

ecological support, management &
solutions



Extended Phase I Habitat Survey

Land at North Street, Emsworth

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For **Hampshire Homes**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief

Ecosupport Ltd. was commissioned by Hampshire Homes to conduct an Extended Phase I Habitat Survey of land at North Street, Emsworth, hereafter known as 'the site', to inform a planning application for the proposed redevelopment of the site. The aims of the survey were as follows:

- Identify current land use and distribution of broad habitat types including plant communities of ecological importance within the area of impact of the proposals and surrounding land (where relevant);
- Identify and classify any priority habitats;
- Identify signs and habitat features of protected species;
- Identify the requirement for any necessary Phase II Protected Species surveys to support the Planning Application;
- Assess the likely ecological effects of the development against relevant legislation and policy;
- Recommend avoidance and/or mitigation measures to reduce the ecological impact of the proposals (if possible at a Phase I stage);
- Make recommendations for ecological enhancements of the site as per national and local policy.

This survey takes no account of seasonal variation or fluctuations in the presence of any species that might take up residence following this report. Lack of signs of a particular species does not confirm its absence, merely that there was no indication of its presence at the time of survey.

This survey does not constitute a full site assessment for invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed.

A search for the presence of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on site has not been undertaken.

Should the proposed development not be underway within 24 months of the date of issue of this report, it is strongly recommended that the assessment be repeated.

1.2 Site Description

The site is located at North Street, Emsworth (approximate central Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SU 74921 06078) (**Figure 1**). The site comprised three buildings that appeared to be industrial in nature, a lean-to, a shed and paved hard standing. The site was accessed via North Street, Emsworth. The site was situated within the urban area of Emsworth, with mixed-use commercial and residential development bounding the site on all sides and in the surrounding area as well as Brook Meadow

Local Nature Reserve to the east (**Figure 2**). The total area of the site is approximately 0.05ha.

Figure 1. Aerial photograph of the site, with approximate boundaries illustrated in red (Google Maps, 2018).



Figure 2. The site in the wider context of the local area (Google Maps, 2018).



1.3 Proposed Development

It is understood that the proposed development of the site comprises the demolition of all existing buildings on site and the subsequent construction of six 2-bed townhouses and associated car parking (see **Appendix**).

2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION & POLICY

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)*

This transposes the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) into UK domestic law. It provides protection for sites and species deemed to be of conservation importance across Europe. It is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or injure species listed in Schedule 2 or to damage or destroy their breeding sites or shelter. It is also illegal to deliberately disturb these species in such a way that is

likely to significantly impact on the local distribution or abundance or affect their ability to survive, breed and rear or nurture their young.

In order for activities that would be likely to result in a breach of species protection under the regulations to legally take place, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence must first be obtained from Natural England.

2.1.2 The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)

This is the primary piece of legislation by which biodiversity is protected within the UK. Protected fauna and flora are listed under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. They include all species of bats, making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a roost or to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost. Similarly this Act makes it an offence to kill or injure any species of British reptiles and also makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to take, damage or destroy their eggs and nests (whilst in use or being built). Further, the Act requires the identification and subsequent protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

The Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) states that it is an offence to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild' any plant listed in Schedule 9 art II of the Act. This list over 30 plants including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and Parrots Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*).

2.1.3 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)

This Act strengthens the Wildlife & Countryside Act by the addition of "reckless" offences in certain circumstances, such as where there is the likelihood of protected species being present. The Act places a duty on Government Ministers and Departments to conserve biological diversity and provides police with stronger powers relating to wildlife crimes.

2.1.4 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

This places a duty on Local Authorities to consider the conservation of biodiversity in their policy and decision making procedures and 'in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'.

2.1.5 The Protection of Badgers Act (1992)

The Protection of Badgers Act (1992) makes it an offence to:

- Kill or injure Badgers;
- Damage a Badger sett or any part of it;
- Destroy a Badger sett;

- Obstruct access to, or any entrance of a Badger sett;
- Disturbing a Badger when it is occupying a sett.

If a proposed development may contravene any of the above points then a licence would be required from Natural England and an appropriate mitigation scheme proposed.

2.2 Policy

2.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The development seeks to comply with relevant Planning Policy. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 supersedes the previous national policy and sets out the Government's vision for biodiversity in England in line with the country's 25 Year Environment Plan. Chapter 15 of this policy outlines key principles related to the natural environment and states that plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure and should provide net gains for biodiversity. Plans should promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats and ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species.

2.2.2 Havant Borough Core Strategy

On a local scale the site falls within the jurisdiction of Havant Borough Council. Part of the 'Vision for Havant Borough in 2026' is to protect and enhance biodiversity. Similarly policy 'CS11: Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough' states that planning permission will only be granted when development protects habitats and features of biological interest and prevents the fragmentation of existing habitats.

2.3 Biodiversity Action Plans & UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (JNCC & DEFRA, 2010) supersedes the UK Biodiversity Action Plan 1992-2012 (UKBAP), setting out goals relating to nature conservation at a UK scale, for example the reduction and reversal in the decline of threatened species and improving the status of biodiversity. The specific habitats and species contained within the UKBAP continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desktop Survey

A search was undertaken of available online resources to determine the presence of statutory sites designated for their conservation value and habitats designated under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan within 2km of the site.

As no suitable habitat for Great Crested Newts (GCN) existed on site, waterbodies located on or within 500 metres of the development were therefore not considered or assessed for this site.

3.2 Extended Phase I Habitat Survey

3.2.1 Site Walkover

The walkover survey was carried out on 29th August 2018 by Darrelle Moffat BES (Hons) PGCert, an experienced Ecologist of Ecosupport Ltd. The survey comprised a site walkover (loosely based on the "Phase 1" methodology (JNCC, 2003), modified to suit the situation) with all habitats and buildings within the area of impact of the proposals assessed. The habitats present were generally described, with particular attention paid to their potential to support protected species. In addition, a general search for evidence of protected species was undertaken.

3.2.2 Assessment of Buildings to Support Bats

An assessment of all buildings within the area of impact of the proposals was made to identify the presence of any bats and/or signs of bats, and to determine the likelihood of them supporting bats. This information was used to inform whether Phase II Bat Surveys would be required, and to what level. The exteriors were examined from ground level using 8 x 42 Avian Trekker binoculars and a high powered torch for any gaps or other suitable features that bats may use, as well as bats themselves and evidence of bat use such as droppings and feeding remains. The internals of buildings were similarly assessed by entering all loft spaces/internal voids wherever possible. Where any bats or evidence of bats identified the surveyor would immediately retreat so as to cause no disturbance. The buildings were subsequently classified as to their potential to support bats using the categories developed by the Bat Conservation Trust. The survey was carried out in accordance with *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition)* published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, J. (ed.), 2016).

3.3 Assessment

The methodology for the assessment of the likely ecological effects of the proposed development is based on CIEEM's Guidelines for Ecological Assessment in the UK (CIEEM, 2006). Although the assessment of the site does not constitute a formal

Ecological Impact Assessment, the CIEEM guidelines provide a useful framework for assessing ecological impacts at any level.

The approach of the guidelines is to assess potential impacts to all features of ecological interest that could be affected by a scheme. As a scheme may have effects beyond its boundaries, it is important to identify the 'zone of influence' of the scheme and to assess the potential for significant impacts throughout this area, for example impacts upon nearby species, habitats and sites designated for their nature conservation value. Impacts are assessed in the absence of any avoidance, mitigation and compensation to inform the design of such measures where required.

3.4 Limitations

No limitations were considered present during the Extended Phase I Habitat Survey. The results are considered to provide an accurate assessment of the site at the time of visit.

Please note, the botanical species noted during the survey do not represent a full species list for the site, but a list of those species considered to dominate the habitat areas at the time of survey, and those of particular conservation interest (if present).

4.0 SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 Desktop Search

No statutory sites of nature conservation value were identified on or adjacent to the site, however, several statutory sites were located within 2km of the site; these are detailed below (**Table 1.**).

No UKBAP Priority Habitats were identified within or adjacent to the site boundaries (MagicMap, 2018).

Table 1. Statutory sites of nature conservation value within 2km of the site.

Site Name	Proximity to Site (distance & direction/km)	Designation/Details of Site
Brook Meadow LNR	0.1km to east	Brook Meadow is a wet meadow in Emsworth, a small town in southeast Hampshire. It consists of 5 acres of grassland, surrounded by woodlands and flanked by two streams. It is full of birds, insects and wild flowers. Brook Meadow is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation and is also a Local Nature Reserve.

Chichester and Langstone Harbour RAMSAR, SPA, SSSI	0.52km to south	Chichester and Langstone Harbours are located on the south coast of England in Hampshire and West Sussex. They are large, sheltered estuarine basins comprising extensive sand- and mud-flats exposed at low tide. The two harbours are joined by a stretch of water that separates Hayling Island from the mainland. Tidal channels drain the basin and penetrate far inland. The mud-flats are rich in invertebrates and also support extensive beds of algae, especially <i>Enteromorpha</i> species, and eelgrasses (<i>Zostera spp</i>). The basin contains a wide range of coastal habitats supporting important plant and animal communities. The site is of particular significance for waterbirds, especially in migration periods and in winter. It also supports important colonies of breeding terns. This site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of several species of birds and a wetland of international importance. The area qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl.
Solent Maritime SAC	0.52km to south	The Solent encompasses a major estuarine system on the south coast of England with four coastal plain estuaries (Yar, Medina, King's Quay Shore, Hamble) and four bar-built estuaries (Newtown Harbour, Beaulieu, Langstone Harbour, Chichester Harbour). The site is the only one in the series to contain more than one physiographic sub-type of estuary and is the only cluster site. The Solent and its inlets are unique in Britain and Europe for their hydrographic regime of four tides each day, and for the complexity of the marine and estuarine habitats present within the area. The Primary reason for the selection of the Solent Maritime as a SAC is the presence of the Annex I habitats: Estuaries, <i>Spartina</i> swards (<i>Spartinion maritimae</i>) and Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>).
Eames Farm LNR	1.1km to south-east	Local nature reserve managed by Chichester Harbour Conservancy

4.2 Extended Phase I Habitat Survey

4.2.1 Habitats

The following habitats were recorded on site:

Hard Standing

The entrance driveway comprised paved hard standing, considered to be in a good state of repair with minimal vegetative colonisation by; Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), Buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*) and non-native species (**Figure 3**). This extended from North Street to the centre of the site.

Figure 3. Hard standing driveway.



Buildings

Three separate buildings were present on site. Their locations can be found in **Figure 4**. In addition, a separate lean-to and a wooden shed were present on site.

Figure 4. Locations of buildings on site (Google Maps, 2018).



Building 1

A single storey industrial brick building was present at the north east corner of the site (**Figure 5**). The building had a vaulted ceiling with a single-pitched roof made of comprising a combination of corrugated metal and plastic (**Figure 6**), which resulted in high internal light levels. A single-storey brick extension protruded from the western aspect of the building with a flat roof. A large garage door was present on the southern aspect of the building.

Figure 5. View of exterior of Building 1 from south.



Figure 6. Interior of Building 1.



Building 2

A two-storey building was present along the site's eastern boundary, connected to Building 1. The building was of brick construction with well-sealed plastic cladding on the exterior (**Figure 7**). The roof was single-pitched and of corrugated metal and plastic construction, underlined with chipboard. Internally, the roof was vaulted with high light levels due to an abundance of windows (**Figure 8**). Evidence of an old bird nest was present in the northern end of the internal ridgeline.

Figure 7. View of exterior of Building 2 from west



Figure 8. Internal view of Building 2



Building 3

A two-storey building of brick construction was identified along the western boundary of the site (**Figure 9**). The building had a flat, felted roof, and a single storey extension to the south, also with a flat roof. No internal loft void was identified.

Figure 9. Exterior view of Building 3.



Lean-to

The lean-to extended from a building adjacent to the southwestern boundary of the site (**Figure 10**). It was of single-skinned wooden construction with a flat plastic roof, creating high internal light levels, with a pair of large sliding metal doors at the entrance.

Figure 10. View of lean-to.



Wooden Shed

A small, single skinned wooden shed was present at the south of the site, with a plastic corrugated roof (**Figure 11**). Several gaps were noted into the shed along with high internal light levels due to the plastic roof.

Figure 11. View of wooden shed.



5.0 EVALUATION & POTENTIAL IMPACTS IN THE ABSENCE OF MITIGATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter evaluates all ecological features identified within the application site, then details the potential impacts of the proposals to all ecological features identified in the absence of avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures to inform the production of a suitable such strategy (where necessary). The potential impacts are identified in reference to the proposed activities associated with the scheme. In many cases, whilst a potential negative impact is identified at this stage, measures can be implemented to ensure that no actual negative impacts occur. Such measures are detailed in **Section 6** of this report.

5.2 Desktop Search

Due to the proposals resulting in a net increase in six residential dwellings on site, there exists the potential for increases in public access to surrounding sites of nature conservation interest, which could result in increased recreational pressure upon such sites. That said, any such increase is considered highly unlikely to deviate substantially from existing levels, due to the small scale of the development, the existing public access to these sites via the local footpath network and the likely

current usage of these sites by relatively high numbers of residents of the local areas. Impacts such as increases in noise and light are considered highly unlikely due to the distance between the sites and application site, together with the presence of surrounding buildings acting as a buffer.

The site sits within the boundaries of the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy (SRMS), within which it is considered that, unmitigated, all developments which result in a net increase in residential units hold the potential to result in adverse impacts upon the Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar and SPA / Solent Maritime SAC via increases in recreational pressure.

5.3 Extended Phase I Habitat Survey

5.3.1 Habitats

Hard Standing

The hard standing was considered to hold negligible ecological value due to lacking suitable opportunities to support wildlife. Its removal is therefore considered highly unlikely to result in any ecological impacts.

Buildings

Building 1 was considered to hold *low ecological value* due to the presence of a bird nest within the building. Should this building be demolished during the bird nesting season and active bird nests are present, works would result in a contravention of wildlife legislation. The removal of this building is not, however, considered likely to result in any significant impacts in the overall status of bird populations in the local area due to the wide range of alternative nesting opportunities off site.

All other buildings were considered to hold *negligible ecological value* due to lacking suitable opportunities to support wildlife, including roosting bats, as detailed below. Their demolition is therefore considered highly unlikely to result in any adverse ecological impacts.

5.3.2 Assessment of Buildings to Support Bats

None of the buildings on site were considered to provide suitable opportunities to support roosting bats, as described below, and were therefore classified as *negligible potential to support bats* as per best practice guidelines. Further, no evidence of such usage was recorded. The demolition of the buildings is therefore considered highly unlikely to result in any impacts upon roosting bats.

Building 1

Building 1 was single skinned, with no roof underlining present, high internal light levels throughout and no crevices or voids internally or externally. The building was

considered to lack a suitable thermal capacity to support roosting bats, and no opportunities for crevice dwelling species were present.

Building 2

Building 2 experienced high internal light levels throughout, with no crevices or voids internally or externally.

Building 3

Building 3 was flat roofed with no internal loft void present. The building featured a panel along the eaves on all sides with a shallow gap present between the panel and the brick building. However, no bats or evidence of use by bats was found and the gap is considered too shallow to provide opportunities to support roosting bats. No further crevices were identified.

Lean-to

The lean-to was single-skinned with high internal light levels throughout, no internal loft voids and no internal or external crevices. The building was considered to lack a suitable thermal capacity to support roosting bats.

Wooden Shed

The wooden shed was single-skinned and was therefore considered to lack the thermal capacity provided by roosting bats, as well as experiencing high light levels. Although there were gaps present into the internals, the internals of the shed were not considered to provide suitable roosting opportunities.

6.0 REQUIREMENTS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND ENHANCEMENTS

6.1 Introduction

The following information is provided to reduce the ecological impact of works as far as possible to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation, and to ensure the proposals result in a positive outcome for biodiversity as per national and local planning policy.

Avoidance/mitigation refers to measures that can be undertaken to avoid or reduce ecological impacts, for example by retaining and protecting suitable habitat on site or timing works to avoid certain ecological sensitive timings. Compensation refers to measures taken in order to offset potential significant impacts, for example by providing alternative habitat features to replace those lost as a result of the works. Measures referred to as 'enhancements' refer only to those that will deliver positive impacts to ecology compared to the current site conditions.

6.2 Designated Sites

The site lies within the vicinity of the Solent SPAs. In order to mitigate for the likely increases in residential pressure, due to the high densities of wildfowl and waders for which the area is predominantly protected, the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy (SRMS) has been introduced in collaboration with Natural England, comprising a partnership of all local councils. Mitigation towards the SPA must be provided for all new recreational developments within the 5.6km disturbance zone of the SPA. The simplest method of providing a necessary suitable and appropriate level of mitigation is via financial contributions, which, at the time of report issue, are calculated on a sliding scale as follows:

- £337 for each 1 bedroom dwelling
- £487 for each 2 bedroom dwelling
- £637 for each 3 bedroom dwelling
- £749 for each 4 bedroom dwelling
- £880 for each 5 bedroom (or more) dwelling

These contributions are used to enable the continued use of the coastline in a way that reduces the risks to the bird species of international importance that use the area, for example funding a team of rangers and implementing initiatives to encourage responsible dog walking (Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership, 2014). It is considered that the contribution, in compliance with the recommendations presented within the SDMP, provides a suitable level of mitigation for the potential adverse impacts associated with the proposed scheme upon the Solent SPA.

The contribution can be made as follows:

- 1) Prior to planning permission being granted or by completing the SDMP Agreement and sending the completed form along with mitigation contribution to the Planning Agreements Officer at the Local Planning Authority; or
- 2) By completing a Unilateral Undertaking before planning permission is granted with an undertaking that the payment will be made before the development is implemented. Please note, this option incurs an administration fee payable to the LPA of £75.

In addition to financial contributions it is recommended that a Homeowner Awareness Leaflet be provided with the purchase documentation of all new dwellings on site. The leaflet will detail the presence and importance of nearby protected sites and ways in which they can be enjoyed respectfully, such as by keeping dogs on leads and sticking to footpaths.

6.3 Nesting Birds

Building 2 should be demolished outside of bird nesting season, which spans March

to August inclusive (Natural England, 2015). Should this not be possible, demolition must be preceded by a Phase II Nesting Bird Survey undertaken by a suitably experienced Ecologist a maximum of 24 hours prior to works commencing. Should any active nests be identified, they must be protected by a minimum of a three metre buffer until the chicks have fledged and the nest has been deemed inactive by the Ecologist.

6.4 Excavations

During construction all excavations on site should be covered nightly and/or include a suitable escape ramp for the protection of wildlife (a suitable escape can be provided by wooden planks placed at 45 degree angle or provision of a sloping end wall). Any temporarily exposed open pipe systems should be checked and then suitably capped when not in use to prevent access by wildlife.

6.5 Lighting

A sensitive lighting scheme will be implemented as follows to reduce any associated disturbance to nocturnal wildlife:

- The use of LED lighting to reduce spill;
- Lighting should be directed to where it is needed through careful design of the luminaire and by using accessories such as hoods, cowls, louvres and shields to direct light to its intended area only;
- Utilise sensor-operated lighting wherever possible, with the timer restricted to the minimum possible;
- Installation of security lighting only when absolutely necessary.

Additional guidance is provided in *Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light* (ILP, 2011), which provides a greater level of detail on how light spill can be reduced.

Lighting should be absent from the aspects of the buildings containing artificial bat roosting features (see **Section 6.7.1**).

6.6 Roofing Underlining

In-line with Natural England (2015) guidance roofing felt should be utilised as apposed to Breathable Roof Membrane (BRM) for all roofing works as there is considerable evidence to suggest that BRM poses a threat to bats occupying a structure due to entanglement in the fibres (Natural England, 2015).

6.7 Ecological Enhancement Strategy

6.7.1 Bat Boxes

To comply with national and local policy, four artificial bat roosting features should be incorporated into the fabric of the new buildings, such as the IBSTOCK Bat Box C

(**Figure 12**), to provide roosting opportunities for bats and thereby enhancing the ecological value of the site. The features should be located at the greatest possible height, away from artificial lighting and as close to the eaves of the buildings as possible (ensuring a minimum of a three metre clearance to the floor). These bat boxes do not allow bats access to the buildings themselves.

New residents should be made aware of the legal protection status of bat roosts upon purchase of the properties.

Figure 12. IBSTOCK Bat Box C.



6.7.2 Native Planting

In line with the CIEEM guidance (2012) and to comply with national and local policy, any proposed planting should favour local, native species over non-natives and ornamentals wherever possible. Where possible species should comprise those that produce berries and nectar to provide feeding opportunities for a range of wildlife, for example Rowan, Hawthorn, Field Maple, Apple, Dogwood, Dog Rose and Holly, as well as a range of native wildflowers. Evening-scented species will enhance the site's potential to support foraging bats.

7.0 CONCLUSION

An Extended Phase I Habitat Survey was undertaken at the land at North Street, Emsworth to inform a planning application for the residential development of the site. The survey identified the potential for the site to support nesting birds within Building 2. In addition a number of designated sites of nature conservation interest

were identified within 2km of the site. Measures have been detailed within this report to ensure the proposals comply in full with wildlife legislation. In addition, enhancements have been included which will increase the site's potential to support biodiversity in the future, in compliance with planning policy.

It is considered that, should all recommendations detailed within this report be implemented in full, the proposals will proceed in compliance with all relevant wildlife legislation and policy and will result in positive outcomes for biodiversity.

Please note, although it is considered highly unlikely, if signs of any Protected Species are identified during works, works must halt immediately and advice sought from a Suitably Qualified Ecologist to ensure works comply in full with relevant legislation and policy.

8.0 REFERENCES

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9.0 APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Proposed site plans

