HBIC Planning Application Screening Guidance (Version 5)

The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre screens all planning applications as part of its service level agreement with each Local Planning Authority. The accompanying attachment highlights those recent planning applications which we believe, from the brief details given, may have an adverse impact on designated sites, notable/protected species, BAP Priority Habitats or Road Verges of Ecological Importance. Local planning authorities need to consider each application in terms of biodiversity and whether any of these features may be affected.

As part of 1APP the submission of a biodiversity survey report is required where a proposed development may have possible impacts on wildlife and biodiversity. The screening process HBIC undertakes is designed to meet the requirements of the Biodiversity Checklist approved by HIPOG for the Hampshire Planning Authorities. The information provided may assist in determining whether a biodiversity survey and report is needed. Please see Hampshire Biodiversity Checklist and DCLG Planning and Validation Guidance (March 2010) for further guidance.

Applications are screened using the information currently held in HBIC's database & GIS (600,000 notable species records, 25,000+ priority habitat polygons & 4,000 designated sites). This information is regularly updated to include the most up to date notable species, habitat information and designated site details that are available to HBIC.

HBIC no longer screens those planning applications that may solely affect bats and/or County Rare/Scarce notable species (such as Stag beetles, West European Hedgehogs, various Lepidoptera species etc) as this takes up a disproportionate amount of staff time to the level of useful results produced. It is important that applicants are able to demonstrate as part of the 1APP process, that bats, along with other protected/notable species, will not be adversely affected by their proposals. Local Planning Authorities, when considering these types of applications, should take into account potential effects to bat populations.

The trigger distance parameters for flagging householder applications in built areas are 50m and rural sites 100m. Please see Annex A for further details of those application types which HBIC does not screen.

Screening Planning Applications

All planning applications (excluding those listed in Annex A) will be screened against the following GIS layers:

- **Designated sites; SPAs, SACs, Ramsars, SSSIs, NNRs, SINCs & LNRs**
- **Priority habitats - S41 NERC list**
- **Notable Species records -** inc. Birds Directive Annex 1, Habitats Directive Annex 2 & 4, W&C Act S.1, 5 & 8, NERC Act S42, Hampshire BAP, RDB and County Rare/Scarce.
- **Brent geese and other wader polygons** with wader/geese records
- **Road Verges of Ecological Importance**
- **[Veteran trees –** *data waiting to be validated before use***]**

If a planning application is thought to have a potential adverse impact on any of the above species, habitats or designated sites then an alert notice will to be sent to Natural England, the Hampshire Wildlife Trust Planning Officer, the County Ecologists, the Woodland Trust (where woodlands are involved) and the District Council Planning/Biodiversity Officers; summarising which sites, habitats or species might be affected. This information may also be used to assist the District Council in seeking further survey information from the applicant.

The following parameters will trigger an alert notice.. For those notable species & habitat records where the supporting data is less precise a judgement will be made as to whether the proposed development is likely to have an adverse impact.

Type of planning application	Within :	Site/Habitat/Species
A 'major' type of application[1]	2km of site	SAC/SPA/Ramsar
	500m of site	Lake & ponds with Great Crested newt records
Both 'major' types and 'minor' types of application[2]; including 'new build' under 0.5ha or 10 dwellings	500m of site	SSSI/NNR
	200m of site	Any bat, water vole, crayfish, otter, newt & toad records recorded in association with any lake, river, canal, pond etc.
	100m of site	SINC, LNR & Priority Habitat (inc. native woodland, wetlands, hedgerows, unimproved grassland & heathland), notable road verges & Brent geese/wader sites
	100m - rural 50m - built	Any land where reptiles or any other notable species have been recorded, including bats, dormice and badgers.(and veteran trees when data has been checked)
	Within site/ adjacent	Any pond/water course/wetland habitat[3]
Householder[4]	Within site/ adjacent	SSSI, SINC, LNR, Priority Habitat (native woodland, wetlands, unimproved grassland, heathland etc.), notable road verges, wader sites, & all ponds. (+ veteran trees when data checked)
	50m of site	Any notable species[5] which might be affected by the proposed development

Note ; the presence of a notable species is taken as either 50m or 100m from the edge of a 100m polygon from which the species has been recorded to the edge of the application site. If the application site sits within a 1km square polygon where a notable species has only been recorded at that resolution then a judgement will need to be made as to whether that species is likely to be affected (looking at habitat affected, site name given and frequency of occurrence).

Bats: Even if a planning application does not flag up bat records in the vicinity, a developer may still be required to undertake a bat survey if there is **a reasonable likelihood** of a bat species being present ***and*** affected by the development . This also applies to some types of application listed in Annex A below (not screened by HBIC) – such as first floor extensions, lighting or TPOs.

See Natural England Standing Advice on Bats:

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/south_east/ourwork/standingadvice/protectedspecies/bats.aspx

Please see below for the Annex A listing types of application not screened by HBIC.

[1] 0.5ha, >10 units/dwellings, power station, sewage treatment works, fish farm, industrial/agricultural development next to or discharging pollutants into a water course, new road scheme

[2] Below 0.5ha and < 10 dwellings for housing or new industrial units, other infrastructure and services, industrial estate, road/rail line, service station, golf course, leisure centre/stadium, car park, industrial/agricultural unit with large powder/liquid discharges.

[3] Taken from OS MasterMap 'inland water features'

[4] Extensions, replacement dwellings, garages, conservatories, change of use etc. and any other type affecting existing buildings & structures which alter the footprint and are not included in Annex A.

[5] Restricted to records of protected species & notable plant species because of time constraints. It is likely that several UK BAP species (relatively common but declining species) such Hedgehog and Stag beetle, and many Amber list bird species, will be present in many gardens and unlikely to be affected by any 'householder' development.

Annex A

Planning applications which deal with the following will not be screened by HBIC:

- Porches
- Chimneys
- Lights
- Dormer windows
- Loft conversions and 1st/2nd floor extensions
- Sheds (on developed land)
- Greenhouses (on developed land)
- Decking/patios
- Walls & fences
- Signage
- Wind turbines (except where there are bats or "large bird" populations in the vicinity)
- Flag poles
- BT equipment (except against road verges of ecological importance)
- Tree Preservation Orders

Note; The number of notable moth species in the screening process to be reduced to only include WCA and UK/Hants BAP species (from 1129 to c220 species).

Nicky Court, Centre Manager, Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre
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