



Hampshire
County Council

**Phase 1 Bat and Nesting Bird
Survey Report and Designated
Sites Impact Assessment**

Report for:

***Hampshire County Council
Property Services***



Hayling College

*Re-cladding and re-roofing of Design and
Technology Block.*

October 2013

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Contents

1	SUMMARY.....	1
2	INTRODUCTION.....	2
	2.1 Project Description	2
	2.1.1 <i>Proposal.....</i>	2
	2.1.2 <i>Requirement for Ecological Survey/Assessment.....</i>	2
	2.2 Site Description.....	2
3	METHODS	3
	3.1 Desk-based Assessment	3
	3.2 Phase 1 Field-based Assessment.....	3
	3.2.1 <i>Bats – Built Structures.....</i>	3
4	RESULTS	5
	4.1 Desk-based Assessment	5
	4.1.1 <i>Bats</i>	5
	4.1.2 <i>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation</i>	5
	4.1.3 <i>Special Protection Areas.....</i>	6
	4.2 Phase 1 Field-based Assessment.....	7
	4.2.1 <i>Building Descriptions.....</i>	7
	4.2.2 <i>Designated sites</i>	8
5	IMPACTS	9
	5.1 Bats - Roosting habitat.....	9
	5.2 Bats - Foraging and Commuting.....	9
	5.3 Nesting birds	9
	5.4 Designated sites.....	9
	5.4.1 <i>Habitat loss</i>	9
	5.4.2 <i>Disturbance.....</i>	10
6	CONCLUSIONS.....	10
7	RECOMMENDATIONS	11
8	REFERENCES.....	11

1 SUMMARY

- A Phase 1 bat survey was undertaken in October 2013 at Hayling College, Hayling Island, Havant. The proposals for the site are for the re-cladding and re-roofing of the Design and Technology Block.
- The survey comprised a field survey and desk-based study to assess the potential for the site to support bats and nesting birds or to affect any statutory or non-statutory sites of nature conservation interest.
- The school site comprises a complex of buildings to the west interspersed with hardstanding and small areas of amenity grassland. There is a large area of playing field to the east of the site that is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation due to its potential value for supporting overwintering Brent geese associated with the nearby European designated site.
- The wider school site was not assessed as this project is concerned solely with the existing buildings and the impacts of the works to those.
- It is concluded that the proposals will not impact bats or nesting birds.
- It is also concluded that the proposal will not have a likely significant effect on the nearby Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area (SPA).
- No mitigation measures are considered necessary.
- It is considered unlikely that the proposals will have impacts to biodiversity.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Description

Hampshire County Council Ecology Team (HCCET) were commissioned to carry out an Phase 1 ecological survey at Hayling College, Hayling Island, Havant ('the Site').

2.1.1 Proposal

Hampshire County Council (HCC) is proposing to re-clad the external walls and re-roof the Design and Technology Block. It may be necessary to remove some small trees to enable access to the Design and Technology Block.

It is understood that submission for planning permission will take place in late October 2013, with work planned to commence in December 2013.

2.1.2 Requirement for Ecological Survey/Assessment

Initial consultation with HCCET identified the potential for the site to support bats, which have been found on other sites to roost behind similar cladding elsewhere in the County.

All bat species and their resting places (roosts, whether in use or not) are afforded legal protection (as 'European Protected Species') through the Conservation (of Habitats and Species) Regulations 2010. In addition, all bat species and nesting birds are safeguarded under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981).

Works were also considered to potentially affect nesting birds. The site was also identified as being adjacent to a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

2.2 Site Description

The school site comprises a complex of buildings to the west interspersed with hardstanding and small areas of amenity grassland. There is a large area of playing field to the east of the site. There are numerous mature trees around the site boundaries to the eastern side of the site and smaller amenity tree specimens in the main school complex.

The immediate surrounding area is characterised by a matrix of residential development and associated infrastructure to the west. To the east of the site, on the far side of the playing field, is an open landscape of fields and a golf course, giving way to a coastal landscape of saltmarsh and mudflats.

3 METHODS

3.1 Desk-based Assessment

A desk-based assessment was carried out by HCCET on 20th May 2013. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) mapping was used in order to identify any records of bats or other relevant protected species and habitats within a 1.0km radius of the site – due to the very localised and limited nature of the works it was considered unnecessary to extend the data search beyond this distance. In addition, records were obtained of all statutory and non-statutory designated nature conservation sites within the search radius. HCCET had full access to the extensive biological database held by the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC).

3.2 Phase 1 Field-based Assessment

A Phase 1 assessment of the site's potential to support roosting bats was undertaken. A brief description of the survey methods used is provided below.

3.2.1 *Bats – Built Structures*

All built structures within the survey area were subject to detailed external investigation to identify evidence of bat activity. The external areas of the buildings were inspected visually to identify potential bat access, egress and roosting features. Such features include: missing, slipped, broken or bowed roof materials; gaps within soffits; gaps behind fascias; gaps/holes within brickwork; louvers; lifted lead flashing and gaps around window and door casements. Features were inspected using binoculars and, where possible, a ladder in order to locate unambiguous field signs such as droppings or urine/fur-staining. Surveyors were equipped with a high-powered torch and binoculars. Survey methods used were those described within Hundt (2012).

The buildings have been assessed for their potential to support roosting bats based upon the presence of direct evidence or the presence of features suitable access, egress or roosting features. Each structure has been graded using the criteria detailed in **Table 1**.

Grading Criteria	Reason
Confirmed Bat Roost	Presence of unambiguous evidence: live bats, corpses, droppings, feeding remains, urine- and fur-staining. Bats heard within roost. Known roost based on desk-based assessment.
High Potential	Structure exhibits numerous or high-quality features for roosting bats. Examples may include older/historic buildings with traditional roof materials, roof voids etc. Potential often higher when structure is in a non-urban setting.
Moderate Potential	Structure exhibits moderate number or moderate-quality features for roosting bats. Examples may include structures of more-modern construction exhibiting gaps within roof materials.
Low Potential	Structure exhibits low number or low-quality features for roosting bats. Examples may include otherwise-suitable structures exhibiting a very small number of potential features.
Negligible Potential	Structure exhibits no features for roosting bats. Examples may include modern structures in sound condition exhibiting no suitable features. Such structures are often within an urban setting.

Table 1 Bat Roost Building Grading Criteria

4 RESULTS

4.1 Desk-based Assessment

4.1.1 Bats

A review of the biological database held by HBIC revealed the presence of a number of bat records within a 1km radius of the site:

Species	Details
Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus</i> sp. bat species	Several individual bats identified at residential properties and nearby church; possibly two small maternity roosts approximately 0.2km to E
Brown long-eared bat <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Roost present in property c1.0km SW in residential area; roost present in nearby church (individual bats only)
Serotine bat <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	Individual bat recorded in nearby church

Table 2 Bat records within 1km of site

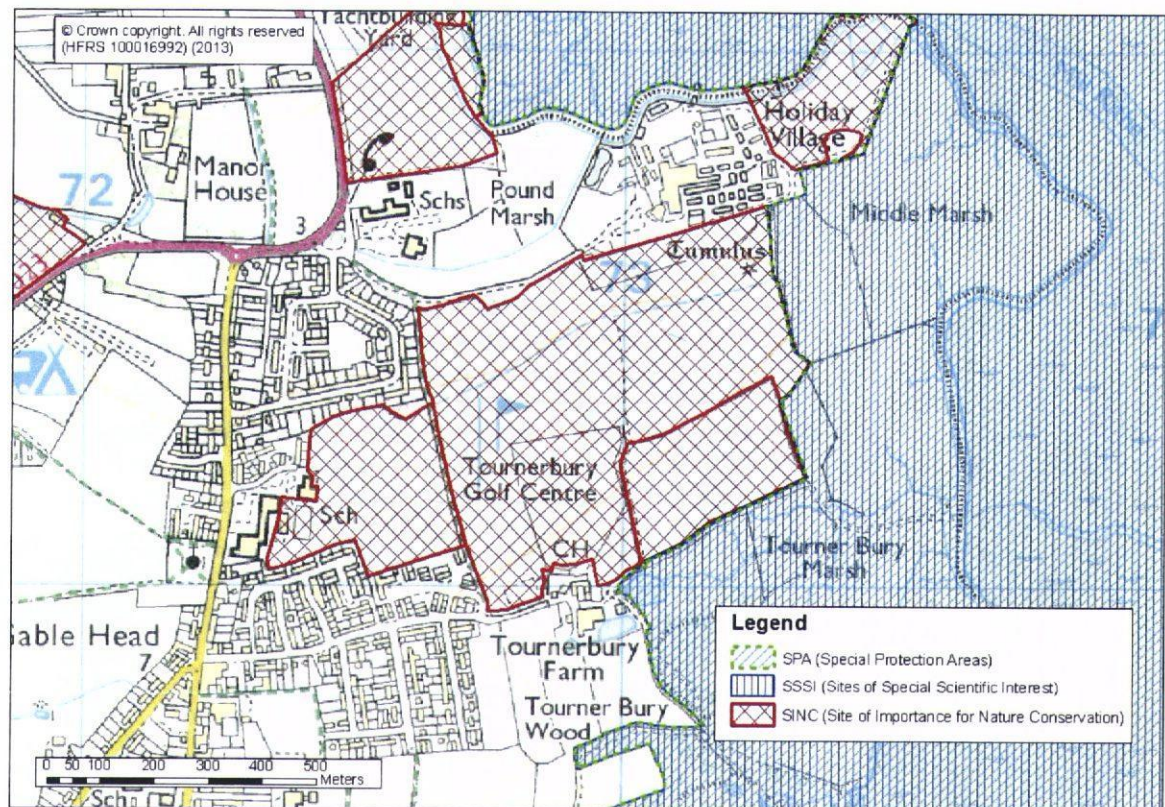
Maps show that the school is located in an area to the edge of the settlement, with residential development surrounding it, but with coastal-type open countryside to the east of the playing field. Maps and aerial photos suggest that the open countryside areas would provide good bat foraging habitat.

4.1.2 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

The playing field is identified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). SINC's are not legally protected. However it has been designated a SINC as it has the potential to provide habitat that is essential to maintaining the conservation status of the nearby European designated site (see below), which does receive legal protection. Therefore impacts to the SINC may have the potential to affect the legally-protected site.

4.1.3 Special Protection Areas

The Site is close to Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area (SPA). The SPA is legally protected under European law for the internationally important population of over-wintering waders and Brent geese that it supports (see Map 1).



Map 1 – Nearby SINC, SPA and SSSI

The SINC has been designated as it has the potential to provide habitat that is essential to maintaining the conservation status of the SPA bird populations – in this case, the Brent geese, which need to use areas of coastal grassland as feeding areas.

Developments that would prevent Brent geese from using the field – for example through permanent loss of habitat from new buildings, or temporary impacts through construction disturbance – might be considered to be likely to have a significant effect on the SPA. In such a situation, the planning authority should only grant planning permission if it can conclude that the development would not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA.

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust produced the 2010 Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy, which used extensive survey work to inform an assessment of the value of potentially suitable sites across the Solent in supporting SPA bird populations.

The open fields and golf course to the east of the Site have been identified in the Strategy as being of either 'Important' or 'Uncertain' value for SPA bird populations. However there is no such identification of the College playing fields. That said, the previous version of the Strategy (2002 Brent Goose Strategy) identified the playing fields as being of High importance for Brent geese associated with the SPA.

Therefore, in the absence of up to date survey data on the use of the fields by geese, it cannot be assumed that they are not used. It is therefore necessary to consider the likelihood of the works at the Site affecting any geese that might be present on the fields.

4.2 Phase 1 Field-based Assessment

4.2.1 Building Descriptions

The school buildings are of modern construction. The technology block is largely of brick to the elevations, but with significant areas of glazing with boarding below. There is uPVC weatherboarding around the top of the elevations, between top of the window level and the roof.

The building is flat-roofed, with felt and metal edging

The buildings were generally found to be in good condition, although there were a number of areas of the plastic boarding that were damaged with small gaps present.

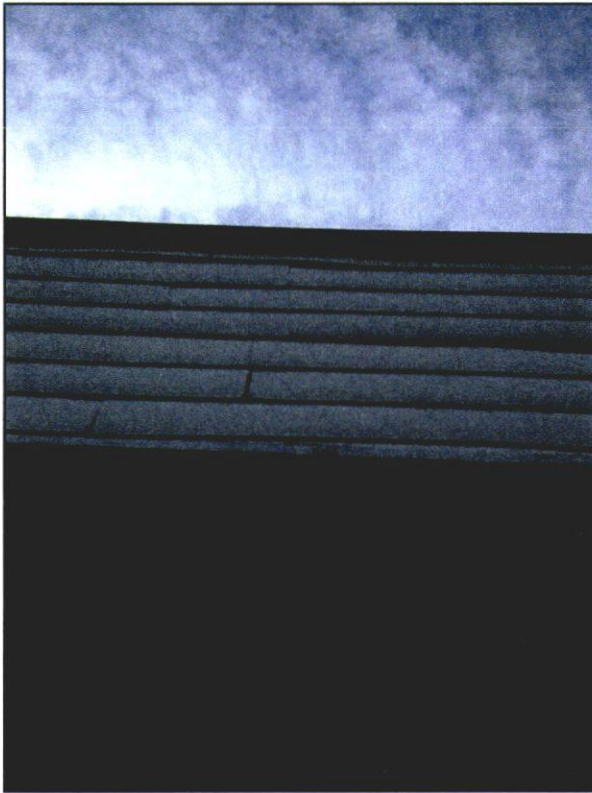


Photo 1 – uPVC weatherboarding with some gaps)

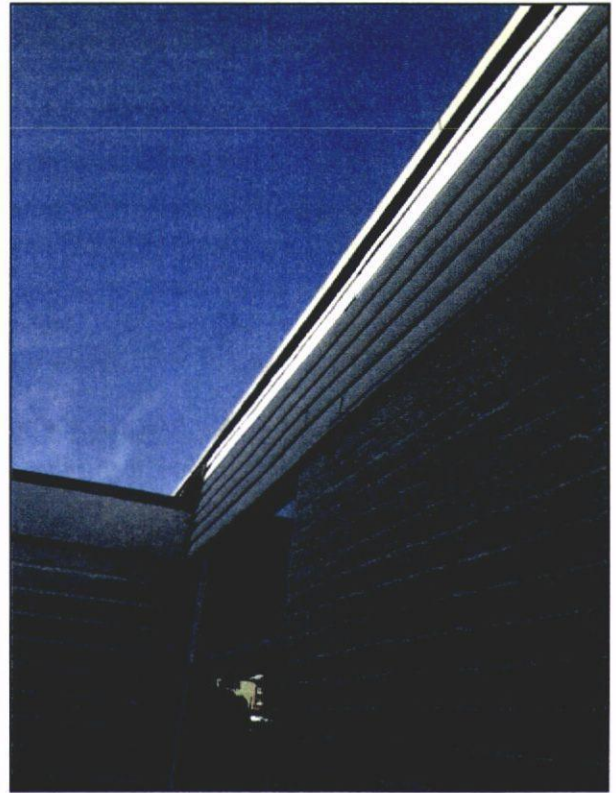


Photo2 – uPVC weatherboarding in good condition

It may be necessary for the contractors to remove a small number of young trees that have been planted along the cycle path in order to gain suitable access to the work area. These trees are all young specimens in good condition with no suitable roost features. They will however offer some limited potential to support breeding birds, although this is less likely due to the location of the trees in a busy school environment and their general young age, which limits available nesting habitat.

4.2.2 Designated sites

The playing field was not accessed at this time. In the absence of historic survey data, several winters of survey work needs to be conducted to be confident of the level of use of a site by SPA birds (or to confidently conclude that it is not used).

5 IMPACTS

5.1 Bats - Roosting habitat

The gaps in the weatherboards would initially appear to have the potential to provide roosting opportunities for bats. However, it should be noted that the material that the existing cladding is constructed from is plastic, which does not provide a suitable surface for bats to grip on to and gain access to any gaps present.

Therefore, the Design and Technology Block is considered to exhibit negligible potential for supporting roosting bats.

The trees potentially affected by the development have **negligible bat roost potential**.

Therefore, no impacts on roosting bats are anticipated as a result of the proposals.

5.2 Bats - Foraging and Commuting

The proposals will not result in any increased lighting at the site and no suitable foraging habitat will be removed. As a result, **no impacts on foraging or commuting bats** are anticipated.

5.3 Nesting birds

The young trees that may need to be removed offer some potential to support nesting birds, although this is fairly low due to their age and location. Works at the site are due to take place in December (during school holidays), which is outside the bird nesting season. Therefore **no nesting birds would be affected** by the tree removal.

Any trees removed will be replaced following completion of the works; there will therefore be no long term net loss of biodiversity.

5.4 Designated sites

5.4.1 Habitat loss

The proposals will **not result in habitat loss** on the SINC.

5.4.2 Disturbance

Elevated disturbance can adversely affect SPA birds as the flight response results in an increase in energy use as well as preventing the birds using the area for the duration of the works. The works are likely to result in elevated noise levels and a degree of increased activity that could potentially give rise to visual disturbance.

Examination of aerial photos shows that there are trees between the Site and the potential goose feeding area. The trees would provide significant screening from visual disturbance as well as noise attenuation.

The open areas of the playing field area (i.e. those areas that would potentially be used by geese) are in excess of 100m from the Site.

The Site proposals will not utilise any excessively noisy methods (e.g. heavy demolition, piling etc.)

It is therefore considered that in view of the distance between the Site and the more open areas of the playing field, the general low levels of additional noise likely to be generated and the screening and noise attenuation provided by the trees, the proposals are **unlikely to have a significant effect on the SPA.**

6 CONCLUSIONS

- The buildings and trees affected or potentially affected offer negligible bat roost potential. No impacts on roosting bats are anticipated as a result of the proposals;
- No impacts on foraging or commuting bats are anticipated;
- No impacts to nesting birds are anticipated as the trees (if removal is necessary) will be removed during the winter;
- The proposals will not result in habitat loss on the SINC;
- The proposals are unlikely to have a significant effect on the SPA through disturbance of waders or Brent geese potentially using the adjacent playing field due to the distance from the works, the general low levels of additional noise likely to be generated and the screening and noise attenuation provided by intervening trees.
- The proposals will not result in any net loss of biodiversity as any trees that need to be removed will be replanted.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the likelihood of roosting bats being present is considered to be negligible, bats can turn up in previously-unoccupied locations. Therefore, it is recommended that precautionary measures are taken during the proposed works. If any evidence of roosting bats (droppings or live/dead bats) is noted during the works then HCCET should be contacted and all further works should cease immediately.

If indeed a bat roost is present it will be necessary to obtain a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence from Natural England prior to any works recommencing. This will require that a suitable bat mitigation strategy is devised in order to maintain the favourable conservation status of bats at the site.

8 REFERENCES

Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2012). *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*. IEEM, Winchester.

Hundt L (2012) Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd edition, Bat Conservation Trust



Proposed 'Gebrick' Slip shown against adjacent building which uses typical Sussex stock bricks throughout the school site..

Slip product reference Terra Antic (Antique) Mana FE71-40





Proposed 'Gebrick' Slip shown against existing SCOLA DT building (Subject of the planning application). The masonry panels will be pointed in a sulphate resisting cement mortar which is typically a light grey colour. The proposed slip is not intended to match the existing but to compliment the existing range of 'brown' bricks used throughout the site.

Slip product reference Terra Antic (Antique) Mana FE71-40