

ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

**LAND AT MANOR FARM
& COPSEYS NURSERY,
DENVILLES,
HAMPSHIRE**

APRIL 2013

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ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT, LAND AT MANOR FARM & COPSEYS NUSREY, DENVILLES, HAMPSHIRE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Aluco Ecology Ltd was commissioned to carry out detailed ecological survey work of land at Manor Farm and Copseys Nursery, Denvilles by Barratt David Wilson Homes (Southampton) Ltd and the Generator Group.

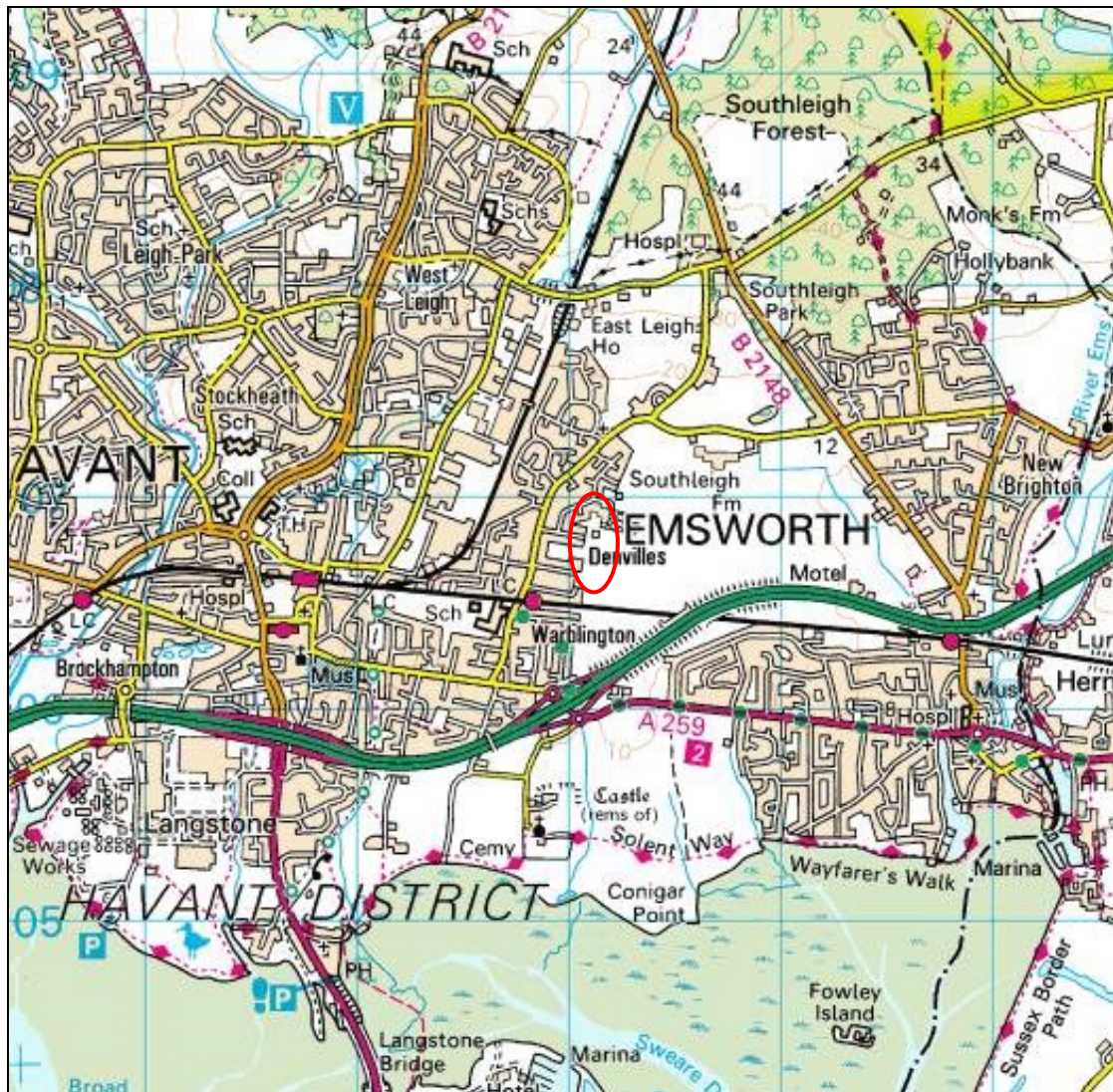
1.1.2 The aim of the Ecological Assessment is to survey and document baseline ecology data on the site, and then to evaluate and assess the impacts of the proposals for Outline Planning Permission against this baseline. The assessment therefore:

- highlights any features of particular ecological value;
- identify potential impacts to ecology as a result of the proposed works;
- identify any ecological issues that may have legal or planning implications such as the presence of protected species; and
- recommends potential for mitigation and/or compensation that can be undertaken to avoid, reduce or offset the potential for impacts.

1.1.3 The results of the assessment are provided below to inform the Planning Application for development on the site

1.2 Outline of the Scheme and Site Location

1.2.1 The land consists of a farm with farm house, yards, arable land, horticultural glasshouses and a modern detached house to the east of the village of Denvilles, Hampshire. Its location is shown at **Figure 1** below.



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Figure 1: Location of the Site

- 1.2.2 The Scheme is for the development of 191 dwellings. A proposed Masterplan is shown at **Figure 2** below. **Figure 2a** provides additional drainage information to the scheme in April 2013.

1.3 Relevant Legislation and Policy

UK Legislation

- 1.3.1 The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 is the principal mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. This legislation deals with both protected species and the designation and protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The parts of this Act most relevant to the proposed development are outlined in **Technical Appendix 1**.
- 1.3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is governed by the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 'The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended)'. These Regulations implement the European Council Directive 85 / 337 on the assessment of the effects of certain

public and private projects on the environment in so far as it applies to town and country planning. Even though this development is not considered as falling within the Regulations, regard has been had to these Regulations in the ecological assessment undertaken.

European Legislation

- 1.3.3 The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 now replaced by the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010 (known as the Habitats Regulations) makes it an offence to deliberately kill, capture, or disturb a European Protected Species (EPS), or to damage or destroy the breeding site or resting place of such an animal. European Protected. The Habitats Regulations are also concerned with the protection of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA), which are designations applied to sites of European Importance for wildlife. See **Technical Appendix 2** for more details.

National Planning Policy

- 1.3.4 The Government sets out its objectives for conserving and enhancing biodiversity in the new National Planning Policy Framework that also makes reference to the existing ODPM Circular 06/2005. The Government's objectives for planning and biodiversity are that '...the planning system should seek not just to protect, but where possible to enhance biodiversity – making sure we don't just have isolated pockets of wildlife, but rich and connected green spaces for all kinds of species to thrive.'
- 1.3.5 The Framework goes on to state that at the heart of the planning system is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Local Planning Policy

- 1.3.6 The Havant Borough Council Local Plan has of March 2011 been replaced by Local Development Framework Core Strategy. These policies are set out in **Technical Appendix 3**.

Biodiversity Action Plans

- 1.3.7 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan is the Government's response to the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity (The Rio Convention), with the aim of halting loss of biodiversity in the UK. Biodiversity strategy is implemented at a local level through county and district level Biodiversity Action Plan (BAPs). The site falls within the geographic area covered by the National BAP and the Hampshire County Council BAP.

2.0 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The methodology for this appraisal is based on the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) in the United Kingdom published by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM, 2006). This sets out survey, evaluation and assessment guidelines.

2.2 Site Survey Methodology

- 2.2.1 The first stage of the assessment is a desk study of the site and associated Zone of Influence. This provides background information on the site and local environment in order to effectively target field survey and further desk research. The aims of the field survey are to record land-use and broad vegetation types present on the site and in the surrounding areas, and to evaluate the habitats and vegetation communities' potential ecological value along with their potential to support protected species, species of principal importance, and any other notable species. This is then backed up with detailed ecological surveys where necessary. The details of these survey methodologies are described in relevant baseline chapters and Technical Appendices.
- 2.2.2 Following the evaluation of the baseline an impact assessment is made. Further details of the assessment methodology used can be found in **Technical Appendix 4**.

3.0 BIOPHYSICAL CHANGES AND THE ZONE OF INFLUENCE

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 In order to be able to target relevant ecological survey and assess the impacts of a proposed development, it is necessary to identify the activities that may result in biophysical changes from the development and the area these cover (i.e. the zone of influence). There are three stages of this development scheme that include activities that may have an impact on features of ecological value; namely site preparation, construction and operation / use.

3.1.2 The proposed development scheme is shown at **Figure 2** below.

3.2 Biophysical Changes associated with the Development Scheme – Determination of the Zone of Influence

3.2.1 It is proposed that change of use of the site will result in the physical structure of the present site being altered. The potential zone of influence of the proposal is determined from the predicted biophysical changes brought about by activities associated with construction and post-construction phases. Therefore the zone is predicted to extend across the development footprint and locally along the edge of the site, and immediately adjacent to the site. Consequently, survey has been carried out within this zone.

3.3 Site Preparation / Construction Activities and Biophysical Changes

3.3.1 During the construction phase, it is predicted that site preparation activities will include some earthworks and earth stripping associated with the building and road footprints. This phase may affect habitat suitable for wildlife. Without appropriate mitigation, site clearance work may result in death or injury to protected species (if they are present), or damage to other features of ecological value. Construction could result in the loss of features of ecological value and/or the loss of habitat of protected species resulting in a net decrease in biodiversity.

3.3.2 The construction of the site has the potential to affect adjacent habitats, where present, through noise, air and run off pollution.

3.4 Predicted Operational Activities during Use Phase and Biophysical Changes

3.4.1 The operational phase will need to consider how protected species and species of conservation concern may use the site and zone of influence, and what effect the proposals may have on their conservation status locally.

