# Biodiversity Checklist for Householder Applications

Planning ref: (for office use)

Site address:

7 GITSHAM GARDENS WIDLEY

There are many legally protected sites of nature conservation importance (see Note1) across Hampshire alongside non-statutory wildlife sites (Note 2), priority habitats (Note 3) and a wide range of legally protected and other notable species (Note 4). Developments can adversely affect these, and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are legally required by Government to consider the conservation of biodiversity when determining a planning application. Government planning policies for biodiversity are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), while the Local Authority's local plan will set out how they address these requirements in local policy terms. LPAs need to be able to understand what the potential impacts of the development might be and if there are impacts on biodiversity, how these will be avoided, mitigated, or compensated.

This Checklist will help you work out if your proposal is likely to affect biodiversity, what additional information you will need to provide to support your application and how to get that information.

## Guidance for applicants

If your answers to the questions in **Sections 1** and/or **2** identify that your project may potentially have an adverse impact on designated sites, priority or other notable habitats or legally protected or notable species then you will need to submit a suitable report such as a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Ecological Impact Assessment or species-specific survey which demonstrates the following:

- Information about the sites, species, habitats or features that could be affected (such as location, size, abundance, importance)
- Likely impacts of your development on habitats, sites or species identified
- How alternative designs and locations have been considered
- How adverse impacts will be avoided
- How any unavoidable impacts will be mitigated (reduced) (*see note 6*)
- How impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated will be compensated (*see note 6*)
- Any proposals for enhancements of biodiversity

Where more targeted and specific reports are necessary (for example bat surveys), these must:

- Be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced person
- Be of appropriate scope and detail (i.e., be carried out to established standards)
- Be conducted at an appropriate time of year, in suitable weather conditions and using approved methodologies.

Reports may not be required where applicants are able to provide pre-application correspondence from Natural England, the Local Authority ecologist or your ecological adviser that confirms that they are satisfied that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on any features identified in Sections 1, or 2. Your local authority ecologist contact details are given on page 5.

The application may not be validated if any of the information submitted proves to be inadequate. If validated and the information is subsequently found not to fully address any potential impacts then further information may be required during the course of any planning application, for instance if any of the information you have provided needs clarification, or if other potential impacts are identified. **If sufficient information on ecological issues is not provided by the time the application needs to be determined, the application may be refused. This can include information (surveys and data searches) considered out of date.**

It is strongly advised that you consider biodiversity at the **earliest** possible stage in your project as there are seasonal constraints to much of the survey work that may be needed to support your application.

For further advice on competent ecologists that can undertake specialist survey work, please see the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management http://www.cieem.net in the first instance.

**Please let us know if this checklist has been completed or checked by a qualified ecologist; YES/NO**

## SECTION 1 – Designated Sites and Habitats

| Please answer ALL questions **Yes** or **No**<br>If you have answered **'YES'** is it possible that the development could have an impact on the identified site? (*see note* )<br>Please provide further information*** | **YES√ NO X** |
|---|---|
| **1.1** Is the application site on or within **50m** of a SSSI, SAC, SPA or Ramsar site? (*see note 1*) | X |
| **1.2** Are any of the following present on or within **50m** of the application site?<br>*Please see note 2 & 3 for further information on identifying these.* | |
| **a)** Site of Importance for Nature Conservation | X |
| **b)** Native woodland including ancient semi-natural and replanted woodland | X |
| **c)** Veteran (particularly old / large) trees | X |
| **d)** Water courses (rivers or streams) | X |
| **e)** Lakes or ponds | X |
| **f)** Wetlands or marshes | X |
| **g)** Species-rich meadow / grassland | X |
| **h)** Heathland/acid grassland/mire/scrub | X |
| **i)** Coastal grassland/saltmarsh/shingle/mudflats | X |
| **j)** Hedgerows supporting mainly native species | X |

*** This may simply be a brief explanation stating that the identified feature is outside the development footprint and boundaries, or it may be a more formal biodiversity assessment or survey report. Please note that submitted information will be reviewed by the Planning Authority's ecological advisor and you may be asked for further clarification if necessary either prior to validation or during the application process.

Data on site designations, habitats and species can be obtained from the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre

## Section 2 – Legally protected and other notable species

| **PROPOSAL DETAILS**<br>Please answer ALL questions **Yes** or **No** by marking against each feature | **YES √**<br>**NO X** | If you have ticked **'YES'** to any of these, you will need to consider potential impacts to the following: | **Survey attached?** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **3.1 Will the proposal affect any of the following features / structures? (*see note 5 and note 7*)** | | | |
| ▪ Buildings or structures exhibiting features likely to support bat roosts or swift nests e.g. in gaps/crevices/cracks within building materials; hanging tiles, timber weatherboarding/cladding; roof voids; etc.<br>▪ Underground structures (e.g. cellars, caves, mines)<br>▪ Structures where there is known current or historic bat use | X | Bats and bat roosts<br>Swift nests | |
| **3.2 Will the proposal affect trees with any of the following features? (*see notes 4, 5 and 7*)** | | | |
| ▪ *Old and veteran trees or other trees with a circumference greater than 1m at chest height* | X | Bats and bat roosts<br>Nesting birds<br>Other Notable species | |
| ▪ *Trees exhibiting, or likely to exhibit holes, cracks, splits, cavities etc. and/or heavy vegetation* | X | | |
| **3.3. Will the proposals affect any of the following wetland features (notes 4 and 5)** | | | |
| ▪ streams, rivers or lakes on or within 25m of the application site that would be affected (including their banks and adjacent habitat) by the development? | X | Bat foraging habitat<br>Otters, Water vole<br>White-clawed crayfish<br>Nesting birds<br>Other Notable species | |
| ▪ ponds within 100m, particularly any that are well-connected to the application site by hedgerows, ditches, woodland, grassland or field boundaries? | X | Amphibians (particularly with respect to great crested newts) | |
| **3.4 Will the proposals affect any of the following features (notes 4 and 5)** | | | |
| ▪ *deciduous (i.e. not mainly conifer) woodland?* | X | Bat foraging habitat<br>Dormice<br>Nesting birds<br>Badger<br>Reptiles<br>Other Notable species | |
| ▪ *field hedgerows over 1m tall and over 0.5m thick?* | X | | |
| ▪ *areas of scrub well-connected to woodland or hedgerows?* | X | | |
| ▪ species-rich meadows or grassland on or directly adjacent to the site? | X | | |
| ▪ mature or overgrown gardens, rough grassland, derelict/brownfield land, railway land or allotments | X | | |
| ▪ coastal grasslands/arable | X | Brent Geese & wader feeding/roost sites | |

Data on site designations, habitats and species can be obtained from the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre

## Notes

***Note 1***

SSSI = Site of Special Scientific Interest, designated and protected under UK law.; https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/

SAC = Special Area of Conservation and SPA = Special Protection Area. These are designated and protected under EU law. See http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1527 They will also be designated as SSSI

Ramsar site = internationally important wetland, designated under the Ramsar Convention. These sites may also be SPAs / SACs and SSSIs. See http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1527 for more information.

You can find out if your application site is on or near any of these sites from www.magic.gov.uk or the LPA's Local Plan Proposals Map, or from the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre

***Note 2***

SINC – Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. These are not legally protected, but are identified in planning policy as being of importance for biodiversity and are considered during the planning process.

The LPA's Local Plan Proposals Map may identify the location of any SINCs but more definitive and up-to-date maps are available from the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre

***Note 3***

Priority Habitats are also called Habitats of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 NERC Act 2006). They comprise natural or semi-natural habitats that have been identified as being at risk (in that they are rare or in decline) or are important for certain key species of plant or animal. Areas of designated Ancient Woodland and some Priority Habitats can be found on www.magic.gov.uk. More definitive and up-to-date maps of Priority habitats are available from the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre

***Note 4***

Notable species include species protected under European legislation and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); species listed under; S41 of the Natural & Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Priority species); the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species; the Birds of Conservation Concern Red list; and species listed as being nationally, county, or vice-county rare or scarce.

The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre holds data on the known locations of over 1million protected and notable species records. However absence of a record does not mean absence of a species.

***Note 5***

Effects could be DIRECT, such as destruction, removal or modification, or INDIRECT through disturbance such as run-off, noise, dust, lighting or increased recreational use.

***Note 6***

Avoidance = measures taken to avoid impacts – should be the first consideration; Mitigation = measures which make unavoidable impacts less severe; Compensation = measures which counterbalance remaining impacts, resulting in an overall no net loss of biodiversity. (NB 'Mitigation' as a general term, or a 'mitigation strategy' is often used to cover all these processes).

***Note 7***

The types of feature highlighted in this Checklist have a higher likelihood of supporting bats and is taken from the list produced by the Bat Conservation Trust in their good practice survey guidelines (see http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/guidanceforprofessionals.html) .However, it is important to recognise that many buildings that do not meet these criteria may also support bats.

**Important: this checklist cannot include reference to *all* protected or notable species in *all* circumstances where they may be affected**. Legislation relating to protected species does apply in all circumstances and it is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the species and their habitats are not impacted as a result of development.

**If protected species are found during the course of development, work should be halted and advice sought from Natural England, the local authority ecologist or a qualified private ecologist.**

## Contacts

If you are unsure about any of these questions, please call your local authority ecologist for advice.

Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council - Biodiversity Officer - Tel 01256 845201/845261

Eastleigh Borough Council - Biodiversity Officer – Tel: 023 8068 8352

East Hampshire District Council/South Downs National Park – HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832335

Fareham Borough Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832317

Gosport Borough Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832335

Hart District Council – Ecologist - Tel 07816 084413

Havant Borough Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832335

New Forest District Council – Ecologist – Tel 023 8028 5747

New Forest National Park Authority – Ecologist - Tel 01590 646685

Portsmouth City Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832317

Rushmoor Borough Council - Biodiversity Officer – Tel 01252 398731

Southampton City Council – Planning Ecologist - Tel 02380 832727

Test Valley Borough Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832334

Winchester City Council/South Downs National Park – Biodiversity Officer – Tel 01962 848532

## For office use:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Have **ALL** questions on **ALL** sections been completed? | **Y / N** | If YES, go to 2 | If NO, application should not be validated |
| 2 | Have any questions been answered 'Yes'? | **Y / N** | If YES, go to 3 | If NO, application can be validated. Evidence that a data search has been carried out by the applicant or their adviser would be helpful at this point. |
| 3 | Does the applicant identify likely impacts **and** address potential issues in any comments made on the checklist? | **Y / N** | If YES, application can be validated | If NO, go to 4 |
| 4 | Has a separate statement, report or other supporting information been submitted to address potential impacts? | **Y / N** | If YES, application can be validated | If NO, application should not be validated |