

Land at College Road, Campdown

HAZEL DORMOUSE SURVEY REPORT

784-B038823

Dandara Southern Ltd.

June 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Contents	Summary
Site Location	The site is shown in Figure 1 and comprises approximately 26.6 hectares of land consisting of a series of large, connected fields with areas of scrub and hedgerow. The site was formerly heavily grazed but, following the removal of livestock from the site (approximately 2019), the site vegetation has become more overgrown.
Proposals	The proposed development plans for the site include the creation of 628 residential properties, with associated landscaping, public open space, allotments, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and access routes.
Existing Site Information	Previous dormouse surveys carried out at the site in 2017 recorded dormice and a nest within a tube along the eastern boundary, confirming presence. An update Ecological Appraisal of the site conducted in June 2022 confirmed boundary habitats and hedgerows across the site had remained suitable to support a population of dormice.
Scope of this Survey(s)	The aims of the survey work and the subsequent report presented herein were to: - Determine the presence / likely absence of hazel dormice on the site; and - Provide an assessment of the potential ecological constraints to the proposed works relating to the presence of dormice at the site.
Results	Overall, a total of eight dormice and 23 nests were found within the hedgerows, scrub and lines of trees along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the site.
Conclusions and Recommendations	A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) will be required from Natural England for the works to proceed. To prevent breaches in the legislation protecting hazel dormice and maintain the population at a favourable conservation status in the local area, the mitigation hierarchy (BS 42020:2013, 2013) will be followed, which will include avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement, with all provided in a detailed method statement within the EPSL application.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Tetra Tech was commissioned by Dandara Southern Ltd. in June 2022 to undertake update hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* (hereafter referred to as 'dormice') presence / likely absence surveys at Land at College Road, Campdown (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The site location is shown in Figure 1.

This report was prepared by Principal Ecologist Dr Sam Kelly and the conditions pertinent to it are provided in Appendix A.

1.2 SITE LOCATION

The site is located approximately 2.5km west of Havant and is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SU 69069 06995. The A3 is situated immediately east of the site, with Widley to the west and Portsmouth Golf Club to the west and south-west. To the south lies an area of grazed farmland and the outer reaches of the city of Portsmouth, with Langstone Harbour beyond.

1.3 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site location is shown in Figure 1 and comprises approximately 26.6 hectares of land consisting of a series of large, connected fields with areas of scrub and hedgerow. The site was formerly intensively grazed but following the removal of livestock from the site in around 2019, it became largely overgrown.

1.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The proposed development plans for the site (as shown in Appendix B) include mixed use residential development comprising 628 dwellings, community centre, allotments, public open space including play areas, new junction to College Road, related internal access roads, footways and cycleways, pumping station and sustainable drainage (SuDs) basins.

1.5 EXISTING SITE INFORMATION

The site was previously surveyed by WYG (now Tetra Tech) in 2017 as part of a planning application for Hampshire Homes. Dormice presence / likely absence surveys were recommended within the Ecological Appraisal (EA) for the site (WYG, 2017a), and subsequent surveys were carried out between 26th June and October 2017. A single dormouse and a nest were recorded within the eastern boundary during the September and October surveys, confirming presence (WYG, 2017b).

An update EA of the site was undertaken by Tetra Tech in June 2022. The data search returned 11 records of dormice within 2 km of the site. A review of MAGIC, the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside online tool from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA, 2023), identified nine European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for dormice granted within 2 km, the closest one being associated with South Downs College (adjacent to the northern boundary of the site). The habitats recorded along the site boundaries included dense scrub, species poor hedgerows, and semi-natural broadleaved woodland. The habitat on site was connected to an offsite network of suitable habitat along the A3 corridor. Therefore, updated dormouse surveys were recommended.

1.6 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The aims of the survey work and the subsequent report presented herein were to:

- Determine the presence / likely absence of dormice on the site; and
- Provide an assessment of the potential ecological constraints to the proposed works relating to the presence of dormice at the site.

Note that scientific names are provided at the first mention of each species and common names (where appropriate) are then used throughout the rest of the report for ease of reading.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 PRESENCE / LIKELY ABSENCE SURVEYS

The dormouse surveys consisted of placing 100 nest tubes within areas of suitable habitat along the boundary habitats and hedgerows on site. The locations of the tubes can be seen in Figure 2. The tubes were installed on the 20th June 2022 and were checked on six occasions from July to November 2022 and continued with a further survey in June 2023 to achieve the survey effort required. Surveys were undertaken following the guidance outlined in the Dormouse Conservation Handbook (Bright, Morris, & Mitchell-Jones, 2006) and Surveying Dormice Using Nest Tubes (Chanin & Woods, 2003). Surveys were undertaken by Consultant Ecologist Emma Taylor and Principal Ecologist Dr Sam Kelly, who both hold Natural England Class 1 survey licences for dormice (licence numbers available upon request).

The standardised dormouse nest tubes were made from stiff double-walled black plastic sheets (50mm x 50mm x 250mm) with plywood inserts and were suspended from suitable limbs of trees and vegetation using plastic coated gardening wire. The nest tubes were located approximately 20m apart within the hedgerows, lines of mature trees and dense scrub along the site boundaries and within any hedgerow or scrub connecting or near to the boundary.

To prove the absence of dormice, an index of probability score was used which assigned a value for each month of the survey (as outlined in Bright et al., 2006). Table 1 shows the index of probability score and cumulative points for each month surveyed at Campdown between July-November 2022 and June 2023. Tubes were checked once during these months to gain the minimum number of points required to establish likely absence (20); as insufficient points had been scored in 2022, the additional check was required in 2023.

Table 1: Index of Probability Scoring (adapted from Bright et al., 2006)

Month	Index of Probability	Total Points Cumulative
July 2022	2	2
August 2022	5	7
September 2022	7	14
October 2022	2	16
November 2022	2	18
June 2023	2	20
Total		20

2.2 LIMITATIONS

Between the September and October dormouse survey, clearance works were undertaken along the shared Highways boundary. The works were to install a new highways fence, for health and safety purposes. As a results of the works, a small section of the dense scrub was cleared where dormice nests had been previous been recorded within the tubes. The clearance was undertaken outside of the breeding period, when there was unlikely to be young in any nests. With no further details of the works, it is unknown if there was ecological supervision during the works from Highways. As nests had

been previously recorded during the summer months of 2022, the clearance works did not impact the results of the survey.

During the June 2023 survey, it was not possible to access all the dormouse tubes due to excessive nettle, bramble and thistle growth. This meant 12 of the tubes were not surveyed at this time (tube numbers 7,8,9,13,18,33,43,44,46,80,99,97) (Figure 2). This was not considered a major limitation as tubes were still accessible on all boundaries in adjacent areas, with missing or inaccessible tubes scattered across the site, and dormice had already been recorded within one of the missing / inaccessible tubes (tube 33).

The details of this report will remain valid for a period of two dormouse survey seasons from the date of the final survey visit (June 2023), after which the validity of this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether further updates are necessary. It is noted that the recommendations within this report should be reviewed (and reassessed if necessary) should there be any changes to the red line boundary or development proposals which this report was based on and may require changes following the completion of the surveys in 2023.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 WEATHER CONDITIONS

The weather conditions during each of the dormouse surveys are summarised in Table 2. All surveys were carried out in optimal weather, no surveys were carried out while it was raining. Overall, the period in which the dormouse surveys were carried out was mainly during dry and sunny conditions.

Table 2: Survey Weather Conditions

Survey	Date	Start Time	End Time	Air Temp Start (°C)	Air Temp End (°C)	Rain	Wind Speed	Cloud Cover (%)
1	7 th July 2022	09:30	11:30	15	15	0	0	0
2	18 th August 2022	10:45	12:30	16	16	0	1	20
3	16 th September 2022	09:50	11:55	12	12	0	1	100
4	31 st October 2022	12:00	14:00	13	13	0	1	50
5	29 th November 2022	09:50	11:50	12	12	0	1	100
6	1 st June 2023	10:00	14:00	17	21	0	2	20

3.2 PRESENCE / LIKELY ABSENCE RESULTS

The results of the dormouse surveys are found in Table 3 and Figure 3.

Table 3: Dormouse Survey Results

Survey	Dormouse Evidence Recorded
7 th July 2022	No dormice or evidence of dormice was recorded
18 th August 2022	No dormice or evidence of dormice was recorded
16 th September 2022	2 dormice were recorded in tube 47, empty dormouse nests were recorded within tubes; 44, 48 and 49.
31 st October 2022	Dormice were recorded in tubes 49, 50 and 43 x 2. Empty dormouse nests were recorded within tubes; 44, 48, 30, 31 and 53.
29 th November 2022	Dormice nests were recorded in tubes 20, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 34, 49, 50, 53, 55, 60 and 71.
1 st June 2023	Dormice were recorded in tubes 31 and 48 (x1 adult in each). Empty dormouse nests were recorded in tubes 21, 23, 26, 27, 47, 49, 50, 55. Old dormouse nests taken over by wood mice were recorded in tubes 36, 53, 57 and 59.

Overall, a total of eight dormice and 23 dormice nests were found within the hedgerows and tree lines along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the site. Wood mice and their nests were also recorded within the tubes. The peak count of dormice identified in any given survey was two.

The exact location of the tubes containing dormice and nests throughout the survey period can be seen in Figure 3, and example evidence of the dormice and the nests recorded can be seen in Plate 1 and 2.

Plate 1- Adult dormouse found in tube 49 along the southern boundary (October 2022)



Plate 2 – Woven dormouse nest with green leaves found in tube 49 (October 2022)



4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

4.1 REVISED NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

A revised NPPF was issued on 20th July 2021 (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2021) and currently supplements government Circular 06/2005, *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System* (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005).

Circular 06/2005 states that the presence of protected species is a material consideration in the planning process. Paragraph 99 of this document also states that:

'It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision... any necessary measures to protect the species should be in place, through conditions and/or planning obligations, before the permission is granted. In appropriate circumstances the permission may also impose a condition preventing the development from proceeding without the prior acquisition of a licence...'

Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that:

'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland*
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate*
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.*

Paragraph 179 is also relevant as:

'To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*

- b) *promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.'*

4.2 LOCAL PLAN

The site falls under the jurisdiction of Havant Borough Council and the relevant local plan document for this site is the Havant Borough Local Plan (pre-submission version with changes) (Havant Borough Council, 2019).

Policy E14, The Local ecological Network, states:

'All development in Havant Borough is expected to protect, conserve and enhance the Borough's Local Ecological Network. Planning permission will only be granted where:

- a. The development results in biodiversity net gain;*
- b. The development avoids the fragmentation of the Local Ecological Network including across administrative boundaries;*
- c. The applicant has identified and assessed the level of ecological value of the site through adequate and proportionate information and any matters arising have been addressed through an avoidance or mitigation plan; and*
- d. Any necessary mitigation plan includes provision for ongoing management and maintenance.'*

Policy E15, referring to protected species, of the plan goes on to state:

'Development proposals which are likely to affect protected species, and/or their supporting habitats, must undertake appropriate surveys to establish their presence/likely absence. In using the findings of such surveys, proposals should, in the first instance, avoid an impact on a protected species. If this is not possible proposals should mitigate and compensate. Planning permission will only be granted where:

- a. A Mitigation Plan, or if this is not possible a Compensation Plan, is provided to the satisfaction of the Council; and*
- b. A Monitoring and Review Plan is put in place.*

Where the above measures cannot be met planning permission will be refused, unless the applicant can show, subject to meeting the tests of the Habitats Regulations, that there would not be an adverse effect on the population of the relevant protected species.'

4.3 LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) identify habitat and species conservation priorities at a local level (typically County by County) and are usually drawn up by a consortium of local Government organisations and conservation charities. Although they are no-longer managed at a national level, many are still reviewed and updated at a local level.

The Biodiversity Action Plan for Hampshire is the relevant document for this site (Hampshire Biodiversity Partnership, 2000) and it includes Species Action Plans (SAPs) for Hazel Dormouse. This document also includes Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) for hedgerows which are present on the site.

It should be noted that the existence of an SAP or HAP does not always infer an elevated level of importance for those features. These plans may be designed to encourage an increase in these, rather than to protect a county-scarce feature (for example).

5.0 DISCUSSION

5.1 DORMOUSE DISTRIBUTION ON SITE

Dormice were recorded along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the site within the dense scrub, hedgerows and broadleaved woodland. Most of the nests were recorded during the latter part of 2022 and again in June 2023, with 14 nests being recorded during both. The nests had largely been constructed between the October and November visits, although five new nests had been formed in the spring/early summer of 2023. The habitats in the which the nest tubes were placed predominantly consisted of hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, English oak *Quercus robur* and dense bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. scrub. These plant species provide a range of food sources for dormice, hosting a range of invertebrates, flowers, berries and nuts which provide dormice with their dietary requirements across their active season. The exact locations of the dormice found during the surveys and their nests can be seen in Figure 3.

Most of the dormouse nests (11) were recorded along the eastern boundary which connects to a habitat corridor running alongside the A3(M). This corridor consists of habitat that is highly suitable for dormice and provides them with a relatively undisturbed foraging and commuting corridor, ranging from Waterlooville to Guildford; whilst this is bisected by roads in multiple locations, it links to woodlands situated adjacent to the main road and is likely a significant dispersal link for this species locally and harbours an apparently sustainable population. Numerous EPSL licences have been issued along this stretch of the A3(M) (both sides), which adds further support for this observation.

Nest tube surveys cannot calculate the population size or accurate distribution of dormice on a site. However, with contiguous boundary habitats connecting to a wider network of suitable habitat within the local area, it can be reliably assumed that dormice could be present within all the hedgerows, tree lines and areas of dense scrub at the site boundaries and those connecting to them. Notwithstanding this, the corridor along the eastern boundary is likely to be the most significant finding on site as dormice could be using this to move and feed between the woodland to the north of the site (which is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation due to dormouse presence) and habitats to the south of the site.

5.2 POSSIBLE IMPACTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT ON DORMICE

The proposed development will result in adverse impacts on dormice if suitable mitigation is not implemented. These effects could include:

- Loss of breeding and foraging habitat through the clearance of hedgerows and dense scrub;
- Disturbance, killing and injury during the construction phase;
- Isolation caused by fragmentation of habitat; and
- Increased risk of domestic cat predation.

The mitigation hierarchy (BS 42020:2013, 2013) must therefore be applied to these effects. This comprises:

- Avoidance – avoid adverse effects as far as possible by designing out or using preventative measures during the construction process thus resulting in an environmental effect of neutral significance.
- Reduction – minimise adverse effects as far as possible; and
- Compensation – involves the creation of habitats of the same value to off-set the impact.

Measures designed to avoid, mitigate, and compensate for the likely impacts identified above are discussed in detail in the Environmental Statement (Tetra Tech, 2023b).

As all impacts cannot be avoided on site, works will only be able to proceed once an EPSL mitigation licence for dormice is obtained from Natural England, with all mitigation measures detailed within an EPSL method statement.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Hazel dormice, a European Protected Species, have been recorded within habitats on site, particularly along the eastern site boundary and in scrub and hedgerow habitats connected to this area. It can be assumed that dormice are using all connected hedgerows, scrub and tree lines on site, with known dormouse presence within the woodland to the north of the site (a SINCC with dormice listed as a feature) and throughout the adjacent A3 habitat corridor.

An EPS mitigation licence for dormouse will be required to facilitate the development due to impacts on habitats used by dormice on site and for the potential to disturb, injure or kill this species. The licence can only be applied for once planning permission has been granted and all planning conditions relevant to wildlife have been discharged. The licence application will be accompanied by a detailed method statement detailing measures which will be put in place to avoid, reduce and compensate for any impacts on this species. No habitat clearance works will be possible on site before this licence has been obtained.

7.0 REFERENCES

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FIGURES

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

Figure 2 – Dormouse Tube Locations

Figure 3 – Dormouse Survey Results



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Site Location Plan

Campdown

Dandara Southern Ltd.



Legend

Site Boundary

Notes:

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Checked by: HK
Office: Southampton

Figure No. 1
Revision No. A

0 50 100 150 Meters
Scale 1:3,000 @A3

08 June 2023
NGR: 469032E 107009N

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Dormouse Tube Location Plan

Campdown



Dandara Southern Ltd.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Dormouse tubes

Notes:

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Figure No. 2
Revision No. A

0 50 100 150 Meters
Scale 1:3,000 @A3
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Dormouse Survey Results

Campdown



Dandara Southern Ltd.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Dormouse and dormouse nest found
- Dormouse found
- Dormouse nest found

Notes:

Drawn by: RD
Checked by: HK
Office: Southampton

Figure No. 3
Revision No. A

0 50 100 150 Meters 08 June 2023
Scale 1:3,000 @A3 NGR: 469032E 107009N

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The whole of the report must be read as other sections of the report may contain information which puts into context the findings in any executive summary.

Tetra Tech reserves the right to share this Report and any related materials, surveys, drawings and/or documents at any time with the relevant Local Ecological Records Centre (LREC), any relevant statutory body or any equivalent organisation as Tetra Tech may reasonably require from time-to-time.

The performance of environmental protection measures and of buildings and other structures in relation to acoustics, vibration, noise mitigation and other environmental issues is influenced to a large extent by the degree to which the relevant environmental considerations are incorporated into the final design and specifications and the quality of workmanship and compliance with the specifications on site during construction. Tetra Tech accept no liability for issues with performance arising from such factors.