



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL REPORT

Sunningdale, Horsham Road, Steyning, West Sussex BN44 3AA

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- Version A – 30.04.26 – Updated to reflect fixed site layout.
- Version B – 17.06.26 – Minor wording amendments and inclusion of pond plan.
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal assessing the site's ecological value and anticipated impacts of the proposals.

The proposed development includes the construction of a residential dwelling in the curtilage of the existing property known as Sunningdale.

The site itself is dominated by close-mown grassland which forms part of the private garden of the existing Sunningdale property and mature trees along the periphery. A ditch is present along the northern boundary of the site.

Key Recommendations (See the report for further details):

- Trees should be retained or replaced wherever possible. Tree protection areas and methods should be advised by a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant.
- Measures to protect the ditch from pollution during construction should be implemented.
- Due to the low risk of presence, precautionary measures are recommended for reptiles, dormice and great crested newts (see report for details).
- To avoid an impact on commuting and foraging bats, it is recommended that lighting is designed to minimise illumination of suitable habitats.
- Vegetation and buildings suitable for nesting birds may only be removed during the nesting season if they have been checked by an ecologist and no nests are present.
- Care should be taken when removing brash or dense vegetation to avoid harm to hedgehogs, which may be present.
- Recommendations are included at the end of this report for measures to enhance the site for local biodiversity.

2. INTRODUCTION

Project Background

This report has been instructed by Atelier de Linde Ltd.

The proposed development includes the construction of a residential dwelling in the curtilage of the existing property known as Sunningdale.

This report has been completed with reference to the following plans and proposals:

Where changes to the below plans are inconsequential to biodiversity within the development, updates to this report may not be required.

- Concept Layout Plan, GA Landscape Plan Rev D, Joe Perkins Space Explorers, (May 2026)

Overall Site Description

The site itself is dominated by close-mown grassland which forms part of the private garden of the existing Sunningdale property and mature trees along the peripheries. A ditch is present along the northern boundary of the site. The wider landscape is dominated by arable land and pasture with pockets of woodland.

The central grid reference for the site is TQ 17485 13203.

Survey Objectives

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal aims to assess the ecological value and potential impacts of the proposed development on biodiversity. The provide information to support the ecological assessment the following have been undertaken:

- UK Habitat Survey to map habitats within the site
- Preliminary Roost Assessment to assess the sites potential to support roosting bats
- Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Assessment (HSI) to assess suitability of ponds for Great Crested Newts in the local area.
- Assessment of the site to support other protected species and habitats.

Limitations

All areas of the site were fully accessed.

This report is broadly considered valid for 18 months, after which time an updated survey may be required. Due to the mobile nature of flora and fauna, use of the site may change in shorter timescales. Precautionary measures or further recommendations are detailed within this report where required.

3. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Horsham District Framework Policy (November 2015)

Policy 25 – The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

The Natural Environment and landscape character of the district, including the landscape, landform and development pattern, together with the protected landscapes and habitats will be protected against inappropriate development. The Council will support development proposals which:

- Protects, conserves and enhances the landscape and townscape character, taking into account areas indenting as being of landscape importance, the individual settlement characteristics and maintains settlement separation.
- Maintain and enhances the green infrastructure network and addresses any identified deficiencies in the district.
- Maintains and enhances the existing network of geological sites and biodiversity, including safeguarding existing designated sites and species and ensures no net loss of wider biodiversity and provides net gains in biodiversity where possible.
- Conserve and where possible enhance the setting of the South Downs National Park.

Policy 31 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

Green Infrastructure

Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains and enhances the existing network of green infrastructure and contributes to the delivery of the emerging Nature Recovery Network, natural capital and biodiversity.

Proposals that would result in any loss, degradation or harmful impacts to green infrastructure, or Core Areas of the Nature Recovery Network will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that appropriately mitigates and / or compensates for the respective harm and ensures that the ecosystem services of the area are retained and enhanced. Development proposals will be expected to remove invasive species.

Proposals will be expected to retain and enhance existing priority habitats. Habitat enhancement including additional hedgerow and tree planting must take account of the local landscape and habitat context. It should seek to optimise biodiversity, ecological connectivity, and function and climate change resilience.

Development likely to affect a watercourse and its associated corridor should seek to conserve and enhance its ecological, landscape and recreational value. This should include providing adequate natural buffer zones to the watercourse.

Biodiversity

Where the felling of a tree is necessary, for example due to disease, replacement planting with a suitable tree species, age and location to retain the link with the wider network of habitats and Green Infrastructure, will be required. Around Ancient Woodland a minimum 15m buffer will be required and consideration should be given to the potential for protected species, e.g. bats.

Major development proposals will be expected to submit a Biodiversity Net Gain report to demonstrate a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain on application of the Defra Metric, or subsequent updates. The net gain must be achieved through the delivery of appropriate on-site biodiversity net gain or, where this is not practicable, through off-site net gain within the emerging District's Nature Recovery Network or as agreed by the Council.

Proposals must give appropriate consideration to protected and notable species. They will be expected to protect priority species and seek to aid their recovery, and must conserve, restore and enhance priority habitats, and should create and manage appropriate new habitats, taking into account pollination, where practicable.

The Council will support appropriate new development which:

- Retains and enhances significant features of nature conservation value on development sites;
- Makes a positive contribution to biodiversity and where appropriate the emerging Nature Recovery Network, through the creation of appropriate green spaces, that provide linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks that enable the movement of wildlife through development sites; and / or
- Following the principle of 'right habitat in the right place', significantly increases woodland or other habitats for the purpose of appropriately enhancing biodiversity, carbon sequestration, pollution control, and / or flood mitigation.

Protected Sites and Species

Particular consideration will be given to the hierarchy of sites and habitats within, or functionally linked to, the District as follows:

- Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites;

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Ancient Woodland and Veteran Trees;
- Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and any areas of priority habitats including traditional orchards, local geodiversity, Core Sites in the emerging NRN or other irreplaceable habitats not already identified above.

Where development is anticipated to have a direct or indirect adverse impact on sites or features of importance to nature conservation, development will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that:

- The mitigation hierarchy has been applied and the objectives of a site's designation, where applicable, and integrity of the area will not be undermined;
- The reason for the development clearly outweighs the likely impact to notified features and / or the need to protect the value of the site; and
- Appropriate mitigation and compensation measures will be provided.

Any development with the potential to impact the Arun Valley SPA / SAC / Ramsar site, The Mens SAC and / or Ebernoe Common SAC will be subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment to determine the need for an Appropriate Assessment. In addition, development will be required to be in accordance with the necessary mitigation measures for development set out in the HRA of this plan.

4. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

MAGIC, DEFRA's online map application was used to search for statutory designation sites within 5 km of the site, the presence of any habitats of principal importance within proximity to the site, such as ancient woodland and for records of European Protected Species.

Biological records were obtained from Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) for a 2 km radius from the proposed site. The records obtained include details of non-statutory sites designated sites, and historical records of protected and notable species.

UK Habitat Survey and Site Walkover

The survey was undertaken on 13th December 2024 by Brooke Waites an experienced Principal Ecologist and Associate Member of the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). An updated site walkover was undertaken on 3rd September 2025, by Brooke Waites, to confirm the conditions of the site remained unchanged.

The vegetation and habitat types within the site were noted during the survey in accordance with the categories specified for a UK Habitat Survey¹. The site survey followed methodology for an ecological assessment detailed in CIEEM's guidance for Preliminary Ecological Appraisals.²

The site survey included an assessment of:

- Evidence of protected and notable species presence within or adjacent to the site
- Suitability of habitats within the site to support protected and notable species
- Inspection for invasive species within the site
- Assessment of the site's ecological connectivity
- Presence of Habitats of Principal Importance

The site was surveyed in December 2024. A repeat site visit has not been undertaken prior to the submission of this report; however, this is not considered necessary given the nature of the habitats present. The site is dominated by close-mown amenity grassland, which is not subject to

¹ UKHab Ltd. (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (at <https://ukhab.org>)

² CIEEM (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

meaningful seasonal variation in its ecological value or condition. No material changes to the site are anticipated since the date of survey, and the baseline data collected is considered sufficient to inform this assessment.

Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

The PRA was undertaken by Thomas Haley, MSc, an experienced Principal Ecologist and Brooke Waites, MCIEEM, an experienced Principal Ecologist, following best practice guidelines issued by the Bat Conservation Trust³. The surveyor holds a Natural England licence to disturb bats whilst surveying (Licence numbers available upon request).

All accessible parts of buildings and trees on site were systematically inspected to look for bats or signs of use by bats from ground level and where required, with use of a ladder. This was with the aid of high-powered torch, binoculars and an endoscope.

Evidence searched for included:

- Individual bats
- Bat Droppings
- Urine staining
- Oil staining
- Feeding remains

³ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition) The Bat Conservation Trust, London

5. DESIGNATED SITES FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

MAGIC, DEFRA's online map application was used to search for statutory designation sites within 5 km of the site and a local records centre search was undertaken to identify non-statutory designated sites within 2 km of the site.

Statutory Designed Sites

A total of 4 statutory designated sites were identified within 5 km of the site. These comprised 3 Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI's) and 1 Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

The closest designated sites, or those where an impact is considered likely are detailed below.

Chanctonbury Hill SSSI

Located approximately 2.6 km south-west of the site, Chanctonbury Hill SSSI is a steep sloped area of woodland with chalk grassland and ponds.

Tottington Wood LNR

Tottington Wood LNR is located approximately 4 km east of the site. The site comprises a semi-ancient woodland dating back to 1600 with a number of veteran trees. The site supports a range of bird and bat species.

Non-statutory Designated Sites.

A total of 3 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) were identified within 2 km of the site.

The closest designated sites, or those where an impact is considered likely are detailed below.

Wiston Pond LWS

Wiston Pond LWS is located in the grounds of Wiston Park, approximately 1 km south-west of the site. The LWS is particularly important for amphibians. It supports exceptional populations of Common Toad, good populations of Common Frog, and Smooth Newt is also present. Breeding toads migrate across the A283 road to the north of the pond, and so a toad tunnel has been constructed to aid their safe passage.

It is also a significant site for birds, Little Grebe and Mute Swans breed here, and other species such as Tufted Duck and Water Rail have been recorded using the pond.

6. HISTORICAL RECORDS SEARCH

The table below summarises records of key protected species considered to be most sensitive to impact from the proposed development. Other species records were returned within a 2 km radius of the site, which are considered unlikely to be impacted by the proposed development and are therefore not summarised below.

Due to the risk of persecution, records of [REDACTED] and Otter (*Lutra lutra*) are not provided by the local records centre, as such they are not included within this report

Species	Local Ecological Records Centre			MAGIC Data
	No. of records within 2 km	Closest record to site (km)	Most recent record	EPS Licences within 2 km
Adder (<i>Vipera berus</i>)	2	2 km south	2020	N/A
Bat species (<i>Chiroptera</i> sp.)	68 records of 8 species.	1 km south	2023	None
Common Lizard (<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>)	4	1.9 km west	2024	N/A
Grass Snake (<i>Natrix helvetica</i>)	10	1.3 km south-west	2009	N/A
Hedgehog (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>)	11	1.2 km south	2018	N/A
Slow-worm (<i>Anguis fragilis</i>)	15	0.7 km north-east	2024	N/A

Records of 8 bat species were returned, which included, Brandt's Bat (*Myotis brandti*), brown Long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Nathuisus's Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*), Natterer's Bat (*Myotis nattereri*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) and soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*).

No records were returned of the following key protected/notable species: Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*), Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*), Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) and White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)

7. UK HAB SURVEY RESULTS

The section below details the habitats present within the site. A detailed habitat plan can be found in Appendix A.

Buildings

The site includes a small greenhouse to the north-west of the site.

Modified Grassland

The majority of the site is dominated by short mown grassland which forms the garden area for the existing residential property known as Sunningdale. Species include perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*).

Trees

The site includes a number of trees, the majority of which are due to be retained within the development. Species include ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) oak (*Quercus robur*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and willow (*Salix sp*). All trees have been individually assessed for their potential to support roosting bats (see below).

Mix Scrub

The western edge of the site is dominated by mix scrub, including hazel, bramble, hawthorn.

Ditch

A small ditch is present along the northern boundary of the site. The ditch had very low levels of water at the time of the survey, despite being in the winter months. No evidence of aquatic vegetation was present. The banks of the ditch comprise well-mown grassland with some mature trees, particularly to the west of the site.



Image 1: Close mown modified grassland within the site.



Image 2: Close mown modified grassland within the site.

8. PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES RESULTS

The table below details the suitability of habitats within the site for protected and notable species. a summary of the biological records search is included. Species not detailed below are considered unlikely to be detrimentally impacted by the proposed development.

Species	Potential habitat on site
Bats	Buildings within the site have been assessed as having negligible bat roosting potential. A number of trees within the site have been assessed as having potential roosting features for bats. See report for details.
Reptiles	The majority of the site is unsuitable for reptiles due to the close mown nature of the site. Scrub along the western boundary may provide suitable corridors for dispersing reptiles.
Great crested newts	The habitat within the site is generally considered unsuitable for great crested newts due to the close mown nature. Small areas of scrub on the western boundary offer some shelter. No ponds are present within the site. The ditch within the site is considered unsuitable due to the low water levels and lack of vegetation.
Hazel Dormice	The hedgerow along the western boundary provides suitable habitat, however is broken up by access points to neighbouring properties to the north and south, limiting suitability. Additionally, no records of dormice were returned.
Otters	The ditch is not considered to be suitable for otters due to the lack of aquatic vegetation and low water levels.
Water vole	The ditch is not considered to be suitable for water voles due to the lack of aquatic vegetation and low water levels.
White-Clawed Crayfish	The ditch within the site is not considered suitable for white clawed crayfish due to the lack of constant flow.
Nesting Birds	Trees and scrub within the site provide opportunities for nesting birds.
Hedgehogs	Scrub along the western boundary provides suitable habitat for hedgehogs.
Invasive Species	No invasive plant species are present within the site..

9. GREAT CRESTED NEWT HSI ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Seven ponds were identified within 250 m of the proposed development site. The closest of which is located 95 m south. No ponds were present within the site.

All ponds within 250 m of the site were located within private land and could not be inspected for their suitability for great crested newts.

The terrestrial habitat within the site itself is generally considered suboptimal for great crested newts as it is dominated by close-mown grassland. A small area of scrub along the western boundary provides a limited area of terrestrial habitat for great crested newts.

Given the absence of suitable habitats within the site, and limited connectivity to ponds within the wider landscape, a further detailed assessment of off-site ponds is not considered necessary to inform this PEA.

10. PRELIMINARY ROOST INSPECTION RESULTS

Buildings

The site contains a small greenhouse (Building B1). The building includes wooden cladding on the exterior wall, which is well sealed and a sloped felt roof.

Building B1 has been assessed as having **negligible** roosting potential for bats due to the lack of suitable roosting opportunities.



Image 3: Building B1

Trees

A number of trees were assessed as having features suitable for roosting bats. A table detailing the survey results and recommendations for each individual tree is included in Section 11.

Commuting and Foraging Habitat

The site itself is considered to be of limited value for commuting and foraging bats. The majority of the site is dominated by close-mown grassland, offering limited value for bats. However tree belts and hedgerows outside the site boundary, along the western and eastern edge provide suitable commuting routes. The ditch and bramble scrub within the site may provide some foraging opportunities.

11. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Designated Sites

Given the small footprint and very localised scale of the development, there is unlikely to be a detrimental impact on designated sites.

Habitats

The site is dominated by close-mown grassland which forms part of the private garden of the existing Sunningdale property and mature trees along the peripheries. A ditch is present along the northern boundary of the site which is due to be retained.

Notable Habitats

Trees

The site includes a number of trees, particularly along the boundaries. The majority of trees are due to be retained.

It is recommended that trees are retained wherever possible. Where removal is required, replacement planting should be undertaken. Tree protection measures should be followed in line with arboricultural guidance.

Hedgerow

The native hedgerow on the western boundary is due to be pruned to improve visibility from the proposed new entrance, and a gap for access in the centre is to be created.

In order to compensate for the impacts on the hedgerow, it's recommended that additional planting, is undertaken in the retained areas to improve species diversity.

Ditch

A small ditch is present along the northern boundary of the site.

A method statement should be produced to prevent pollution or contamination of the ditch during the works, such as construction materials, run off, dust and vegetation arisings.

Protected Species

Roosting Bats - Buildings

The building within the site was assessed as having negligible potential for roosting bats due to the lack of suitable roosting features.

Therefore, the proposed development is not likely to have a detrimental impact on bat roosts. As such, no further surveys or mitigation is recommended.

Roosting Bats – Trees

A number of trees were assessed as having features suitable for roosting bats. The table below gives a recommendation specific to each tree. The number of trees requiring further survey will depend on the final layout for the proposed development and the extent to which trees are due to be impacted. The requirement for further bat surveys will be minimised if trees with bat roost potential can be left in place within the proposed development.

Tree Number	Tree Species	Bat Roosting Potential	Recommendations
T1	Hawthorn	Negligible	No further surveys required.
T2	Ash	Further Assessment Required	Climbed inspection by a licenced ecologist if due to be removed.
T3	Ash	Further Assessment Required	Climbed inspection by a licenced ecologist if due to be removed.
T4	Willow	Negligible	No further surveys required.
T5	Hawthorn	Negligible	No further surveys required.
T6	Ash	Negligible	No further surveys required.
T7	Ash	Negligible	No further surveys required.
T8	Ash	Further Assessment Required	Climbed inspection by a licenced ecologist if due to be removed.
T9	Ash	Negligible	No further surveys required.
T12	Apple	Negligible	No further surveys required.
T13	Oak	Negligible	No further surveys required.

T14	Ash	Further Assessment Required	Climbed inspection by a licenced ecologist if due to be removed.
T15	Hazel	Negligible	No further surveys required.

Climbed inspections can be undertaken at any time of year and often rule out the need for further surveys, where close inspection can confirm features as unsuitable. However, where features suitable for roosting bats are present, surveys may be required within the active season (May-August).

Bats - Commuting and Foraging Habitat

Given the habitats present within the wider landscape, it is considered that bats are likely to utilise the area for foraging and commuting to some extent. In order to minimise any potential impacts on commuting and foraging bats, a Sensitive Lighting Strategy should be implemented as part of the proposed development to minimise light spill from the scheme. The following measures should be incorporated into the lighting design:

- Minimise light spill through careful aiming, positioning and selection of luminaires and column heights to prevent light spill on the boundaries of the site.
- LED luminaires should be used where possible due to their sharp cut off, lower intensity and dimming capacity.
- Lighting should have no upward spill.
- Warm white luminaires with peak >550nm. UV lighting should be avoided.
- Reduce blue content of lighting. Red spectrum light sources should be favoured.
- Reduce the light intensity to the minimum required for safety and security;
- Where security lamps are used these should use a trigger to illuminate them (e.g. infra-red detector), and switch off after a short period, rather than remaining on all night.

Reptiles

The site is dominated by close mown grassland and hardstanding, however small areas of suitable habitat such as scrub are due to be impacted by the proposed works. Given the small size of the area, it is unlikely the habitats themselves support a population of reptiles. However, individuals may occasionally utilise the habitat.

In order to minimise the risk of harm to reptiles (if present) precautionary measures are recommended during the site clearance phase of the works. These are outlined below:

- This approach can only be undertaken when reptiles are active. This is generally between **March and October** inclusive (when temperatures are not below 10°C)
- The habitat should be strimmed outwards toward the site boundary, to flush any reptile species into the adjacent habitats.
- The first cut to a height of no less than 15 cm. The area should then be left for two days to allow any animals to move into surrounding habitats.
- Following this, the vegetation should be cut down to ground level under ecological supervision.
- Any sheltering places and potential hibernaculum such as log piles, rubble mounds and compost piles should be dismantled by hand under ecological supervision, to remove any reptiles present. Such features must be replaced within the proposed development.

Great Crested Newts

No ponds are present within the site itself. The site lies within the Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing (DLL) red impact zone, and ponds are present within the wider landscape; however, no records of great crested newts were returned from data searches within a 2 km radius of the site.

The predominant habitat within the site comprises heavily managed amenity grassland, which is of negligible value for great crested newts as foraging, sheltering or dispersal habitat. Of the areas subject to proposed works, only a small area of scrub along the western boundary provides any terrestrial suitability for the species. Nearby ponds visible in the wider landscape are separated from the site by intervening residential curtilage, managed land, and road infrastructure, and there is limited functional habitat connectivity between these water bodies and the development footprint.

Taking into account the absence of on-site ponds, the very low quality and limited extent of habitat affected, the absence of local records, and the limited of any connectivity to off-site ponds, great crested newts are considered to have a very low likelihood of presence within the site. The proposed development is not considered to result in any direct or indirect impact on the species.

To minimise the risk of harm to any individuals that may be present, precautionary working measures (detailed below) should be followed during the removal of scrub on the western

boundary. Given the limited scale of this impact and the poor habitat suitability of the site as a whole, these measures are considered proportionate and sufficient.

- To maintain the low suitability of the development footprint for dispersing GCN (if present) amenity grassland must be mown regularly. Vegetation should be kept short throughout the year. GCN dispersal will be more likely through peripheral belts of shrubbery and trees, which are due to be retained.
- Prior to construction/demolition operations being undertaken, vegetation to be retained should be clearly marked out to ensure that this area is protected through the construction process. Materials must not be stored or dumped in this area.
- During the GCN active period (March – October) any excavations that are created during works will be backfilled and compacted before nightfall or have a gentle sloping gradient at one end to allow any newts to exit. The accumulation of rainwater within excavations should be particularly avoided, as any temporary pools may become colonised by GCN.
- During the GCN active period (March – October) stored materials such as rubble (that may act as temporary resting places) should be raised off the ground on pallets.
- During the GCN active period (March – October) prior to works each morning, a walk over will be completed by the site manager or other competent person to ensure that no GCN are present within excavations or other suitable places within the working area.
- In the event any GCN are identified during site works, operations in the area will stop and an ecological consultant will be contacted. A Natural England licence may be required for completion of the works.
- Prior to construction all contractors will receive a formal briefing in relation to the protection of GCN, as set out here. A copy of this method statement must be read and understood by all contractors conducting the clearance works. Site staff must be familiar with identifying GCN.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Hazel Dormice

Habitats within the site are generally considered suboptimal for dormice. The proposed development is therefore considered unlikely to impact this species. Notwithstanding this, some pruning of the site boundary hedgerow will be required to achieve the necessary visibility splays, and a precautionary approach to this work is recommended.

The risk to dormice from hedgerow pruning is considered low. The boundary hedgerow contains large gaps at both the northern and southern ends, associated with existing access points to neighbouring properties. These gaps significantly reduce the overall connectivity of the hedgerow for dormice, and the retained sections are therefore considered unlikely to support resident animals.

To minimise the risk of harm, hedgerow pruning should be undertaken outside the active season for dormice (i.e. between November and March inclusive) and in accordance with the precautionary working measures detailed below:

- The removal of the vegetation will be undertaken in two stages
- Stage 1 involves the coppicing of above ground trees, scrub and understorey to a height of 10 inches carried out over the winter months (December – February) to avoid nesting birds and arboreal dormice activity; and
- Stage 2 involves grubbing out of roosts, stumps and arisings during spring summer or autumn months to avoid the risk of disturbing hibernating wildlife such as reptiles, amphibians and dormice.
- In the unlikely event that a dormouse is observed during the above vegetation works, these works must stop immediately, and a licence application made to Natural England to enable them to continue.

Otters

No habitat suitable for otters is present within or adjacent to the site. The proposed development is considered unlikely to impact these species. As such no further surveys or mitigation is recommended

Water Voles

No habitat suitable for Water Vole is present within or adjacent to the site. The proposed development is considered unlikely to impact these species. As such no further surveys or mitigation is recommended.

White-clawed Crayfish

No habitat suitable for White-clawed Crayfish is present within or adjacent to the site. The proposed development is considered unlikely to impact these species. As such no further surveys or mitigation is recommended.

Nesting Birds

The site includes areas of scrub and trees, which provide suitable nesting habitat for a range of bird species.

In order to avoid the destruction of active birds nests, it is recommended that vegetation clearance and building demolition is undertaken outside of the nesting season (Typically February – August inclusive).

Works may be undertaken during the nesting season if pre-works check has been undertaken by an ecologist within 24 hours of the work and they can confirm no active nests are present.

Where birds' nests are present, they must be left in-situ and undisturbed until the young have fledged.

Other Species

Hedgehogs

Areas of scrub provide suitable habitat for hedgehogs. In order to prevent harm to hedgehogs, vegetation should be cleared in a phased manor to allow individuals to move on. Once vegetation has been cleared to a height of 15-20 cm, it should be checked by staff to ensure no hedgehogs are present. Where hedgehogs are present, they should be relocated to suitable safe shelter nearby.

Invasive non-native Plant Species (INNPS)

No invasive non-native plant species were recorded within the site boundary.

12. BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Wherever possible, ecological enhancements should be designed into the proposed development and landscape design. The section below details possible ecological enhancements which should be considered within the scheme.

General Bird Boxes

The installation of bird boxes increases nesting opportunities for bird species within the site. These can be to be integrated into the new structure, or installed on mature trees within the site. Boxes should be installed over 2 m and avoid areas of disturbance and prevailing winds. Example models are shown below.



Schwegler 26 brick box nest



Woodstone Seville Nest Box 32 mm.

Hedgehogs

Hedgehogs are suffering a steep decline throughout the UK. The proposed landscaping is due to create habitat suitable for hedgehogs. To further enhance the site for hedgehogs, hedgehog domes can be placed within dense vegetation in the site, away from disturbance. The dome will provide a suitable shelter for breeding and hibernation. The recommended model is shown below.



Recommended Model: Schwegler Hedgehog Dome or similar.

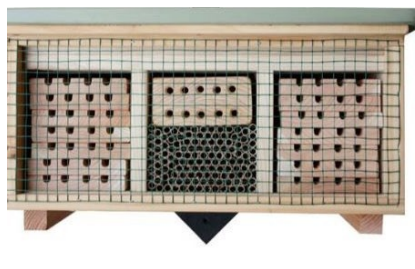
During the site clearance works, consideration should be given to chipping or composting vegetation for re-use on the new habitats on site, or creation of brash piles on the periphery of the site as a further aid to increasing.

Invertebrate Boxes.

In order to provide additional habitat for invertebrates to shelter, over-winter or nest in, invertebrate boxes can be installed within the site. These should be placed in sunny locations in areas of suitable habitat. It is recommended that invertebrate boxes are not placed in close proximity to bird boxes. Recommended models are shown below.



Recommended Model: Insect Tower



Conservation Solitary Beehive

Bats Boxes

To provide new opportunities for roosting bats within the site, bat boxes should be installed within the site. These can be integrated into the new structure or installed on mature trees within the site. The boxes should be placed at least 3 m above the ground, away from dense vegetation and artificial light. Ideally boxes will be placed facing south or east. Recommended models are shown below.



Habitat Bat Box 001 - Custom Brick Facing



Beaumaris Bat Box

Wildlife-Friendly Garden Planting

In order to enhance the sites suitability for bats and other wildlife, wildlife friendly planting within the site should be encouraged.

To maximise ecological value, species should be chosen with a range of flowering periods and aim to include night flowering plants to encourage night flying invertebrates. Recommended species include⁴:

- Red Campion (*Silene dioica*)
- Red Valerian (*Centranthus ruber*)
- Sweet Williams (*Dianthus barbatus*)
- Wood Forget-me-not (*Myosotis sylvatica*)
- Knapweed species (*Centaurea sp.*)
- Lavender (*Lavandula*)
- Night Scented Jasmine (*Cestrum nocturnum*)
- Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*)
- Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*)

Shrub planting

Shrub planting should include a variety of species found on the Royal Horticultural Society's 'Plants for Pollinators' lists, such as:

- Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*)
- Common box (*Buxus sempervirens*)
- Common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Bell heather (*Erica cinerea*)
- Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
- Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*)
- Barberry (*Berberis species*)

⁴ Bat Conservation Trust (2015) Encouraging Bats: A Guide for bat-friendly gardening and living

Tree and Hedge Planting

Additional tree planting within the site should include a variety of native species, particularly those known to be valuable for wildlife. Recommended species include:

- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*)
- Crab apple (*Malus sylvestris sens.str*)
- Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)
- Field maple (*Acer campestre*)
- Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
- English oak (*Quercus robur*)
- Hazel – (*Corylus avellana*)
- Hawthorn – (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Blackthorn – (*Prunus spinosa*)
- Guelder rose – (*Viburnum opulus*)
- Common beech – (*Fagus sylvatica*)
- Common hornbeam – (*Carpinus betulus*)
- Dog-rose – (*Rosa canina*)
- Field maple – (*Acer campestre*)

13. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Habitat Plan

Appendix B – Legislation

Appendix A – Site Plan



Legend

Red Line Boundary

Target notes

Potential Roost Assessment (Buildings)

Negligible

Potential Roost Assessment (Trees)

Further Assessment Required if impacted

Negligible

Baseline Habitats

Mixed Scrub

Buildings

Modified grassland

Ditches

Native hedgerow



Site name:

Land Adjacent to Sunningdale Horsham Road.

Plan title:

Habitat Map

Date: 30/04/2026

Appendix B – Legislation

Wildlife Legislation

Bats

All species of bat and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are protected under Regulation 41 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As a result It is an offence to:

- intentionally to kill, injure or handle a bat.
- to possess a bat (whether live or dead).
- disturb a roosting bat without a licence.
- sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence.
- damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not.

Reptiles

Smooth snakes and sand lizards are European protected species (EPS) are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

It is an offence to:

- deliberately kill, injure, disturb or capture them
- deliberately take or destroy their eggs
- damage or destroy their breeding sites and resting places
- possess, control or transport them (alive or dead)

For smooth snakes and sand lizards, it is also an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to intentionally or recklessly:

- disturb them while they occupy a structure or place used for shelter or protection
- obstruct access to a place of shelter or protection

Other native reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to kill or injure:

- Adders
- Grass snakes

- Common or viviparous lizards
- Slow worms

All native reptiles are listed as rare and most threatened species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006).

Great Crested Newts (GCN)

GCN are designated and protected as European protected species (EPS). EPS are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is an offence to:

- deliberately kill, injure, disturb or capture them
- deliberately take or destroy their eggs
- damage or destroy their breeding sites and resting places - even if GCN are not present
- possess, control or transport them (alive or dead)

It is also an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to intentionally or recklessly:

- disturb GCN while they occupy a structure or place used for shelter or protection
- obstruct access to a place of shelter or protection

GCN are listed as rare and most threatened species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006).

Badgers

Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 which makes it an offence to kill, injure or possess a badger; interfere with, damage or destroy a badger sett including obstructing access to a badger sett; cruelly treat or harm a badger; or disturb a badger in a sett.

Hazel Dormice

Hazel dormice are designated and protected as European protected species (EPS). EPS are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

It is an offence to:

- deliberately kill, injure, disturb or capture them
- damage or destroy their breeding sites and resting places

- possess, control, transport (alive or dead)

It is also an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to intentionally or recklessly:

- disturb hazel dormice while they occupy a structure or place used for shelter or protection
- obstruct access to a place of shelter or protection

Otters

Otters are designated and protected as European protected species (EPS). EPS are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

It is an offence to:

- deliberately kill, injure, disturb or capture them
- damage or destroy their breeding sites and resting places - even if otters are not present
- possess, control or transport them (alive or dead)

It is also an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to intentionally or recklessly:

- disturb otters while they occupy a structure or place used for shelter or protection
- obstruct access to a place of shelter or protection

Water Vole

Water voles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to intentionally:

- kill, injure or take them
- possess or control them (alive or dead)

It is also an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- damage or destroy a structure or place used for shelter or protection
- disturb them in a place used for shelter or protection
- obstruct access to a place used for shelter or protection

White-clawed Crayfish

Water voles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to intentionally take them.

They are also fully protected under Annex II and V of the European Habitats Directive (1992), requiring the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) for their protection and prohibiting the taking or disturbance of the species in the wild. The European Bern Convention lists white-clawed crayfish in Appendix III as a protected species.

Birds

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) states that all wild birds are protected and usually cannot be killed or taken except under licence. As a result, you must not:

- intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
- intentionally damage, destroy or take the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built - nests of golden eagles, white tailed eagles and ospreys are protected all year round
- intentionally destroy an egg of any wild bird
- intentionally or recklessly disturb certain wild birds or their dependent young while they are at or near to an active nest site
- kill or take huntable birds during the close season for that species

Specially protected birds - often referred to as 'Schedule 1' birds - receive enhanced protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The birds listed in Schedule 1 are further divided. Part I birds are fully protected at all times, whereas Part II birds are protected only during the close season.

All birds, their nests and their eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 from being killed or taken, but Schedule 1 birds and their dependent young are also protected from disturbance at or near the nest.

Mammals

The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 prevents certain cruel acts against mammal species such as crushing, drowning, burning and other offences.

Invertebrates

Three UK invertebrate species are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 – large blue butterfly, fisher's estuarine moth, little ramshorn whirlpool snail. It is an offence for anyone to deliberately disturb, capture, injure or kill them. It is also an offence to

damage or destroy their breeding or resting places, to disturb or obstruct access to any place used by them for shelter. It is also an offence to possess, or sell these species.

Approximately 400 further invertebrate species are listed as 'Species of Principle Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act (see below).

Invasive Species

The purpose of section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Act (as amended) is to prevent the release into the wild of certain plants and animals which may cause ecological, environmental, or socio-economic harm.

To achieve this section 14 prohibits the introduction into the wild of any animal of a kind which is not ordinarily resident in and is not a regular visitor to Great Britain in a wild state, or any species of animal or plant listed in Schedule 9 of the Act.

Schedule 9 lists non-native species that are already established in the wild, which continue to pose a conservation threat to native biodiversity and habitats, so that further releases should be regulated.

The Hedgerows Regulations

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 were introduced to protect hedgerows of importance from destruction. The Regulations define a hedgerow as, 'a row of bushes forming a hedge with the trees growing in it'. The law however does not clarify the difference between a line of trees and a hedgerow.

The Regulations apply to any hedgerow growing in, or adjacent to, any common land, protected land, or land used for agriculture, forestry or the breeding or keeping of horses, ponies or donkeys, if:

- it has a continuous length of, or exceeding, 20 metres; or
- it has a continuous length of less than 20 metres and, at each end, meets (whether by intersection or junction) another hedgerow.

These Regulations do not apply to any hedgerow within the curtilage of, or marking a boundary of the curtilage of, a dwelling-house.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that pursuing sustainable development includes moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature, and that a core principle for planning is that it should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.

Planning policies should promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act)

The NERC Act was created to make provision in connection with wildlife, sites of special scientific interest, National Parks and the Broads; to amend the law relating to rights of way; to make provision as to the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council; to provide for flexible administrative arrangements in connection with functions relating to the environment and rural affairs and certain other functions; and for connected purposes.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.