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BLOCK 1, DELLWOOD HOSPITAL, LIEBENROOD ROAD, READING PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

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READING
PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL**

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1. SUMMARY

Ramboll Environment and Health UK Ltd ('Ramboll') was commissioned by NHS Property Services Limited (NHS) to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Dellwood Hospital, Reading. Ramboll understands that the assessment is required in relation to the potential future redevelopment of the Site.

The content of this report is based on the findings of an extended Phase 1 habitat survey undertaken on 28th January 2019. Habitats on Site comprised one main building with one portacabin to the rear of the Site, associated hardstanding areas, amenity grassland, introduced shrub, species-poor hedgerows and scattered trees.

The Site is likely to support species including invertebrates, birds and bats and a number of recommendations are made concerning these species.

Netting to deter birds was present on the southern side of the building though it was heavily damaged. It is recommended that this is removed to prevent animals such as birds becoming trapped and killed which could result in contravention of animal welfare legislation.

Following an external building inspection, the main building was assessed as having High potential to support roosting bats and Negligible potential to support hibernating bats. Further surveys to determine the presence of roosting bats are recommended and should take the form of an internal inspection of loft spaces and three external dusk emergence and dawn re-entry surveys. There will be seasonal constraints with regards to the timings of these surveys, with emergence and return to roost surveys needing to be undertaken between May to September with at least two of the surveys to be carried out between May and August.

Prospect Park Local Wildlife Site (LWS), is located approximately 10 m to the west of the Site, on the opposite side of the road. Once development proposals are known further assessment by an ecologist will be required, to assess if any negative impacts are likely. Measures will likely include the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (to reduce the risk of pollution or contamination).

Redevelopment, mitigation and enhancement measures have been recommended to reduce residual effects on biodiversity and increase the value of the Site for existing habitats and species present. These include the adoption of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, appropriate timing of works and/or pre-clearance checks to avoid impacts on nesting birds, the production of a landscape planting plan including native species and the provision of bat and bird boxes. In addition, recommendations are made regarding the retention of certain habitats.

It should be noted that under normal circumstances it is not appropriate to submit a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report in support of a planning application because the scope of a PEA is unlikely to fully meet planning authority requirements in respect of biodiversity policy and implications for protected species. In particular, further surveys are recommended in this PEA report, which would be required in advance of determination of a planning application. The further surveys recommended in Section 5 of this report should be completed and an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) produced, detailing the results of any further surveys, outlining the impacts of the proposed development on ecological features and making commitments to appropriate mitigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Ramboll Environment and Health UK Limited (Ramboll) was commissioned by NHS Property Services Limited (the Client) to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of land at Dellwood Hospital (the Site). Ramboll understands that there are no current plans for redevelopment, but options are being considered for the future. The Site is located at OS grid reference SU 6942 7272, within the administrative boundary of Reading Borough Council, as shown in Figure 2.1.

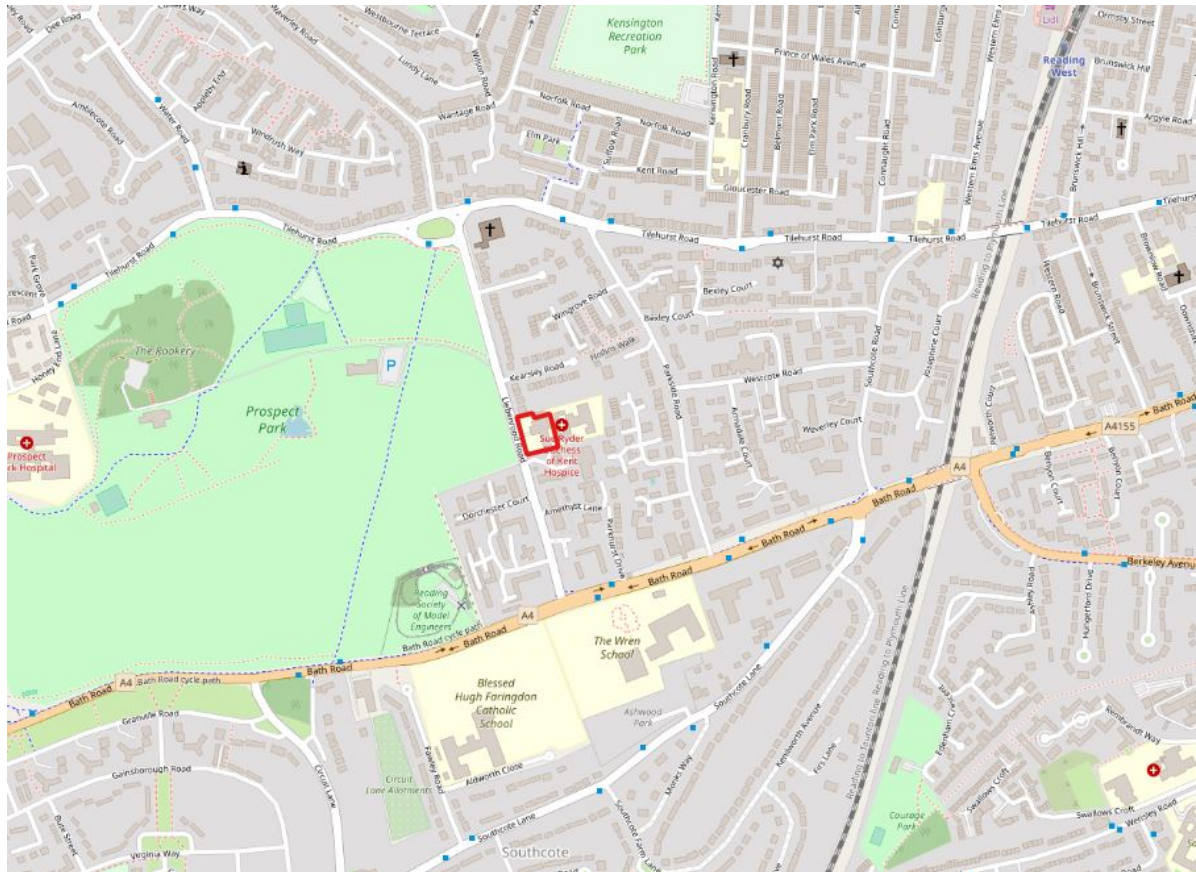


Figure 2.1: Site Location

2.2 Objectives

The aim of this report is to provide a PEA of the Site carried out in accordance with guidance provided by CIEEM, 2017¹. PEA is the term used to describe a rapid assessment of the ecological features present, or potentially present, within a site and its Zone of Influence (ZoI). The ZoI is the area over which ecological features may be affected by the biophysical changes caused by the proposed development and its associated activities. The structure and content of the report is based on current ecological report writing guidance (CIEEM 2017² and BSI Standards Institution 2013³).

¹ CIEEM (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Second Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), Winchester

²

CIEEM (2017) Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

³ BSI Standards Institution (2013). BS 42020:2013. Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development. BSI Standards Limited, London.

The content of this report is based on the findings of:

- a desk study;
- an extended Phase 1 habitat survey;
- a daytime external building inspection to assess bat potential; and
- a ground level roost assessment of trees on-Site to determine their bat potential.

The specific objectives of this report are to:

- identify designated nature conservation sites located either within the Site or the ZOI of the proposed development;
- assess the potential for the Site and the ZOI of the proposed development to support populations of protected species or species of nature conservation importance⁴;
- record the main habitats and features of ecological interest on the Site;
- assess the overall ecological importance of the Site;
- provide recommendations for any additional further surveys; and
- provide preliminary recommendations for the protection and enhancement of the Site's ecological features.

The report is supported by the following appendices:

- Appendix 1: Figures;
- Appendix 2: Legislation and Policy Context; and
- Appendix 3: Site Photographs.

It should be noted that under normal circumstances it is not appropriate to submit a PEA to inform a planning application. This is because the scope of a PEA is unlikely to fully meet planning authority requirements in respect of biodiversity policy and implications for protected species. In particular, further surveys are recommended in this PEA report, which would be required in advance of a planning application being determined. The further surveys recommended in Section 5 of this report should be completed and an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) produced, detailing the results of any further surveys, outlining the impacts of the detailed proposed development on ecological features and making commitments to appropriate mitigation.

2.3 Proposed Development

Ramboll understands that the Site is expected to be redeveloped or renovated, although no plans or proposals have been formulated at the time of writing this PEA.

2.4 Legislation and Policy Framework

Various legislation and planning policies refer to the protection of wildlife. These are summarised in Appendix 2, but should not to be regarded as a definitive legal opinion. When dealing with individual cases, the full texts of the relevant documents should be consulted, and legal advice obtained if necessary.

⁴ The following species are considered to be of nature conservation importance: i) listed as a national priority for conservation (such as those listed as habitats and species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006; ii) listed as a local priority for conservation, for example in the relevant local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP); iii) assessed as a threatened or near-threatened species according to International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list criteria; iv) Red or Amber Listed species in national Species of Conservation Concern assessments; v) listed as a Nationally Rare or Nationally Scarce species (e.g. in one of the Species Status Project reviews) or a Nationally Notable species where a more recent assessment of the taxonomic group has not yet been undertaken; and/or vi) endemic to a country or geographic location (including endemic sub-species, phenotypes, or cultural behaviours of a population that are unique to a particular place).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

The purpose of the desk study was to collect existing baseline data about the Site and the ZoI, such as the location of designated sites or other natural features of potential ecological value such as woodland and ponds. The following within the ZoI have been considered:

- all statutory designated sites up to 2 km from the Site, including Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), National Nature Reserves (NNR), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR);
- non-statutory designated sites: Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) up to 2 km from the Site; and
- records of protected species up to 2 km from the Site.

Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) was contacted to provide details of designated sites and protected species within 2 km of the Site (Report Ref. TVERC/18/618, dated 31/01/2019). Due to data ownership restrictions in the reproduction of the TVERC report, it is not appended to this PEA, but the information provided is summarised in the relevant sections. In addition, the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website⁵ was searched for supplementary information on statutory sites. This included a search for European Protected Species licences issued within 2 km of the Site. Supplementary information on the Site and its surroundings were obtained from aerial images available from Google™ Earth.

3.2 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

An extended Phase 1 habitat survey of the Site was undertaken by Sharon Yardy BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM on 28 January 2019. Sharon has a BSc in Ecology and an MSc in Applied Ecology and Conservation and has worked professionally as an ecologist since 2015. The weather during the survey period was dry and sunny.

The survey involved a site walkover and preliminary assessment of key habitats, land use and ecological features. The main habitats present were recorded using standard Phase 1 habitat survey methodology as described in the Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey (JNCC, 2010⁶). In addition to general habitat classification, a list was compiled of observed plant species (using the nomenclature of Stace, 2010⁷, with common and Latin names referred to in the first instance after which only the common names are used). The abundance of each species was estimated for each habitat respectively using standard 'DAFOR' codes:

- D = Dominant.
- A = Abundant.
- F = Frequent.
- O = Occasional.
- R = Rare.

The Site was assessed for its potential to support protected and notable species such as reptiles, amphibians, bats and badgers *Meles meles*, and was inspected for signs of any invasive plant species subject to legal controls. This was in order to identify potential ecological constraints and to guide recommendations for further survey requirements for these species.

⁵ www.magic.gov.uk, accessed 04 February 2019

⁶ Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (2010). Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey – a technique for environmental audit. JNCC Peterborough

⁷ Stace, C. (2010) New Flora of the British Isles 3rd Edition. Cambridge University Press

3.3 Daytime Building and Tree Inspection for Bats

A daytime inspection of buildings, trees and structures was completed on the 28 January 2019 during the extended Phase 1 habitat survey by Sharon Yardy. Sharon holds a Natural England (NE) Level 2 Licence for bats (Natural England licence number 2017-28708-CLS-CLS). The exterior elevations of the Site's buildings, structures and trees were visually inspected for field evidence of roosting bats including droppings, urine staining, feeding remains and potential roosting points. In accordance with the guidance outlined in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition (Collins, 2016⁸) each building, and tree was assessed for its potential to support bats. The following building types and features are considered to be of particular suitability to support roosting bats:

- buildings of pre-20th or early 20th century construction;
- agricultural buildings of brick, stone or timber construction;
- large and complicated roof void(s) with unobstructed flying spaces;
- large (>20 cm) roof timbers with mortise joints, cracks and holes;
- entrances into buildings for bats to fly through;
- poorly maintained buildings such that they provide access points for bats into roofs, walls, bridges, but at the same time not being too cool and draughty;
- roof warmed by the sun e.g. south facing;
- weatherboarding and/or hanging tiles with gaps;
- undisturbed building roofs and structures;
- buildings and built structures in proximity to each other providing a variety of roosting opportunities throughout the year; and
- buildings and built structures close to good foraging habitat e.g. mature trees, parkland, woodland or wetland.

The following tree features are considered of particular suitability to support roosting bats:

- natural holes;
- woodpecker holes;
- cracks / splits in major limbs;
- loose bark;
- bat, bird or mammal boxes;
- partially detached large-stemmed ivy; and
- other hollows / cavities.

Each building, structure and tree has been classified into a category dependent on the presence of features suitable to support bat roosts. The categories assigned were: Confirmed Roost, High, Moderate, Low and Negligible Potential for use by bats. Table 3.1 below provides criteria for each of these categories. In addition, the suitability of the Site for foraging and commuting bats was assessed.

Table 3.1: Building, Structure and Tree Bat Roost Potential Categories	
Roost Potential	Description
Confirmed	A building, structure or tree that is confirmed to support a bat roost.
High	A building, structure or tree with one or more potential roost site that is obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a regular basis and

⁸ Collins, J. (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition). Bat Conservation Trust (BCT)

Table 3.1: Building, Structure and Tree Bat Roost Potential Categories	
Roost Potential	Description
	potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
Moderate	A building, structure or tree with one or more potential roost site that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
Low	A building or structure with one or more potential roost site that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection and / or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a large number of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for hibernation or maternity). Trees of sufficient size and age to contain potential roost features but with none seen from the ground or features seen with very limited roosting potential.
Negligible	Negligible habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats and bats very unlikely to be present.
Notes: Category descriptions drawn from Collins (2016)	

3.4 Assessment of Importance of Ecological Features

The importance of ecological features (i.e. designated sites, habitats and species) identified within the ZoI has been assessed using a scale that classifies ecological features within a defined geographic context in accordance with CIEEM guidelines (2018⁹). The classification uses recognised and published criteria (e.g. Ratcliffe, 1977¹⁰, Wray *et al.* 2010¹¹) where the habitats and Site were assessed in relation to their size, diversity, naturalness, rarity, fragility, typicalness, connectivity with surroundings, intrinsic value, recorded history and potential value. The following geographic frame of reference has been used for the Site:

- International Importance;
- National Importance (England);
- Regional Importance;
- County Importance (Berkshire);
- Local Importance;
- Site Importance (limited to the Site boundary); and
- Negligible Importance.

A wide range of sources can be used to assign importance to ecological features, including legislation and policy. In the case of designated sites, their importance reflects the geographic context of the designation. For example, sites designated as SACs are recognised as being of importance at an International level. Ecological features not included in legislation and policy may also be assigned importance, due to, for example, local rarity or decline, or provision of a functional role for other ecological features. Professional judgement is used to assign such importance.

3.5 Limitations

The ecological assessment has been undertaken based on CIEEM's 2017 Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, with elements of 2018 Ecological Impact Assessment Guidelines,

⁹ CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

¹⁰ Ratcliffe, D. (1977) A Nature Conservation Review. Cambridge University Press

¹¹ Wray, S., Wells, D., Long, E. and Mitchell-Jones, T. (2010) Valuing Bats in Ecological Impact Assessment. In Practice, pp 23-25

taking a proportional approach to the level of survey effort and reporting required due to the small size and suburban of the Site.

It should be noted that availability and quality of the data obtained during desk studies is reliant on third party responses. This varies from region to region and for different species groups. Furthermore, the comprehensiveness of data often depends on the level of coverage, the expertise and experience of the recorder and the submission of records to the local recorder.

The extended Phase 1 habitat survey provides a snapshot of ecological conditions and does not record plants or animals that may be present at the Site at different times of the year.

The survey was undertaken outside of the optimum period for Phase 1 habitat surveys (April to September). However, it is not felt that this was a limitation due to the habitats present consisting largely of buildings, hardstanding, introduced shrub and amenity grassland and therefore being quite common and readily identified.

Internal inspections of the buildings to inspect the interior spaces for potential to support roosting and hibernating bats were not undertaken. Further survey in the form of an internal inspection is therefore recommended within this report.

The absence of a particular species cannot definitely be confirmed by a lack of field signs and only concludes that an indication of its presence was not located during the survey effort.

Ramboll is satisfied that this report represents a robust appraisal of the Site. If any action or development has not taken place on this land within twelve months of the date of this report, the findings of this survey should be reviewed by a suitably qualified ecologist and may need to be updated.

4. BASELINE CONDITIONS

4.1 Desk Study

4.1.1 Landscape Context

The Site is located to the west of Reading and to the north of the A4155. The Site is surrounded by residential properties to the north, east and south, with Liebenrood Road and Prospect Park to the west. Prospect Park is a large green space, which is partly wooded, with a pond located approximately 325 m to the west.

4.1.2 Designated Sites

Statutory Sites

There are four Local Nature Reserves (LNR) within 2 km of the Site. These are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Statutory Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site

Name	Type	Location (m)	Area (ha)	Reason for designation
Lousehill Copse	LNR	590 to north-west	13.03	Semi-ancient woodland of mature oak <i>Quercus robur</i> and hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i>
Round Copse	LNR	1,898 to north-west	1.66	Woodland with three species of woodpecker
McIlroy Park	LNR	1,879 to north-west	11.96	Semi-ancient woodland, with natural park and grassland
Blundells Copse	LNR	1,966 to north-west	5.55	Ancient woodland with stream

No other SPAs, SACs, SSSIs or National Nature Reserves NNRs are located within 2 km of the Site.

Non-Statutory Sites

TVERC identified eleven Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) located within 2 km of the Site. These are listed in Table 4.2. No further designated sites were identified within 2 km of the Site.

Table 4.2: Local Wildlife Sites within 2 km of the Site

Name	Type	Location (m)	Area (ha)	Reason for designation
Prospect Park (Includes the Rookery)	LWS	10 to west (other side of the road to Site)	24.1	Historic parkland and woodland
Lousehill Copse	LWS	890 to north-west	13.16	Woodland
Fobney and Kennet Valley Meadows	LWS	903 to south	140.4	Wet grassland and swamp
Meadway Fringe	LWS	1,000 to west	2.13	Woodland and unimproved grassland
Holly Brook	LWS	1,106 to south	4.5	Calcareous stream

Table 4.2: Local Wildlife Sites within 2 km of the Site

Name	Type	Location (m)	Area (ha)	Reason for designation
Cow Lane Depot	LWS	1,400 to north-east	1.544	Willow scrub, standing water, swamp and tall herb grassland
River Kennet/Kennet and Avon Canal	LWS	1,440 to south	Unknown	Chalk river
Fobney Island	LWS	1,472 to south-east	11.17	Grassland and water bodies
Burghfield Gravel Pits	LWS	1,723 to south-west	177.7	Gravel pits and wooded areas
McIlroy Park (including Round Copse)	LWS	1,895 to north-west	11.75	Woodland - partly ancient
Blundell's Copse and The Moor	LWS	1,970 to north-west	5.48	Woodland with glades

4.1.3 Ancient Woodland

No parcels of ancient woodland were identified on MAGIC within 2 km of the Site, but it should be noted that McIlroy Park (including Round Copse) LWS is designated for being partly ancient woodland.

4.1.4 Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI)

There are numerous parcels of deciduous woodland, wood pasture and parkland and traditional orchard within 2 km of the Site. There is an extensive area of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh 900 m to the south of the Site surrounding the River Kennet, and a small area of lowland dry acid grassland to the north of Site.

4.2 Habitats

The following descriptions of habitats should be read in conjunction with Figure 1: Phase 1 Habitat Plan in Appendix A.

4.2.1 General Site Description

The Site is rectangular in shape and contains a derelict two-storey building surrounded by hardstanding, amenity grassland, introduced shrubs, hedgerows and scattered trees. A portacabin is present to the rear of the building.

4.2.2 Buildings

The main building was a disused former hospital building: Building 1, is a two-storey building of red brick construction with a newer section to the north and single-storey extensions to the south and east. The roof consisted of pitched and flat roof structures. A portacabin: Building 2, is situated to the east of the Site.

The buildings are of Negligible ecological importance but may support nesting birds and roosting bats. These issues are discussed in Section 5.3. Buildings are described in Table 4.3.

4.2.3 Buildings and Structures

Table 4.3: Buildings at the Site		
Building Name	Description	Photo
Building 1: Western front of building	Two-storey section red brick building, brick work generally appears in good condition. The building has a multi-pitched tiled roof, which as tiles missing and damage to the ornamental ridge tiles. Two pitched gable ends with hanging tiles with gaps present. Wooden eaves present.	
Building 1: Southern single-storey	Single storey section with flat roof covered in bitumen felt. Part red brick and part wooden cladding. Barge boards were present with gaps.	
Building 1: Southern and eastern elevations	Southern side pitched roof gable end with hanging tiles and eaves. Dormer window present on the eastern side. Two-storey flat roof extension to east side with hanging tiles present on east side and damaged roofing material. Barge board present on single-storey flat roof extension.	 
Building 1: North-eastern elevation with flat roof extension	Timber soffit box present on eastern side of two-storey pitched roof, timber soffit present. Single-storey, flat roof extension, red brick and	

Table 4.3: Buildings at the Site		
Building Name	Description	Photo
	wooden cladding. Flat roof of bitumen, with barge boards with gaps present.	
Building 1: North and east elevations	Northern elevation with double pitched roof and eaves. Hanging tiles present on north-western half of building with gaps present. Dormer window present facing to east.	
Building 2: Portacabin	Present to east of Building 1. No features with the potential to support roosting bats identified.	

4.2.4 Hardstanding

There is hardstanding present around the building on Site, which is used for car parking and pavement.

Hardstanding is of Negligible importance for wildlife.

4.2.5 Amenity Grassland

Amenity grassland is present to the east of the building. Grass species present include frequent perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne* and Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and rarely common bent *Agrostis capillaris* and annual meadow-grass *Poa annua*. Forbs present occasionally were yarrow *Achillea millefolium* and daisy *Bellis perennis*, along with rare groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*, selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, shepherd's purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris* and wood-sorrel sp. *Oxalis* sp. Lords-and-ladies *Arum maculatum* was recorded in the south-east corner of the Site. Bryophytes recorded included springy turf-moss *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus* and rough-stalked feather-moss *Brachythecium rutabulum*.

Amenity grassland is a common habitat. The sward height was low, due to mowing, which limits its value for wildlife, especially invertebrates. It is therefore considered to be of importance at Site level only.

4.2.6 Introduced shrub

There are areas of introduced shrub to the west and east of the Site. Species present include occasional Mexican orange blossom *Choisya ternata*, ivy *Hedera helix*, a cultivated rose, *Rosa* spp., viburnum *Viburnum* sp., lavender *Lavandula* sp. and iris *Iris* sp. Buddlejia *Buddleja davidii* is present growing from the roof of flat roof extension to the north-east.

The areas of introduced shrub provide common habitat and are considered to be of importance at Site level only.

4.2.7 Species-poor hedgerow

The northern and southern boundaries consisted of sections of hedgerow which contained cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, with larger trees consisting of hazel.

The hedgerows were species poor and could offer some habitat to common invertebrates, birds or commuting and foraging bats, but were considered to be of Site level importance only.

4.2.8 Scattered Trees

Two trees were recorded on site with a semi-mature cherry trees *Prunus avium* present within an area of introduced shrub at the north-east area of Site and a multi-stemmed sycamore present at the south-east corner of the Site.

The trees present were considered to be of Site level importance only.

4.3 Species

4.3.1 Invertebrates

TVERC provided records for a number of invertebrate species within 2 km of the Site. This includes protected species including butterflies such as the small blue *Cupido minimus* and White-letter Hairstreak *Satyrrium w-album*, listed as Species of Principal Importance (SPI) under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. One hundred and fifty records of stag beetle *Lucanus cervus* were returned within 2 km, with one record approximately 100 m to the north from the Site, with records also within Prospect Park LWS. Stag beetle are listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive.

The Site offers limited habitat in the form of amenity grassland, introduced shrub, a hedgerow and scattered trees, which could support common assemblages of invertebrates. The Site is unlikely to support significant populations of rare or protected invertebrates due to the management of grassland on Site and lack of flowering species suitable for species such as

butterflies. There was an absence of dead wood noted on Site, a habitat with the potential to support stag beetles.

Based on the above, the Site is considered to be of Site level importance for use by common invertebrate assemblages.

4.3.2 Amphibians

TVERC provided records for three species of amphibians within 2 km of the Site, smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*, common toad *Bufo bufo* and common frog *Rana temporaria*. Common toad are listed as an SPI under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. There were no records of great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*, which is listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive.

There is no aquatic habitat present and a limited amount of suitable terrestrial habitat on Site which could support amphibians. As there are no records of great crested newt within 2 km, the Site is considered of Negligible suitability to support great crested newt and other amphibians.

4.3.3 Reptiles

TVERC provided records for three species of reptiles within 2 km of the Site, slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*, grass snake *Natrix Helvetica* and common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*. The nearest record was grass snake within Prospect Park, approximately 738 m to the west.

The Site offers limited suitable habitat to support common reptile species and offers neither the cover nor foraging opportunities. Therefore, due to this and the distance of records, the Site is considered of Negligible suitability to support common reptile species.

4.3.4 Birds

TVERC provided records for a number of notable bird species which are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and/or listed as SPIs under Section 41 of the NERC Act or Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) red or amber lists. Notable species recorded which may utilise the Site include house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, swift *Apus apus*, house martin *Delichon urbicum*, bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* and starling *Sturnus vulgaris*.

Roosting feral pigeons *Columba livia domestica* were present on the southern side of Building 1. No other bird species were noted on Site during the visit.

The Site is unlikely to support large numbers of rare or notable species of bird. This is due to the fact that much of the Site is covered in buildings and hard standing with the bulk of the remaining area covered by closely mown amenity grassland. These habitats are not particularly valuable as either nesting or foraging habitat. The trees and hedgerow on Site could offer limited potential for common species for nesting purposes, while the Site as a whole may offer foraging potential for the same.

Based on the above, the Site is considered to be of Site level importance for use by common species of nesting and foraging bird.

4.3.5 Bats

TVERC returned records of six species of bat within 2 km of the Site. These species comprised serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*. These were a mixture of roost and bat detector records, but due to confidentiality of records, roost records are only to 1 km precision.

Three granted European Protected Species bat licence applications were identified on MAGIC within 2 km of the Site. The species to which these licences related included common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle.

Building 1 contains external features which could support roosting bats. These features include slipped/damaged/missing tiles (including ridge tiles), hanging tiles with gaps underneath, gaps behind soffit boards, bargeboards and gaps underneath bitumen roofing sheets. These could offer roosting potential for crevice dwelling bats. Building 1 had a loft space (which was not surveyed), which could potentially be utilised by larger colonies of bats or for bat species which favour larger roosting spaces.

Building 1 was therefore assessed as having High potential to support roosting bats and Negligible potential to support hibernating bats

Building 2 was assessed as having Negligible potential to support roosting bats.

The trees on Site were considered to have Negligible potential to support roosting bats.

The Site contains habitat suitable to support foraging bats in the form of scattered trees, hedgerows and introduced shrubs, which could provide commuting corridors and foraging opportunities.

Based on the above, further surveys will be required to assess for the presence of roosting bats on Site. This further survey is detailed later in this report and prior to further surveys, the importance of the Site for bats cannot be assessed.

4.3.6 Badger

TVERC provided 23 records of badger within 2 km of the Site. Records are largely to 1km and therefore cannot be assessed to see how close to Site they are.

No signs of badger were found on Site and due to the lack of suitable habitat for badgers in the immediate surroundings the Site is considered to have Negligible suitability to support badger.

4.3.7 Hedgehog

TVERC provided 25 records for hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* within 2 km of the Site. The Site was considered to have Negligible suitability to support hedgehogs, due to limited suitable habitat.

4.3.8 Invasive Species

TVERC returned records of seven species of Schedule 9 plants and American mink *Neovision vison*, all of which are over 200m away from the Site. The nearest of these records is two records of rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* in Prospect Park.

No invasive species were identified within the Site.

4.4 Assessment of Important of Ecological Features

Table 4.4 presents the ecological importance of habitats and species present on the Site, in accordance with CIEEM guidance. Species assessed as unlikely to be present on the Site are not considered further in this assessment.

Table 4.4: Ecological Importance of Features Present on the Site (in accordance with CIEEM, 2018)		
Feature	Ecological Importance	Rationale
Amenity Grassland	Site Level	Provides relatively low species diversity and is a common habitat type in the locality. Intensive management practices, such as mowing, reduce its species diversity.
Individual Scattered Trees	Site Level	Two trees are present within the Site and offer limited potential for birds, invertebrates or commuting and foraging bats.
Species poor hedgerow	Site Level	Contributes to biodiversity value of the Site and provides potential habitat for common invertebrates and birds but value is unlikely to extend beyond the Site Level.
Introduced Shrub	Site Level	Contributes to biodiversity value of the Site, and provides potential habitat for common invertebrates, birds and bats but value is unlikely to extend beyond the Site Level.
Hardstanding	Negligible	Does not contribute to biodiversity value of the Site.
Buildings	Negligible	Does not contribute to biodiversity value of the Site.
Invertebrates	Site Level	The Site is likely to support common invertebrates of value at the Site Level.
Amphibians	-	The Site is unlikely to support amphibians. Further guidance is provided in Section 5 if these species are identified on the Site at a later date.
Reptiles	-	The Site is unlikely to support reptiles. Further guidance is provided in Section 4 if these species are identified on the Site at a later date.
Birds	Site Level	Vegetation is likely to be used by common foraging bird species, and the woodland, trees and scrub may be used by small numbers of common nesting bird species.
Bats	Requires further survey	There are records of bats and roosts within 2km of the Site and habitats on Site could offer roosting, hibernating, foraging and commuting opportunities. Further surveys are required for bats and are detailed below.
Hedgehog and Badgers	-	The Site is unlikely to support these species. Further guidance is provided in Section 4 if these species are identified on the Site.

5. ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Information gained during the desk study and extended Phase 1 habitat survey has been collated in this section. The ecological constraints and opportunities are presented, as well as making recommendations for mitigation and further surveys. It has been prepared in the absence of any development proposals and may need to be revised once such proposals are devised. So as to provide a useful appraisal of the further survey and mitigation which may be required, a 'worst case scenario' is envisaged in which the entire Site is to be cleared and redeveloped.

5.1 Designated Sites

The nearest statutory designated site is Lousehill Copse LNR, which is approximately 590 m to the north-west and within 2 km of the Site. Due to the distance and lack of ecological connectivity of statutory sites from the Site, impacts arising from development are considered unlikely. Mitigation for the protection of statutory designated sites is therefore not required.

Prospect Park LWS, is approximately 10 m to the west of the Site, on the opposite side of the road. Once development proposals are known further assessment by an ecologist will be required, to assess if any negative impacts are likely. Measures will likely include the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (to reduce the risk of pollution or contamination). No negative impacts are envisaged on other non-statutory designated sites within 2 km of the Site.

A CEMP should be produced to prevent negative environmental impacts. The CEMP should include measures such as the prevention of contaminated run-off during the construction phase as well as the control of waste and noise. A suitably qualified Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) should input into the CEMP to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are in place.

5.2 Habitats

The development would lead to the loss of habitats including buildings, hard standing, amenity grassland, introduced shrub, scattered trees and hedgerows.

Of these habitats, the buildings have no ecological value beyond their potential to support protected species, i.e. roosting bats and nesting birds. These constraints related to birds and bats are addressed in Section 5.3.

The hardstanding is of negligible importance and presents no ecological constraint.

The amenity grassland, introduced shrub, scattered trees and hedgerows have limited ecological value beyond their potential to support nesting birds. This constraint is addressed in Section 5.3.

The trees should be retained where possible, where this cannot be achieved, landscape planting should be used with mature specimens using species with known biodiversity value (ideally native planting) would mitigate for the loss. Such areas should aim to be of interest to invertebrate species, with areas of bare ground and piles of rubble and logs.

Construction works in the vicinity of trees to be retained could damage overhanging branches or roots, possibly leading to significant adverse impacts upon the trees (potentially premature death). Therefore, retained trees should be protected during construction activities in accordance with BS 5837: 2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction', in order to reduce the possibility of any damage, to both crown and roots of the trees.

Consideration should be given to providing green infrastructure, such as biodiverse roofs, green walls and drainage swales within any future development.

5.3 Species

5.3.1 Invertebrates

Loss of vegetation would lead to loss of habitat suitable for use by common invertebrates, for which the Site is considered to be of Site level importance.

Further surveys are not considered necessary. The provision of landscape planting with known biodiversity value (including nectar-producing flowers), as well as green infrastructure would be of benefit to invertebrate species using the Site and would mitigate the loss of habitat in the medium term once new habitats are established. Areas of bare ground, piles of rubble and logs, as well as invertebrate boxes or 'bee hotels' would provide additional interest for invertebrates such as bees.

5.3.2 Amphibians

There is considered to be negligible potential for great crested newt or other amphibian species within the Site, due to the limited suitable terrestrial habitat. The nearest water body is located approximately 300 m to the east, with road barriers in-between. Further surveys for great crested newts are not considered necessary.

While no further survey or dedicated mitigation is necessary for great crested newts on Site, Site operatives should be made aware of the potential for this species to occur. If great crested newts are found on Site during the construction phase, then works should cease immediately and an ecologist consulted on how to proceed.

5.3.3 Reptiles

It is considered unlikely that there are reptile populations present on Site. While no further survey or dedicated mitigation is necessary for reptiles on Site, Site operatives should be made aware of the potential for this species to occur. If reptiles are found on Site during the construction phase, then works in the vicinity of the animal should cease immediately and an ecologist consulted on how to proceed.

5.3.4 Birds

All wild birds are protected whilst nesting, with disturbance and destruction of active nests constituting an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Loss of vegetation would remove suitable nesting habitat for breeding birds. Were this to take place during the breeding season (March to August inclusive), there would be a risk that nests would be damaged or destroyed during the process, which could contravene the law.

Works at the Site, including the removal of vegetation, should therefore take place between September and January. If this is not possible, a nesting bird check should be undertaken by an experienced ecologist within 48 hours prior to removal. If evidence of nesting birds is identified, work should stop and a suitable no-work buffer zone around the nest area should be installed, until such time as chicks have fledged. In addition, bird scarers could be installed across the Site including hawk eyes to help to prevent birds from nesting on the buildings on the Site, prior to demolition.

Netting to deter birds was present on the southern side of the Building 1, though it was observed to be heavily damaged. It is recommended that this is removed to prevent animals such as birds becoming trapped and killed which could result in contravention of the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

5.3.5 Bats

Building 1 on Site is assessed as having High potential to support roosting bats.

The development would result in the removal of Building 1 and therefore further surveys for bats are recommended. These surveys should take the form of an internal inspection of any accessible loft spaces within the building followed by three dusk emergence or dawn re-entrance surveys. There will be seasonal constraints with regards to the timings of these surveys, with emergence and return to roost surveys needing to be undertaken between May to September with at least two of the surveys to be carried out between May and August. If any proposed development is deemed likely to impact the integrity of a bat roost on Site, then the production of a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence would need to be sought from the English wildlife licencing body 'Natural England' (NE).

Removal of vegetation could impact foraging and commuting bats. Where possible, the integrity of tree lines should be maintained both during construction and post-construction. An appropriate lighting strategy should be devised to limit light spill onto the tree lines and thus allow their continued functionality as wildlife corridors, especially as a potential bat commuting route.

5.3.6 Badger

Badgers were not found to be present on Site. While no further survey or dedicated mitigation is necessary for badgers on Site, Site operatives should be made aware of the potential for this species to occur. If badgers are found on Site during the construction phase, then works in the vicinity of the animal should cease immediately and an ecologist consulted on how to proceed.

5.4 Enhancement

In order to comply with planning policy^{12,13} to achieve no net loss of biodiversity and net gain where possible, additional biodiversity enhancement measures could be introduced to the Site.

Enhancement for invertebrate species could be provided through provision of log piles, pebbles or insect boxes ('bug hotels') within the landscape planting. Additional enhancement for birds and bats could be provided through the inclusion of bird boxes (such as those suitable for house sparrow) and bat boxes attached to the building.

A native wildflower seed mix could be applied to any areas of grassland within the landscape planting, to provide an additional foraging resource for pollinating bees and other insects.

Consideration should be given to green infrastructure provision at the Site, such as a green wall, planters on the southern aspect of the building, or a green roof. Such provisions would enable BREEAM credits to be maximised if a BREEAM assessment is undertaken.

¹² Department for Communities and Local Government, 2018. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). London. HMSO

¹³ Defra, 2011. Natural Environment White Paper. The natural choice: securing the value of nature
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-natural-choice-securing-the-value-of-nature>

6. CONCLUSIONS

The extended Phase 1 habitat survey and external building inspection for bats confirmed that the Site contains habitats which vary in nature conservation importance from Negligible to the Site level. Additionally, there is potential for on-Site habitat to support bats and birds, which are protected species.

Recommendations are made in this report concerning requirements for further survey, mitigation proposals and enhancement proposals. These recommendations are summarised in Table 6.1. By undertaking the work in accordance with these recommendations, any proposed development is likely to be in conformity with relevant planning policy and legislation relating to ecology.

Table 6.1 summarises the mitigation requirements for the proposed development, along with the enhancements that will be delivered.

Table 6.1: Summary of Recommendations for Development		
Receptor	Recommendations	Justification
Designated Sites	Further assessment required when development plans are known, due to the proximity of Prospect Park (Includes the Rookery) LWS. The production of a CEMP which will include detailed actions to be followed during the construction phase of the development to limit the potential negative impact on the LWS and surrounding habitats.	To prevent construction impacts on the LWS and surrounding habitats.
Habitats	Root protection zones to be applied around any retained trees on or adjacent to the Site.	To ensure any remaining trees are not damaged.
	Provision of landscape planting with native and non-native fruiting and nectar-producing species.	To replace existing habitats on the Site.
	Consider the provision of green infrastructure such as biodiverse roofs and green walls.	To replace existing habitats on the Site and provide additional enhancement.
	Implementation of a CEMP.	To ensure construction impacts are minimised.
Amphibians	Brief Site workers on the identification of amphibians. If amphibians are noted during works then works in the vicinity should cease and an ecologist consulted.	To prevent impacts on amphibians in the unlikely event they are identified.
Reptiles	Brief Site workers on the identification of reptiles. If reptiles are noted during works then works in the vicinity should cease and an ecologist consulted.	To prevent impacts on reptiles in the unlikely event they are identified.

Table 6.1: Summary of Recommendations for Development

Receptor	Recommendations	Justification
Birds	Whilst the site remains in its current configuration the bird netting should be removed. Vegetation clearance to be undertaken between September and February, outside of the bird nesting season, or following checks by an experienced ecologist.	To prevent disturbance of nesting birds.
	Provision of bird boxes.	Enhancement for nesting birds.
	Provision of habitat suitable for nesting and foraging birds through the incorporation of appropriate soft landscaping. This should include fruit producing species for food as well as dense shrub species and tree planting to provide nesting opportunities.	Enhancement for nesting and foraging birds
Bats	Internal inspection of Building 1 to assess for signs of bats and bat potential	To assess potential of the Site to support roosting bats
	Dusk emergence and dawn re-entry survey.	To determine presence or likely absence of roosting bats and if present, characterising the roost.
	Provision of landscape planting and green infrastructure with native and non-native evening flowering plant species.	Enhancement for foraging bats.
	Provision of bat boxes.	Enhancement for roosting bats.
	A lighting strategy should be devised so as to be sensitive to the needs of foraging and commuting bats which may utilise the Site	To ensure the favourable conservation status of the local bat population.
Invertebrates	Provision of rubble or log piles and invertebrate boxes.	Enhancement for invertebrates.

APPENDIX 1

FIGURES



- Legend**
- A3.1 Broadleaved scattered trees
 - J1.2 Amenity grassland
 - J1.4 Introduced shrub
 - J3.6 Buildings
 - J5 Hard standing
 - J2.1.2 Intact hedge - species-poor

- Building Inspection for Bats**
- B2** Building 2
HH Hanging Tiles
GS Gap under soffit
S Gap under soffit
B Gap under barge board
DW Dormer window
BR Gap under bitumen roof
T Damaged/missing tiles

Figure Title	
Phase 1 Habitats and external building inspections for bats	
Project Name	
Dellwood Hospital	
Project Number	Figure No.
1700003544	1
Date	Prepared By
February 2019	SY
Scale	Issue
1:284 @A3	1
Client	
NHS Property Services Limited	



APPENDIX 2

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Ecological features are protected under various United Kingdom (UK) and European legislative instruments. These are described below. European legislation is not included as it is incorporated in UK legislation by domestic provisions.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC)¹⁴ came into force in 1992 and provides for the creation of a network of protected wildlife areas across the European Union, known as 'Natura 2000'. The Natura 2000 network consists of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC)¹⁵. These sites are part of a range of measures aimed at conserving important or threatened habitats and species.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017¹⁶ commonly known as 'the Habitats Regulations' transposes the Habitats Directive into national law and set out the provisions for the protection and management of species and habitats of European importance, including Natura 2000 sites. The 2017 bill consolidated all previous versions of the regulations and subsequent amendments since initial transposition, bringing them all under the single heading, and made a number of minor amendments. It extends to England and Wales, and to a limited extent Scotland and Northern Ireland. In Scotland, the Habitats Directive is transposed through a combination of the Habitats Regulations 2010 (in relation to reserved matters) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) transposes the Habitats Directive in relation to Northern Ireland.

In addition to providing for the designation and protection of Natura 2000 sites, the Habitats Regulations provide strict protection for plant and animal species as European Protected Species. Derogations from prohibitions are transposed into the Habitats Regulations by way of a licensing regime that allows an otherwise unlawful act to be carried out lawfully for specified reasons and providing certain conditions are met. Under the Habitats Regulations, competent authorities have a general duty, in the exercise of any of their functions, to have regard to the Habitats Directive and Wild Birds Directive including in the granting of consents or authorisations. They may not authorise a plan or project that may adversely affect the integrity of a European site, with certain exceptions (considerations of overriding public interest).

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000¹⁷ primarily extends to England and Wales. It provides a new statutory right of access to the countryside and modernises the rights of way system, bringing into force stronger protection for both wildlife and countryside.

The Act is divided into five distinct sections, Part III is of relevance to ecology:

Part III - Nature Conservation and Wildlife Protection: The Act details a number of measures to promote and enhance wildlife conservation. These measures include improving protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and increasing penalties for deliberate damage to SSSIs. Furthermore, the Act affords statutory protection to Ramsar Sites which are wetlands designated under the International Convention on Wetlands¹⁸.

¹⁴ European Commission (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. European Commission, Brussels

¹⁵ European Commission (1979) Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds, European Commission, Brussels

¹⁶ Secretary of State (2017) The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations. Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO)

¹⁷ Secretary of State (2000) The Countryside and Rights of Way Act. HMSO

¹⁸ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1971) Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, as amended in 1982 and 1987. Ramsar, Iran Published in Paris, 1994

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as Amended in Quinquennial Review and by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981¹⁹ forms the basis of much of the statutory wildlife protection in the UK. Part I deals with the protection of plants, birds and other animals and Part II deals with the designation of SSSIs.

This Act covers the following broad areas:

- Wildlife - listing endangered or rare species in need of protection and creating offences for killing, disturbing or injuring such species. Additionally, the disturbance of any nesting bird during breeding season is also noted as an offence, with further protection for species listed on Schedule 1. Measures for preventing the establishment of non-native plant and animal species as listed on Schedule 9 are also provided;
- Nature Conservation - protecting those Sites which are National Nature Reserves (NNR) and SSSI;
- Public Rights of Way - placing a duty on the local authority (normally the County Council) to maintain a definitive map of footpaths and rights of way. It also requires that landowners ensure that footpaths and rights of way are continually accessible; and
- Miscellaneous General Provisions.

The Act is enforced by Local Authorities.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

Under the NERC Act 2006²⁰ Section 40, public authorities must show regard for conserving biodiversity in all their actions. Public authorities should consider how wildlife or land may be affected in all the decisions that they make. The commitment to the biodiversity duty must be measured by public authorities.

NERC Act 2006 Section 41 requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992²¹ consolidated previous legislation relating specifically to badgers. This makes it an offence to kill, injure or take a badger, or to damage or interfere with a sett unless a licence is obtained from a statutory authority.

Biodiversity Action Plans

In 1994, Government produced the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)²², a national strategy for the conservation of biodiversity. This led to the creation of the UK Biodiversity Steering Group, which has listed 1,150 Species Action Plans (SAPs) and 65 Habitat Action Plans (HAPs). Regional and District/Borough BAPs apply the UK BAP at a local level.

From July 2012, the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework²³ succeeds the UK BAP and Conserving Biodiversity - the UK Approach. This is as a result of a change in strategic thinking following the publication of the Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity

¹⁹ Secretary of State (1981) Wildlife and Countryside Act. HMSO

²⁰ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. HMSO

²¹ Secretary of State (1992) Protection of Badgers Act 1992. HMSO

²² Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1994. Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan. London

²³ JNCC and Defra (on behalf of the Four Countries' Biodiversity Group), 2012. UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. July 2012. jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/UK_Post2010_Bio-Fwork.pdf

2011 - 2020 and its 20 'Aichi targets', at Nagoya, Japan in October 2010, and the launch of the new EU Biodiversity Strategy (EUBS) in May 2011.

The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework constitutes the UK's response to these new 'Aichi' strategic goals and associated targets. The Framework recognises that most work which was previously carried out under the UK BAP is now focussed on the individual countries of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, and delivered through each countries' own strategies.

Following the publication of the new Framework, the UK BAP partnership no longer operates. However, many of the tools and resources originally developed under the UK BAP remain of use. The UK list of priority species has been used to help draw up statutory lists of priorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. For England, this is in line with the NERC Act 2006 Section 41.

Biodiversity in the Planning Process

Administrative and policy guidance on the application of some of these statutory obligations is provided through relevant government policy guidance and advice. In England, this includes National Planning Policy Framework 2012, National Planning Practice Guidance, Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System, Biodiversity 2020 and Natural Environment White Paper The natural choice: securing the value of nature.

National Planning Policy Framework, 2018

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)²⁴ adopted in 2018 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF contains the following statements which are of relevance (not an exhaustive list, but including those of highest relevance):

- Section 15, paragraph 170 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: "minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures";
- Section 15, paragraph 174 states that planning applications should "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".
- Section 15, paragraph 174 states that - "To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies [local authorities] should: 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
- Section 15, paragraph 175 states that: "When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles: 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". It also states that: "planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of ancient or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the

²⁴ Department for Communities and Local Government (2018) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). London. HMSO

development in that location clearly outweigh the loss and a suitable compensation strategy exists”.

National Planning Practice Guidance, 2014

The National Planning Practice Guidance²⁵ is a web-based resource launched in March 2014. This guidance is divided into sections, of which Natural Environment: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Green Infrastructure provides information on biodiversity issues within planning and guidance on where to find further information on biodiversity issues.

Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System.

This circular²⁶ provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England. It complements the national planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance.

Natural Environment White Paper. The natural choice: securing the value of nature

The Natural Environment White Paper²⁷ outlines the government’s vision for the natural environment over the next 50 years, shifting the emphasis to an integrated landscape-scale approach. It describes the actions that will be taken to deliver that goal.

Biodiversity 2020

The Biodiversity 2020²⁸ strategy for England builds on the Natural Environment White Paper and provides a comprehensive picture of how England is implementing its international and EU commitments. It sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea.

The mission for this strategy is to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.

It is anticipated that this will be delivered through:

- a more integrated large-scale approach to conservation on land and at sea;
- putting people at the heart of biodiversity policy;
- reducing environmental pressures; and
- improving our knowledge.

Local Planning Policy

Reading Biodiversity Action Plan

The Reading Biodiversity Action Plan sets out a methodology to protect, conserve and enhance Reading’s diversity of wildlife.

²⁵ Department for Communities and Local Government (2014) National Planning Practice Guidance: <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

²⁶ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005) Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-and-geological-conservation-circular-06-2005>

²⁷ Defra (2011) Natural Environment White Paper. The natural choice: securing the value of nature <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-natural-choice-securing-the-value-of-nature>

²⁸ Defra, 2011. Biodiversity 2020. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services>

APPENDIX 3

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1. Front of Building 1, showing hard standing and introduced shrub



Photo 2. Rear of Building 1 and hard standing

Title: PEA Photographs	Client: NHS Property Services Limited
Site: Dellwood Hospital	Date: 28-01-19



Photo 3. Tree with multi-stem stool to south of Site.



Photo 4. Hedgerow present at south of Site.

Title: PEA Photographs	Client: NHS Property Services Limited
Site: Dellwood Hospital	Date: 28-01-19