



ecosupport



## Updated Ecological Enhancement & Management

Knowle Lane SINC

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### **Client:**

Parsons Construction

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|                      |                                                                    |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Report</b>        | Updated Ecological Enhancement & Management                        |
| <b>Site Name</b>     | Knowle Lane, SINC                                                  |
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| <b>Client</b>        | Parsons Construction                                               |
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| <b>Status</b>        | FINAL                                                              |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ecosupport Ltd was instructed by Parsons Construction to update the existing Habitat Restoration Management Strategy report prepared by Peach Ecology (September 2018) due to the change in proposed land use of the adjacent site from residential to industrial. Due to the changed use, there will no longer be access to the SINC.

Information provided in this supplementary report confirms the previous prescriptive measures recommended within the previous management strategy are appropriate and will be carried out. In addition, further measures have been included to provide additional benefit to the site.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Ecosupport Ltd was instructed by Parsons Construction to provide an updated enhancement report for the enhancement and management works within the Knowle Lane SINC. A previous report was prepared by Peach Ecology (2018) entitled 'SINC Habitat Restoration, Management Strategy' for the discharge of Condition 28 of Planning Application Reference F/17/80640' for the development of 48 in number one- and two-bedroom flats at the site known as 'Land East of Knowle Lane, Fair Oak, SO50 7DZ'. Condition 28 states the following:

*'Within a year of the issuing of planning permission, a detailed SINC Habitat Restoration, Management Strategy supported by Invertebrate and Great Crested Newt Surveys and reports regarding the extent of the sand egress on site to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to secure the restoration of the area known as Knowle Lane SINC. This plan will include a programme and timeframe for delivering the proposed restoration works. The works shall proceed in accordance with the approved plan.'*

*Full discharge will only occur following submission of an ecological survey 1 year after restoration and a site visit from Eastleigh Borough Council Biodiversity Officer'.*

*Reason: To ensure the restoration and long-term protection of an important wetland nature conservation site.*

This Peach Ecology report (2018) also built on the original Ecological Management Plan (EDP, 2010), which provided details on the survey findings of the site and detailed recommendations based on these findings. As well, an invertebrate survey was carried out by Peach Ecology in July 2018 and a separate report was prepared. This report should be read in conjunction with the previous reports for full details.

Finally, a supplemental report was prepared by Ecosupport (2021) to provide further details on residential access to the site including pathways and associated infrastructure. As there is no longer any access into the site, that report is no longer considered relevant.

Since the previous reports have been prepared, the land use of the site has been changed from residential to industrial and access will no longer be permitted to the SINC within the site. Therefore, the purpose of this updated enhancement plan is to provide an update to reflect these changes as detailed in this report and builds on the recommendations within the previous reports.

## 2.0 LOCAL POLICY

### 2.1 Eastleigh Borough Council

The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016 – 2036 has a number of policies relating to ecology with the relevant ones listed below.

#### ***'General Approach***

*1. The Council will work with statutory and voluntary agencies and developers, and will determine planning applications, to:*

*a. protect, conserve and enhance all:*

*i. international, national and local nature conservation designations;*

*and*

*ii. networks of natural habitats and features, including the Local Ecological Network, Priority Biodiversity Areas and Priority Biodiversity Links, watercourses, wetland complexes, woodland trees, and trees and hedgerows important to biodiversity and local character; and facilitate their adaptation to climate change wherever possible;*

*b. assist in achieving national, county and local biodiversity targets as set out in Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs);*

*c. seek a net gain of biodiversity on all development sites (including sites for redevelopment) through the protection, enhancement and connection of existing and provision of new habitats and features of nature conservation interest compatible with the native biodiversity characteristics of the Borough, having regard to local geodiversity and soils; and*

*d. contribute to major elements of the PfSH Green Infrastructure Strategy and other strategies for the provision and enhancement of multifunctional green infrastructure including green routes, ecological networks and biodiversity enhancements (see strategic policy S9).*

#### ***International Designations***

*2. Development which is likely (either individually or in combination with other developments) to adversely affect the integrity of an international or European nature conservation site will not be permitted subject only to imperative reasons of overriding public interest and securing any necessary compensatory measures in the absence of alternative solutions. A 'project level' Habitat Regulations Assessment will be required where there are likely significant effects or uncertainty. Any mitigation measures required to ensure no adverse impact must be implemented at the appropriate time.*

*3. The Council will work with PfSH, Natural England, the Environment Agency and other wildlife organisations to develop and implement with developers a strategic approach to the protection and enhancement of international and European sites from the direct and indirect effects of development. Within Eastleigh Borough this will include:*

*a. implementing:*

- i. the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy (requiring contributions from residential developments within 5.6 kilometres of the Solent Special Protection Area to the Strategy); and*
- ii. the interim and any future New Forest Recreation Mitigation Strategy if required; or alternative agreed site specific measures to address recreational disturbance;*
- b. preserving the water quality and flows within the Itchen and Hamble, Southampton Water and Solent;*
- c. protecting the River Itchen SAC, in particular the maintenance and where appropriate restoration of habitats and qualifying species to favourable conservation status (as defined by article 1 of the Habitats Directive); and*
- d. seek contributions towards measures set out in the Southern Damselfly Conservation Strategy (or other strategy) specifically to deliver biodiversity net gain.*

**National and Local Designations**

- 4. Development will not be permitted if it is likely (either individually or in combination with other developments) to have a direct or indirect adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or Local Nature Reserve (LNR) as shown on the policies map (or on a more recent plan provided by the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre) unless it can be demonstrated that:*
- a. there are no alternative solutions;*
  - b. the adverse effects are unavoidable;*
  - c. measures are taken to mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects;*
  - d. there is an overall biodiversity net gain; and*
  - e. if there are any residual adverse effects which cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated, the benefits of the development must clearly outweigh the adverse effects on the nature conservation value of the site and any broader impacts on national and local designations.*

**Priority habitats, protected and priority species and the local ecological network**

- 5. Development will not be permitted if it is likely (either individually or in combination with other developments) to have a direct or indirect adverse effect on priority habitats, protected or priority species, or on the local ecological network unless it can be demonstrated that:*
- a. there are no alternative solutions;*
  - b. the adverse effects are unavoidable;*
  - c. measures are taken to mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the adverse*

effects;

d. there is an overall biodiversity net gain; and

e. if there are any residual adverse effects, the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the adverse effects on priority habitats, priority and protected species, and the local ecological network.

### **Irreplaceable habitats**

6. Development will not be permitted if it results in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees), unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

### **Buffers**

7. Buffers free from development will be provided to designated sites to avoid/mitigate impacts, including recreational impact and impacts on edge habitats, and to maintain dark skies.

### **Surveys**

8. Development will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

a. there have been thorough habitat and species surveys;

b. the great crested newt strategic survey and strategy have been considered in all developments within 500m of a great crested newt pond; and

c. the strategic bat trapping survey has been considered in all developments within the locality of a woodland or connected habitat networks.'

### 3.0 UPDATED ASSESSMENT

#### 3.1 Site Visit

An updated walkover of the site was carried out on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2022. This visit was carried out by Darla Brown, Project Ecologist with Ecosupport Ltd, assisted by Louise Davies, Assistant Ecologist with Ecosupport Ltd. The purpose of this visit was to assess the condition of the site and to inform recommendations for enhancements based on the new proposals.

#### 3.2 Results

##### 3.2.1 Habitats

The habitats appeared to be similar to the previous habitat maps so it is believed the condition is very similar and the previous recommendations are considered appropriate.

The woodland was noted to be somewhat shaded at the time of the site visit. In addition, it was noted that the banks of the pond were shaded by overhead vegetation.

##### 3.2.2 Mammals

Evidence of mammal presence was noted where a mammal hole is present at the northern boundary of the site (**Fig 1**).

**Figure 1.** Mammal hole found at the northern boundary of the site (taken November 2022).



##### 3.2.3 Conditions on site

At the time of the survey, there was some rubbish and litter present within the SINC, such as beer cans. Some potential access points were identified where fencing is broken or missing, particularly on the northern and eastern boundaries. Adjacent the golf course, there are gaps

in the hedgerow and the barbed wire has been pushed down allowing access into the site (**Fig 2**).

**Figure 2.** Gap in fencing and vegetation allowing access from golf course (taken November 2022).



## 4.0 HABITAT RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT

### 4.1 Existing Prescriptions (as per previous report)

As per the previous habitat restoration and management strategy report (Peach Ecology, 2018), the following prescriptions in **Table 1** will be carried out within the SINC. The map of management compartments can be seen in **Appendix 1**. A detailed schedule of timings can be seen in **Tables 2 to 4** below. All prescription measures build upon the detail provided in original Ecological Management Plan (EDP, 2010) and therefore should be read in conjunction with that report.

**Table 1.** Prescription measures previously agreed to be carried out within the site, as per Peach Ecology (2018), with minor adjustments

| <b>Objective 1: To Protect, Maintain and, Where Possible, Enhance the Present Extent and Conservation Value of the Marshy Grassland</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prescription 1a                                                                                                                         | Undertake a grass cut each year between August to October, removing arisings to create a habitat pile. The date of the cut will vary during this period as continually late cuts can reduce floral diversity. Approximately a quarter of the vegetation will be left uncut in rotation to ensure that there are overwintering sites available for invertebrates and other species. The procedure will be monitored by an ecologist.                                                                                       |
| Prescription 1b                                                                                                                         | Habitat piles will be created adjacent to the southern boundary of the site.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Prescription 1c                                                                                                                         | Protective fencing and additional measures will be put in place to protect the SINC during construction of the adjacent site. This will include the use of sediment traps                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Objective 2: To Protect, Maintain and Where Possible Enhance, the Hedgerow Habitat</b>                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Prescription 2a                                                                                                                         | Hedgerow 3 will be strengthened by planting a mix of native shrubs (particularly fruit and nut bearing species, Appendix EDP 4, early- and mid-flowering species will ensure that woody habitats provide foraging resources. Species such as Blackthorn, Hawthorn, willows, Elder and rose) where gaps exist. Owing to the presence of deer, saplings will be properly protected by guards. Biodegradable guards are preferred to prevent plastic pollution within the SINC should they come loose.                       |
| Prescription 2b                                                                                                                         | Traditional coppicing of the mature hazel growth within Hedgerow 1. To avoid the entire hedgerow habitat being cut at once, the hedgerow will effectively be split in half, with each half managed every five years with a two-year lag time between the first and second halves being cut.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Objective 3: Create and Maintain Diversity in the Scrub Habitats</b>                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Prescription 3a                                                                                                                         | Rotational scrub management will be undertaken on the parcel of scrub located adjacent to the pond, south of Hedgerow 3 with the objective of achieving a mosaic of scattered bushes, areas of open sunny grassland, areas of shelter and clumps of scrub of varying maturity. Scrub will be cut, and arisings mulched and piled to form a discrete 'hibernacula' on site at the boundary. Scrub typically matures after 15 years or so, hence it is recommended that following the initial management to 'break up' some |

|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                         | of the larger scrub stands, approximately 20% is cleared every three years. An increase in the standing and fallen deadwood resource, including both species that display wet-rot and dry-rot should be provided using techniques such as ring-barking, and creating artificial rot holes in stumps. Targeted thinning can take place within the woodland that will create sheltered and sunny glades and rides, and promote the growth of woodland ground flora, as well as structural diversity. |
| Prescription 3b                                                                                         | Dense scrub adjacent to the grassland habitat will be completely cleared. Subsequent grassland cuts (Prescription 1a) will restrict scrub regrowth. Where scrub regenerates within these grassland areas, it should be cleared at the time of mowing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Objective 4: Maintain and Enhance the amphibian and Reptile Populations</b>                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Prescription 4a                                                                                         | Creation of log pile refugia/hibernacula.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Prescription 4b                                                                                         | A series of four scrapes are to be created on the northern edge of the track in wet depressions that currently exhibit low species diversity as a result of recent disturbance. Bare patches should be created in tandem with scrub removal to further enhance the structural variety present at the site and encourage early-successional habitats - these can involve scrapes of vegetation to remove nutrient-enriched topsoil                                                                  |
| Prescription 4c                                                                                         | De-silt the scrapes. De-silting activities should be carried out sympathetically with vegetation and silt left on site for several days at least before it is removed to allow any invertebrates sheltering there to escape, with work undertaken rotationally (e.g. one scrape every two years) so that scrapes are in different stages of succession                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Objective 5: Maintain and Enhance Roosting, Foraging and Commuting Opportunities for Bat Species</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Prescription 5a                                                                                         | Ten bat boxes to be erected on mature boundary trees. It is recommended that a selection of models are used, namely open bottomed boxes like Schwegler 1FF models.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Prescription 5b                                                                                         | The bat boxes will be checked (by a suitably qualified bat worker) after three years for use by bats and moved if necessary.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Objective 6: Maintain and Enhance the Nesting and foraging Habitat for Bird Species</b>              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Prescription 6a                                                                                         | Twelve bird boxes to be erected on mature boundary trees. It is recommended that a selection of Schwegler models are used, namely four 1B (32mm), four 1B (26mm) and four 2H models.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Prescription 6b                                                                                         | All bird boxes to be maintained, ensuring boxes are secure and free of debris. Any defective boxes to be replaced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Objective 7: Assess, Maintain and Enhance the Invertebrate Assemblage</b>                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

|                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prescription 7a                                                                                       | Undertake an initial invertebrate survey to assess the invertebrate assemblage and undertake changes to site management as specified. Undertake specialist invertebrate surveys for different species as per Invertebrate Survey report.       |
| <b>Objective 8: Ensure Works do not Adversely affect Badgers Foraging Habitat</b>                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Prescription 8a                                                                                       | Install badger gates in eastern and western fence lines unless badger access has been maintained at ground level.                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Objective 9: Restrict and monitor public access</b>                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Prescription 9a                                                                                       | Installation of secure fencing along the boundaries to prevent public access.                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Prescription 9b                                                                                       | Monitoring success of restricting access and repair or extend fence as required                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Objective 10: Provide Clear Results of Monitoring to Inform the Management plan Review Process</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Prescription 10a                                                                                      | Monitor the development and management of the habitats detailed within the above objectives on years one, two and four following its creation. A record will be maintained, and the management plan will be reviewed and updated as necessary. |

**Table 2.** Schedule of works in Year 1

| Prescription                           | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|----------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1a Marshy grassland cut                |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1b Creation of habitat piles           |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1c Protection from adjacent site works |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2a Hedgerow 3 planting                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2b Hedgerow 1 coppicing                |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3a Scrub management                    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3b Scrub clearance                     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4a Log pile refugia/hibernacula        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5a Erection of bat boxes               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6a Erection of bird boxes              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7a/7b Invertebrate survey              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9a Fence to prevent access             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10a Monitor SINC                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

**Table 3.** Schedule of works in Years 2 to 5

| Prescription                                                   | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | Year      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|
| 1a Marshy grassland cut                                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Annually  |
| 2b Hedgerow 1 coppicing                                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 2    |
| 3a Scrub management                                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 3    |
| 3b Scrub clearance                                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 3    |
| 5b Monitor and maintain bat boxes                              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 2    |
| 6b Monitor and maintain bird boxes                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 2    |
| 7c Invertebrate survey                                         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 4    |
| 9b Maintenance of Fencing and review of Public Access Strategy |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 2, 4 |
| 10a (& 9b) Monitor SINC                                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 2, 4 |

**Table 4.** Schedule of works in Years 5 to 15

| Prescription                                                   | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | Year                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| 1a Marshy grassland cut                                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Annually              |
| 2b Hedgerow 1 coppicing                                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Years 5, 7, 10, 12    |
| 3a Scrub management                                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Years 6, 9, 12        |
| 3b Scrub clearance                                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Years 6, 9, 12        |
| 4a Maintenance of log piles                                    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Years 5, 10           |
| 5b Monitor and maintain bat boxes                              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 5 and thereafter |
| 6b Monitor and maintain bird boxes                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Year 5 and thereafter |
| 9b Maintenance of Fencing and review of Public Access Strategy |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Yrs 5, 10 & 15        |
| 10a/b Monitor SINC and review management strategy              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Yrs 5, 10 & 15        |

## 4.2 Additional Measures

### 4.2.1 Access to small pond within industrial site

Separate to the SINC site, there is a small pond present within the main proposed industrial site (**Fig 3**). To enhance this area, a small picnic area and gravel path will be installed adjacent to the pond to provide an attractive area for industrial workers to use. Rubbish bins will be provided here to prevent littering. The purpose of this enhancement is to provide an alternative space to prevent people attempting to access the SINC.

**Figure 3.** Small pond within industrial site to the west of the SINC (taken November 2022).



### 4.2.2 Clean-up enhancement

A site-wide clean-up exercise will be carried out within the SINC to clear any existing litter and rubbish. Clearance of all foreign objects, rubbish, unnatural debris, discarded fencing will be carried out, including from within the main pond of the SINC. This will be carried out as soon as possible within the management schedule. This will enhance the site through removal of potential pollutants.

The monitoring of the SINC (as per Prescription 10 above) will include monitoring of litter within the site and any additional litter clean-ups will be further prescribed, if required.

## 4.3 Management Responsibilities

Management and maintenance of the newly created habitats as per this report will be the responsibility of the developer to appoint a management company to carry out all

management works. It is the responsibility of the developer to inform the management company of their responsibilities as described within this report. It is the responsibility of the management company to ensure that qualified ecologists are contracted, where required. All management works as described above should be secured through an appropriate conveyancing agreement for the site that will legally oblige the management company to carry out the works. This will be required as part of the proposed development over the 15-year management and monitoring period.

Please note, if the responsible party has changed, an agreement will be written to establish this change and to ensure the new responsible party accept the management responsibilities.

#### **4.4 Informing Local Council**

##### *4.4.1 Annual Report*

An annual report detailing completion of all capital works and thereafter all ongoing management as detailed within this report, will be produced and submitted to Eastleigh Borough Council Planning Department. This will provide the local planning department with confirmation that actions in respect of the SINC and its future management will continue in perpetuity.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

The aim of this report is to provide an updated enhancement report for prescription of the management of habitats for a period of at least 15 years within the site Knowle Lane SINC adjacent the proposed industrial development at the Land East of Knowle Lane. With the provision of all inclusions within this report, the overall site is expected to provide long-term biodiversity enhancement.

## 6.0 REFERENCES

Ecosupport (2021). *Supplementary Knowle Lane SINC Report*. January 2021.

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# APPENDIX 1 – Ecological Enhancement Plan Prescriptions (Peach Ecology, 2018)

