

111 Winchester Road

Chandler's Ford

Eastleigh

Ecological Appraisal



RACHEL
HACKING
ECOLOGY

Client Co-op Property

Project Title 111 Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford

Project Reference RHE.3733.01

Project Leader Simon Holden

Contact Details simon@rachelhackingecology.co.uk

	Name	Position	Date
Author	James Webster	Principal Ecologist	03/04/23
Reviewer	Simon Holden	Associate Ecologist	11/04/23
Revision			



**RACHEL
HACKING
ECOLOGY**

The Stables
Paradise Wharf
Ducie Street
Manchester
M1 2JN

0161 465 8971

www.rachelhackingecology.co.uk

mail@rachelhackingecology.co.uk



**RACHEL
HACKING
ECOLOGY**

Report Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Methods	6
3. Results	8
4. Assessment	11
5. Recommendations	12
Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation	
Appendix 2: Habitats Plan	
Appendix 3: Proposed Plan	



Executive Summary

Development Details

The client is proposing remodelling work at 111 Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, hereafter referred to as the 'site'.

This report describes the ecological features of the site and its surroundings and assesses the potential impacts of the development on the ecological interest. Recommendations are provided so that the development is compliant with biodiversity policy and legislation.

Ecological Interest

The site has a low level of ecological interest. Ecological features of interest include a mature Yew tree and limited potential for nesting birds.

Outcomes

No further survey work is required. Potential impacts to nesting birds can be avoided by timing works to avoid the nesting season. If this is not possible a nesting birds survey will be required. The mature Yew tree should be protected during construction.



1. Introduction

1.1 Project Brief

- 1.1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2023 by Co-op Property to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of 111 Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, hereafter referred to as the 'site'. The site is located at O.S. grid reference: SU 4397 2114 (see Figure 1). The site is a Co-op store located in a suburban environment.

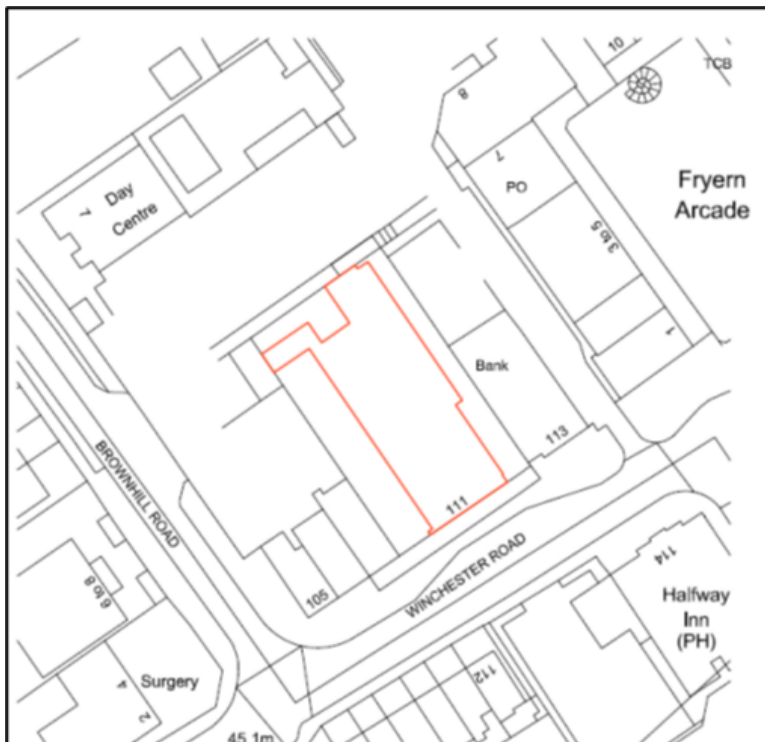


Figure 1. Map showing the location of the site

Description of Development

- 1.1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the remodelling of the site.

Relevant Planning History

- 1.1.3 No previous planning applications were identified at the site.

1.2 Scope of Work

- 1.2.1 The Client commissioned Rachel Hacking Ecology to carry out the following works:
- Desk-based study to obtain details of designated sites, protected and notable species within 1km
 - Record the extent, type, and condition of habitats within and next to the site
 - Search for signs of protected species and assessment of the potential of habitats and features to support protected and notable species

1.3 Site Visit Information

Surveyor Details

- 1.3.1 Dani Rozycka (Senior Ecologist) carried out the site visit on 25th March 2023. Dani is an experienced ecologist and fully trained in botanical surveys and protected species assessments.

Weather

- 1.3.2 The weather at the time of the survey was sunny and dry.



2. Methods

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 The Magic Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside) was interrogated for the presence of Statutory Designated Sites (and European Protected Species licences) within 1km radius of the site.
- 2.1.2 The Impact Risk Zones for any SSSI within 5km of the site was checked to determine whether the Local Planning Authority will need to consult with Natural England.
- 2.1.3 Hampshire Biological Information Centre (HBIC) was contacted to provide details of non-statutory designated sites and records of protected and notable species within a 1km radius of the site.

2.2 Field Survey

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.2.1 In accordance with JNCC guidelines¹ the site was walked over and the habitats and features of ecological interest were mapped and described. Habitats and features of particular interest were target noted.
- 2.2.2 During the walkover habitat and features were assessed for their suitability to support of protected and notable species in accordance with CIEEM guidelines². Field signs of protected, notable, and invasive non-native species, if encountered, were mapped, and described.

Bats

- 2.2.3 The exterior of the site was surveyed from the ground using binoculars and a high-powered torch. Features offering potential access to roosting bats were recorded. Such features may include suitable gaps in roof coverings, gaps behind external cladding/facia and gaps in masonry.
- 2.2.4 Evidence indicating the presence of roosting bats was also searched for. This may include bat droppings on walls, windows or on the ground below roost entrances or staining from fur oil around roost entry points.

¹ JNCC (2010). *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough

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

- 2.2.5 The interior of the site, including the roof void, was surveyed to identify any evidence indicating use by roosting bats. Such evidence may include bat droppings, feeding remains, urine splashes, live or dead bats and staining from fur oil on timbers.
- 2.2.6 Any trees on the site were given a ground-level assessment, searching for Potential Roosting Features (PRFs), such as flaking bark, woodpecker holes, knot holes and limb splits.



3. Results

3.1 Constraints

- 3.1.1 Field survey results are valid for a limited duration and no investigation can provide a complete description and characterisation of a site. The composition of habitats and species can change depending on environmental variables and the mobility of species, so the results of a study become less reliable over time. In some cases, surveys that are 3 years old may be acceptable for a project assuming that habitats have not significantly changed in the intervening period, but for protected species it is likely that survey data will need to be no more than 18 months old.

3.2 Designated Sites

- 3.2.1 No statutory designated sites for nature conservation are present within the study area. Seven Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are present within the study area. The closest is Fryern Hill Wood SINC, 215m southeast of the site.
- 3.2.2 The desk study identified that the site was located within the Impact Risk Zone of the River Itchen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The proposed development will not require the Local Planning Authority to consult with Natural England.

3.3 Habitats

- 3.3.1 The habitats survey plan is contained at Appendix 2.

Buildings

- 3.3.2 The Co-op store (B1) comprises the majority of the site. This is a large flat roofed brick building in current use as a supermarket. There are numerous security lights around the exterior of the building. B1 is located within a row of terraced shops. Trolley shelters are present within the site (B2 and B3).





Photograph 1 showing the front (south) of the site

Hardstanding

- 3.3.3 Hardstanding used for car parking and access is present to the rear of the site.

Introduced Shrub

- 3.3.4 Small areas of ornamental planting dominated by Honeysuckle *Lonicera nitida* are present to the northwest of B1.

Scattered Tree

- 3.3.5 A single mature Yew *Taxus bacata* tree with ivy cover is located in the northeast corner of the site (Photograph 2).



Photograph 2 showing the mature Yew tree

3.4 Species

Bats

- 3.4.1 Over 60 records of bats were returned, the majority of these are within the last ten years. Species recorded include; Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Soprano Pipistrelle *P. pygmaeus*, Noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*. The closest record is approximately 400m to the east of the site within a residential area close to Winchester Road, this area contained multiple records of pipistrelle bats from 2021. Other records are located to the west and north of the site around 500m or further.
- 3.4.2 The brickwork of B1 is in generally good condition, with occasional cracks too small for Potential Roost Features (PRFs). Occasional gaps were noted within the brickwork and under fascia. The site is subject to external lighting and the habitats surrounding the site are of low suitability for foraging bats. No evidence of bats was recorded externally or internally.
- 3.4.3 The site contains very little in the way of vegetation to attract commuting and foraging bats. There are some trees bordering the site and a woodland nearby to the north of the site, within a school ground, therefore it is possible bats are seen passing over the site though considered unlikely.

Birds

- 3.4.4 Numerous records of birds were returned. The mature Yew tree on site offers suitable habitat for nesting birds.

Other Species

- 3.4.5 The habitats on site offer negligible potential to support any other notable species.



4. Assessment

4.1 Development Context

- 4.1.1 The following assessment is based on the proposed plan produced by Wellfield Associates (see Appendix 3).

4.2 Impacts on Designated Sites

- 4.2.1 No impacts to any statutory or non-statutory designated sites are anticipated due to the distance between the site and any protected sites and the absence of impact pathways.

4.3 Impacts on Habitats

- 4.3.1 The buildings, hardstanding and introduced shrub on site are of negligible ecological importance and no mitigation is required for any impacts to these habitats.
- 4.3.2 The mature Yew tree is of importance at the site level. It will be retained but there is potential for it to be damaged during construction through soil compaction or mechanical damage.

4.4 Impacts on Species

Bats

- 4.4.1 B1 offers negligible potential to support roosting bats. The proposed development is unlikely to result in any impacts to bats or their roosts.

Birds

- 4.4.2 B1 offers some potential to be used by nesting birds. The proposed development has a low risk of impacting nesting birds, should these be present.



5. Recommendations

5.1 Further Surveys

Bats

- 5.1.1 No further surveys are recommended.

Birds

- 5.1.2 If works are required within the nesting season (March to August inclusive) then a nesting bird survey should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist no more than 48 hours in advance.

5.2 Mitigation Measures

Habitats

- 5.2.1 The mature Yew tree should be protected during construction with fencing in accordance with BS 8357.

Bats

- 5.2.2 In the unlikely event that bats are encountered at any time during construction, work should stop in that area and a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted to advise on how to proceed.

Nesting Birds

- 5.2.3 Should any active nests be identified, they would need to be protected by an appropriate buffer zone until nesting is complete.



Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) describes the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. Within this framework, the requirements in relation to biodiversity are included within several policies. The two most relevant to individual planning decisions are Paragraphs 174 and 180, shown below:

- 174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; etc...

- 180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
 - a) if significant harm to biodiversity 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;
 - b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;



- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Legislation

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000) includes the notification and confirmation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). SSSIs can be notified for their floral, faunal, geological, or physiographical features. Protection against damaging operations and management of SSSIs is also included within the Act. Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are zones around an SSSI account for the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and identify development proposal which could have adverse impacts.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000) protects native animals, plants and habitats. Under the Act it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5 and it is an offence to interfere with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturb animals occupying such places. The Act prohibits picking, uprooting or destroy any wild plant (or any attached seed or spore) listed in Schedule 8.

European Protected Species (EPS) such as bats, Hazel Dormouse, Otter, Natterjack Toad, Smooth Snake, Sand Lizard and Great Crested Newt are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The Acts make it an offence to:

- a) Deliberately capture, injure or kill an EPS;
- b) Deliberately impair an EPS's ability to survive, breed, reproduce, rear or nurture young; to hibernate or migrate; or significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the EPS.
- c) Possess or control live or dead EPS or any part of, or anything derived from a EPS;
- d) Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an EPS;
- e) Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place that is used for shelter or protection by an EPS;
- f) Intentionally or recklessly disturb a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection that is occupied by an EPS.



All common herptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000). Grass Snake, Slow Worm, Common Lizard, Adder are protected against intentional killing or injury. Common Frog, Common Toad, Smooth Newt and Palmate Newt is protected against sale. In addition, all British reptiles, Common toad and Great Crested Newt are listed as Species of Principal Importance.

All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage, or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb a species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act while they are nest building or at or near a nest with eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young.

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it an offence to wilfully, or to attempt to kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a Badger, or intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett. Interference of a sett includes disturbing badgers during occupation of a sett, or damaging or destroying a sett, or obstructing access to the sett.

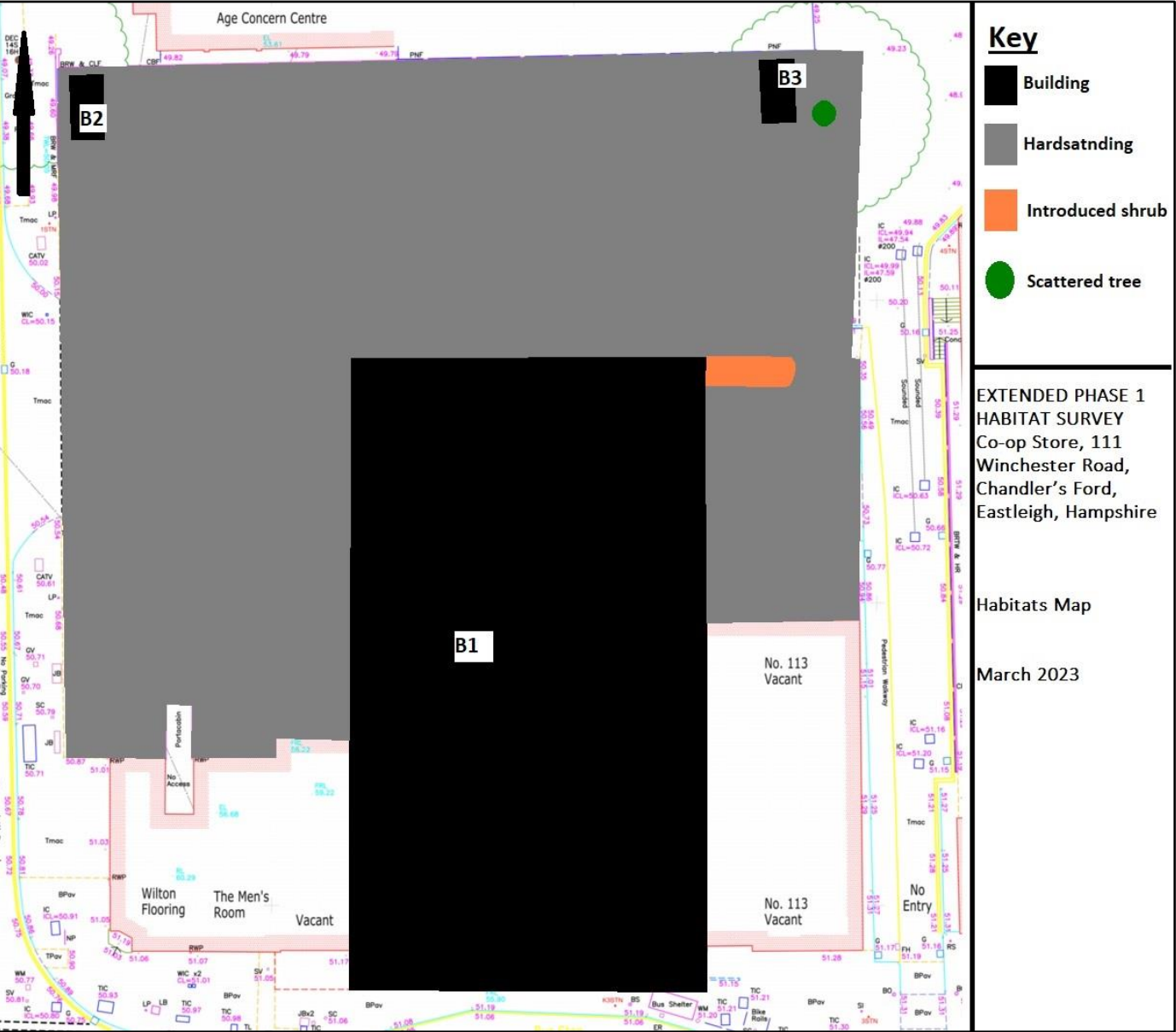
Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty on every public authority to have regard to conserving biodiversity. Section 41 of the same Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitats that are of 'Principal Importance' for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The Secretary of State must take steps, as appear reasonably practicable, to further the conservation of those living organisms and habitats in any list published under this section. The list of species and habitats of principal importance currently includes 943 species and 56 habitats. These are the species and habitats found in England which are regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 protect 'important' hedgerows from destruction or damage. A hedgerow is 'important' if it (a) has existed for 30 years or more; and (b) satisfies at least one of the criteria listed in Part II of Schedule 1 of the Regulations. Under the Regulations, it is against the law to remove or destroy 'important' hedgerows unless permitted by the local planning authority.





Appendix 2: Habitats Plan



Appendix 3: Proposed Plan

