



Technical Note

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30th April 2026

RE: Technical Note on Current Ecological Baseline & Ecological Constraints: Barton Peveril Sixth Form College.

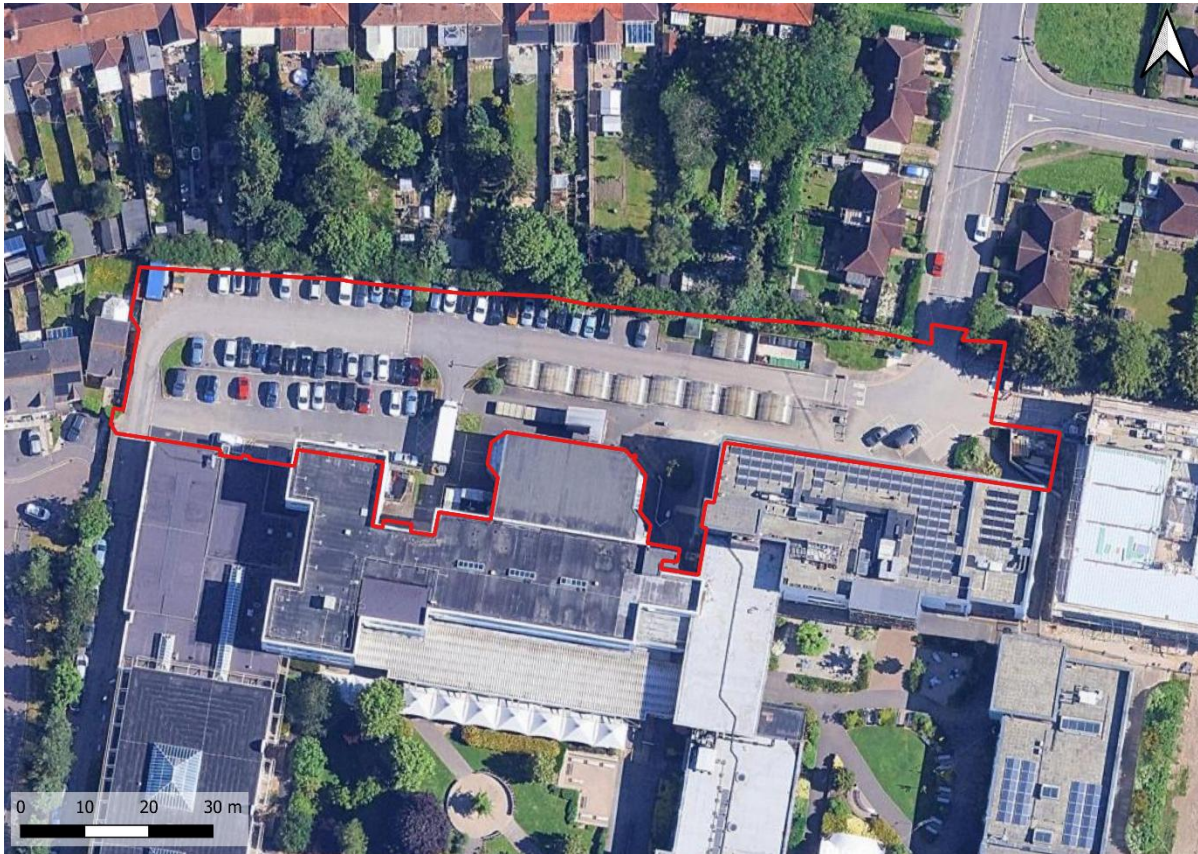
Background

This Technical Note (TN) acts to provide the results of an ecological walkover and identifies any potential constraints to support the application at Barton Peveril Sixth Form College. The proposals entail the addition of car parking spaces and bicycle storage.

Site Description and Location

The site is located within the boundary of Barton Peveril College, Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh, SO50 5ZA (centred on OS grid reference SU 44615 18275) (**Fig. 1**). The site is bound to the north and west by residential development and associated garden spaces, with the sports pitches to the east and Chestnut Avenue running along the southern boundary. The wider landscape is also of a developed nature due to the site's location within Eastleigh. However, Lakeside Country Park and Stoneham Lakes and Golf Course lie to the south.

Figure 1. Aerial image of the site with approximate redline boundary (Google Satellite, 2026).



Methodology

Desk Study

A search for statutory and non-statutory designated sites, S41 habitats, and records of protected species within 2km of the site was undertaken using freely available online resources.

Waterbodies

Any ponds located within 500m of the proposed development were searched for using Ordnance Survey maps and available aerial images.

Field Survey

An initial site walkover was carried out by Project Ecologist Grace Roberts MSc (Hons) and Assistant Project Ecologist Laura Purnell BSc (Hons) AMRSB on the 9th of April 2026, to assess the site for ecological impacts and constraints that may arise as part of the proposed development. Habitats on site pre-development were identified in accordance with the categories specified for a UK Habitats survey, using Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023). This was chosen as an appropriate habitat categorisation system as it fits within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation.

During the walkover by Ecosupport Ltd, the site was thoroughly searched for evidence of use by Badgers (*Meles meles*), with the specific aim of identifying the presence and location of any setts. In accordance with the *Badgers and Development: A Guide to Best Practice and Licensing* (Natural England, 2011) guidance, the survey accounted for a 30m from the site's boundary (observed where possible i.e., does not conflict with private dwellings). Evidence of Badgers could include latrines, dung pits, feeding remains and foraging evidence, trails and setts.

Limitations

Although the survey was taken outside the optimum timing for the identification of botanical interest species, it was considered that the majority of species present could be suitably identified. Therefore, it is not considered to represent a significant limitation to the overall assessment.

Ecological Baseline

Designated Sites

Statutory Designated

Following a review of freely available resources, the River Itchen Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) was identified as being 1.5km to the south-east of the site. No further statutory designated sites were identified within 2km of the site.

Non-statutory Designated

Following a review of freely available online resources, the Hut Wood Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) was identified as being approximately 1.9km to the north-west of the site. No further non-statutory designated sites were identified within 2km of the site.

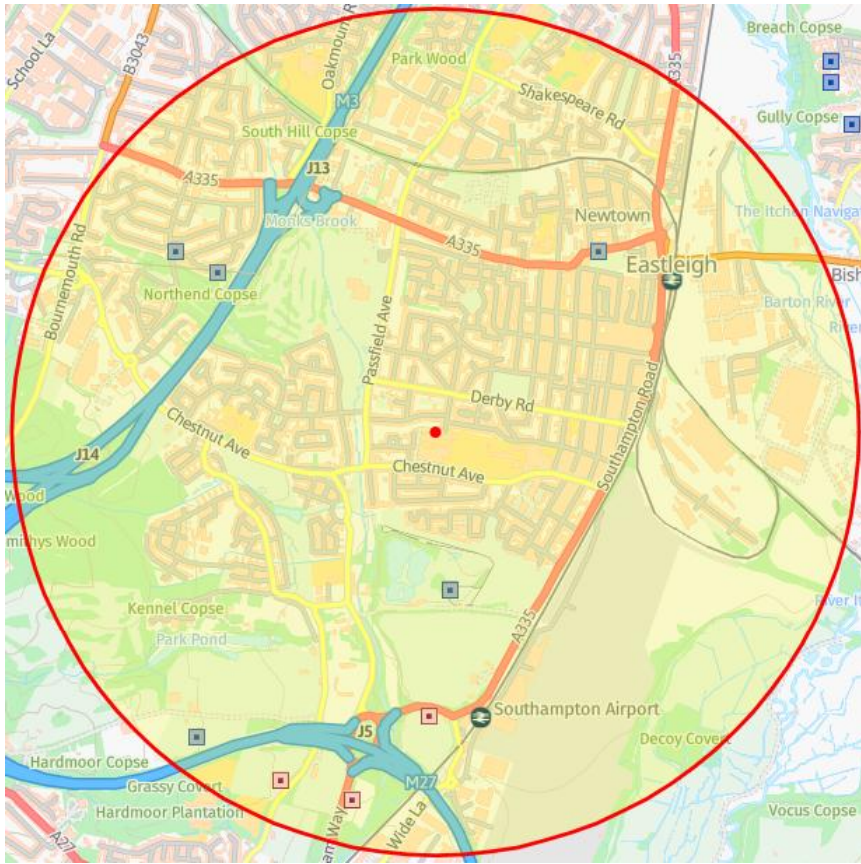
Section 41 Habitats

No Section 41 (Priority) Habitats were identified on or immediately adjacent to the site, following a review of freely available online resources. The nearest parcel of Ancient Woodland lies approximately 800m north-west of the site.

Protected Species

Following a review of freely available online resources, several European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) were identified from within 2km of the site boundary. Five bat EPSLs were identified within 2km of the site, with the closest one being approximately 730m south of the site. The three Hazel Dormouse EPSLs are identified to the south of the site close to the M27 Junction 5 roundabout. These EPSLs lie approximately 1.5km south of the site.

Figure 2. European Protected Species Licences (squares, pink = dormouse, blue = bat) located within 2km of the site.



Habitats

The vegetation within the site has been described below using classification terminology as described within Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd, 2023). The below species should not be considered an exhaustive list and instead refer to dominant, characteristic and other noteworthy species associated with each community within the survey area. The habitat types identified within the site comprise of:

Developed Land; Sealed Surface (u1b) – The majority of the site consists of hardstanding with car parking spaces, motorcycle parking spaces, bicycle sheds, bin store, substation, and walkways (Figs 2a & 2b).

Artificial Unvegetated; Unsealed Surface (u1c) with secondary code (81) Ruderal / Ephemeral – There are also areas which comprise gravel/sand with ruderal species growing through (Figs 2c & 2d).

Modified Grassland (g4) with secondary codes Scattered Trees (32) and Introduced Shrub (847) – Modified grassland was present in small areas around the car park (Figs 2e & 2f). Within these areas there were individual trees and introduced shrubs (Figs 2g & 2f).

Figure 2. Habitats on site (taken April 2026).

a) Hardstanding covering the majority of the site



b) Hardstanding covering the majority of the site



c) Ruderal vegetation to the north of the car park



d) Ruderal vegetation to the north of the car park



e) Modified grassland to the south of the car park



f) Modified grassland within the car park



g) Individual trees within the modified grassland



h) Introduced shrubs within the modified grassland



Bats

Site Assessment

The site is dominated by hardstanding, with some small areas of grassland and ruderal habitat. These vegetated areas have low species diversity with few flowering species, and as such is unlikely to support a range of invertebrate species for local foraging bats. The trees on site were not found to have any potential roosting features for bats. In addition, the trees on site and the native hedgerows adjacent to the northern boundary may provide some suitable foraging habitat with limited connectivity to the wider landscape. Furthermore, the site is situated within a largely urban environment. Therefore, the site is considered to have **potential** for foraging and commuting bats, however, as suitable adjacent habitat is being retained and new low-level lighting will be installed, it is anticipated that the proposals will have a **negligible impact** on bats.

Badgers & Other Terrestrial Mammals

Site Assessment

During the walkover, no Badger (*Meles meles*) setts or evidence of associated badger activity (e.g. deceased animals, snuffle holes, latrines, spoil heaps) were identified on site. The majority of the site is hardstanding with small areas of grassland or ruderal habitat. The site is also surrounded by fencing and is in a highly urban area. As such, the site is considered to hold **negligible potential** to support foraging and commuting Badgers. Notwithstanding this, due to the surrounding vegetation and gardens, there is **low potential** for the site to support other terrestrial mammals, such as Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*).

Reptiles

Site Assessment

The grassland on site is of a short sward height and as such does not offer any suitable habitat for common reptile species, due to the lack of varied structure and heterogeneity needed by foraging and sheltering reptiles (Edgar et al., 2010). The site is predominantly made up of hard standing, and the areas surrounding the site are of a similar nature. As such the site is considered to hold **negligible potential** to support reptiles.

Great Crested Newts

Site Assessment

Similarly to reptiles, the site is considered to offer limited suitable habitat for GCN and no ponds were identified within 500m of the site. As such, the site is considered hold ***negligible potential*** to support GCN.

Hazel Dormice

Site Assessment

The native hedgerow adjacent to the northern boundary forms a part of the vegetation associated with the gardens of the neighbouring houses. The hedgerow is not well connected to the wider landscape due to the presence of roads, isolating any potentially suitable habitat for Hazel Dormice. While there are Hazel Dormice EPSLs within 2km of the site, they are separated from the site by major roads such as the M27 and A335. Due to the location of these populations and the isolated nature of any potentially suitable habitat on site, the site is considered to hold ***negligible potential*** to support Hazel Dormice.

Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC)

Site Assessment

The trees on site and the native hedgerow adjacent to the northern boundary provide suitable habitat for breeding and nesting birds. Therefore, the site is considered to have ***potential*** for breeding birds. However, these features are being retained, so it is unlikely that any breeding and nesting birds will be impacted.

Evaluation and Further Survey Recommendations

Following the walkover, no further surveys are recommended since it is unlikely that any species of interest are using the site, and the majority of suitable habitat which has been identified is being retained. Notwithstanding this, the following mitigation measures are proposed to ensure the proposals do not result in any adverse impacts to terrestrial mammals or Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC).

Terrestrial Mammals

During the construction phase, any open excavations left overnight will either be covered to prevent commuting Badgers and other mammals falling in or escape ladders will be used to prevent them from becoming trapped. Any open pipework should be checked and then capped nightly.

Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC)

In order to avoid disturbance of breeding and nesting birds or damage to their nests, any proposed works to the trees / shrubs should avoid bird nesting season (typically March – August, dependent on weather). If this is not possible, these habitats should be thoroughly checked by an ecologist immediately prior to works. If any active nests are found, they should be left undisturbed with a suitable buffer within which works cannot take place (ca. 5m) until nestlings have fledged.

Biodiversity Net Gain

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculation will be undertaken with results provided in a separate report, along with details on habitat management and monitoring (HMMP).

Kind regards,

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Assistant Project Ecologist

Darla Brown BSc (Hons) ACIEEM

Senior Ecologist

References

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APPENDIX: Legislation

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transposes the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) into UK domestic law. It provides protection for sites and species deemed to be of conservation importance across Europe. It is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or injure species listed in Schedule 2 or to damage or destroy their breeding sites or shelter. It is also illegal to deliberately disturb these species in such a way that is likely to significantly impact on the local distribution or abundance or affect their ability to survive, breed and rear or nurture their young.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit) makes changes to the three existing instruments which transpose the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives so that they continue to work (are operable) upon the UK's exit from the European Union (EU). These include The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This instrument also amends section 27 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to ensure existing protections continue. The intention is to ensure habitat and species protection and standards as set out under the Nature Directives are implemented in the same way or an equivalent way when the UK exits the EU.

In order for activities that would be likely to result in a breach of species protection under the regulations to legally take place, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence must first be obtained from Natural England.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)

This is the primary piece of legislation by which biodiversity is protected within the UK. Protected fauna and flora are listed under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. They include all species of bats, making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a roost or to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost. Similarly, this Act makes it an offence to kill or injure any species of British reptiles and also makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to take, damage or destroy their eggs and nests (whilst in use or being built).

The Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) states that it is an offence to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild' any plant listed in Schedule 9 part II of the Act. This list over 30 plants including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and Parrot's Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*).

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)

This Act strengthens the Wildlife & Countryside Act by the addition of "reckless" offences in certain circumstances, such as where there is the likelihood of protected species being present. The Act places a duty on Government Ministers and Departments to conserve biological diversity and provides police with stronger powers relating to wildlife crimes.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 requires that public bodies have due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. This means that Planning authorities must consider biodiversity when planning or undertaking activities. Section 41 of the Act lists species found in England which were identified as requiring action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the *UK Post – 2010 Biodiversity Framework*.

Protection of Badgers Act

The Protection of Badgers Act (1992) relates to the welfare of Badgers (*Meles meles*) as opposed to nature conservation considerations. The Act prevents:

- The wilful killing, injury, ill treatment or taking of Badgers and / or
- Interference with a Badger sett
- Damaging or destroying all or part of a sett
- Causing a dog to enter a sett and
- Disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett

Provisions are included within the Act to allow for the lawful licensing of certain activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under the Act.

The Environment Act (2021)

The Environment Act 2021 is the UK's new legislation for environmental protection in the UK, which includes protection of water quality, clean air, and biodiversity among other key protections. This Act provides the government power to set targets to reach long-term aims relating to the environment, which will be periodically reviewed and updated. This legislation also establishes a new environmental watchdog organisation, the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP), which will hold the government accountable on environmental issues.

Part 6 of The Environment Act relates to nature and biodiversity. This section makes provision for biodiversity net gain to be a condition of planning permission in England and a requirement for nationally significant infrastructure projects. Biodiversity net gain will require maintenance for a period of at least 30 years after the completion of enhancement works to be achieved.

The legislation also includes updates to existing environmental legislation, such as the NERC Act 2006, to strengthen biodiversity enhancement rather than just conservation and includes a requirement for local, or relevant, authorities to publish biodiversity reports. Further, The Environment Act places a requirement on responsible authorities to prepare local nature recovery strategies, which will outline nature conservation sites and priorities and opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity within the local area. Within England, the legislation also provides Natural England with the power to publish 'species conservation strategies' and 'protected site strategies' to identify activities that may affect a species or site's status and outline their opinions on measures that would be appropriate to avoid, mitigate or compensate any adverse impacts.

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

Chapter 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity, the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity including by incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.

The NPPF states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and land should be allocated with the least environmental or amenity value and take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale.

To protect and enhance biodiversity, plans 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 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.

The NPPF states 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 SSSI, 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 SSSIs;
- 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;
- 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.

Potential SPAs and possible SACs, listed or proposed Ramsar sites and sites required as compensatory measures for the previous should be given the same protection as habitats sites.

Local Policy - Eastleigh

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.'*