



DARWIN ECOLOGY
integrating nature conservation

Unit 6, The Wincombe Centre,
Wincombe Business Park, Shaftesbury,
SP7 9QJ

Email: info@darwin-ecology.co.uk
www.darwin-ecology.co.uk

Information to Support a Habitat Regulations Assessment

34 Bishopstoke Road
Bishopstoke
Eastleigh
SO50 6LB

September 2024

Darwin Ecology Ltd
Registered Office: 8 Layton Lane, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 8EY
Company No. 07654823

QUALITY CONTROL		
The information which we have prepared and provided is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.		
Prepared by	Olatz Gartzia BSC (Hons), MSc, ACIEEM Principal Ecologist	06.09.2024
Checked by	Jessie Forster BSc (Hons) Senior Ecologist	10.09.2024
This report remains valid for 24 months from date of issue.		

Copyright Darwin Ecology Ltd.

This report is intended for the commissioning party only and should not be copied or reproduced in any way without prior written permission from Darwin Ecology Ltd.

This report has been prepared for the sole use of the client. Any third party referring to this report or relying on the information contained herein, does so entirely at their own risk.

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living creatures are capable of migration and whilst protected species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on site at a later date.

The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to works.

1.	INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	4
	Scope of Planning Application	4
	Site Overview	4
2.	HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT	6
3.	IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN SITES AND QUALIFYING FEATURES	8
4.	SCREENING AND LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS	9
	Potential Impact Pathways	9
5.	APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT	12
	Likely Significant Effects	12
	Mitigation Requirements	12
6.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	14
7.	REFERENCES	15

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Scope of Planning Application

- 1.1. Darwin Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Ms Diane Gorecki to provide Information to Support a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the proposed construction of a single storey rear extension and alterations to existing fenestration at 34 Bishopstoke Road, Bishopstoke, Eastleigh, SO50 6LB.

Site Overview

- 1.2. The site lies in a suburban area in the outskirts of Bishopstoke, approximately 8km to the north east of Southampton.
- 1.3. The site comprises approximately 0.07ha and consists of a single dwelling and associated garden. The site is bounded by a residential property and garden to the west, woodland to the east, lowland meadow to the south and a road to the north (**Figure 1**).
- 1.4. The site is situated in a rural setting, with nearby residential and commercial areas, with its immediate surroundings comprising sparse residential areas, priority habitat grassland and the River Itchen.
- 1.5. The dwelling is 20m to the west of River Itchen Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (**Figure 2**).
- 1.6. Additional constituent parts of the SAC within 5km of 34 Bishopstoke Road comprises River Itchen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is located immediately to the south of the site.



Figure 1: 34 Bishopstoke Road within the immediate landscape, highlighted in red (Copyright Google Earth, 2024).

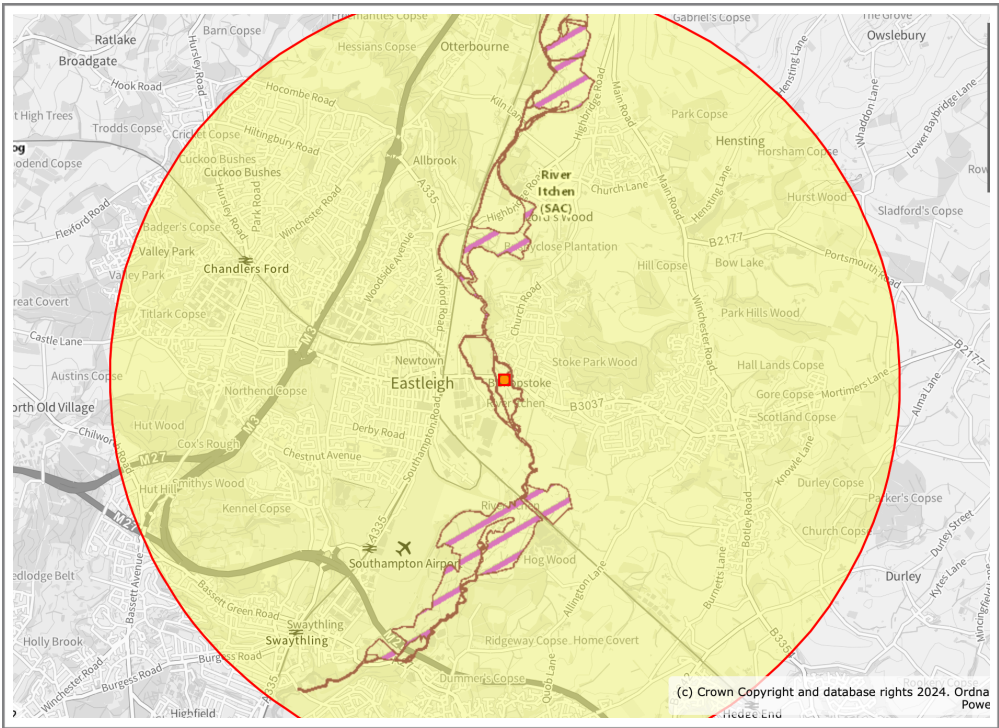


Figure 2: Designated sites (SAC and SPA) within 5 km of the site (marked in red) (Copyright Magic Maps, 2022)

2. HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

- 2.1. All plans and projects that may have a significant effect on sites designated with the National Site Network (previously Natura 2000 sites), either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, are subject to an appropriate assessment of the implications for the designated site, in view of the site's conservation objectives. Relevant designated sites include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). SPAs are protected sites of European importance for rare or vulnerable birds whilst SACs are protected sites of European importance for rare or vulnerable habitats.
- 2.2. Under the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017*, it is the Council's duty as the competent authority to consider the protection afforded to European sites when determining planning applications to ensure that they do not have a significant adverse effect on the designated site(s). It is therefore the duty of the council and not the planning applicant to undertake this assessment, however, the information provided in this report will assist the council in undertaking their assessment.
- 2.3. The purpose of an HRA is to demonstrate that a land-use plan (or other plans or projects) will not have any adverse effects on the integrity of any European Sites. If a likely significant effect is established then that aspect of the plan or project will need to be the subject of an appropriate assessment where further mitigation may be proposed to avoid or reduce the likely significant effect.
- 2.4. The stages of the HRA process are:
- *Stage 1 - Screening:* To test whether a plan or project either alone or in combination with other plans and projects has the potential to have a significant effect on a European designated site;
 - *Stage 2 - Appropriate Assessment:* To determine whether, in view of the designated site's conservation objectives, the plan (either alone or in combination with other projects and plans) would have an adverse effect (or risk of this) on the integrity of the site with respect to the site structure, function and conservation objectives. If adverse impacts are anticipated, potential mitigation measures to alleviate impacts should be proposed and assessed;
 - *Stage 3 - Assessment of alternative solutions:* Where a plan is assessed as having an adverse impact or risk of this on the integrity of a European designated site, there should be an examination of alternatives (e.g. alternative locations and designs of development); and
 - *Stage 4 - Assessment where no alternative solutions remain and where adverse impacts remain:* In exceptional circumstances (e.g. where there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest), compensatory measures to be put in place to offset adverse impacts.

- 2.5. This report comprises the information required to support a Stage 1 - Screening Assessment and Stage 2 - Appropriate Assessment of the proposed development at Land adjacent to 34 Bishopstoke Road and takes into account both the construction and operational phases of the project.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN SITES AND QUALIFYING FEATURES

- 3.1. Proposed developments can have spatial implications that extend beyond proposed site boundaries. For the purposes of HRA it is recognised that distance in itself is not a definitive guide to the likelihood or severity of an impact. This means that European sites at some distance from the proposed development may still need to be considered as part of the screening process.
- 3.2. The following sites have been considered as part of the wider screening process for the proposed development:
- River Itchen SAC lies 20m east of the site.
- 3.3. Qualifying features, conservation objectives and known vulnerabilities for each of the designated sites identified are provided in **Table 1**.
- 3.4. HRA guidance recommends that following an initial scoping of sites, the assessment should seek to screen out sites for which impacts are very unlikely and for sites where the conditions and underlying trends for the sites indicate favourable condition status and the effects arising from the proposed development are minimal. Each of the sites listed above were reviewed and considered in the context of the possible impacts from the proposed development.

Table 1 Designated sites, qualifying features, conservation objectives and known vulnerabilities

Site	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives	Known vulnerabilities
River Itchen SAC	Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection: • Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection: • Southern damselfly <i>Coenagrion mercuriale</i> • Bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i> Annex II species present as a qualifying feature: • White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> • Brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i> • Atlantic salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> • Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the favourable Conservation Status of its qualifying features, by maintaining or restoring: a) The extent and distribution of the qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species b) The structures and function (including typical species) of the qualifying natural habitats c) The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species d) The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely e) The population of qualifying species f) The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	• Water pollution • Physical modification • Siltation • Overgrazing • Water abstraction • Inappropriate weed control • Hydrological changes • Inappropriate water levels • Change in land management • Inappropriate cutting / mowing • Invasive species • Undergrazing • Inappropriate ditch management • Inappropriate scrub control • Forestry and woodland management

4. SCREENING AND LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Potential Impact Pathways

- 4.1. Stage 1 of the HRA process is the assessment of Likely Significant Effects (LSE).
- 4.2. To address the above question, this screening process must identify and consider the potential impact pathways by which the development proposals may lead to an adverse effect on the European designated site(s) either alone, or in combination with other projects nearby.
- 4.3. **Table 2** identifies potential impacts on the European designated site(s), and looks into how the impacts, if unmitigated for, could impact on the qualifying features of the European site.

Table 2 Potential impacts on European designated site

Potential impact	Assessment of likely significant effect in the absence of mitigation	Likely significant effect (either alone or in combination)
Direct damage of habitats that are a qualifying feature or are supporting qualifying species	The proposals involve the erection of an extension and will only affect the dwelling on site and small areas of hardstanding and amenity grassland immediately surrounding the residence. The site does not contain any habitats which are the same or similar to the qualifying features of the SAC and therefore no direct physical modification, change in land or ditch management or siltation of the designated site will occur.	No likely significant effect
Pollution of surface/ground water	The new extension will not result in an increase in wastewater that could drain into the River Itchen SPA. There is potential of polluted surface water runoff from the site into the River Itchen during the construction phase of the development. Pollution of surface water is listed as a pressure of a number of qualifying features of the River Itchen SAC, including H3260 Rivers with floating vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot, S1044 Southern damselfly, S1092 Whiteclawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish, S1096 Brook lamprey, S1106 Atlantic salmon and S1163 Bullhead. There is potential for water pollutants from the site to enter the SAC.	Likely significant effect
Hydrology	The proposed extension is within flood risk zone 1, which has a low probability of flooding, however an area within flood risk zone 3 is located on the eastern end of the site. Impacts to the groundwater or drainage are not predicted due to the small scale of the development. The existing residential dwelling is already on mains drainage and the construction of the extension will not change this. Due to the residential nature of the development, it will not result in additional water abstraction from the river at construction or operational stages.	No likely significant effect

Table 2 Potential impacts on European designated site (cont.)

Potential impact	Assessment of likely significant effect in the absence of mitigation	Likely significant effect (either alone or in combination)
Noise	Any noise from the development works will be low-level and short-term. Due to the proximity of nearby dwellings, it is understood that the majority of the works will be undertaken sensibly to avoid disturbance to local residents. During the construction works there may be a temporary increase in noise. However, given the presence of other properties and roads nearby, it is not considered that the proposed development will result in a significant increase in noise levels at the construction or operational stages, and it is therefore not considered likely to have any significant effects on the SAC.	No likely significant effect
Atmospheric pollution / air quality	Similarly, no likely significant effects are predicted on the SAC from atmospheric pollution. Any dust that may be generated by the construction will be very short-term and in line with standard working practices. The number of vehicles accessing the site and daily traffic flows will be similar to the current usage.	No likely significant effect
Grazing	The proposed development is residential and will not result in additional grazing pressures of the SAC or SSSI habitats.	No likely significant effect
Recreational pressure	The proposed development is small-scale and involves the construction of an extension to the rear of the house. There will therefore be no net increase in residential units, and no predicted increase in recreational pressure as a result. There are no expected increases in dog walking which may result in the disturbance of otters.	No likely significant effect
Forestry and woodland management	The proposals to extend the property will have no impacts on any forestry or woodlands near the site.	No likely significant effect
Introduction of invasive non-native species	The proposed development will not involve the planting or deliberate introduction of any invasive plant species such as signal crayfish.	No likely significant effect
Other urbanisation effects	The proposals will not result in a net increase in residential units within the site. The proposals involve the erection of an extension and will only affect the dwelling on site and small areas of hardstanding and amenity grassland immediately surrounding the residence. No additional buildings, areas of car parking or other construction is proposed. The nature of the development (with no net gain in residential units) is such that it is considered highly unlikely that it will result in any increase in the risk of invasive alien plant species being spread through garden waste. In addition, on the basis that the proposals only involve the erection of an extension to the rear of the house, the proposed development is not anticipated to result in a net increase in the effect of predation of cats, rats, foxes or any other potential predators associated with urbanisation.	No likely significant effect

4.4. Based on the above table, the impact pathways carried forward (scoped in) are:

- Pollution of surface/ground water.

5. APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Likely Significant Effects

- 5.1. This screening assessment has identified that there is potential for a likely significant effect on River Itchen SAC as a result of the proposals which would result in the runoff of pollutants of surface water during construction of a rear extension at 34 Bishopstoke Road. Therefore, further stages of Appropriate Assessment are to required to be undertaken.

Mitigation Requirements

Pollution of Surface / Ground Water

- 5.2. The proposals could result in an increase in pollutants into the River Itchen SAC as a result of dirty water roof from the site during construction. Mitigation measures are necessary to reduce the risk of water runoff from the site during development.
- 5.3. In order to avoid individual pollution events during construction, all relevant activities will adhere to the Pollution Prevention Guidance for Businesses provided by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Environment Agency, in particular the section 'Construction, inspection and maintenance' which includes 'Work in, over or near a river, stream, lake or pond'. Details of specific pollution prevention and control measures will be set out in a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) that can be conditioned within the planning approval. These control measures will include, but not be limited to:
- Safe storage/use of fuel and careful refuelling procedures.
 - Safe storage/use of solvents, cements, adhesives, grout and concrete.
 - Sufficient spill kits available on Site.
 - Strict adherence to COSHH procedure.
 - Minimising the escape of dust and mud.
 - Prevention of water pollution through run off via the use of gully guards, straw bales, gravel traps, silt fencing, etc.
 - Emergency protocol should a major pollution incident occur.
- 5.4. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will need to be produced and followed which will outline the working methods for controlling site pollution during construction. The CEMP will follow all relevant legislation for the construction phase of the project. This shall include but is not limited to the following:
- Control of Pollution Act (COPA) 1974;
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990;
 - Water Resources Act 1991;

- Environment Act 1995;
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations, 2009; and
- List of Wastes (England) Regulations, 2005.

5.5. In addition to the above the Contractor will refer to CIRIA Environmental Good Practice on Site C502, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Code of Best Practice for Demolition and Construction Sites (Eastleigh Borough Local Plan, June 2018), and Environment Agency Pollution Prevention Guidance notes.

5.6. In light of the foregoing, and subject to the identified pollution prevention and control measures, it can be ascertained that the proposed development will have no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Itchen SAC site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 6.1. Based on the information provided here-in, it is anticipated that the Eastleigh Borough Council, in their capacity as competent authority under Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, will conclude that the proposed development has the potential to result in likely significant effects on the Itchen River SAC, when considered alone (in light of the definition of these terms in the 'Waddenzee' ruling of the European Court of Justice Case C- 127/02).
- 6.2. The Council must therefore undertake an Appropriate Assessment of the implications of the proposed development on the qualifying features of the River Itchen SAC in light of their published conservation objectives.
- 6.3. With consideration of the proposed measures intended to avoid or reduce effects (i.e. policy compliant pollution prevention controls during construction and operation of the proposed development) it is anticipated that the Council's Appropriate Assessment will conclude that the proposed development will not have any adverse effect on the integrity of the Itchen River SAC, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- 6.4. Through submission of this shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment, it is considered that the client has discharged their duty under Regulation 63(2) to, "provide such information as the competent authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the assessment."

7. REFERENCES

Eastleigh Borough Council (2018). Eastleigh Local Plan

Environment Agency. Flood Risk Information for Planning. Available at: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/> (Accessed September 2024)

Joint Nature Conservation Committee - River Itchen Special Area of Conservation. Available at: <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0012599> (Accessed September 2024).

LHB Ecology (2024). 34 Bishopstoke Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 6LB: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Natural England Site Improvement Plan for River Itchen (SIP193). Available at: <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5404054607888384> (Accessed September 2024).