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Site Name	Allington Lane, Chartwell Green, West End, SO30 3HN
Report Title	Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan
Date of Report	05/12/2024
Version	FINAL
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Summary

South Coast Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Mr Peters to produce this Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (BEMP) to satisfy Condition 6 of Decision F/24/96845. This includes a plan showing the positions of the Ecological Enhancements, fencing to be installed along the SINC buffer, future maintenance and timings for the implementation of the recommended measures.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

South Coast Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Mr Peters to produce this Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (BEMP) in line with Condition 6 of F/24/96845:

“No development shall take place until a Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (BEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan should show the positions of the recommended enhancements as detailed within paragraphs 6.5 to 6.7 of the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (Ecosupport, 18 July 2024) as well as the location and type of boundary treatments for the site, which shall include the fencing to be installed to protect the 15m buffer to the adjacent SINC as recommended within paragraph 6.2 of this PEA. The BEMP shall include timings for the implementation of the recommended measures and details of their future maintenance.

The approved BEMP shall then be implemented in full.

Reason: To ensure that wildlife features are appropriately protected, enhanced and managed”.

1.2 Aim

The aim of this BEMP is to provide Eastleigh Borough Council with greater detail relating to Biodiversity on site both in terms of Enhancement and Management. Enhancement is defined as “an increase or improvement in quality, value, or extent” thus this report details how proposals will improve the quality and value of the biodiversity on site. It will ensure proposals are in line with local and national policy and legislation (**Appendix I**).

1.3 Site Information

1.3.1 Site Location

The site is located along Allington Lane, West End, Southampton (centred on OS grid reference SU 47433 16179). The site is adjacent to wet and lowland mixed deciduous woodland Priority Habitat, the majority of which is classified as a SINC Copse by Oaklands House. Copse by Oaklands House SINC is classified due to the presence of ‘ancient semi-natural woodland’ / ‘wet woodland’. A pond lies within the adjacent woodland (155m from the proposed stable construction).

1.3.2 Site Description

The site consisted of modified grassland (g4). Along Allington Lane a Willow (*Salix Sp.*) tree line was recorded along with three mature Oak (*Quercus Sp.*) trees.

Along the woodland areas edge dense and scattered Bracken was (*Pteridium Sp.*) noted along with some areas of longer grassland. Finally, within the centre of the field a brash pile was noted along with a patch of unmanaged grassland.

2.0 Previous Recommendations

These recommendations have been tabulated with timings stipulated (**Table 1**).

2.1 Prior to and During Works

2.1.1 Protection of Retained Vegetation

Prior to any works getting underway, all existing trees will be protected from damage during the works. They will be fenced using standard arboricultural tree protection measures which include protection of the canopy and prevents root compaction.

2.1.2 Reptile and GCN Precautionary Approach

To add confidence that reptiles and GCN will not be negatively impacted a precautionary approach will be implemented within the areas of widening access and stable construction. These works will be undertaken during the active reptile period (April – September) when temperatures are above 12°C with sunshine:

Toolbox Talk – Before any works commence an Ecologist must brief all site operatives. This briefing must include details of the legal protection of reptiles and GCN, all precautionary steps that must be taken during the proposed works, an annotated key detailing the appearance, characteristics of GCN and what actions need to be taken if, in the unlikely event a GCN is found on site when the Ecologist is not present.

Habitat reduction – Following the toolbox talk, initially the vegetation will be reduced to 10cm under the supervision of an Ecologist. After 24-48 hours, this vegetation will be taken down to ground level. All works will be directional (i.e. towards retained, unimpacted habitats). Once at ground level, it is imperative the vegetation is then maintained at this level so that it remains unsuitable for both reptiles and amphibians.

Please note any vegetation suitable for nesting birds (i.e. dense scrub/shrubs and/or trees will require a nesting bird check given works will take place within nesting bird season. If an active nest is identified a 5m buffer will be established. Only once an Ecologist has confirmed the nest is no longer active, can the vegetation be cleared).

Within the centre of the site, if to be removed, the brash pile will be dismantled by hand during April – September.

Steps to be taken in unlikely event GCN are found – In the unlikely instance that a GCN is found during any works, all works must immediately stop and Natural England will need to be contacted.

2.1.3 Badgers and Hedgehogs

A means of escape (e.g. a ramp) will be left in excavations over-night in case of animals falling in. A member of staff on site should be responsible for ensuring that this is carried out before leaving the site each day.

2.1.4 Native Planting

Once works have been completed, native planting will take place on site. The hedgerow will be reinforced (as outlined in **Figure 1** below). Hedgerow planting will utilise native planted ideally fruit bearing to provide food sources for birds and small mammals during the autumn and winter. Hawthorn, Hazel, Field Maple, Dog Rose and Dogwood are recommended as these are included within the Woodland Trust 'Horse and livestock-friendly hedge mix'.

Key tree species for enhancing the site for bats are Willow, Oak and Birch as they can support high numbers of insects. In addition, once matured they can eventually provide roosting opportunities for bats.

Figure 1. Approved plans for site showing planting.



Bare-rooted and rootballed trees become available during November and planting continues until March. Unless otherwise specified in a planting

specification the following steps will be followed to ensure successful establishment of plants:

- Cultivate and weed-kill all areas to be planted.
- The hole must be dug 1.5 times the width of the roots.
- Ameliorate soil prior to planting.
- Water retaining polymer to be in planting pit only.
- Plants will need to be secured (i.e. cane or stake).
- Spiral to be used to protect new plants. 60cm will be used protect from Rabbits, 90cm Silvitube Guards from Muntjac deer and Hares, 120cm from Roe deer and 135cm from Fallow deer.
- Apply 'Fish, Blood and Bone' or 'Growmore' in March/April at the rate of 75g/m².
- Water when required.

2.2 In perpetuity

2.2.1 Protection of Woodland

Aa 15m buffer will be established along the woodland edge. A post and rail fence will be erected to prevent animals gaining access into this buffer. To allow for horses reaching through the fence, it is recommended this is set back an additional meter.

2.2.2 Sensitive Lighting

It is recommended that no new lighting be introduced on site. If lighting is required it will comply with the published Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at night (ILP / BCT, 2023) produced via a collaboration between the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) and the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT).

2.2.3 Bat Boxes

It is recommended that at least two bat boxes are erected on site. The Miramare Bat Box (**Figure 1**) 'replicates a natural roost within a hollow tree'. It has four internal roosting compartments. It is constructed from the durable material FSC certified WoodStone which maintains consistent temperatures, is breathable and has a long lifespan of up to 10 years (NHBS, 2024a).

The Vivara Pro Large Multi Chamber WoodStone bat box (**Figure 2**) features internal wooden dividers. There are two entrances, one on the front panel and one on the underside of the box. The exterior and front panel of the box is constructed using woodstone as above. It is suitable for the following Common, Nathusius's and Soprano Pipistrelle, Noctule, Leisler's and Natterer's bat (NHBS, 2024b).

The boxes should be sited at least 3-5m off the ground with a clear flight path for access facing south or southwest in a sheltered area.

Figure 1. Miramare Bat Box (NHBS, 2024a). **Figure 2.** Large Multi Chamber Bat Box (NHBS, 2024b).



2.2.4 Bird Boxes

At least two bird nest boxes will be erected within mature trees on site. Those constructed of woodcrete/woodstone for the properties outlined above.

The Schwegler 2M (32mm entrance hole woodcrete nest box) will attract Great Tit, Redstart, Nuthatch and House Sparrow and also bats.

The Schwegler 1B (26mm entrance hole) suits Blue, Marsh, Coal and Crested Tit and possibly Wren. All other species are prevented from using the nest box due to the smaller entrance hole.

2.2.5 Hibernacula

A wood-based hibernacula will be constructed on site. This will provide shelter and hibernation opportunities as well as providing a significant habitat resource for invertebrates. This will be at least 5m².

In addition, two log piles will be constructed. Two different log pile styles will be utilized; vertical and horizontal.

Table 1. Avoidance, Mitigation and Enhancements Measures.

Activity	Timing	Comments
Establish 15m buffer along boundary to SINC	Any time prior to horses occupying the site.	The fencing will be slightly set back (i.e. 16m) to allow for horses grazing through the fence. Any breaches to the fence will be repaired as soon as possible.
Erect tree protective fencing	Prior to machinery starting on site.	
Nesting Bird Check	April – September.	On the morning of vegetation removal
Vegetation reduction relating to precautionary approach for reptiles and GCN	April – September (with temperatures >12°C).	
Escape ramp within open excavations	During construction.	To allow mammals means of escape if they fall into excavations.
Plant native hedgerow	November – February.	Stretch of hedgerow to be planted at entrance to site.
Plant native trees	November – February.	3 trees to be planted.
Erect at least 2 bat boxes in trees on site	Any time.	Miramare Bat Box The Vivara Pro Large Multi Chamber WoodStone bat box
Erect at least 2 bird boxes in trees on site	Any time.	Schwegler 1B and 2M.
Build hibernacula	Any time.	
Build 2 Log Piles	Any time.	

3.0 Management

The timings for habitat management on site have been provided in **Table 2**.

3.1 SINC Buffer

It is considered unlikely the main body of the site will require management as this is to be subject to grazing from horses however the buffer between the field and the SINC will require management. Any breaches to the fence will be repaired as soon as possible.

The buffer will prevent manure leading to additional nutrients, potentially changing the composition of the ancient semi-natural woodland / wet woodland, and also prevent direct damage to vegetation through grazing. However, it is considered through appropriate management of this area, woodland edge habitat could be created (**Figure 4**). This is the interface between the high forest and open ground (Blakesley and Buckley, 2010). The microclimate of this habitat type is more suitable for many plants and insects in terms of light and warmth than the internal woodland itself. This habitat structure is often complex, with a well-developed shrub layer (Fuller, 1989).

Figure 4. Profile of a structurally diverse woodland edge (Blakesley and Buckley, 2010).



Woodland edge habitats tend to develop a different flora and fauna from that of the woodland interior. Many mobile invertebrate species utilise edges often in response to increased abundance of nectar-yielding plant species (Greatorex-Davies, 1989). Several bird species show strong preferences for the external edges of woods; Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*), Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*), Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff show a clear response to these edges in many woods as well as Blackbird (*Turdus merula*), Long-tailed Tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*) and Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*) (Fuller, 1989).

The herbaceous vegetation needs to be managed in such a way as to maintain structural diversity and floristic richness and diversity (Greatorex-Davies, 1989). However a potential significant issue will be establishment and subsequent dominance of species such as Bracken and Bramble. Both of these species thrive at the woodland edge and are effective competitors with grasses and herbs reducing overall plant diversity (Blakesley and Buckley, 2010). However, both Bracken and Bramble provide cover for nesting birds and small mammals, as well as a food supply in late summer and autumn. Bracken cover hosts over 40 species of invertebrates and Bramble is the food plant of moths and butterflies and source of nectar for butterflies, moths, hoverflies, bees, wasps, lacewings and flies (Blakesley and Buckley, 2010). Therefore, presence of both

Bracken and Bramble is positive providing it does not become dense. Therefore, the management of both species will be essential.

Mechanical clearance of either species during the nesting season will be avoided. In and around ancient woodland the best technique is to use localised treatments, for example spot-spraying individual clumps as and when necessary, and in combination with mechanical methods (Blakesley and Buckley, 2010).

The usual practice of flail-cutting shrub edges on a 3-5year cycle is determined more by machine capability rather than conservation requirements. Shrub edges should be cut in sections on a 6-8 year cycle (Currie, 1989).

If Bracken becomes an issue it should be cut or rolled twice a year in late June and August for five years to achieve control (Willoughby *et al.*, 2004) with care taken in relation to nesting birds. Advice should be sought from an Ecologist.

The grass itself should be cut once a year with the arisings removed. Mowing in mid-June brings a premature end to the flowers and can compromise insects and other wildlife relying on the habitat. However, grassland which is consistently cut late in the season, in August and September, year on year reduces species diversity as late cutting gives more time for coarse grasses and other dominant plants to grow unchecked. To maintain maximum diversity and flowering interest the grassland should be managed in sections at different times from late June to the end of August. Varying the mowing times from year to year is the best way to maintain a diverse balanced sward.

3.2 Hedgerow

The more favourable approach to managing hedgerows for the benefits of wildlife is to encourage minimal interference and ensure when there is cutting, it takes place late winter (after autumn fruiting and outside of nesting bird season).

The key points of the management prescriptions will therefore be as follows (adopting recommendations as outlined within Bright and MacPherson 2002):

- Cutting will be done on a 3-year cycle (part of the hedges on site cut during the first year, another part of the hedges cut during second year and no cutting during the third year), to provide sustained foraging opportunities across the site every active season. Hedgerows will be allowed to develop into a tall, dense, bushy structures and maintained at a height of 3 – 4m.

- A proportion of hedges (at least 30%) should be left to grow for at least 7 – 10 years.
- Not all hedgerows should be cut in any one year, so some heavy fruiting hedges are always present.
- Use hand tools whenever possible.
- Coppicing or laying should be used to manage an of the hedgerows on site which become gappy or sparse
- If the size of the hedgerow needs to be reduced, avoid cutting the top and cut one side.

Table 2. Management of on-site habitats.

General Activity	Specific Action(s)	Timing
Ensure successful establishment of newly planted hedgerow and trees	Apply 'Fish, Blood and Bone' or 'Growmore' at the rate of 75g/m ² .	March/April.
	Water	When required likely April – September.
	Remove stakes and spirals.	Year 3.
Hedgerow Management	Hedgerow to be managed as part of the wider hedgerow network. A proportion of hedges (at least 30%) should be left to grow for at least 7 – 10 years. Hedgerows will be allowed to develop into a tall, dense, bushy structures and maintained at a height of 3 – 4m.	Cutting will be done on a 3-year cycle during October – February.
Tree Management	Once established management will be minimal and restricted to pruning as and when required	October – February

SINC Buffer Management	Grassland: To be managed in sections at different times. Scrub: Should be cut in sections on a 6-8 year cycle. Bracken: If Bracken becomes an issue this should be cut/rolled twice a year for five years.	June - August. Varying the mowing times from year to year November – February Late June and August
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4.0 Conclusion

The PEA report concluded that that ‘habitats within the area of impact are considered to be limited to site value with limited opportunities for legally protected and/or notable species’. It was considered the species could be adequately protected via the measures outlined within the original report. These measures have been reiterated here with additional detail provided along with the requested plan.

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APPENDIX I – Legislation and Policy

Legislation

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

The primary 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.

Protection of Badgers Act (1992)

This 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, damage to or destroying a Badger sett and disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett including causing a dog to enter a sett.

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*.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the “Habitats Regulations 2017”) consolidate and update the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the “Habitats Regulations 2010”).

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transposed 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.

Schedule 2 - European Protected Species (animals)

Common name	<i>Scientific name</i>
Bats (all species)	Vespertilionidae
Eurasian Beaver	Castor fiber
Large Blue Butterfly	Maculinea arion
Wild Cat	Felis silvestris
Dolphins, porpoises and whales (all species)	Cetacea
Dormouse	Muscardinus avellanarius
Pool Frog	Rana lessonae
Sand Lizard	Lacerta agilis
Fisher's Estuarine Moth	Gortyna borelii lunata
Great Crested Newt	Triturus cristatus
Common Otter	Lutra lutra
Lesser Whirlpool Ram's-horn Snail	Anisus vorticulus
Smooth Snake	Coronella austriaca
Sturgeon	Acipenser sturio
Natterjack Toad	Bufo calamita

Marine Turtles

Caretta caretta
Chelonia mydas
Lepidochelys kempii
Eretmochelys imbricata
Dermochelys coriacea

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit) made changes 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 legislation ensures the existing protections of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 continue.

The Environment Act (2021)

The Environment Act 2021 includes the protection of water quality, clean air and biodiversity. Part 6 of The Environment Act relates to nature and biodiversity. This section makes provision for biodiversity net gain. The legislation specifies biodiversity enhancement and includes a requirement for authorities to publish biodiversity reports including local nature recovery strategies.

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.

Policy

National

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) 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, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

The NPPF states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and that the scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

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 SSSI;
- 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.



Legend

- Post and Rail Fence
- Bat Box
- Bird Box
- Buffer
- Native Hedge Reinforcement
- Hibernacula
- Log Pile
- Newly Planted Native Trees

Map	Ecological Enhancement and Management
Site	Land at Allington Lane
Client	Mr Peters
Date	03/12/2024