

ECOLOGY STATEMENT

94 HURSLEY ROAD CHANDLERS FORD SO53 1JB

PURPOSE OF THE STATEMENT

This method statement outlines the measures to be taken to avoid harm to hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and nesting birds, both of which are protected under UK wildlife legislation, during site preparation and construction activities. It ensures compliance with:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC)
- Relevant Local Planning Policy and Biodiversity Guidance

ECOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Habitats on or near the development area may include:

- Hedges, or dense vegetation
- Leaf piles, log piles, or compost heaps

These can be used by hedgehogs for nesting and foraging, and by birds for nesting.

TIMING OF WORKS

- Any vegetation to be removed to facilitate the development must be removed outside of bird nesting season (which is usually between the beginning of March and the end of August) or if this is not possible then only after being checked for nesting birds by a suitably qualified ecologist up to 24 hours before the start of works. If any active nests are found, work must stop and a 5 m buffer must be erected around the nest to protect it from disturbance until after the birds have fledged and left the nest.
- Hedgehog hibernation typically occurs between November and March. Ground clearance, particularly involving potential hibernation features (e.g., log piles), should ideally be done outside this period, or with careful inspection.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

General Site Measures

- Site personnel will be made aware of the presence of protected species and the relevant mitigation measures through toolbox talks.
- A suitably qualified ecologist will be contacted if nesting birds or hedgehogs are found to be present.

For Hedgehogs

- Any piles of debris, logs, or dense vegetation will be carefully hand-checked before removal.
- Waste must be stored in a skip and not be allowed to accumulate in piles which could be used by wildlife. Any chemicals and fuels must be stored carefully and away from potential wildlife habitat.
- All building materials to be stored on hard standing or on pallets, as far as possible from hedgerows, scrub or potential habitat.
- No fires can be lit on site.
- Trenches or deep excavations will be covered overnight or fitted with escape ramps to prevent entrapment.
- Although it is not assumed boundary treatments are to change, should new boundary treatments be installed, hedgehog-friendly fencing (with 13x13 cm gaps at ground level) will be used for any permanent boundaries.

For Nesting Birds

- If active nests are found, an exclusion zone of at least 5 meters (depending on species) will be established, and works will not proceed in the vicinity until young birds have fledged.
- Vegetation removal will begin in the non-nesting season whenever feasible.

Monitoring and Reporting

- A log of any wildlife sightings will be maintained on-site.
- If protected species are found during works, activity will cease immediately in the affected area, and an ecologist will be consulted.
- A post-clearance report may be submitted to the local planning authority if required.

CONCLUSION

By implementing this precautionary method statement, the development works will be conducted in a way that minimises the risk of harm to hedgehogs and nesting birds, ensuring compliance with relevant wildlife legislation and ecological best practice.