

28th March 2024



Re: 24002 East Hill, Medway – Ecology Overview

An update Site walkover was undertaken by Corylus Ecology in February 2024 to assess the condition of the wider site in relation to the survey results and mitigation measures as provided within the Corylus Ecology reports in 2018 and 2019 in support of the Environmental Statement for the application.

The habitats within the site have been subject to continued management and used as intensive arable land as it was prior to the surveys in 2018. The habitats have not changed significantly and the areas suitable and with recorded used by protected species in 2018 have not changed. As such there is no need to update the following protected species surveys for the scheme and the mitigation measures proposed within the Environmental Statement are still valid:

- Great crested newts
- Reptiles
- Winter birds
- Breeding birds
- Invertebrates
- Bat activity

Below is a summary of this update assessment and highlighted ecology matters that will require further attention, these are highlighted **in red**.

Habitats

- Areas of chalk grassland identified in 2018 are being colonised and overgrown by scrub habitat.
- **The scheme will need to ensure the creation of chalk grassland habitat as identified within the Environmental Statement.**
- **Update assessments of habitats will be required to inform the BNG assessment of the scheme.**

Bats

- Tree with bat roost identified in 2018, still present and features are still present.
- Two additional trees have developed bat roost potential on the edge of the site adjacent to the lake at capstone country park.
- **If these trees will be directly or indirectly impacted by proposals (removal or lighting) update bat emergence surveys will be required to inform the need for a bat EPS licence.**

Badgers

- Fresh evidence of badger activity within the identified badger sett within scrub patch between the eastern and western fields.
- **The need for regular site assessments to record badger activity and new setts within impacted areas will be needed before and during construction works.**

Dormouse

- Regarding dormice, it is understood that update surveys of the wider site have been in 2023. Similar levels of dormouse presence have been recorded across the site as was recorded in 2018.
- **A dormouse EPSM licence will need to be obtained from Natural England post detailed planning permission and pre habitat clearance to allow removal of identified dormouse habitat within the site.**

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The following documents will be required to support future detailed applications for the scheme.

- Construction Environmental Management Plan for Biodiversity (CEMP: Biodiversity),
- Ecological Mitigation Strategy (EMS)
- Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Management Plan (LEMMP)
- Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment

Kind regards,

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