

LAND AT ARUNDEL

Ecological Site Walkover



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REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- RPS was commissioned by Redrow Homes to undertake an Ecological Site Walkover of land at Arundel, Angerming, Littlehampton, BN16 4ET.
- The application site is located on the northern edge of Angerming village, immediately to the north of the Angerming Sports and Social Club and allocated recreational land. The site is accessed off Arundel Road. The site benefits from outline application for the construction of up to 160 dwellings together with up to 1,393m² of B1/B2 units and land made available for expansion of current sports pitch provision, approved by Arun District Council in March 2020 (A/122/19/OUT). A range of ecology surveys were undertaken across the site by CSA Environmental between 2017 to 2019.
- The site is 9.1 hectares and is mixed use, comprising agricultural, industrial, and residential (New Place Bungalow) buildings. This residential building is approved for demolition as part of the outline application. Two oak trees within the western boundary are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- The aim of the 2021 verification walkover was to confirm the current ecological value of the site and establish the need for any further mitigation and enhancement measures.
- The RPS updated 2021 walkover confirmed the site conditions remain the same as outlined by CSA Environmental in previous studies.
- Due to the presence of confirmed bat roosts in Buildings B3 and B4, a Natural England European Protected Species Licence (EPS) and associated mitigation will be required prior to works commencing on these structures. An updated internal inspection of these buildings will be required for the future licence application.
- In addition, repeat emergence/re-entry surveys must be completed on Buildings B3 and B4 to gather data for a Natural England Licence Application. Natural England require data that has been collected within the past two years for submission with licence applications and the existing data collected by CSA Environmental is dated 2017/2018. If any other buildings are found to have evidence of bat presence following internal inspections, these will also require emergence/re-entry surveys.
- Hazel dormouse were recorded within boundary vegetation during the CSA Environmental surveys and therefore a Natural England EPS licence and associated mitigation strategy will be required prior to works commencing on site.
- It is recommended that the following surveys and reporting are repeated to update the data for the Reserved Matters application and Natural England EPS licencing (bats and dormice):
 - Phase 2 bat surveys (emergence/re-entry) (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018);
 - Phase 2 hazel dormouse surveys (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018);
 - Phase 2 badger surveys (CSA Environmental, 2018); and
 - Phase 2 great crested newt surveys (CSA Environmental, 2018).
- An active badger sett was recorded on the northern boundary of the site during the updated walkover. It is recommended that the sett is monitored for signs of badger activity over an extended period (four weeks) to establish the extent of use. Once the layout for the scheme is confirmed, the sett may require closure under licence depending on the risk of disturbance from the proposed development. If closure is required, the monitoring data will be sufficient for a sett closure under a Natural England disturbance licence.
- An updated Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy relating to the Reserved Matters application will be required.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location and Background

- 1.1.1 RPS was commissioned by Redrow Homes to undertake an Ecological Site Walkover of land at Arundel, Angerming, Littlehampton, BN16 4ET.
- 1.1.2 The application site is located on the northern edge of Angerming village, immediately to the north of the Angerming Sports and Social Club and allocated recreational land. The site is accessed off Arundel Road.
- 1.1.3 The site is 9.1 hectares and at the time of survey was mixed use, comprising agricultural, industrial, and residential (Building B1). This residential building is approved for demolition as part of the outline application. Two oak trees within the western boundary are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- 1.1.4 An outline application for the construction of up to 160 dwellings together with up to 1,393m² of B1/B2 units and land made available for expansion of current sports pitch provision was approved by Arun District Council in March 2020 (A/122/19/OUT).
- 1.1.5 As part of the outline planning application, detailed ecological information was submitted in support of the development, including:
- Ecological Impact Assessment (CSA Environmental, 2019);
 - Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy (CSA Environmental, 2019A number of Phase 2 protected species were completed in support of the Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy and include the following;
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018);
 - Preliminary Roost Assessment (CSA Environmental, 2017);
 - Phase 2 bat surveys (emergence/re-entry and activity surveys) (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018);
 - Phase 2 hazel dormouse surveys (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018);
 - Phase 2 badger surveys (CSA Environmental, 2018);
 - Phase 2 reptile surveys (CSA Environmental, 2018); and
 - Phase 2 great crested newt surveys (CSA Environmental, 2018).

1.2 Purpose and scope of this report

- 1.2.1 The 2021 site walkover aims to:
- review and assess the habitats present on site compared to previous reports and note if any updating ecological surveys are required for a Reserved Matters planning application.
 - provide outline options for mitigation measures as appropriate; and
 - make recommendations for appropriate biodiversity enhancements in line with national and local planning policy.
- 1.2.2 To undertake a site walkover, an ecologist visited the site and systematically walked the area, noting habitats present.

- 1.2.3 This report pertains to these results only; recommendations included within this report are the professional opinion of an experienced ecologist and therefore the view of RPS. The surveys undertaken as part of this review and subsequent are prepared in accordance with the British Standard for Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development (BS42020:2013).

1.3 Site Walkover

- 1.3.1 A updated site walkover was completed on the 2nd February 2021 by Frances Morris MRSB ACIEEM.
- 1.3.2 The site walkover followed the standard methodology (JNCC, 2010), and as described in the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Assessment (IEEM, 2012). In summary, this comprised walking over the survey area and recording the habitat types and boundary features present.
- 1.3.3 The surveyor looked for evidence of use including signs such as burrows, droppings, footprints, paths, hairs, refugia and particular habitat types known to be used by certain groups such as ponds. Any mammal paths were also noted down and where possible followed. Fence boundaries were walked to establish any entry points or animals signs such as latrines. Areas of bare earth were inspected for mammal prints. Areas of habitat considered suitable for protected species or those of conservation interest were recorded.

1.4 Limitations

Survey

- 1.4.1 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation can ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment.
- 1.4.2 Access into the bungalow grounds (Building B1) was not provided, and the building was occupied by residents therefore assessments of this building were made from the fence line.
- 1.4.3 During the site walkover one of the tenants would not provide access to their yard and therefore Building B2 could not be thoroughly surveyed.
- 1.4.4 The site walkover was carried out outside of the optimal survey season (April to October). Although the survey was carried out at a sub-optimal time of year, it is considered that sufficient information was obtained to enable an accurate assessment of the site to be carried out.

2 RESULTS

2.1 Site walkover

2.1.1 The 2021 updated walkover results are presented in the form of survey notes below. Descriptions of the habitat types and boundary features are detailed below. Habitat descriptions are defined by broad habitat types (JNCC, 2010).

2.1.2 Site photographs can be found at Appendix A.

Buildings

2.1.3 Buildings were externally assessed during the site walkover for features suitable for supporting roosting bats. The site walkover confirmed that no physical changes have occurred to the buildings since the previous surveys (CSA Environmental, 2017). A number of buildings are considered suitable for supporting roosting bats and two are confirmed roosts.

Hardstanding

2.1.4 Areas of hardstanding were located throughout the site in the form of roads and car park. All areas remain as per previous surveys (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018).

Semi-improved grassland

2.1.5 An area of semi improved grassland was located to the north of the site which is in line with the assessment made by CSA Environmental in 2017/2018. The grassland showed signs of recent ploughing (ridge lines). The sward height was approximately 3cm as shown in Photo 2 in Appendix A. The semi improved grassland field margins were considered suitable for supporting common and widespread reptile species, as per previous reports (CSA Environmental, 2018).

Native hedgerow

2.1.6 As previously reported by CSA Environmental, the site is bordered to the south, west and north by native hedgerow. Directly adjacent to the northern boundary was an area of deciduous woodland. As previously reported by CSA Environmental, a badger sett with recent signs of activity was noted in the northern boundary hedgerow. Native hedgerow on site is considered suitable for supporting great crested newts, common and widespread reptiles, nesting birds and hazel dormouse.

Scrub

2.1.7 An area of scrub was present to the north east of the site with bramble encroachment. A trench had been excavated in this area, with vegetation clearance recently carried out as shown in Photo 10 in Appendix A. Areas of scrub on site were considered suitable for supporting great crested newts, common and widespread reptiles, nesting birds and hazel dormouse.

Amenity garden

- 2.1.8 An amenity garden associated with Building B1 was present at the time of the site walkover. This area comprised amenity grassland and managed ornamental planting as per the previous survey (CSA Environmental, 2017).

3 ECOLOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Bats

- 3.1.1 Previous bat emergence/re-entry surveys recorded bat roosts in Buildings B3 and B4 with a single common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* seen emerging from under a ridge tile on Building B3 on the 6th June 2018 and a soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* seen emerging from Building B4 on the 12th June 2018.
- 3.1.2 Buildings B3 and B4 will therefore require a Natural England LowImpact Class licence to be in place and any associated mitigation measures prior to works commencing on site.
- 3.1.3 Previous internal surveys of the buildings were completed in 2017 and therefore to support an EPS licence application and assess the existing status of buildings on site, this should be repeated to gather up to date data.
- 3.1.4 In addition, repeat emergence/re-entry surveys must be completed on Buildings B3 and B4 to gather data for a Natural England Licence Application. If any other buildings are found to have evidence of bat presence following internal inspections, these will also require emergence/re-entry surveys.

3.2 Hazel dormouse

- 3.2.1 Previous surveys found hazel dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius* present within the eastern and western hedgerows on the site and therefore a Natural England EPS licence will be required for vegetation removal.
- 3.2.2 It is recommended that dormouse surveys are repeated to collect additional survey data for a Natural England licence application. Natural England require data that has been collected within the last two for submission with licence applications and the existing data collected by CSA Environmental was collected in 2018.

3.3 Other species

- 3.3.1 A badger *Meles meles* sett showing signs of recent activity was noted on the northern boundary of the site during the 2021 walkover. It is recommended that the sett is monitored for signs of badger activity over an extended period (four weeks) to ensure that, if active, badger will not be disturbed by the works. Once the layout for the scheme is confirmed, the sett may require closure under licence depending on the proximity of construction work and likelihood of disturbance from the works footprint. If closure is required, the monitoring data will be sufficient for a Natural England disturbance licence application for sett closure.
- 3.3.2 An Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy (RPS, 2021) has been provided which details further mitigation requirements for great crested newts, common and widespread reptiles and birds. This has since been updated by RPS (RPS, 2021).
- 3.3.3 For the purposes of a Reserved Matters application in 2021, the following survey reports are considered accurate due to site conditions being wholly unchanged since previous surveys:
- Ecological Impact Assessment (CSA Environmental, 2019); and;
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018), supported by this report.
- 3.3.4 It is recommended that the following surveys and reporting are repeated to update the data for the Reserved Matters application and Natural England EPS licencing (bats and dormice):

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- Phase 2 bat surveys (emergence/re-entry) (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018);
- Phase 2 hazel dormouse surveys (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018);
- Phase 2 badger surveys (CSA Environmental, 2018); and
- Phase 2 great crested newt eDNA surveys (CSA Environmental, 2018).

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 Habitats on site remain unchanged from the previous ecological surveys undertaken on the site in 2017 to 2019. It is therefore considered that the protected species assessments for reptiles and associated mitigation as detailed within the CSA Environmental reports submitted within the outline application (A/122/19/OUT), remain valid.
- 4.1.2 It is recommended that the following surveys and reporting are repeated to update the data for the Reserved Matters application and Natural England EPS licencing (bats and dormice);
- Phase 2 bat surveys (emergence/re-entry and activity surveys) (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018);
 - Phase 2 hazel dormouse surveys (CSA Environmental, 2017/2018);
 - Phase 2 badger surveys (CSA Environmental, 2018); and
 - Phase 2 great crested newt eDNA surveys (CSA Environmental, 2018).
- 4.1.3 Prior to any works commencing on site, Natural England EPS licences will be required for hazel dormice and bats which have been recorded on the site, plus associated mitigation strategies.
- 4.1.4 As recommended, an updated Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy relating to the Reserved Matters application will also be required. This will detail any mitigation or enhancement with respect to birds, great crested newts, and common and widespread reptiles during all phases of the project.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Site Photographs



Photo 1: Southern and eastern elevations of Building B2.



Photo 2: View looking north from south.



Photo 3: View looking east towards Building B1.



Photo 4: Hardstanding to east of site, used as car park.

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Photo 5: Open storage containers to east of site.



Photo 6: Eastern elevation of Building B10.

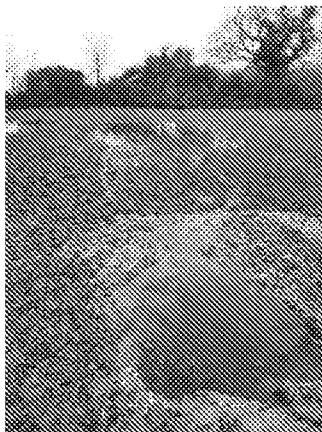


Photo 7: Standing water in north east corner of site.

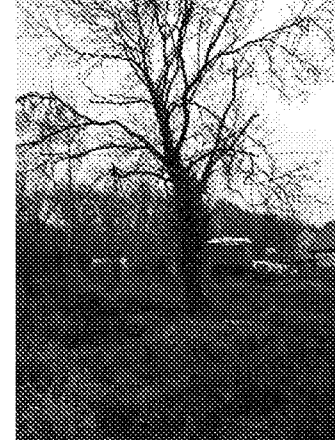


Photo 8: Tree with ivy cover to south east of site.

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Photo 9: Scrub area to south east of site.



Photo 10: Recent trenching works to south east of site.



Photo 11: View looking south from northern boundary.



Photo 12: Western elevation of Building B3.

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Photo 53: Scrub and vegetation covering Building B13



Photo 14: Southern elevation of Building B3 (previous bat roost in apex)



Photo 15: Badger sett on northern boundary of site.



Photo 16: Eastern elevation of Building B2.

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Photo 67: Building B14 looking east.



Photo 18: Southern elevation of Building B5.



Photo 19: Eastern elevation of Building B5.



Photo 20: Northern and western elevations of Building B1.

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Photo 22: South east of site looking east.



Photo 73: Northern boundary of the site.



Photo 24: Western elevations of Building B12.



Photo 25: Southern elevation of Building B11.

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Photo 26: Northern elevation of Building B4.



Photo 27: South western aspect of Building B1.

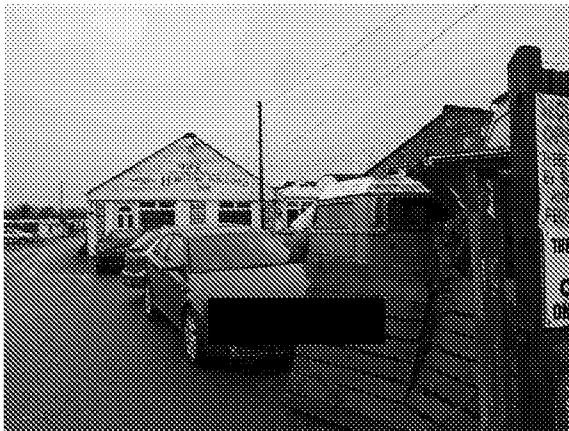


Photo 28: View of Building B2 looking north.



Photo 29: Building B12 looking south.

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Photo 30: Building B7 looking north.

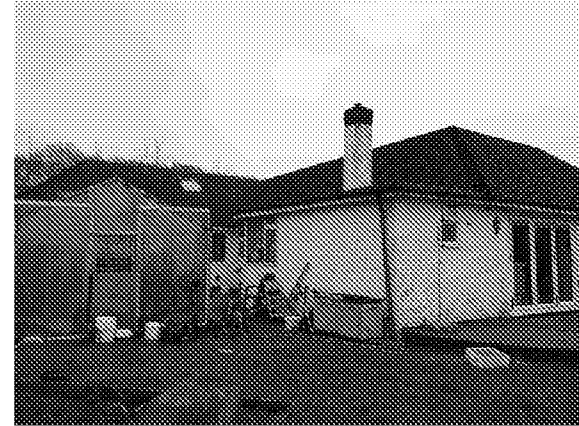


Photo 31: Building B1, residential property owned by the client.