

Site Inspection Report



Site:	LEC Airfield, Bognor Regis
Client:	BR Aviation Ltd
Job Number:	A114027
Survey Type(s):	Ecological Appraisal
Date of Survey(s):	14.06.2019
File Location:	I:\Projects\Projects A114000 on\A114027 LEC Airfield Bognor Regis\REPORTS

Introduction

WYG was commissioned by BR Aviation Ltd on 10th June 2019 to undertake an Ecological Appraisal of the site known as LEC Airfield, Bognor Regis. The site is located to the north of Bognor Regis and is centred at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference, SU 94540 00996.

The development proposals consist of the construction of a single hanger within an area of amenity grassland within the eastern extent of the airfield. The survey area is confined to an area within the eastern extent as no other areas of construction are proposed within the airfield at the current time.

This report has been prepared by Project Ecologist Ben Cooke GradCIEEM.

The purpose of this report is to complete:

- An extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, involving a walkover of the site to record habitat types and dominant vegetation, including any invasive species, and a reconnaissance survey for evidence of protected fauna or habitats capable of supporting such species; and
- An assessment of the potential ecological receptors present on site, identify any constraints they pose to future development and (if possible) any recommendations for any further surveys, avoidance, mitigation or enhancement measures that are needed (as appropriate).

Note that scientific names are provided at the first mention of each species and common names (where appropriate) are then used throughout the rest of the report for ease of reading.

Methodology

The following methodologies have been used to identify the ecological receptors present on or near the site, which are relevant to the proposed development.

Habitats

An extended Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken on the site on 14th June 2019 by WYG Project Ecologist Ben Cooke GradCIEEM. The weather conditions were breezy with scattered cloud and sunshine.

The vegetation and broad habitat types within the site were noted during the survey in accordance with the categories specified for a Phase 1 Vegetation and Habitat Survey (JNCC, 2010). Dominant plant species were recorded for each habitat present using nomenclature according to Stace (2010).

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The site was also appraised for its suitability to support notable flora, with regard to the *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* (CIEEM, 2017).

Protected & Notable Species

The site was inspected for evidence of, and its potential to support, protected or notable species, especially those listed under the Schedule 2 of the Habitat Regulations, Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (W&CA), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW Act) and those given extra protection under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act).

Results

Designated Sites

There are two statutory designated sites within a 2km radius of the site; Felpham Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Bersted Brooks Local Nature Reserve (LNR). In addition, the Lidsey Rife (situated adjacent to the west of the site) is classified as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area by the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership.

Habitats

For the locations of the habitats described below within the area assessed, refer to Figure 1.

Scattered Scrub

Sections of scattered scrub were present along the eastern boundary of the site. These areas were dominated by bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. and hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* (Photograph 1).

Photograph 1: Area of Scattered Scrub along Eastern Boundary



Tall Ruderal

Stands of tall ruderal vegetation were located sporadically along the margins of the eastern boundary of the site. The habitat was dominated by stinging nettle *Urtica dioica* and creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*.

Marginal Vegetation

The habitat was present along the length of Lidsey Rife which forms the eastern boundary of the site. The habitat was dominated by reeds *Phragmites australis* (Photograph 2).

Photograph 2: Marginal Vegetation along Lidsey Rife



Amenity Grassland

The majority of the site consists of well managed amenity grassland. The habitat is dominated by perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* with occasional white clover *Trifolium repens* and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* with rare examples of common daisy *Bellis perennis* (Photograph 4).

Photograph 3: Amenity Grassland



Protected and Notable Species

GCN

The majority of the habitat within the site is considered unsuitable for GCN. Areas of suitable habitat for the species are limited to the peripheries of the site with Lidsey Rife a major barrier to dispersal for GCN. The site is assessed as being of negligible suitability for GCN.

Reptiles

The habitat within the site with suitability for reptiles, offering opportunities for foraging and/ or shelter were located within the peripheries of the site. The proposed hanger location is located on a short sward of regularly maintained grassland with no suitability for reptiles. The site is therefore is considered to have negligible suitability for reptiles.

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Bats

The boundaries provide linear features which could provide commuting corridors for bats and are connected to suitable habitats within the wider area, in particular the along the Lidsey Rife. The site consists of amenity grassland which provides limited foraging and commuting habitats for bats. Suitable habitat is present along the river but this is off site and therefore the site offers negligible suitability for commuting and foraging bats.

No suitable features were recorded within the site for bats to roost, as all the mature trees within the immediate area are situated along the river outside of the boundaries of the site. The site is therefore assessed as being of negligible potential for roosting bats.

Badgers

No signs of badger activity was recorded within the site. Given the level of disturbance experienced within the site and adjacent areas in combination with the Lidsey Rife it is considered that the site is of low suitability for the species to commute and forage. The flat topography throughout much of the site in combination with the openness of the habitat means there is minimal opportunity for sett creation. The site is therefore considered to be of negligible suitability for badgers.

Hazel Dormice

Areas of scrub along the site boundaries have suitability as a foraging resource for dormice although no hazel *Corylus avellana* trees or scrub were recorded within the site. The location of the site with surrounding urban development (including roads) and the Lidsey Rife prevents a direct connection to suitable habitat within the wider area. The site is therefore considered to have negligible suitability for dormice.

Otter and water vole

No signs of otter or water vole were recorded during the assessment. The majority of the site comprised of habitat which is considered unsuitable for both species to commute or forage. The Lidsey Rife situated adjacent to the site does offer suitable habitat for these species however this is off site. The proposed area for construction is 35m from the rife at its closet point with no suitably connected habitat present. The site is therefore considered to have negligible suitability for otter and water vole.

Breeding Birds

The habitats present within the site were considered suitable to support a common assemblage of breeding birds. Habitat such as scattered scrub does provide suitability for breeding birds in relation to foraging and shelter. The site is largely considered unsuitable for notable species given the majority of the site is amenity grassland and therefore has a relatively low level of biodiversity. As the proposed area of construction comprised of amenity grassland, while the site is considered to have low suitability for breeding birds, the area to be impacted is considered to be of negligible suitability.

Invertebrates

The habitats present within the site were considered likely to harbour widespread and common invertebrate species. As the site is dominated by amenity grassland these areas of suitable habitat are confined to the boundaries of the site. The site is considered to be of negligible suitability for notable invertebrate species.

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Invasive Species

No invasive species were identified within or near the boundaries of the site.

Discussion

Designated Sites

Felpham SSSI and Bersted LNR are both designated for the presence of particular flora and habitats. These sites are situated over 1km from the proposed location for the hanger with no direct links connecting these designated areas with the site. The construction of the proposed hanger is not considered to have any direct or indirect impact to the integrity of these sites.

Habitats

The habitat lost as a result of the proposed development will be confined exclusively to an area of amenity grassland. This habitat has been assessed as being of low ecological value and is common and widespread within the wider landscape.

Protected & Notable Species

The majority of the habitat present within the site has been assessed as being of low ecological value and do not provide the habitat characteristics to support protected and notable species and are not connected to areas of suitable habitat in the wider landscape. the site has therefore been assessed as providing negligible suitability to support protected and notable species

Quality Control		
Version:	1	FINAL
Prepared by:		Ben Cooke GradCIEEM Project Ecologist
Checked By:		Kevin Wood GradCIEEM Senior Ecologist
Verified By:		David West CEnv/MCIEEM Associate Ecologist

Version:	Date:	Updated by:	Verified by:	Description of changes:

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References

- CIEEM, (2017), *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*, 2nd Edition, CIEEM: Winchester.

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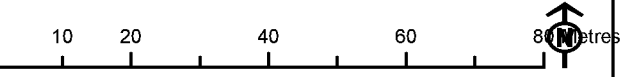
- JNCC, (2010), Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit, JNCC: Peterborough.
- Stace, C., (2010), *New Flora of the British Isles*, 3rd edition, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.



Rev	Date	Notes
A	25/06/19	Initial map production

Legend

- Scrub - scattered
- Tall ruderal
- Non-ruderal
- Amenity grassland
- Site Boundary



Site Location Plan

LEC Airfield, Bognor Regis
BR Aviation Ltd

Scale at A3: 1:1,100	Project No: A114027	Drawing No: Figure 1	Revision: A
Drawn by: Ben Cooke	Drawn date: 25/06/2019	Approved by: David West	

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