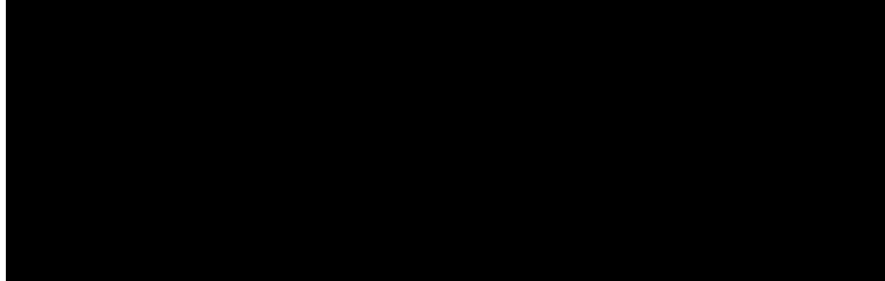


SPECIES

Ecological Consultancy

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**LAND AT RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL
ESTATE, LITTLEHAMPTON,
WEST SUSSEX
PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEYS**

FINAL REPORT

JANUARY, 2021

LAND AT RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, LITTLEHAMPTON
PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEYS

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LAND AT RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, LITTLEHAMPTON
PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEYS

SUMMARY

Species Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Pegasus Planning on behalf of L & C Commercial Limited to undertake a Biodiversity Survey of land at Riverside Industrial Estate, Littlehampton, West Sussex. It is proposed to erect an additional industrial unit on the site. This survey identified the need for targeted protected species surveys of the Site to more fully evaluate its ecological value, to inform on the potential impacts of the proposals. These surveys were therefore instructed and the results are presented here.

The surveys found that the Site itself has a low level of protected species. No bat roosts were identified and low-level bat foraging was recorded by two species of bat. No common reptiles were found at the Site. Common breeding birds were recorded in trees on the Site but the adjacent industrial unit, which lies in close proximity to the proposals, was found to support breeding Herring gulls, a Red List Bird of Conservation Concern.

Mitigation will be required to avoid disturbing the breeding birds on and adjacent to the Site by not commencing construction during the bird breeding season – March to August inclusive. Measures not to light the vegetated boundary of the Site will also be necessary to avoid impacts upon foraging bats. Compensation measures will also be required to ameliorate any impacts upon bird species – it is recommended that a brown roof be installed on the new building to enhance the biodiversity of the Site and to provide potential new habitat for other bird species. Biodiversity enhancement is also a requirement to meet UK planning policy over and above any Site issues and therefore it is recommended that bird and bat boxes also be installed within trees in the vegetated boundary of the Site

LAND AT RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, LITTLEHAMPTON

PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEYS

1. INTRODUCTION

Overview

- 1.1 Species Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Pegasus Planning on behalf of L & C Commercial Limited to undertake a Biodiversity Survey of land at Riverside Industrial Estate, Littlehampton, West Sussex. It is proposed to erect an additional industrial unit on the site.
- 1.2 This survey identified a number of protected species surveys that are required to fully assess the ecological value of the Site and thus allow any potential impacts from the proposals to be evaluated. These surveys were therefore instructed and were undertaken during 2020. The results of these surveys are presented here.

Site Location

- 1.3 The site forms part of an industrial estate at Bridge Road (B2187), Littlehampton, West Sussex and thus largely comprises hard standing that is currently used for carparking by the existing businesses present. However, there is a mature vegetation strip present along the boundary of the site that may be impacted by the scheme. The strip is also connected to vegetation off-site that lines the embankment up to Bridge Road and contains a ditch. The industrial estate is structured around an internal, square access road and the site lies to the north west corner. The River Arun runs along the southern boundary of the industrial estate, nearby.
- 1.4 The land on site is generally level and off-site to the north the land rises to form the embankment to Bridge Road which runs between the roundabout with the A259, which crosses the River Arun to the south, and Broad Piece.

Policy and Legislation

- 1.5 Nature conservation in the UK is protected by legislation, principally under the Habitats Regulations: The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). The Government's stance on biodiversity is set out in The National Planning Policy Framework (2018) and includes how biodiversity policy is expected to be applied in order to achieve sustainable development. The environment is considered a core component of sustainable development and the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils;

- recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- preventing both new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.

1.6 To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries;
- 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.

2. METHODOLOGY

Breeding Bird Survey

- 2.1 During the initial Biodiversity Survey of the Site, breeding birds were noted using trees on Site and on the boundary with the road embankment. In addition, gulls were noted sitting with chicks on the industrial unit roof immediately adjacent to the site – Unit H. It was thus recommended that a breeding bird survey was undertaken to evaluate the status of the Site. Best practice is for six visits to be undertaken between March and July. This work was instructed in July 2020 and thus much of the bird breeding season had passed. However given that:

- Breeding birds were noted on nests on Site and some still feeding young;
- the Site largely comprises hard standing and has limited suitable habitat for birds; and
- Herring gulls are a species of issue here and these birds are late breeders having dependent young well into August;

It was decided to undertake two early morning visits to the Site in July 2020 to assess whether any breeding birds were present as early as possible in the calendar to inform the proposals. Any birds considered to be breeding were recorded and noted on a plan.

Bat Survey

- 2.2 Some mature trees are present on Site and immediately adjacent to the Site along the road embankment to the north. An industrial unit in very close proximity to the proposals which is considered to have a low potential to support a bat roost. It is thus best practice for bat emergence and activity surveys to be undertaken to evaluate the use of the Site by bats. Given the limited vegetation habitat on site and the low potential value of the adjacent industrial unit, it is appropriate to conduct two bat emergence/re-entry surveys within May to August, the core period of the bat activity season. One of these surveys must be a dawn bat survey.
- 2.3 Bat emergence and activity surveys were undertaken on Site on 21st July and 5th August, 2020. The first survey was undertaken at dusk and the second survey at dawn.

Reptile Survey

- 2.4 The majority of the Site comprises hard standing and is therefore not considered suitable habitat for common reptiles but part of the site comprises dumped and overgrown rubbish, scrub and a vegetated embankment behind. This area is also South-facing and receives sunshine for most of the day. This habitat is considered suitable to support common reptiles.
- 2.5 The site was set up with potential refuges for reptiles in the form of pieces of roofing felt and corrugated iron which were placed on the ground in early July, 2020 – see **Plan 4**. In accordance with best practice, seven repeat visits were made to the Site to check the refugia which were checked in late July and then the majority checked in September, 2020. Surveys

were undertaken during appropriate weather conditions for reptile survey and these details are given in **Table 2** below:

Table 2: Reptile Survey Environmental Conditions

DATE	WEATHER
26/07/20	17°C, 0.5-1/5 breeze
29/07/20	18°C, Dry, Sunny, 2/5 breeze
31/08/20	13°C, Dry, Sunny spells with 0.5/5 breeze. 10% cloud
05/09/20	Sunny, clear, dry, 13°C.
07/09/20	Sunny spells, 14°C, 1/5 breeze.
10/09/20	13°C, Sunny, clear.
17/09/20	17°C, sunny with 1-2 breeze.

2.6 Any reptiles found on Site were identified and their locations recorded.

3. RESULTS & EVALUATION

Bat Survey

- 3.1 No bat roosts were found on Site on either of the bat emergence/re-entry surveys undertaken. No bat roosts were confirmed roosting in trees or within the industrial building immediately adjacent to the Site. Low numbers of two species of bat were recorded foraging along the mature trees to the rear of the site and generally in a limited manner across the Site: Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. The bat species recorded are provided in **Table 3.1** and the bat activity recorded in **Table 3.2** below. The data collected is also summarised on **Plans 1** and **2**. Generally foraging bats appeared later on in the evening suggesting that bats were not resident on Site but travelling through the site from roosting elsewhere, stopping here to feed. The adjacent industrial unit and the majority of the hard-standing area are quite brightly lit by streetlights at night which would be likely to negatively affect bat activity.

Table 3.1: Summary of Bat species recorded.

Species	Species - Latin name	Numbers	Status
Common Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	3-4	Common & widespread
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	1	Common & widespread

Table 3.2: Summary of Bat Emergence/re-entry Surveys

DATE	BAT SPECIES RECORDED	BAT ACTIVITY
17/07/2020	Common Pipistrelle; Noctule.	Low numbers of Common Pipistrelle bats were largely recorded foraging along the vegetated northern boundary of the Site; A single Noctule flew across the site from NE-SW at a moderate height.
08/08/2020	Common Pipistrelle;	Lower numbers of Common Pipistrelle bats were briefly recorded foraging along the vegetated northern boundary of the Site at dawn; A Common

		Pipistrelle was recorded flying north-south alongside the adjacent industrial unit.
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- 3.2 It is considered that the Site is of Low nature conservation value for the bat foraging and commuting habitat it provides across the landscape. The proposals should not light the vegetated northern boundary of the Site in order to prevent negative impacts upon bat foraging and commuting through the Site.

Breeding Bird Surveys

- 3.3 Low numbers of two species of common UK birds were recorded nesting on site – Carrion crow *Corvus corone* and Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*. A further four bird species were recorded nesting or holding breeding territory in the trees to the rear of the Site. These species are shown in bold in **Table 3.3** below and are presented on **Plan 3**. A number of other bird species were recorded on Site or passing through the Site. These species are also given in **Table 3.3**.

Table 3.3: Birds recorded on and adjacent to the Site. (Species in **bold** are considered to be breeding)

Species – Common Name	Species – Latin Name	Status
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	
Chaffinch	<i>Fringella coelebs</i>	
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Red
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Amber
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	

Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	
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- 3.4 Herring gulls *Larus argentatus* were recorded breeding on the roof of the adjacent industrial unit which includes Block H. Breeding Herring gulls were also recorded on other units nearby including Unit D4 and Units N10-11 (Stockley Outdoor & Equestrian). See **Table 3.4** below.
- 3.5 Herring gulls have a Red UK Conservation Status due to ongoing declines in their population and declines in the overwintering population. A total of three pairs of Herring Gulls and six chicks were recorded on the adjacent roof.

Table 3.4: Herring gulls recorded on the adjacent industrial units.

Date	No. of adult Herring Gulls nesting on units F-H	No. of chicks on units F-H	On other units nearby	
			Adults	Chicks
10/07/20	3	4	2	3
16/07/20	6	6	4	5

- 3.6 The common breeding birds recorded on site and in the adjacent vegetated embankment are considered to be of Site nature conservation value. The adjacent industrial unit (F-H), along with the whole of the Riverside Industrial Estate, is also considered to be of Low nature conservation value for the nesting habitat it provides for Herring Gulls. It is considered likely that there will be a number of other nesting sites for Herring Gulls present at Littlehampton, along the southern coast of England.
- 3.7 In order to mitigate for the potential disturbance to bird species on and adjacent to the Site, construction work will need to commence outside the bird breeding season, March to August inclusive. The bird breeding season can extend outside this period in milder weather however.
- 3.8 In terms of providing compensation for potential disturbance to breeding birds on and adjacent to the Site, the construction of a new metal, flat roof will actually, just on its own, provide additional nesting habitat for use by Herring Gulls. Thus the provision of an expanse of metal roof is thus required. In order to make further positive gains for biodiversity, a brown roof could be created on the roof of the new building to provide new nesting habitat for additional bird species on Site and for other wildlife such as invertebrates. A brown roof comprises laying a substrate on the roof and providing some fixed larger rubble areas which will allow ephemeral herbs to colonise and provide sheltered niches in which birds could nest. It is recommended that this is undertaken.

Reptile Survey

- 3.9 No reptiles were recorded at the Site and hence it is considered unlikely that they are present on Site.

- 3.10 A Brown rat *Rattus norvegicus*, a Common shrew *Sorex araneus*, a Common vole *Microtus arvalis* and a Wood mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus* were all recorded under felts on the Site and are considered to be of Negligible nature conservation value.
- 3.11 The absence of reptiles may be due to the limited size of the habitat available on site, the vibration and noise from the busy main road in close proximity to the rear of the site and the dense shade from the mature trees present on the road embankment to the rear which limits the basking opportunities available.

4. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

4.1 The Site is considered to have a low value for protected species:

- No bat roosts were found within the Site during the surveys undertaken but very low numbers of two of the more common bat species were found to be foraging through the Site;
- Low numbers of common species of breeding bird were found to occur on Site. Herring gulls, a Red List Bird of Conservation Concern species, were found to be nesting on the roof of the adjacent industrial unit which lies immediately adjacent to the proposals. It will be very likely that these birds will be disturbed by the construction of the proposals. Further common species of breeding birds are present within the vegetated road embankment adjacent to the Site and may also be disturbed.
- No reptiles were found to occur on the Site.

Recommendations

- 4.2 Construction work will need to commence outside the bird breeding season, March to August inclusive, in order to prevent disturbance to breeding birds.
- 4.3 Provision of an expanse of a new metal, flat roof will be required for use by nesting Herring Gulls as compensation for any potential disturbance caused. Creation of a brown roof to provide some additional ecological habitat of value to bird species generally is recommended.
- 4.4 No new lighting must shine onto the northern boundary vegetation to prevent negative impacts upon foraging and commuting bat species.
- 4.5 UK planning policy requires every planning application to make a positive contribution over and above any mitigation required for impacts upon protected species from the Scheme. It is thus recommended that three woodcrete bird boxes and two Schwegler 2F bat boxes with double front panels are installed on trees on the northern boundary of the Site as an enhancement for biodiversity.

PLANS

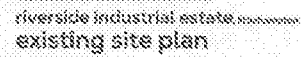
PLAN 1 - RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE – BAT SURVEY

17/07/2020

PLAN 2 - RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE – BAT SURVEY

05/08/2020

05/08/2020



PLAN 3 - RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - BREEDING BIRD SURVEY



schedule of
accommodation
as per existing species

culvert drainage pipes to be diverted
away from new unit

existing tunnel
new canopy extent

KEY

- CF = Chaffinch
- CW = Carrion crow
- WR = Wren
- BB = Blackbird
- GF = Greenfinch
- HG = Herring gull
- WP = Woodpigeon

riverside industrial estate, Southampton
existing site plan

ref: 4076/p0018/1 rev. dec 2020
scale 1:200 @ A1 (1:1000 on screen)

210th, London and Cambridge University
subject to the survey and the approval
gdm architects

PLAN 4 - RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - REPTILE SURVEY

[illegible]