
EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY

RONTEC CROSSBUSH SERVICES,
LYMINSTER ROAD, ARUNDEL,
WEST SUSSEX

JULY 2021



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2021 by Rontec Service Stations 1A Limited, via Jennings Design Limited, to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey at Crossbush Services, Arundel, West Sussex. The site is situated off Lyminster Road, to the south-east of Arundel (O.S. grid reference: TQ 02829 05812 – see Figure 1). The proposed development site currently comprises a roadside verge within the service station, which is planted with trees.

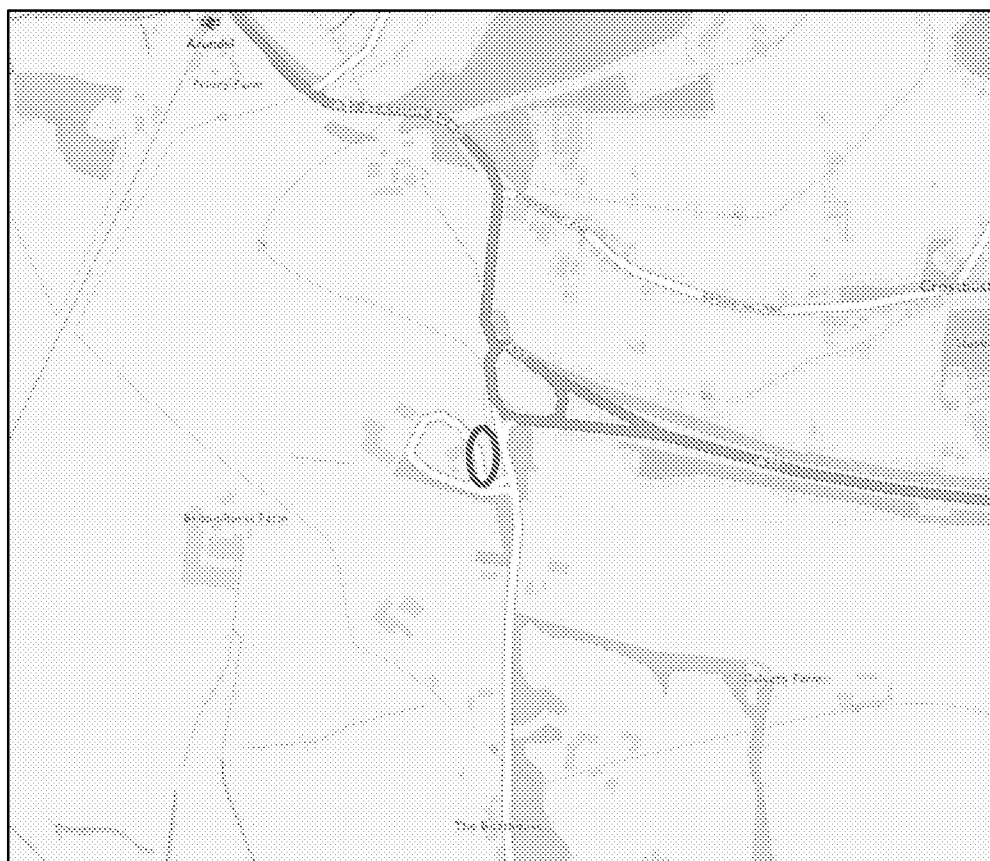


Figure 1 showing the location of the site circled in red

Description of Development

- 1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the erection of a drive-through coffee facility.

Biodiversity in Planning

- 1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a requirement to consider biodiversity and protected species when determining planning applications. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) gives specific reference to minimising the impacts of development on biodiversity. Local and Neighbourhood plans also provide guidance towards protecting and enhancing biodiversity, including priority habitats and notable species.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.1 A Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (JNCC, 2010). The site was walked and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 habitat category. Species lists were taken at locations of botanical interest. All botanical nomenclature follows Stace, 2019. A Phase 1 map was produced showing habitat boundaries.
- 2.2 During the Extended Phase 1 survey, the habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included, for example, looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g. setts, paths, latrines and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on site or near the site for their potential to support Great Crested Newt, assessing any trees for bat roost suitability and assessing the site for reptiles.
- 2.3 The site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

- 2.4 Andy Harmer (Principal Ecologist) carried out the Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey on the 16th July 2021. Andy has over twenty years of experience in habitat and protected species assessments. July is an optimal time of the year for botanical surveys. Protected species assessments can be undertaken at any time of the year. The weather at the time of the survey was sunny and dry.

Survey Constraints

- 2.5 The site was fully accessible. There were no constraints to the survey.

3.0 RESULTS

PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY

- 3.1 The Phase 1 Habitat Map can be found at the back of the report. The habitats on the proposed development site are described below.

Broad-leaved Plantation Woodland

- 3.2 The proposed development site is dominated by broad-leaved plantation woodland (see Photograph 1). This is fairly young, with tree guards still evident, and the tree species include Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Guelder-rose *Viburnum opulus*, Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur*, Italian Alder *Alnus cordata*, Field Maple *Acer campestre* and Holly *Ilex aquifolium*. The ground flora is species-poor (see Photograph 2), with scattered Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*. Most of the woodland floor comprises bare ground.



Photograph 1 showing the plantation woodland



Photograph 2 showing the ground within the plantation

Amenity Grassland

- 3.3 A mown grass verge exists between the plantation woodland and the access road (see Photograph 3). This is species-poor and comprises Annual Meadow-grass *Poa annua*, Red Fescue *Festuca rubra* and Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*.



Photograph 3 showing the amenity grassland verge

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 3.4 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit) and the species is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.5 No waterbodies exist on the site. One waterbody exists within 250 metres. This is a man-made pond which lies 150 metres to the south-east, across Lyminster Road which is a barrier to amphibian dispersal. There is no habitat connectivity between this pond and the site. The site support suitable Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat, within the plantation woodland.

Bats

- 3.6 All bat species are European Protected Species. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit). Bats are also protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.7 No buildings exist on site. No mature trees exist on site. Therefore, no habitats suitable for roosting bats exist on site. The site supports a tree belt, which as a linear habitat, offers limited foraging and commuting habitat for bats. This is well-lit by streetlamps.

Badger

- 3.8 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These Acts, for example, make it illegal to disturb a Badger whilst it is in a sett, to kill, injure or take a Badger and to obstruct the entrance to a Badger sett.
- 3.9 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity such as latrines or snuffle holes was located on site.

Nesting Birds

- 3.10 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- 3.11 The plantation woodland supports suitable bird nesting habitat.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 3.12 No invasive, non-native species, as listed on Schedule 9 of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), were found on site.

PROTECTED SITES

- 3.13 No statutory protected sites lie on the site or immediately adjacent to the site boundary. The nearest statutory protected site is Arundel Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which lies 1.9km to the north-west of the site.
- 3.14 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, which lists certain types of development that may deleteriously impact upon local SSSIs. The type of development proposed is not listed as a concern at this location.
- 3.15 No non-statutory protected sites exist on or adjacent to the site or within 1km of the site.

4.0 ASSESSMENT

Habitats

- 4.1 The Phase 1 Habitats present on the site are common throughout the UK. No nationally rare or locally rare plant species were located during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
- 4.2 The site comprises a planted tree belt, which is species-poor with a poorly developed ground layer. A strip of mown amenity grassland occurs between the tree belt and the existing access road. The habitats are of limited ecological value, with the tree belt offering nesting habitat for birds. The site is isolated by well-lit, busy roads.

Development Context

- 4.3 The development proposals involve the loss of the tree belt and amenity grassland. Further plantation woodland and amenity grassland exists to the north and south which will not be impacted upon. No specific habitat mitigation is considered necessary, given the low ecological value of the site. However, to compensate for the loss of bird nesting habitat, bird boxes will be provided (see below).

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 4.4 No ponds exist on the site. One pond exists 150 metres from the site, across Lyminster Road. There is no habitat connectivity between this pond and the site. The site itself offers limited suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newt and is isolated by busy roads and commercial development. Given the lack of suitable breeding habitat in the locality, no further amphibian survey work is required, and Great Crested Newt is not considered to be a constraint on development at this time.

Bats

- 4.5 No buildings exist on site. No mature trees exist on site. No Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) were found at the trees on site. The site does not support suitable bat roosting habitat. No further bat survey work is considered to be necessary. Whilst the tree belt does offer a linear habitat for bats to utilise for foraging, it is well-lit and not considered to be optimum bat habitat. The tree belts to the north and west offer better foraging habitat.

Badger

- 4.6 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity was located during the survey. Badger is not considered to be a constraint on development.

Nesting Birds

- 4.7 The plantation woodland offers suitable bird nesting habitat. If the site clearance work will proceed within the bird nesting season (which is generally March-August), then a nesting bird check will be required immediately prior to any work.

PROTECTED SITES

- 4.8 No statutory or non-statutory protected sites lie within the proposed development site or immediately adjacent. The nearest statutory protected site is Arundel Park SSSI, which lies 1.9km to the north-west of the site. At this distance, and with barrier habitats between the SSSI and the proposed development site, there is expected to be no deleterious impact on any protected sites from the development.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Further Surveys

- 5.1 Protected species are a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a planning application. The presence of protected species, the effect of the proposed development and suitable mitigation, if required, must be established before planning permission can be granted. Following the findings from the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, the following survey may be required:

- Nesting Birds - If any work to the plantation woodland needs to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally March to August), then a nesting bird survey will be required immediately prior to work commencing.

Habitat Enhancement

- 5.2 The landscaping scheme should include a species-rich amenity grassland, such as Geminal WFG20 Eco Species-rich Lawn seed mixture.
- 5.3 Bird boxes and bat boxes should be erected onto retained trees to the north of the site.

6.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

