



Hallam Land Management

Bognor Regis Golf Club, Bognor Regis

APPENDIX 8.6 - HAZEL DORMOUSE SURVEYS

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TABLE

Table 1: Index of Probability for Nest Tube Surveys

FIGURE

Figure 1: Dormouse Tube Locations Plan 2021

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The following report has been prepared by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd on behalf of Hallam Land Management to present the results of hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* surveys completed on the site at Bognor Regis Golf Club, Bognor Regis, West (central grid reference: SU 950 012).
- 1.2 The scope and objectives of the report are to:
- present the findings of the dormouse surveys undertaken in 2016, 2017 and 2021;
 - assess the relative importance of the survey area for dormice;
 - review the site proposals and provide recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement.

Site Context

- 1.3 The Site covers an area of approximately 40ha and currently comprises the existing Bognor Regis Golf Course and associated club house and car parking. Vehicular and pedestrian access is provided from Golf Links Road. The golf course comprises fairways, fairway trees with occasional drainage ditches. A practice green is also located close to the club house.
- 1.4 The Site is located to the north of Felpham and Bognor Regis, and is adjacent to the north-western edge of the built-up area of Felpham. It is bounded to the west by Lidsey Rife, beyond which is the LEC Airfield, the railway line and areas of commercial development. To the north is the A259. To the east is the existing residential environs of Felpham and Downview Primary School. To the south are open fields extending to the B2259 and further afield Felpham.

Development Proposals

- 1.5 Outline planning application with all matters reserved, except means of access, for the erection of up to 480 new homes (C3), the formation of a new means of access onto Golf Links Road, together with the creation of new surface water drainage, new landscaping and habitat creation, ground works and other infrastructure. The retention and re-purposing of the retained club house (F2(b)).

2.0 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

- 2.1 The hazel dormouse is legally protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and is a European Protected Species (EPS) under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017 (Amendment) (EU Exit). It is also a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.
- 2.2 In summary, it is an offence to:
- intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture dormice;
 - intentionally, deliberately or recklessly disturb dormice in such a way as to significantly affect their ability to survive, breed, rear/nurture their young or significantly affect their local distribution or abundance;
 - intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to places used by dormice for shelter or protection (whether occupied or not);
 - intentionally or recklessly disturb a dormouse whilst occupying a place of shelter or protection;
 - damage or destroy a dormouse breeding site or resting place;
 - possess or transport a dormouse (or any part thereof) unless under licence; and
 - sell or exchange dormice.
- 2.3 Proposals which could lead to any of the above would require a derogation licence from Natural England alongside appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

- 3.1 In order to compile existing baseline information, relevant ecological information was requested from both statutory and non-statutory nature conservation organisations including:
- Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC); and
 - Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SBRC)
- 3.2 When handling data, species records were filtered to those within the last ten years. Older records were reviewed but only included where they were considered relevant to the site assessment.

Presence/Likely Absence Surveys

- 3.3 Dormouse presence surveys were undertaken in accordance with current good practice guidelines within The Dormouse Conservation Handbook. Surveys involved placing standard dormouse nest tubes every 20m in suitable habitat, approximately 1.5m above ground. A total of 100 tubes were installed on site on 20th July 2016 and subsequent surveys have been completed in August, September and October 2016, and May and June 2017. A total of 140 tubes were installed on site on 25th August 2021 (*Figure 1*) and subsequent surveys have been completed on 24th of September and 21st of October 2021. Surveys were undertaken by suitably qualified ecologists.
- 3.4 The survey results are used in conjunction with an index of probability, which indicates the likelihood of finding dormice during this period (see *Table 1*).
- 3.5 Guidelines provide an index of probability, which indicates the likelihood of finding dormice during the survey period (*Table 1*). The final survey score is calculated by multiplying the sum of the months that tubes were checked by the number of tubes used, based on 50 tubes as a standard (i.e. 50=1). Fewer tubes reduce the overall score (i.e. 25 tubes = 0.5) and more tubes increase the score (i.e. 100 tubes = 2). A survey effort score of 20 or above is required to provide confidence in the survey results.

Table 1: Index of probability for nest tube surveys

Month	Index of Probability
April	1
May	4
June	2
July	2
August	5
September	7
October	2
November	2

Limitations

- 3.6 Due to the timing of commission, the surveys undertaken in 2021 have not reached a survey effort score of 20, however surveys are ongoing and will continue into 2022, however, due to the extensive nature of the historical dataset it is considered that there is sufficient information to inform this assessment.

4.0 RESULTS

Desk Study

- 4.1 There were no dormice records within 1km of the survey area provided by SBRC in 2021.

Habitat Suitability

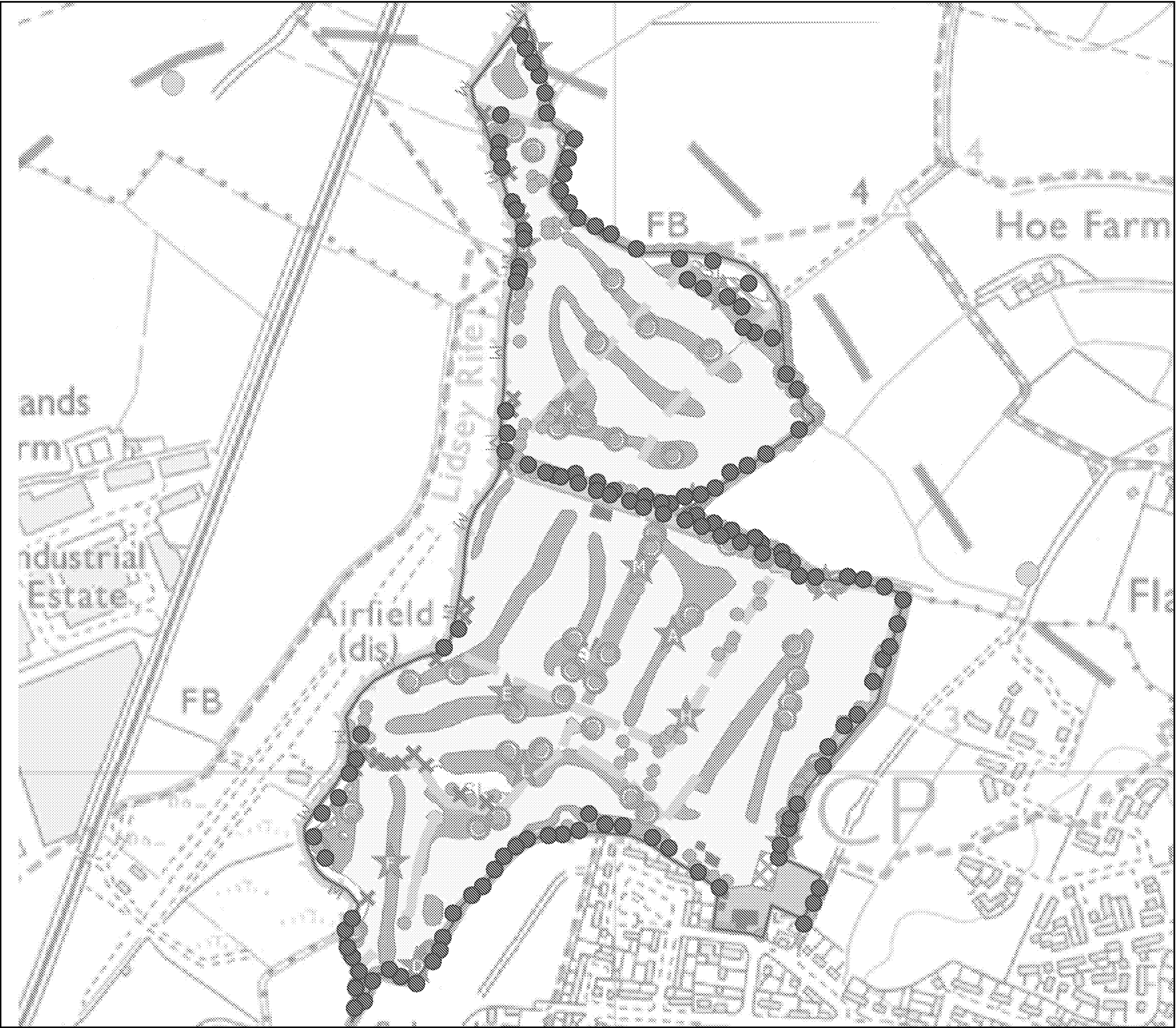
- 4.2 Suitable habitat for dormice was present on and around site in the form of native hedgerows, and broadleaved and mixed plantation woodlands. These provided commuting, foraging and nesting opportunities with connectivity around the site. Connectivity to an extensive hedgerow network in the wider area was present providing opportunities for dormice within adjacent habitats.

Presence/Absence Surveys

- 4.3 No evidence of hazel dormice was recorded in 2016/2017 surveys after achieving a score of 40.
- 4.4 To date, no evidence of hazel dormice has been recorded in the 2021 surveys.
- 4.5 The results of both surveys indicate likely absence of this species on site.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The site supported a network of broadleaved and mixed plantation woodlands, which provided foraging and nesting opportunities along with connectivity across the site and into the wider area. There were also a range of species present that could be utilised by dormice for foraging, including bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*, willow *Salix* species and hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*. However, no evidence of dormice was found on site in either 2016/2017 or 2021.
- 5.2 Furthermore, the boundary hedgerows and woodlands, which would most likely be used by this species, are largely to be retained within the design of the scheme, although some central regions will have vegetation removed. As such, the hazel dormouse is not considered a constraint to the development.



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Key

- Site Boundary
- Dormouse Tube Locations



Hallam Land Mangement

Bognor Regis Golf Course,
West Sussex

DORMOUSE TUBE LOCATION PLAN

scale @ A3
1:5000

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Figure 1