

# Biodiversity Checklist for Full Applications

Planning ref: (for office use)

Site address:

There are many legally protected sites of nature conservation importance (see Note 1) across Hampshire alongside non-statutory wildlife sites (Note 2), priority habitats (Note 3) and a wide range of legally protected and other notable species (Note 4). Developments can adversely affect these and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are legally required by Government to consider the conservation of biodiversity when determining a planning application. Government planning policies for biodiversity are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), while the Local Authority's local plan will set out how they address these requirements in local policy terms. LPAs need to be able to understand what the potential impacts of the development might be and if there are impacts on biodiversity, how these will be avoided, mitigated, or compensated.

This Checklist will help you work out if your proposal is likely to affect biodiversity, what additional information you will need to provide to support your application and how to get that information.

## Guidance for applicants

If your answers to the questions in **Sections 1, 2 and/or 3** identify that your project may potentially have an adverse impact on designated sites, priority or other important habitats or legally protected or notable species then you will need to submit a suitable report such as a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Ecological Impact Assessment or species-specific survey which demonstrates the following:

- Information about the sites, species, habitats or features that could be affected (such as location, size, abundance, importance)
- Likely impacts of your development on habitats, sites or species identified
- How alternative designs and locations have been considered
- How adverse impacts will be avoided
- How any unavoidable impacts will be mitigated (reduced) (see note 6)
- How impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated will be compensated (see note 6)
- Any proposals for enhancement of biodiversity

Where more targeted and specific reports are necessary (for example bat surveys), these must:

- Be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced person
- Be of appropriate scope and detail (i.e. be carried out to established standards)
- Be conducted at an appropriate time of year, in suitable weather conditions and using approved methodologies.

Reports may not be required where applicants are able to provide pre-application correspondence from Natural England, the Local Authority ecologist or your ecological adviser that confirms that they are satisfied that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on any features identified in Sections 1, 2 or 3. Your local authority ecologist contact details are given on page 5.

The application may not be validated if any of the information submitted proves to be inadequate. If validated and the information is subsequently found not to fully address any potential impacts then further information may be required during the course of any planning application, for instance if any of the information you have provided needs clarification, or if other potential impacts are identified. **If sufficient information on ecological issues is not provided by the time the application needs to be determined, the application may be refused. This can include information (surveys and data searches) considered out of date.**

It is strongly advised that you consider biodiversity at the **earliest** possible stage in your project as there are seasonal constraints to much of the survey work that may be needed to support your application.

For further advice on competent ecologists who can undertake specialist survey work, please see the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management <http://www.cieem.net> in the first instance.

Please let us know if this checklist has been completed or checked by a qualified ecologist; YES/NO

## SECTION 1 – Legally protected sites for nature conservation

<p>Please answer <b>Yes</b> or <b>No</b> to the following question. If you answer 'YES', it is possible that the development could have an impact on the designated site. (see note 5). Please provide further information with your application.</p>	<p><b>YES</b> ✓ <b>NO</b> X</p>
<p><b>Does the application lie within:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2km of a SAC, SPA or Ramsar site</b></li> <li>• <b>An SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ)</b> and does it correspond to any of the development types listed in the results.</li> </ul> <p>See Note 1 and  <a href="http://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/SSSI%20IRZ%20User%20Guidance%20MAGIC.pdf">http://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/SSSI%20IRZ%20User%20Guidance%20MAGIC.pdf</a> for guidance on the interpretation and use of the <b>Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest</b></p>	

## SECTION 2 – Habitats and locally designated sites

<p>Please answer ALL questions <b>Yes</b> or <b>No</b></p> <p><i>Many of the features described below may support a <b>Priority Habitat</b>. See <u>note 3</u> for further information on identifying these.</i></p> <p>If you have answered 'YES', is it possible that the development may have an impact on the designated site or habitat? Please PROVIDE further information if that is the case</p>	<p><b>YES</b> ✓ <b>NO</b> X</p>
<p><b>Are any of the following present on or within 100m of the application site?</b></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) See Note 2</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Native woodland including ancient semi-natural and <u>replanted</u> woodlands</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Veteran (particularly old / large) trees</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Water courses (rivers or streams)</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Lakes or ponds</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Wetlands or marshes</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Unimproved/semi-improved species-rich grassland</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Arable field margins supporting assemblages of rare arable plants</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Heathland/acid grassland/mire/scrub</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Coastal grassland/saltmarsh/shingle/mudflats</i></p>	
<p>▪ <i>Hedgerows supporting mainly native species</i></p>	

The [Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre](#) can provide detailed maps showing boundaries of all site designations and Priority habitats.

## Section 3 – Legally protected and other notable species

<b>PROPOSAL DETAILS</b> Please answer ALL questions <b>Yes</b> or <b>No</b> by marking against each feature	<b>YES</b> ✓  <b>NO</b> X	If you have ticked 'YES' to any of these, you will need to consider potential impacts to these species.	<b>Survey attached?</b>
<b>3.1 Will the proposal affect any of the following features / structures? (see note 2 and note 7)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buildings or structures exhibiting features likely to offer bat roosting potential e.g. gaps/crevices/cracks within building materials; hanging tiles, timber weatherboarding/cladding; roof voids; etc.</li> <li>Underground structures (e.g. cellars, caves, mines)</li> <li>Bridges or similar structures</li> <li>Structures where there is known current or historic bat use</li> </ul>		Bats and bat roosts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural buildings particularly of traditional brick, timber or stone construction and/or with exposed timber beams greater than c.20cm thick.</li> </ul>		Bats and bat roosts Barn owl/Little owl Nesting birds	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other large agricultural buildings</li> </ul>		Barn owls/Little owl	
<b>3.2 Will the proposal affect trees with any of the following features? (see note 2)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Old and veteran trees or other trees with a circumference greater than 1m at chest height</i></li> </ul>		Bats and bat roosts Nesting birds	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Trees exhibiting, or likely to exhibit holes, cracks, splits, cavities etc. and/or heavy vegetation</i></li> </ul>		Other Notable species	
<b>3.3. Will the proposals affect any of the following wetland features (note 2)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>streams, rivers or lakes on or within 25m of the application site that would be affected (including their banks and adjacent habitat) by the development?</li> </ul>		Bat foraging habitat Otters, Water vole White-clawed crayfish Nesting birds Other Notable species	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ponds within 100m, particularly any that are well-connected to the application site by e.g. hedges, ditches, woodland, grassland or field boundaries?</li> </ul>		Amphibians (particularly with respect to great crested newts)	
<b>3.4 Will the proposals affect any of the following features (note 2)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>deciduous woodland?</i></li> </ul>		Bat foraging habitat Dormice Nesting birds Badger Reptiles Other Notable species	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>field hedgerows over 1m tall and over 0.5m thick?</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>areas of scrub well-connected to woodland or hedgerows?</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>species-rich meadows or grassland on or directly adjacent to the site?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mature or overgrown gardens, rough grassland, derelict/brownfield land, railway land or allotments</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>coastal grasslands/arable</li> </ul>		Waders and Wildfowl feeding/roost sites	

## Notes

### Note 1

Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) is a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks to SSSIs posed by development proposals. They define zones around each SSSI which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts. The SSSI IRZ Dataset can be downloaded from the [Natural England Open Data Geoportal](https://naturalengland-open-data-geoportal.naturalengland.org.uk/). It is also available to view on [www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk)

SSSI = Site of Special Scientific Interest, designated and protected under UK law.;  
<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/>

SAC = Special Area of Conservation and SPA = Special Protection Area. These are designated and protected under EU law. See <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1527> They will also be designated as SSSI

Ramsar site = internationally important wetland, designated under the Ramsar Convention. These sites may also be SPAs / SACs and SSSIs. See <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1527> for more information.

You can find out if your application site is on or near any of these sites from [www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk) or the LPA's Local Plan Proposals Map, or from the [Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre](http://hampshirebiodiversityinformationcentre.co.uk/)

### Note 2

SINC – Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. These are not legally protected, but are identified in planning policy as being of importance for biodiversity and are considered during the planning process.

The LPA's Local Plan Proposals Map may identify the location of any SINC's but more definitive and up-to-date maps are available from the [Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre](http://hampshirebiodiversityinformationcentre.co.uk/)

### Note 3

Priority Habitats are also called Habitats of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 NERC Act 2006. They comprise natural or semi-natural habitats that have been identified as being at risk (in that they are rare or in decline) or are important for certain key species of plant or animal. Areas of designated Ancient Woodland and some Priority Habitats can be found on [www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk). More definitive and up-to-date maps of Priority habitats are available from the [Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre](http://hampshirebiodiversityinformationcentre.co.uk/)

### Note 4

Notable species include species protected under European legislation and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); species listed under; S41 of the Natural & Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Priority species); the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species; the Birds of Conservation Concern Red list; and species listed as being nationally, county, or vice-county rare or scarce.

The [Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre](http://hampshirebiodiversityinformationcentre.co.uk/) holds data on the known locations of over 1million protected and notable species records. However absence of a record does not mean absence of a species.

### Note 5

Effects could be DIRECT, such as destruction, removal or modification, or INDIRECT through disturbance such as run-off, noise, dust, lighting or increased recreational use.

### Note 6

Avoidance = measures taken to avoid impacts – should be the first consideration; Mitigation = measures which make unavoidable impacts less severe; Compensation = measures which counterbalance remaining impacts, resulting in an overall no net loss of biodiversity. (NB 'Mitigation' as a general term, or a 'mitigation strategy' is often used to cover all these processes).

### Note 7

The types of feature highlighted in this Checklist have a higher likelihood of supporting bats and is taken from the list produced by the Bat Conservation Trust in their good practice survey guidelines (see <http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/guidanceforprofessionals.html>). However, it is important to recognise that many buildings that do not meet these criteria may also support bats.

**Important:** this checklist cannot include reference to *all* protected or notable species in *all* circumstances where they may be affected. Legislation relating to protected species does apply in all circumstances and it is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the species and their habitats are not impacted as a result of development.

**If protected species are found during the course of development, work should be halted and advice sought from Natural England, the local authority ecologist or a qualified private ecologist.**

## Contacts

If you are unsure about any of these questions, please call your local authority ecologist for advice.

Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council - Biodiversity Officer - Tel 01256 845201/845261

Eastleigh Borough Council - Biodiversity Officer – Tel: 023 8068 8352

East Hampshire District Council/South Downs National Park – HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832335

Fareham Borough Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832317

Gosport Borough Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832335

Hart District Council - Biodiversity Officer - Tel 01252 774106

Havant Borough Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832335

New Forest District Council/ New Forest National Park Authority – Ecologist - Tel 01590 646685

Portsmouth City Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832317

Rushmoor Borough Council - Biodiversity Officer – Tel 01252 398731

Southampton City Council – Planning Ecologist - Tel 02380 832727

Test Valley Borough Council - HCC Ecology Team - Tel 01962 832334

Winchester City Council/South Downs National Park – Biodiversity Officer – Tel 01962 848532

## For office use:

<b>1</b>	Have <b>ALL</b> questions on <b>ALL</b> sections been completed?	<b>Y / N</b>	If YES, go to 2	If NO, application should not be validated
<b>2</b>	Have any questions been answered 'Yes'?	<b>Y / N</b>	If YES, go to 3	If NO, application can be validated. Evidence that a data search has been carried out by the applicant or their adviser would be helpful at this point.
<b>3</b>	Does the applicant identify likely impacts <b>and</b> address potential issues in any comments made on the checklist?	<b>Y / N</b>	If YES, application can be validated	If NO, go to 4
<b>4</b>	Has a separate statement, report or other supporting information been submitted to address potential impacts?	<b>Y / N</b>	If YES, application can be validated	If NO, application should not be validated