




ECOW FILE NOTE

Ref: 22-0245
Client/Site: Tophaven Sustainable Construction Ltd
Date: 09/06/2022

Item	Description
Site Description and Background	<p>Nicholsons Lockhart Garratt was commissioned by Tophaven Sustainable Construction Ltd to conduct a nesting bird survey of an area of hedgerow and trees situated to the rear of Marshalls Road, Raunds ('the Site').</p> <p>The Site consists of poor semi-improved grassland bound by hedgerows with trees and fences.</p> <p>The Site has an application for planning permission with the Local Authority for the construction of four residential units.</p> <p>An area of hedgerow with trees was due to be cleared. A nesting bird survey by a suitably qualified ecologist (SQE) is required for all vegetation clearing and cutting during the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive).</p>
Sensitive Ecological/ Environmental Features	<p>No habitats of local, regional or national importance were identified within the survey area. The hedgerow to be removed was approximately 3-4m in height and 2-3m in width. The hedgerow consisted predominantly of conifer trees with hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>, ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> and scattered elder <i>Sambucus nigra</i>. Dense areas of dogrose <i>Rosa canina</i>, bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> and ivy <i>Hedera helix</i> were also present.</p> <p>The largest of the trees to be removed was an ash standing at approximately 12m in height. A further mature ash tree was to be cut back and crown lifted.</p> <p>It was noted that if further vegetation were to be removed during nesting bird season (March – August inclusive) a nesting bird check would need to be carried out.</p> <p>Legislation: In the UK all birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Committing an offence under this Act (in respect of a single bird, nest or egg) can result in a fine of up to £5,000, and/or six months imprisonment. It is an offence (with certain exceptions) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird; • intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built; • intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have in one's possession or control any wild bird, dead or alive, or any part of a wild bird, which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954; • have in one's possession or control any egg or part of an egg which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954; • use traps or similar items to kill, injure or take wild birds; • have in one's possession or control any bird of a species occurring on Schedule 4 of the Act unless registered, and in most cases ringed, in accordance with the Secretary of State's regulations (see Schedules); and • intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.
<p>ECoW Context</p>	<p>The purpose of this file note is to provide an overview of the nesting bird survey conducted on 08th June 2022. The aim of the survey was to provide an assessment of nesting bird activity within the habitats subject to clearance works, no more than 48 hours prior to cutting.</p> <p>This nesting bird check was carried out to prevent harm to nesting birds through site clearance works, as recommended within the original Preliminary Ecological Appraisal survey (Nicholsons Lockhart Garratt, 2022).</p>
<p>Methodology</p>	<p>The survey was conducted from 8:00am to 9:30am by the SQE (Alison Saunders). Weather conditions were clear and sunny, visibility was good throughout with minimal breeze (Bft 1-2) and an air temperature of 14-17°C.</p> <p>A vantage point survey was carried out at locations along the hedgerow and trees using binoculars for 20-30 minutes. The habitats were observed for signs of birds entering and/or leaving any areas of the vegetation and other signs of breeding birds such as singing males, defending territories, nest building and adult birds carrying food, sounds of young birds and alarm calls from adult birds.</p> <p>A visual inspection from ground level was undertaken following the vantage point survey. All of the vegetation within the hedgerow and trees was checked for nests and other signs of breeding birds such as deposits of faecal matter. This check was carried out from ground level to approximately 2m and as far as was visible into the vegetation by parting the branches and looking in.</p>
<p>Results & Conclusions</p>	<p>Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>, robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>, magpie <i>Pica pica</i>, woodpigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>, blue tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>, great tit <i>Parus major</i> and colored dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> were all recorded foraging and sheltering within the hedgerow and scattered trees. However, no evidence of nesting birds was found.</p>

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	<p>A single disused nest was found within the conifers in the hedgerow. This nest was a collection of loose twigs arranged within the branches and was likely to be woodpigeon nest from the previous year or early this year. There was no evidence of fresh lining material, faeces or feathers within the old nest found.</p> <p>Following the visual inspection and vantage point survey, the tree-cutting contractor on site was advised and clearance works commenced immediately.</p> <p>Further observation was made while the works began to ensure no birds were alarm calling or showing signs of distress during the clearance works.</p>
Photographic Record	 <p><i>Figure 1: Eastern section of hedgerow and two ash trees surveyed</i></p>  <p><i>Figure 2: Western section of hedgerow and two ash trees</i></p>

Item	Description
	 <p data-bbox="472 857 1414 913"><i>Figure 3: Ash trees within the hedgerow (left tree to be crown lifted and pruned and right tree to be removed)</i></p>

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