

LANDSCAPE AND CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Serious Stages

Culliford

Wells

BA5 3NT

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Rachel Denness, assistant ecologist to Geoff Billington Greena Ecological Consultancy (GEC), a full member of CIEEM with 30 years of experience of ecological surveying.

1.2 Survey/ Mitigation Actions

GEC was commissioned to conduct the following activities for a parcel of land containing a storage and transportation base. Previous consent was given for a 2m high bund of soil to shield the site from a footpath. During the works the bund was increased to 3m requiring ecological assessment.

Conduct updated PEA of site:

No development shall take place, including: ground works, vegetation clearance until a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

No vegetation clearance including tree/ shrub removal or earth works shall commence until a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP), has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

This combined LEMP & CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period and afterwards strictly in accordance with the approved details.

1.3 Objectives, scope and relevant planning conditions

This CEMP presents a scheme for enhancing the biodiversity and overall ecology of the site, whilst also taking into account the landscaping of the development. It is compiled in order to address condition 7 of planning permission.

Condition 7 specifies the CEMP shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- a. Measures which will be used to avoid or reduce impacts during construction e.g. precautionary Method of Working for reptiles and amphibians including great crested newts, hedgehogs, birds etc.
- b. The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid causing harm to biodiversity features
- c. The times during construction when specialist ecologists including Ecological Clerk of Works, will be present on site to oversee works
- d. The Location of "Biodiversity Protection Zones" and where appropriate protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs,
- e. Ongoing monitoring, including compliance checks by a competent person(s) during construction and immediately post-completion of construction works.

Condition 8 specifies the LEMP shall include:

No vegetation clearance including tree/shrub removal or earth works shall commence until a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP), including long term objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for the 'Designated Wildlife Area' has been submitted to

and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The 'Designated Wildlife Area' (see in Appendix Plan I Landscape proposal 480.2.1 22/10/20) shall be maintained as such in perpetuity.

The LEMP shall be carried out as approved in accordance with the approved details.

This document also includes information to discharge condition 5 in respect of bats.

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the information submitted with the planning application (and as modified by a Natural England European Protected Species Mitigation licence for bats) as included in Extended Phase I Ecological Survey.

1.4 Structure of the report

This report sets out important information regarding the landscaping, habitats and ecological features and species of the project, as well as stipulations on the management of these features to optimise their functionality within the ecosystems present on site.

It should be read in conjunction with appendices, which provide visual representations and plans of the site and other useful guidance.

2. BASELINE ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

2.1 Extended phase 1 habitat survey

An ecological survey was undertaken by GEC on the 21st April 2023. The following principle habitats were characterised on site:

- 3m tall bund of grass and other species
- Buildings and hardstanding

The results of the ecological survey highlighted the following vegetation / species / habitats as potential issues on site:

- To the north and west of the site is a 3m tall bund with grass, teasels, buddleia and burdock, all of which hold ecological significance for insects.
- The rest of the site is a hardcore area which is currently used for storage. There has been no change since previous consent was given.
- There is also a tarmac road on site which has no changes proposed.

A precautionary approach to initial site clearance is set out and hibernacula will be created in suitable areas of the wider site.

2.2 Bats

The site has woodland directly to the north of the site, and also maintains good links to hedgerows and agricultural land, all of which is habitat suitable for commuting, feeding and roosting bats. Works to the trees on site is not proposed, and therefore there should be limited effects on bats roosting/commuting/feeding opportunities.

The North Somerset & Mendip Bats SAC lies 1m north of the site.

2.3 Breeding birds

No birds have been recorded nesting in or on any of the buildings on site. They may utilise the surrounding woodland for nesting, but this remains unaffected by the works. The trees on the earth bank are very likely to support bird nesting being too immature.

2.4 Treeline/ Hedgerows

A single young bush and tree have been removed in the northwest corner of the site, but otherwise the vegetation on site remains untouched.

3. OBJECTIVES & MEASURES

The LEMP contains seven objectives which ensure that protected habitats and species are safeguarded throughout the development and in the future operation of the site. Each objective is outlined below, along with how each objective will be achieved.

Site drainage and archaeological investigations are not considered in this report as construction and site management of materials and procedures are also not included.

Planting species to be provided by client.

3.1 Objective 1

To protect retained habitats on site from damage and disturbance during construction of extended mound.

3.1.1 Trees and hedgerows

The trees and treeline/ hedgerow are to be retained. Avoiding excavation under tree canopy cover will prevent root damage.

3.2 Objective 2

To ensure that protected species are adequately protected during construction.

3.2.1 Birds

The trees and hedgerows on and around the site present good quality foraging and nesting habitat for bird species. No works to the existing vegetation is proposed.

3.2.2 Bats

There is currently no change proposed to the existing buildings or habitat on/around the site. Therefore, there are no further requirements.

3.3 Objective 3

To create new habitats.

3.3.1 Landscaping and planting

The landscape and planting plan is included in Appendix 1 and full details all of the species to be planted will be supplied by the client in due course.

The species to be planted will support a functioning ecosystem by providing a range of services. Both evergreen and deciduous species have been chosen, which will provide year- round shelter for bird species and other sheltering wildlife.

Once mature, the trees will develop crevices and cavities which will provide nesting and roosting opportunities for birds and bats respectively.

Furthermore, when the trees are flowering, this will attract a range of butterflies, moths and flies. The flowering shrubs and specimen plants will also attract insects, and this will in turn provide a food source for birds, bats, other mammals and amphibians.

Full details of species to be planted will be supplied in due course.

The linear features of the site, such as hedgerows and tree lines, are being retained. These features, coupled with the network of gardens and planted trees, will ensure that green corridors are present across the site and that the site is connected to other areas of suitable habitats in the wider surrounding area.

3.3.2 Ongoing management

It is important to implement good horticultural practice in any landscaping scheme, including the use of peat-free composts, mulches and soil conditioners. The use of pesticides (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and slug pellets) should be discouraged to prevent fatal effects on the food chain. Any pesticides used should be non-residual.

Excessive removal or pruning of shrubs and trees should be avoided to maximise growth and plant matter available to wildlife. Pruning should be left until late winter to leave seeds and berries for wintering wildlife and ensure there is no impact on breeding or nesting birds.

3.4 Objective 4

To provide shelter, breeding and foraging opportunities for local species.

3.4.1 Birds

The landscaping and planting plan provides a range of foraging opportunities at different times of year, as detailed in the previous section. As the trees mature, more nesting opportunities will become available as will food which will be attracted to the grassy, vegetative side of the bund.

3.4.2 Bats

The benefits detailed in section 3.3 will ensure that the site can support a good sized assemblage of invertebrates, which will in turn provide a healthy food source for bats in the local area.

3.5 Objective 5

Ecological Clerk of work requirements

3.5.1 Breeding birds

All scrub and woody above ground vegetation clearance should take place outside of the bird breeding season (February to August inclusive).

If this is not possible and works are required outside of this period, a breeding bird nest survey by an ecologist must be undertaken up to 48 hours prior to clearance, and an ECW undertaken during site clearance to check fully as access becomes available.

If breeding birds are present, then the works to these areas will be delayed until after the young have fledged.

3.5.2 Bats

There is no risk of negatively effecting bats in the area with the work therefore there are no further requirements.

3.5.3 Trees within or adjacent to clearance areas

There will be no works completed within the tree canopy areas.

3.6 Objective 6

Monitoring and compliance checks

Inspections and monitoring site visits are required for the following in addition to ECW attendances detailed in 3.5:

- Check planting and hibernacula have been completed as specified and in correct locations this can be verified by client by providing concise, clear photographs.

3.7 Objective 7

Biodiversity protection zones

Protection zones are detailed in plan 3 in appendix I. One area of hard standing laps below part of one of the trees which needs to be removed this will be done under attendance of ECW to prevent/ minimise any roost damage once completed protected fence will be reinstalled.

Trees

During construction none of the proposed works will be carried out near the existing trees.

4.0 Management and Legal Responsibilities

4.1 Initial habitat creation and implementation

During the construction phase of the development, the contractor(s) is/ are responsible for ensuring that:

- Site personnel are fully trained and aware of their ecological and environmental responsibilities.
- The landscape and planting plan is fully implemented.
- Habitats and species are protected during the construction phase of the development according to this report.
- Habitat features, as detailed in the landscape plan (see plan 1 in appendix), are correctly installed and conform to the ecological guidance provided, including species planting list to be supplied.

4.2 Ongoing habitat management

All areas will be maintained under current ownership.

4.3 Monitoring

No monitoring of the site is required.

5. CONCLUSION

Once implemented, the increase in surface area of the bund will create an ecologically diverse area containing areas for insects which includes grasses, teasels, buddleia and burdock that are self-seeding already. The other side of the bund will contain a mix of trees providing long-term connecting, feeding, roosting and nesting habitats for birds and bats.

