

JAMES BLAKE

A S S O C I A T E S

Our Ref: JBA 16/070 ECO03 AW

30th November 2023

Gary Mann,
Bullen Developments

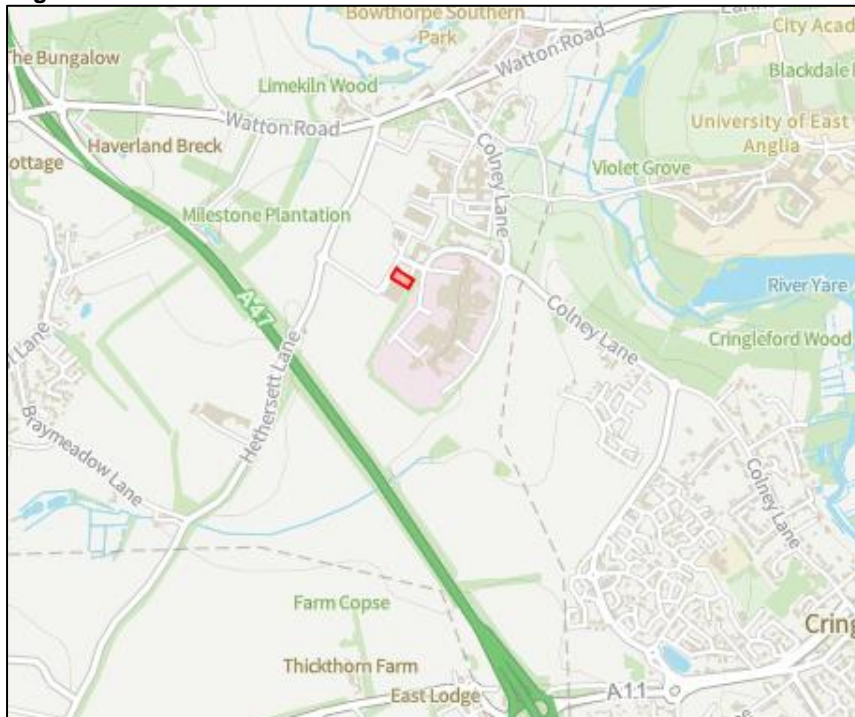
RE: Ecological Walkover Survey of land at Norwich Research Park South, Norwich, Norfolk

Introduction and Background

James Blake Associates Ltd. (JBA) was instructed by Bullen Developments to undertake an ecological walkover survey of land at Norwich Research Park South, Norwich in Norfolk to assess the potential for protected species and invasive & non-native species and to provide a report to summarise the findings of the walkover survey, highlighting any significant constraints for the site for the proposals of extending the existing multi-storey car park.

The development site is approximately 0.3 hectares in size and is located southwest of Norwich, the wider landscape consists of the city of Norwich, agricultural fields and woodlands. The A47 is located 0.5km southwest of the site. Habitats immediately adjacent to the site boundary consists of amenity grassland with three mature oak trees (*Quercus robur*), a 'young' mixed woodland and buildings. The site itself is mainly hardstanding with ornamental planting around the north and west boundary. The site location (red) is shown below in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Site location



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Habitats found on site included:

- Hardstanding
- Ornamental planting

The ecological walkover survey was undertaken on the 28th November 2023 by Alex Ward QCIEEM. This report is intended to give an overview of the site habitat(s), condition at the time of the survey and recommendations for site clearance.

The survey methodology followed the standard Phase 1 methodology of Joint Nature Conservation Committee Guidelines (JNCC, 2010). An extension of this basic methodology was also undertaken to provide further details in relation to notable or protected habitats present within the survey area, or in relation to habitats present that have the potential to support notable or protected species (CIEEM, 2013).

The baseline conditions reported in this document represent those identified at the time of the survey on 28th November 2023. Although a reasonable assessment of habitats present can be made during a single walkover survey, seasonal variations are not observed.

The relevant wildlife legislations and planning policies are listed below:

- Conservation of Habitats and Species 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019, ('The Habitats Regulations'). The Habitats Regulations implement The Habitats Directive 1992 (92/43/EEC) into English Law. (Amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2012 S.I. 2012/1927).
- Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (WCA). [Amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)].
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (NERC).
- The Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 (The Badgers Act).
- The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act, 1996.
- The Hedgerows Regulations, 2007.
- National Planning Policy Framework, 2023 (NPPF).

[Previous Surveys](#)

A previous *Ecology Assessment* was undertaken by Hopkins Ecology in 2017, prior to the multi-storey car park now present on site. This survey concluded that the site was of negligible ecological value and '*bat roosts are considered to be absent in nearby trees although potential roost features are present*'.

No further surveys were deemed necessary; however, precautionary vegetation clearance was recommended, as well as minor enhancement measures.

[Results and Evaluation](#)

Habitats within the site boundary consist of hardstanding with ornamental planting, which are of negligible ecological value. Habitats found offsite but may be indirectly impacted by the development include three mature oak trees along the northern boundary and an area of 'young' mixed woodland along the eastern boundary.

The oak trees (T1, T2 and T3) are not within the site boundary however they are considered to have 'moderate' bat roosting potential (BRP). T1 has multiple dead limbs at the trunk and knot holes, a bird nest was identified in T1 whereas T2 has broken limbs with a cracked trunk. T3 had extensive ivy cover, knot holes and dead branches, the canopy of T3 overhangs into the site boundary. These trees are enclosed in permanent fencing and surrounded by existing light columns on all sides, therefore subject to high light levels.

The adjacent woodland along the eastern boundary connects the site to the wider landscape and is considered as a suitable foraging route for commuting bats; however, as above, this habitat is subject to high levels of lighting due to adjacent existing lighting columns.

Habitats on site provide no suitability habitat for badgers (*Meles meles*) due to the amount of hardstanding with minimal cover for sett creation and foraging. The wider landscape consisting of agricultural fields and large areas of woodland offer suitable habitat for sett creation and foraging opportunities. The woodland along the eastern boundary offers limited opportunities for badgers due to the regular use from walkers and minimal cover for sett creation. No signs of badgers were identified during the survey visit.

The site’s suitability for hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) is negligible due to the lack of grassland and dense vegetation, however; the adjacent woodland could offer suitable hibernation site for a small number of hedgehogs due to log piles being present.

Field signs of rabbit activity (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) (diggings) was found in the ornamental planting along the western boundary of the site.


There are two ponds within 250m of the site, however; at the time of the survey, they were dry and had minimal bank vegetation therefore the ponds are not considered suitable for great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) (GCN).




Habitats on site were deemed to be unsuitable for reptiles due the lack of suitable grassland areas.




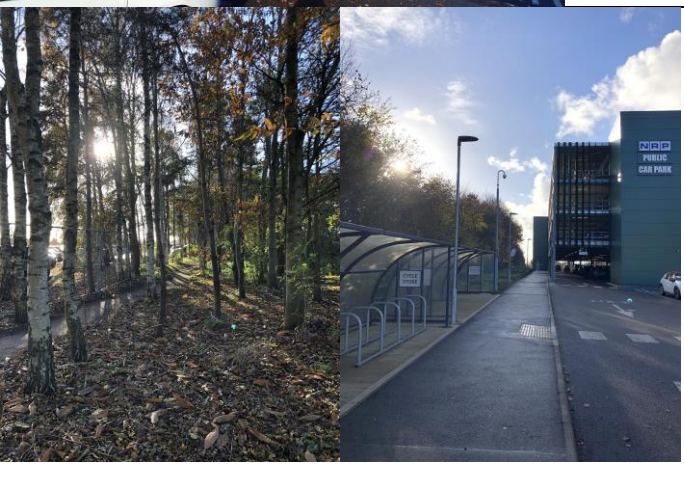
Plant species, such as Indian cluster berry (*Lonicera ligustrina*), rose sp (*Rosa sp*), bigleaf periwinkle (*Vinca major*) and chenault coralberry (*Symphoricarpos x chenaultii*) were identified during the walkover. Whilst priority invasives such as Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) was not identified at the site during the walkover survey.

See Table 1 below for site photographs and descriptions.

Table 1: Site photographs and descriptions

Reference	Description	Photo
Hardstanding	Hardstanding currently used as a car park.	

Reference	Description	Photo
Ornamental planting	Planted along the northern and eastern boundary	
Mammal Digging	Rabbit digging along the eastern boundary.	
T1	Oak tree consisting of dead limbs at the trunk< knot holes and nest	

Reference	Description	Photo	
Nest	Bird nest located in T1		
T2	Oak tree consisting of broken limbs and cracked trunk		
T3	Oak tree consisting of ivy cover, knot holes and dead branches.		
Adjacent woodland	Mixed woodland along the eastern boundary.		

Recommendations/Enhancements

The site is considered to be of negligible ecological value however the adjacent woodland along the eastern boundary is considered suitable for commuting bats and the oak trees along the northern boundary are considered to have 'moderate' BRP. Due to the nature of the site, the following is recommended:

- It is recommended that no **additional** external lighting are included especially along the northern and eastern fascia of the building to ensure that the commuting route and retained oak trees are maintained.
- It is recommended bat and bird boxes be installed (if possible) within the mixed woodland along the eastern boundary to promote roosting and nesting opportunities for common species.
- It is recommended that swift boxes are installed onto the extension of the multi-storey car park.
- It is recommended that the development takes place outside of the root protection zone and woodland, following the arboricultural plans (JBA, 2023).
- It is recommended that during construction no lights are to be directed towards the retained oak trees.
- Any trenches/excavations left overnight should be covered or provided with ramps (or wildlife 'ladders') to prevent animals (such as badger, hedgehog and other amphibians) being trapped.

Conclusion

An ecological walkover survey was undertaken on 28th November 2023 for the proposed extension of the multi-storey car park at Norwich Research Park South, Norwich in Norfolk. The site itself is considered to be of negligible ecological value however the adjacent woodland and the oak trees are considered to be important for roosting and commuting bats.

No further surveys are considered necessary however precautionary measures should be followed.

If works do not begin within 2 years of this survey, another walkover survey will be required to note any changes in the interim.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Ward
Field Ecologist
James Blake Associates

References

CIEEM (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management) (2013) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Technical Guidance Series.

Hopkins Ecology (2017) *Ecology Assessment of Norwich Research Park South: Multi-storey Car Park (Revised Location)*.

JNCC (2010) Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey: a technique for environmental audit (revised reprint) JNCC: Peterborough