

# Grey Farm House, Cheriton Ecological Appraisal Survey Report

Dr A Jones & Mr I Martin



September 2023

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## Document Control

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Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living creatures are capable of migration and whilst protected species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on site at a later date.

The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to work

## Executive Summary

### *Purpose of the report*

To provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the proposed development involving,

Evaluation of its conservation status based on a desktop review that summarises information collated on protected species and nature conservation designations in the area.

Assessment of habitat composition on site, derived from a Phase 1 habitat survey.

Assessment of the likelihood of protected, or otherwise notable, species occurring on site.

### *Context of the development*

The proposed development:

Construction of a new property.

Associated landscaping and groundworks.

### *Methods*

The project requirement was to assess the existing ecological value of potential ecological issues associated with the proposed development and make recommendations for general mitigation, compensation, enhancement and further surveys, as appropriate. A desk study and a Phase 1 habitat survey were carried out.

### *Key issues*

None.

### *Further surveys required*

None, however a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment should be completed.

## Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this document is truthful and accurate at the time of completion.

**Lead ecologist & Project manager:** Daniel Ahern CEnv MCIEEM FLS

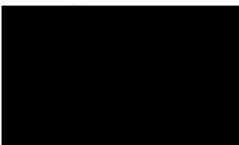
**Signature:**



**Date:** 20/09/2023

**Assistant Ecologist:** Peter Allen QCIEEM AMRSB MSc

**Signature:**



**Date:** 02/09/2023

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

1.1.1. In August 2023, Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Masker Architects on behalf of Dr A Jones & Mr I Martin to undertake an ecological appraisal of land south of a property, situated near the village of Cheriton, Hampshire.

1.1.2. The purpose of this report is to identify key ecological constraints to inform the project planning such that significant ecological impacts are avoided or minimised. It also aims to highlight any further ecological surveys that may be required to inform any future Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), so that they can be appropriately designed. Finally, the report aims to provide the information required in order to develop appropriate mitigation or compensation measures.

## 1.2. Site description

1.2.1. The land south of Grey Farm House, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', measures approximately 322m<sup>2</sup>, and is situated on Kilmeston Road (approximate OS grid reference: SU 88578 55455), see Fig. 1 below.

Figure 1. Site location with the red line boundary



1.2.2. The Site comprises an area of improved grassland, part of a garden lawn, set south of a two-storey property. To the north of the site was an area of neutral grassland, which the current owners are leaving to turn into a meadow.

1.2.3. The proposed developments and alterations to the site are as:

- Construction of a new property.
- Associated landscaping and groundworks.

## 2. Planning & Legislation

### 2.1. Legislation

The following legislation informed the survey approach and content:  
The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)  
The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2002 (as amended).  
Environment Act 2021

### 2.2. Planning policies

2.2.1. This report is prepared with reference to the National Planning Framework 2021.

## 3. Methods

### 3.1. Desk study

3.1.1. The following publicly accessible websites were searched for ecological information:

- <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>
- <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1376> (summary of nature conservation legislation)
- [www.ukbap.org.uk](http://www.ukbap.org.uk) (archived 2012)
- [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) for aerial photography
- <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>

3.1.2. Data relating to statutory & non-statutory sites and all protected species records within 2km of the red line boundary was requested from the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC).

3.1.3. No previous reports relating to the site were available for review.

### 3.2. Field survey

3.2.1. An extended Phase 1 habitat survey of the site was undertaken with reference to the Institute of Environmental Assessment's Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment (IEA, 1997) and the Institute of Ecology and

Environmental Management's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (IEEM, 2012).

- 3.2.2. The survey was conducted on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 by Peter Allen MSc QCIEEM and Megan Conway BSc.
- 3.2.3. The weather conditions were good with an average temperature of 20°C.
- 3.2.4. During the survey, dominant plant species were recorded, and habitats were classified according to their vegetation types, as identified in the Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – A technique for environmental audit (JNCC, 2010). Target notes (TN) were taken to denote species and habitats of conservation interest and to describe the vegetation in areas that were too small to map. Evidence or habitat suitable for any legally protected species was recorded, where appropriate.
- 3.2.5. The presence of any Category 9 invasive non-native plant species was recorded.
- 3.2.6. The results are presented in the standard format with hat and a phase 1 habitat map (see Figure 3).
- 3.2.7. The site was inspected for direct evidence and r protected and notable species. Particular attention was given to those species listed under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). This included searching for signs of badger activity and habitats suitable for amphibians, dormice, bats and reptiles.
- 3.2.8. According to the Institute for Environmental Assessment (IEA, 1995), phase 1 surveys can be undertaken all year round in order to identify any habitats on site where protected species may potentially be present.
- 3.2.9. In the event that habitats suitable for protected species are identified, it may be necessary to undertake further seasonal surveys to confirm presence/absence. In the event that no suitable habitats or features are identified, a phase 1 habitat survey is sufficient to determine the potential impacts associated with a proposed development.

### **3.3. Limitations**

- 3.3.1. The data provided by the online resources were not exhaustive that species and habitats not found in the data search occur within the vicinity of the proposed development site.
- 3.3.2. The details within this report will remain valid for a per beyond that date it is advised that a review of ecological conditions undertaken.



## 4. Baseline Ecological conditions

### 4.1. Desk study

4.1.1. The HBIC data search confirmed that there was a single statutory wildlife site recorded within 2km of the Site. As seen in Figure 3 below, with the details in Table 1 below.

4.1.2. The HBIC data search confirmed that there were 12 non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 2km of the Site. As seen in Figure 2 below, with the details in Tables 1 & 2 below.

Figure 2. A Map of the Statutory and Non-Statutory Wildlife Sites Within 2km of the site

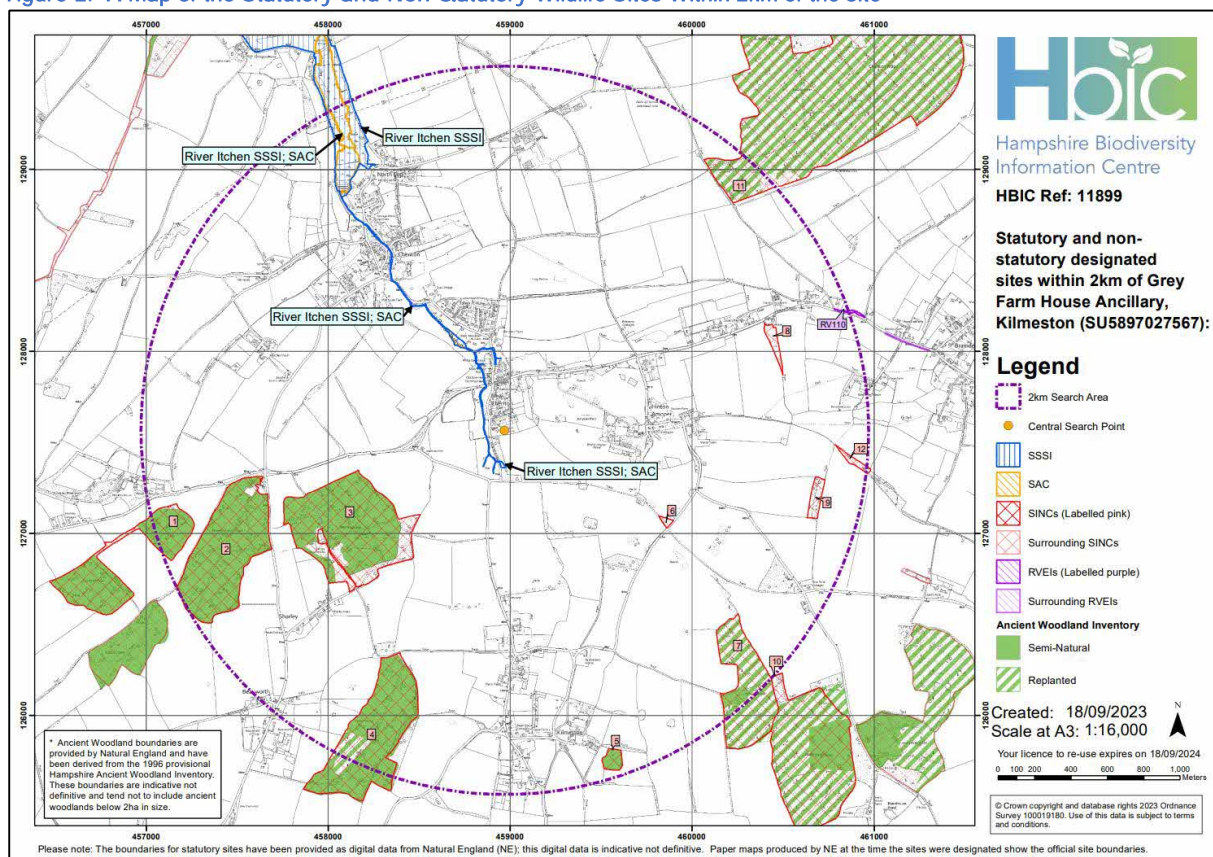


Table 1. The details of the Statutory Wildlife Sites Within 2km of the site.

Designation	Name	Area (ha)
SAC, SSSI	River Itchen	748.5

Table 2. The details of the Non-Statutory Wildlife Sites Within 2km of the site.

Map number	SNC reference	Name	Area (ha)
1	WC0323	Durden Copse	14.14
2	WC0340	Powells Grove Copse	23.18
3	WC0354	Shorley Copse	28.70
4	WC0366	West Wood, Kilmiston	22.52
5	WC0660	Kilmiston Copse	1.04

6	WC0659	Corner Copse	0.22
7	WC0440	Broom Wood	14.76
8	WC0657	Little London Copse	0.95
9	WC0655	Manor Farm Copse, Bramdean	1.29
10	WC0446	Blackhouse Copse	28.03
11	WC0457	Cheriton Wood	94.78
12	WC0656	Bramdean Copse	0.59

4.1.3. Eight EPSLs have been granted for bats within 2km of the site. The bat licence covered seven species, brown long eared *Plecotus auritus*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, natterer's *Myotis nattereri*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and whiskered *Myotis mystacinus*.

Table 3. The details EPSL's within 2km of the site.

Case reference	Species	Distance (m) and direction from site
2019-44042-EPS-MIT-1	brown long eared <i>Plecotus auritus</i> common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	1,458m northwest
2020-48618-EPS-MIT	brown long eared common pipistrelle whiskered <i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	994m east
2015-15395-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle soprano pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	986m south
EPSM2011-2981	brown long eared common pipistrelle natterer's <i>Myotis nattereri</i>	1155m south
EPSM2010-2414	brown long eared common pipistrelle serotine <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> soprano pipistrelle	1155m south
2018-37123-EPS-MIT	brown long eared common pipistrelle	1940m south
2014-762-EPS-MIT	brown long eared common pipistrelle natterer's noctule <i>Nyctalus noctula</i> serotine	1993m southwest
2017-30055-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle	1993m southwest

4.1.4. Protected species records for the following taxa were recorded within 2 km of the site:

**Amphibians:**

Common Toad

*Bufo bufo*

**Bats:**

Barbastelle

*Barbastella barbastellus*

Brandt's

*Myotis brandtii*

Brown Long-eared

*Plecotus auritus*

Common Pipistrelle

*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*

natterer's

*Myotis nattereri*

noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>
Soprano Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>
Whiskered Bat	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>

**Birds:**

Black redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>
Corn bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>
Grasshopper warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>
Grey partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Whinc hat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
Woodc o c k	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>

**Mammals:**

European Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>
European Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>
European Water Vole	<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>
Hazel Dormouse	<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>
polecat	<i>Mustela putorius</i>

**Reptiles:**

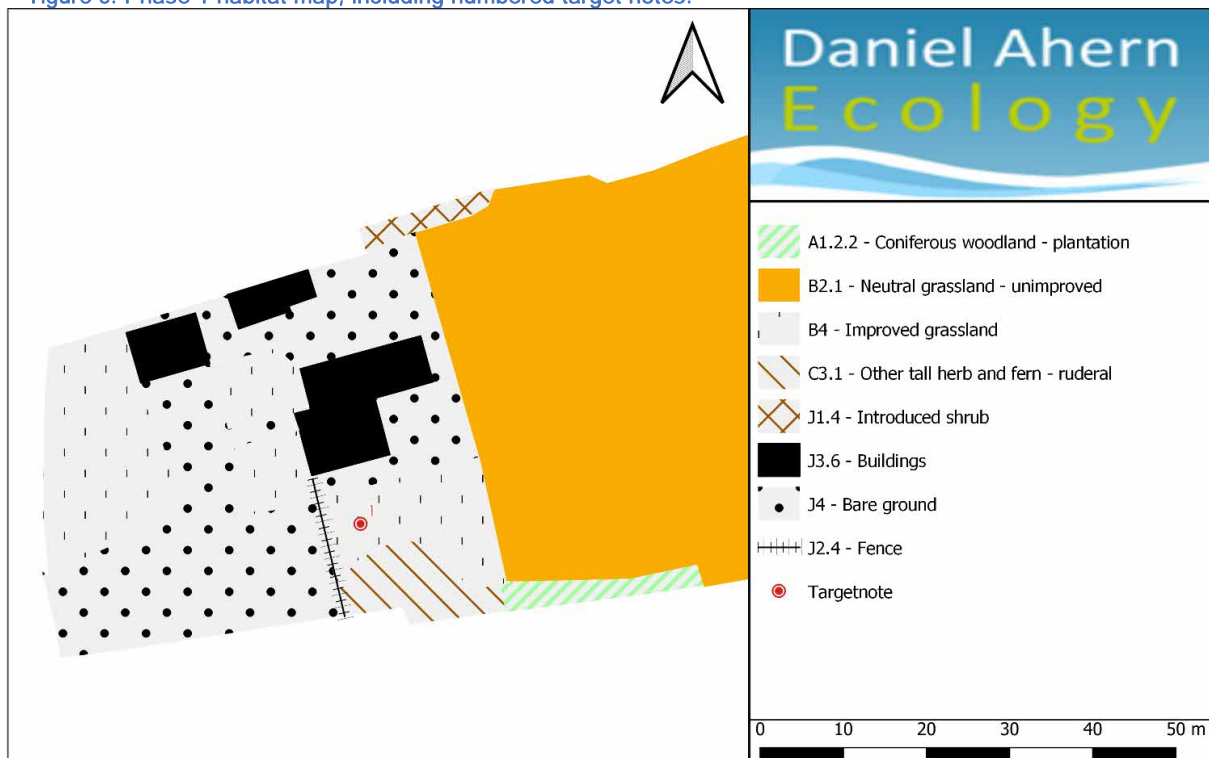
N/a	N/a
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## 4.2. Site survey

4.2.1. A Phase 1 habitat map of the site is set out in Figure 5 below.

- 4.2.2. The site was primarily lawn, specifically B4 – Improved grassland. The area in which the planned development will take place is at the bottom of a shallow gradient, Target Note 1. The species primarily consisted of perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* and red fescue *Festuca rubra*. There was also white clover *Trifolium repens*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* present. There was very limited biodiversity of wildflower and grass species, especially in comparison to the area to the east, which had been left to transform into grassland meadow (Per comms with the homeowner).
- 4.2.3. To the south of the proposed development site was an area of C3.1 – tall ruderal herbaceous plants, in this case it was primarily nettle *Urtica dioica* and buddleia *Buddleja davidii*. This was in an area which had previously been used for depositing of lawn cuttings and potentially manure previously, leading it to become enriched. It also sat beneath a band of coniferous trees which are not on site. However, the boundary line eventually becomes a line of A1.2.2 – plantation coniferous trees, the coniferous trees primarily being scots pine *Pinus sylvestris*. It is not though the development will impact the trees present within the site boundary.
- 4.2.4. Much of the existing house was surrounded by B4 – Bare ground in the form of patio slabs and gravel. There were also small garden beds to the east of these areas.
- 4.2.5. There was no evidence of Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*, or any other invasive non-native plant species present onsite.
- 4.2.6. Target notes relating to the numbers on the Phase 1 Appendix 1.

Figure 5. Phase 1 habitat map, including numbered target notes.



4.2.7. The survey recorded the following potential for protected groups to be present.

- Amphibians: NEGLIGIBLE potential. There was no suitable habitat recorded on site or within 2km of the Site. There were no records of great crested newts found within 2km of the site.
- Badgers: LOW potential for badgers on site, records present within 2km.
- Bats; MODERATE foraging and commuting potential within the Site boundary. Records for nine species of bats were recorded within 2km of the Site.
- Dormice: Records found within 2km, NEGLIGIBLE potential for presence on Site due to the absence of suitable habitat.
- Otter: NEGLIGIBLE potential for this species due to the lack of suitable habitat on Site. There were records found within 2km.
- Reptiles: NEGLIGIBLE potential for this group due to the habitat available on Site. No records were found within 2km of the Site.
- Water vole: NEGLIGIBLE potential for this species due to the lack of suitable habitat on Site. There were records found within 2km.

## 5. Ecological constraints and opportunities

### 5.1. Designated nature conservation sites

5.1.1. The HBIC data search confirmed that there was a single statutory and 12 non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 2km of the Site.

5.1.2. Eight EPSLs have been granted for bats within 2km of the site. The bat licence covered seven species, brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, natterer's, noctule, serotine, soprano pipistrelle and whiskered. It is not considered likely that the proposed works will have a significant impact to these roosts

### 5.2. Habitats

5.2.1. The proposed development of the site will result in the loss and fragmentation of the current homogeneous mix of habitats recorded within the Site.

5.2.2. Site clearance mitigation and habitat enhancement should be set out in a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy (BMES).

5.2.3. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment should be prepared based on the results of this survey and the landscape plan for the proposed development.

### 5.3. Fauna

- 5.3.1. The site had MODERATE habitat potential for breeding birds, LOW potential for mammal species
- 5.3.2. There was LOW bat roost potential in some of the mature trees adjacent to the Site
- 5.3.3. A lighting plan should be incorporated within the BMES

### 5.4. Recommendations

- 5.4.1. A Biodiversity Net Gain calculation should be performed, to increase post development biodiversity.
- 5.4.2. A BMES should be prepared.
- 5.4.3. Habitat enhancement:
  - 1. Bat box – install a large, multi-chamber woodstone bat box installed on a northern elevation at a height above 3m. [https://www.arkwildlife.co.uk/product/large-multi-chamber-woodstone-bat-box/?gclid=EAlaIqObChMIgdvw8pTNgAMVh9XtCh07\\_gPIEAYASAAEglst\\_D\\_BwE](https://www.arkwildlife.co.uk/product/large-multi-chamber-woodstone-bat-box/?gclid=EAlaIqObChMIgdvw8pTNgAMVh9XtCh07_gPIEAYASAAEglst_D_BwE)
  - 2. Bird box – install a Vivaro Pro Madrid swift nest box installed on a northern elevation under the eaves at a height of at least 3m above the ground. [https://www.amenity.co.uk/products/madrid-swift-nest-box?variant=43620846371065&currency=GBP&utm\\_medium=product\\_sync&utm\\_source=google&utm\\_content=sag\\_organic&utm\\_campaign=sag\\_organic&gclid=EAlaIqObChMI3MC6uJXNgAMV\\_oIQBh31EAtQEAQYASABEgKMSfD\\_BwE](https://www.amenity.co.uk/products/madrid-swift-nest-box?variant=43620846371065&currency=GBP&utm_medium=product_sync&utm_source=google&utm_content=sag_organic&utm_campaign=sag_organic&gclid=EAlaIqObChMI3MC6uJXNgAMV_oIQBh31EAtQEAQYASABEgKMSfD_BwE)
  - 3. “Bug” hotel – install an insect hotel Capri installed on a free standing post or fence post at a height of 1.5m above the ground. [https://www.birdfood.co.uk/insect-hotel-capri?gclid=EAlaIqObChMIgoXo8pXNgAMVBPntCh3N9Q17EAQYBSABEglgR\\_D\\_BwE](https://www.birdfood.co.uk/insect-hotel-capri?gclid=EAlaIqObChMIgoXo8pXNgAMVBPntCh3N9Q17EAQYBSABEglgR_D_BwE)
  - 4. Site boundaries should be composed of native, species rich hedgerow.

## 6. References

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- Rose, F. (1989) *Colour Identification Guide to the Grasses, Sedges, Rushes and Ferns of the British Isles and North Western Europe*; Viking

## 7. Appendices

### Appendix 1

Target note	Target note comments
1	The proposed development site.



## Appendix 2

Photo 1 – The proposed development site, consisting of improved grassland.



Photo 2 – The hedgerow / introduced shrub to the south of the development.

