

Northney Marina, Hayling Island, Hampshire Ecological and Arboricultural Assessment Summary

Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by MDL Limited to undertake an Ecological and Arboricultural Assessment of land at Northney Marina, Hayling Island, Hampshire (*Grid Reference: SZ 74705 98908*).

A preliminary ecological appraisal (*PEA*); bat roost assessment; and detailed tree survey was undertaken of the site area on the 07th May 2021 to appraise the existing ecological and arboricultural resource within the land and the surrounding area.

Ecological Appraisal

The main body of the site is dominated by common, widespread habitats of '***negligible-low***' value. The plant species on site were common and widespread species; no rare or unusual species were recorded. The habitats which would be directly affected by the development proposals are of ***negligible-low value***.

Boundary trees and scrub should be retained within any development scheme, both for their wildlife value and for the screening they provide between the proposed construction zones and the Chichester Harbour area.

The proposals should be designed to achieve a ***Biodiversity Net Gain*** in terms of the habitats present. This is likely to require areas of open space within the development scheme, as well as features such as green walls or green roofs.

Protected Sites

The site lies adjacent Unit 10 – Northney Foreshore of Chichester Harbour SSSI. This unit is classified as being in 'Unfavourable- declining' condition due to loss of saltmarsh resulting from excessive nutrients, flood defences and inappropriate coastal management.

The proposed development must seek to retain and protect the adjacent mudflats and saltmarsh from habitat degradation during construction or occupation of dwellings. Given the small size of the site and existing land-use, coastal squeeze is not considered to be a major factor however the development should be designed to avoid the need for hard flood defences where possible.

Provided that these adjacent habitats are unaffected, the development shall not cause the loss of any functional supporting habitat of the adjacent SPA.

As the site is located within the Solent Nutrient Impact Area a nutrient budget calculation shall be required to demonstrate how the site achieves nitrate neutrality. Should this not be possible, compensation payments may be required to offset any increase in nitrogen discharge resulting from the development.

Due to the proximity of the site to Chichester & Langstone Harbours SPA, contributions towards the Solent Bird Aware scheme shall be required to mitigate against the effects of increased recreational disturbance.

Reptiles

The site contains areas of suitable reptile habitat which are likely to require removal to facilitate development. A detailed reptile survey should be completed to determine whether reptiles are present, their species and the population size class such that adequate mitigation can be provided if necessary. Reptile surveys can be completed between mid-March and October each year.

Bats

Tree T01 was found to offer 'low' bat roost suitability. This tree should be sectioned felled under ecological supervision if removal is required, in accordance with best practise guidelines (BCT, 2016).

Mature trees and scrub which surround the site are likely to form foraging and commuting corridors for low numbers of common bat species. Avoidance of disturbance should be achieved through a combination of good design and careful consideration of lighting.

Breeding Birds

Removal of suitable nesting habitat should be undertaken outside the nesting season (*avoiding March-August*) or following inspection by a suitability qualified ecologist to ensure no active nests are present. New bird nesting provision should be incorporated into the proposals to compensate for the loss of recently cleared scrub to the western sector of the site.

Wintering Birds

A full suite of wintering bird surveys should be completed to assess the true value of the adjacent habitats for wildfowl and waders associated with the SPA. Surveys should broadly follow the Solent Brent Goose and Waders methodology with survey visits completed every two weeks between October and March. Given the amount of existing data regarding the surrounding habitat with the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy, a single year's monitoring is considered sufficient to assess the potential impacts of this proposed development.

Invertebrates

New native shrubs, insect houses and log piles should be incorporated into the proposals to compensate for the loss of the area of scrub and grassland to the western portion of the site. Compensation for the loss of any areas of semi-improved grassland should be provided through areas of wildflower seeding within the scheme.

Summary of Protected Species Requirements and Ecological Recommendations

A summary of recommendations is as follows:

- *Undertake reptile surveys of the site during the optimal survey season;*
- *Complete winter bird surveys between October and March;*
- *Remove any bird nesting habitat outside the bird nesting season (Nesting season: March – August inclusive) or following inspection to ensure no active nests are present;*
- *Section fell tree T01 under ecological supervision should removal be required;*
- *Compensate for loss of recently cleared scrub through the installation of bird boxes, insect houses and log piles. Areas of native shrubs should be utilised within the scheme to provide additional compensation;*
- *Retain and protect boundary trees and scrub with the scheme designed in accordance with BS5837;*
- *Retain and protect all adjacent mudflats and saltmarsh both during construction and occupation;*
- *Design the proposals to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with BS42020:2013;*
- *The drainage scheme shall need to consider the location of the site within The Solent Nutrient Impact Area.*

Arboricultural Appraisal

The existing access road is lined with cypress, sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and field maple (*Acer campestre*) trees, some of which still have tree guards present through the centre of the site. A small number of scattered trees exist within the western section of the site including downy birch (*Betula pubescens*) and willow (*Salix* sp.), with a small number of young birch trees also planted within the site. Boundary trees are of **site / local value**. Semi-mature trees of high value to the southern site boundary and through the centre of the site should be retained and protected to the within the development scheme where possible.