

TECHNICAL NOTE: DISCHARGE OF ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

Bloor Homes

Normandy Fields, Hinckley

20 April 2026

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Ecology Technical Note has been prepared by FPCR Environment and Design on behalf of Bloor Homes. The Technical Note provides ecology re-assessment for water vole, bats, great-crested newts, and badgers required by Conditions 14, 19, and 20 (on the Outline Planning Permission (OPP) (Referenced: 15/00188/OUT, File Reference: 26/00003/DISCON) for the proposed development at Normandy Fields, Hinckley (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').
- 1.2 The technical ecology re-assessment is only relevant to the discharge of Conditions 14, 19, and 20 relating to Phase 7 of the proposed development. These conditions have already been discharged for other phases, which are currently subject to active construction or are occupied.

2.0 PLANNING CONDITIONS

- 2.1 Condition 14 states:

"No development shall commence on site until a Water Vole Mitigation Strategy, based on the principles outlined on the Water Vole Habitat Strategy Plan Dwg No DE155_006, has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include a phased programme of mitigation works relative to the build programme of the development. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme."

- 2.2 Condition 19 states:

"No development shall commence, in any phase, unless and until a schedule of re-surveys and/or re-assessment of ecological plans and assessment for that phase is submitted to and agree in writing"

- 2.3 Condition 20 states:

"No development shall commence, in any phase, unless and until such time as the re-survey and/or re-assessment of ecological plans and assessment as identified in condition 19 are submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved survey/assessments and any identified mitigation measures."

3.0 SITE ECOLOGY RE-ASSESSMENT

Water Voles

- 3.1 No watercourses are present on Phase 7 of the development, but drainage ditches associated with the boundary hedgerow were identified. Over the extended survey period, these drainage ditches have been recorded as being mostly dry and no evidence of watervole was recorded in

these drainage ditches. From these results the overarching conclusion was that the drainage ditches did not provide suitable water vole habitat.

- 3.2 Over the updated survey, the profile of the drainage ditches associated with Phase 7 were shallow and unsuitable to support water voles. No evidence of water vole activity was identified in the drainage ditches. From this evidence, it has been concluded that water vole is not a statutory ecological constraint to the development of Phase 7.
- 3.3 In the wider development, a short section of the water vole protection corridor occurs in close to Phase 7. This protective fencing is linked with the previous water vole mitigation strategy agreed for earlier phases of the development.
- 3.4 The protective fencing installed to exclude water voles was inspected during the Site surveys and was found to be intact, with no gaps, damage, or other defects that would allow water voles to enter the current construction phases or Phase 7 of the development.
- 3.5 Given the lack of suitable water vole habitat within Phase 7 of the development and the protective measures / mitigation provided for other phases of the development, it has been concluded that no additional water vole mitigation or protection is required for Phase 7 of the development.

Bats

- 3.6 An updated Ground-Based Tree Assessment of on-Site trees was undertaken to identify the presence of Potential Roost Features (PRFs), in accordance with British Standard 8596:2015 (Surveying for bats in trees and woodland¹).
- 3.7 PRFs were identified associated with two trees within the western boundary hedgerow of Phase 7. Both of these trees are retained and protected, with appropriate buffer zones to avoid potential effects on the potential roost sites.
- 3.8 With the provision of a sensitive lighting scheme ensuring disturbance of potential roost features is avoided, development of Phase 7 will not affect a bat roost if present in these trees. Therefore, the presence of a bat roost has not been identified as a statutory ecological constraint to the development of Phase 7.
- 3.9 The boundary features will offer a suitable commuting route and foraging areas for the local bat population. For the most part, the proposals are broadly similar to those submitted with the outline planning application, and these commuting routes and foraging areas remain largely retained and protected by the proposals. Where there are minor losses, the green infrastructure of the overall scheme has been identified as providing adjacent mitigation and compensation for any losses which occur as part of the consented development. Given this, the detailed proposals are not considered to result in any additional effects that have not already been assessed through the granting of planning permission and the completion of additional survey work is not considered necessary.

Badgers

- 3.10 The survey also sought to identify any significant changes in the presence or absence of badger activity, including setts, latrines, runs, and other field signs of foraging within the Site and

¹ British Standard 8596:2015 *Surveying for bats in trees and woodland*, October 2015.

adjacent habitats. The assessment was undertaken in accordance with standard badger survey methodologies and recognised best practice guidance.

- 3.11 No badger activity was observed within the Phase 7 or within 30m of the development.

Great-Crested Newts

- 3.12 The Site walkover, which included inspection of the great crested newt (GCN) exclusion fencing and an assessment of habitat suitability within the Site.
- 3.13 GCN barrier agreed through discharging Conditions 14 and 19 for phase 1 of the development was present and has been maintained. Whilst secondary vegetation has developed since the removal of agricultural management, the presence of the amphibian fencing will minimise opportunities for use of the habitats within the Site.

Birds

- 3.14 The Site walkover included an assessment of habitats for their suitability to support breeding birds. Within the Phase 7 development area, suitable habitat is largely restricted to boundary features, including retained hedgerows and trees. These features provide suitable opportunities for foraging and nesting birds.
- 3.15 The secondary grassland present on-Site grassland will offer some limited suitability to support ground-nesting bird species through regular disturbance during the ongoing development operations on land surrounding the Site. The boundary hedgerows also provide suitable nesting opportunities for breeding birds, but the hedgerows and vegetation adjacent to the hedgerows are currently protected by erected fencing and will be retained as part of the development proposals.
- 3.16 In the event vegetation removal is required over the main bird breeding season, clearance works should be overseen by an ECoW. If the presence of activity nest site(s) is recorded, these nest site(s) and an appropriate buffer should be implemented until confirmation that the chicks have fledged the nest.

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