

HILL25205 Northern Arc, Burgess Hill, Phase 1C Eastern Neighbourhood Centre, Development Parcels P1.7 & P1.8.

Interim summary – AUGUST 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. In June 2026 a site walkover was conducted to determine the scope of survey work required. The area of land which was surveyed is known as Northern Arc, Burgess Hill, Phase 1C, Eastern Neighbourhood, here will be known as the 'Application Site'. The grid reference for the centre of the site is TQ 30967 20761.

1.2. The Application Site is approximately 12.21 hectare in size, located north of Burgess Hill.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. The site walkover was carried out on 8th June 2026 to identify habitats on the Application Site and protected species which could be present.

2.2. The UKHabs survey methodology was used to classify the habitat types in the Application Site.

2.3. The Application Site habitats were compared to the habitats classified in the Biodiversity Statement and Metric Assessment by Middlemarch in 2025. ¹

2.4. Notes of flora and fauna were made throughout the UKHabs survey onsite and were evaluated for their importance for supporting legally protected species.

Limitations

¹Middlemarch (2025) Biodiversity Statement and Metric Assessment.

2.5. There was a limitation, the west of the site was not possible to be walked as it was fenced off and padlocked. This part of the site was walked along the perimeter to categorize the habitat and assess the condition. The area was possible to view on the 12th August 2026, it was deemed the same as the previous report by Middlemarch².

3. RESULTS

3.1. The Application Site comprises of improved neutral grassland, dense scrub, bare ground, hedgerows and semi natural broadleaf woodland. The habitats recorded on the Application Site were the same as those recorded in Middlemarch Biodiversity Statement and Metric Assessment. The habitats are also included as images in Appendix 1.

Table 1: Floral species list

Area	Plant species
Improved neutral grassland	Cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> , cut leaved cranes-bill <i>Geranium dissectum</i> , cat's- ears <i>Hypochaeris radicata</i> , cocks foot <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> , common birds foot – trefoil is <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> , bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> , common fleabane <i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , broadleaf dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , common ragwort <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i> , dandelion <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , common vetch <i>Vicia sativa</i> , pendulous sedge <i>Carex pendula</i> , soft brome <i>Bromus hordeaceus</i> , Yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i> , perennial rye grass <i>Lolium perenne</i> .
Dense scrub	Bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> , blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> , dog rose <i>Rosa canina</i> , nettles and holly <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> .
Bare ground	Creeping thistle and perennial rye grass
Hedgerows	Hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> , blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> , dogrose, bramble, elder <i>Sambucus nigra</i> .
Semi – natural broadleaf woodland	Dogwood <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> , hazel, hawthorn, ash <i>Fraxinus exelsior</i> , common ivy <i>Hedera helix</i> , holly <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> , blackthorn, dog rose, bramble.

Fauna

3.2. For the ease of reference, descriptions of the relevant fauna have been provided alphabetically below.

² Middlemarch (2025) Biodiversity Statement and Metric Assessment.

Bats

- 3.7. The Application Site has potential to support bats. The Application Site has potential for supporting commuting and foraging bats and a small number of roosting bats. There are mature trees along the hedgerows and within the woodland to the east of the Application Site, which could be utilised by bats for roosting. One of the trees in the north of the Application Site had a bat box. Many of the trees had no visible Preliminary Roost Features (PRFs) at the time of the survey, but it is important to note precheck would be required on any tree's to be removed, as PRFs can develop and establish in the future.
- 3.8. It is recommended that a bat transect/activity survey takes place due to the habitats present in the Application Site. This is where a specific route is walked at dusk with detectors, to map foraging and commuting routes and identify high traffic routes. This will require a minimum of one survey visit per season (spring- April/May, summer-June/July/August and autumn September/October). This will also include static deployment, which is an automated detector that is left in a specific location, for several nights to record overall activity.

- 3.9. Survey efforts have begun on the site to understand how bats are using the site, a transect was carried out on 6th August 2026, the transect survey showed low levels of bat activity and species such as common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, Nathusius pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and myotis sp. were recorded. The first bat heard was a soprano pipistrelle at 20:43. The survey will be replicated in the autumn and summer to understand how bats are using the site as well as the importance of the site for local bat populations.

Birds

- 3.10. The Application Site has good nesting and feeding potential for breeding and ground nesting birds. A breeding bird survey and nesting bird checks will need to be completed before any removal or management works occur on any of the Application Site. Breeding bird surveys should optimally be carried out between March-June.
- 3.11. Breeding bird surveys are being carried out during the breeding bird season. The first survey was carried out in August 2026; the survey will be replicated another two times next survey season in April and June to get a greater understanding of which species are using the site. Although August is not during peak breeding bird season it is still within the breeding bird season for species found in the United Kingdom.

Great crested newts and amphibians

- 3.12. The Application Site has potential to support amphibians and newts in both their terrestrial and aquatic phases. There is a pond located on the north of the site and there is suitable habitat. There are a further 6 ponds within 250 metres of the Application Site according to MAGIC³. Ponds to the west of the site have been ruled out due to the physical barrier of the road.
- 3.13. eDNA survey should be carried out on the pond within the Application Site boundary and if possible, those off site. eDNA should be carried out between mid-April-June. If the eDNA results are positive for newts, bottle trapping surveys may be required to confirm population size. Bottle trapping is carried out between the middle of March-June.
- 3.14. The eDNA surveys and Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) surveys will be carried out during the newt season, these have all been provisionally booked in for next survey season. The surveys will determine if there are great crested newts present around the site.

³ Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside [online]. Available at: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

Hazel dormice

- 3.15. The Application Site has potential to provide for hazel dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius*, due to the habitats present onsite. The Application Site appears to have had a previous dormouse survey as evidence of dormouse tubes were found during the site walkover in a hedge along the eastern hedgerow. Dormice presence surveys were carried out in 2018/2019 by AECOM to obtain the outline planning permission.
- 3.16. The Application Site should have a dormouse survey to understand the presence/absence of the species on the site. This should be carried out between April-November. Any previous survey data should be reviewed to understand the result of previous survey efforts.
- 3.17. MAGIC returned three records of hazel dormice within one kilometre of the site, with one of the returns c.100 meters of the site.
- 3.18. Survey efforts have begun to identify the presence or absence of dormice on the site, with the first dormouse tunnel check was carried out on 12th August 2026 and presence was not identified. The tunnels will be checked another 2 times to determine presence.

Invertebrates

- 3.19. The Application Site likely has common species present and are considered to be widespread in the local area. The invertebrate assemblages onsite are therefore considered to be of site level importance.

Reptile

- 3.20. The habitats within the Application Site provide suitable opportunities to support reptiles, in large part due to the grassland and varied sward height. The south area of the Application Site appears to have previously had reptile surveys as old reptile fencing was identified. Any previous survey data should be reviewed to understand the results of the previous survey efforts.
- 3.21. It is likely these habitats will be impacted by the proposed development therefore reptile presence/absence survey should be undertaken. Reptile presence/absence surveys can be carried out in the active season for reptiles, which is typically late March to early October. If the presence of reptiles on site is confirmed an appropriate mitigation and enhancement strategy should be developed.

3.22. To identify presence of reptiles on the Application Site survey efforts have begun, two surveys have been carried out so far and no reptiles have been identified. Surveys will be carried out over the next month to identify presence/likely absence.

Other mammals

3.23. The Application Site has potential for supporting a small mammal population. The Application Site could be utilised by species such as fox *Vulpes vulpes* and hedgehog *Erinaceus europeaus*. The Application Site is considered suitable for other mammals as a commuting route and foraging route between other suitable habitats surrounding the Application Site.

3.24. These habitats will likely be impacted by the proposed development.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1. In conclusion the Application Site has the potential to support a variety of protected species identified in the site walkover on 8th June 2026. Survey work is currently underway to confirm the presence or likely absence of protected species within the Application Site. Surveys which are not possible to be completed within the current survey season are provisionally booked in for the 2027 survey season. Further surveys need to be carried out for protected species as this project progresses to determine the appropriate mitigation and the proposed impacts from the development on identified protected species.

APPENDIX 1 – SITE PHOTOS



Image 1: Application Site looking north



Image 2: Application Site looking from the south to the north

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Image 3: Southern boundary



Image 4: Hedgerow in the southern section of the site



Image 5: Semi-natural woodland on the western boundary



Image 6: Centre of the Application site

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Image 7: View from the east boundary looking west