

MR & MRS BAKER



23 HURST ROAD, HASSOCKS, WEST SUSSEX, BN6 9NJ

Ecological Impact Assessment

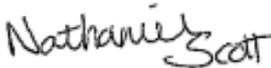
October 2024



eas ltd

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd

REPORT DATA SHEET

Requirement	Data
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Date	October 2024
Client	Mr & Mrs Baker
Report type	Ecological Impact Assessment
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Prepared by	Nathaniel Scott BSc (Hons), MSc  Signed
Approved by	Lucy Monday BSc (Hons), ACIEEM  Signed

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Ecological Impact Assessment

October 2024

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23 HURST ROAD, HAS SOCKS, WEST SUSSEX, BN6 9NJ

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

October 2024

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd has been appointed to prepare a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in relation to the proposed redevelopment of land at 23 Hurst Road, Hassocks.

The site (as existing) comprises an existing garage and garden area with associated access. It is proposed to demolish the existing garage and develop a single, detached residential dwelling with minor alterations to the access, parking and garden areas.

The aim of this report is to collate preliminary, baseline information on the conservation and ecological status of the site in terms of habitats and species within the framework of current environmental legislation and provide recommendations in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the site, where appropriate.

The assessment comprised consultation with the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre to obtain records of protected, rare and notable species within 1 km of the site, consultation with Mid Sussex District Council regarding Tree Preservation Orders for trees within and adjacent to the site, and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (walkover survey) undertaken on 3 October 2024 to identify features of ecological value and the site's likely potential to support protected and other notable species.

Consultation with Mid Sussex District Council has confirmed that there are two Oak trees within / on the northern boundary of the site covered by a TPO, no. 0004, 2015. Assessment of the site, along with a review of consultation provided by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre, found the site to have potential for invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and bats.

Further assessment of the site in relation to trees (Arboricultural Implications Assessment) and bats (Bat Survey Report) has been undertaken with recommendations for mitigation and protection measures confirmed. These can be found in Appendix D and E of this report, respectively.

Recommendations for the protection of ecological features and species, and where appropriate, mitigation and compensation measures, have been made in relation to invertebrates, amphibians (including Great Crested Newts), reptiles, birds, bats and trees. Where protection, mitigation and compensation measures are implemented, the potential impacts of the proposed development and future site use should have minimal impact on the biodiversity value of the site.

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23 HURST ROAD, HAS SOCKS, WEST SUSSEX, BN6 9NJ

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

October 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The following report, prepared by Environmental Assessment Services Limited, is a preliminary assessment of the baseline status of the ecology of land at 23 Hurst Road, Hassocks, West Sussex.

The site comprises an existing detached two-bay garage with first floor annex, access and residential garden area to the south (rear). The Ordnance Survey map reference for the centre of the site is TQ 29666 15561. See Appendix A for the site location and existing site plans.

It is proposed to demolish the existing garage building and develop a single, detached residential dwelling with associated access, parking and garden area. See Appendix B for the proposed site plans.

1.2 Aim of the Report

The aim of the report is to collate preliminary, baseline information on the conservation and ecological status of the site in terms of habitats and species, within the framework of current environmental legislation.

The report also evaluates the potential of the site to support protected species, in particular for:

- Animals and plants listed under Schedules 1 and 5, and Schedule 8, respectively, of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) as amended, and those European protected species listed under Schedules 2 and 5 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- Plants and animals with Red Data Book¹ or Notable² status.
- Plants, animals and habitats identified as Priority Species / Habitats or Species / Habitats of Principal Importance for Conservation in England (formerly UK Biodiversity Action Plan)³.

¹ The World Conservation Union Red List of threatened species provides taxonomic, conservation status and distribution information on taxa (species or group of related species) evaluated to determine their relative risk of extinction.

² Notable (or Nationally Scarce) species occur in 16 – 100 10 km squares in Britain.

³ Species derived from Section 41 list of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 + the hen harrier.

Where the site includes features of ecological value and/or has potential for protected species, an assessment of the likely impacts of the proposal is made, together with recommendations for any further surveying, mitigation and enhancement as considered appropriate.

1.3 Legislation

The legislation relevant to this study is:

- i. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which transposes into UK law the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (known as the “Bern Convention”) and the Birds Directive 2009.
- ii. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000, which strengthens the legal protection for threatened species.
- iii. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, which through Section 41 provides a list of habitats and species of principal importance for biodiversity conservation (Priority Habitats and Species) in England.
- iv. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. These consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, which transposed the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (EC Habitats Directive) into national law.
- v. Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which safeguards both the animals and their setts.
- vi. The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (made under section 97 of The Environment Act 1995), which make provisions for the protection of important hedgerows.
- vii. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which makes requirements for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system.

1.4 Assessment Method

This assessment has been prepared generally in accordance with the CIEEM EcIA guidelines, as applicable, as recognised by the British Standard on Biodiversity BS42020:2013.

The assessment was undertaken in two stages:

- a) Consultation: comprising data searches by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) and Mid Sussex District Council.
- b) Preliminary ecological appraisal (walkover survey) carried out on 3 October 2024 to:
 - Assess the baseline status of the site.
 - Identify its use by species of flora and fauna protected or controlled under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and associated European legislation.

- Identify notable features of interest that should or could be retained and/or enhanced as part of the proposals.

2. CONSULTATION AND BASELINE DATA SEARCH

2.1 Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre Data Search

2.1.1 Data obtained from Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) provided information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites and records of protected and notable species within the search area. The search was conducted for a 1 km radius surrounding the Ordnance Survey grid reference TQ 29666 15561. The search area was selected based on the scale and likely impacts of the proposed development.

2.1.2 The statutory and non-statutory designated sites identified by SxBRC within 1 km of the site are set out in section 3.2 below, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on these sites. Mitigation, where appropriate, is recommended in section 4.

2.1.3 Records of protected and rare species within 1 km of the site have been provided by SxBRC. These records are discussed under the protected species headings in Section 3.3 below, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on these species. Mitigation, where appropriate, is recommended in section 4.

2.2 Mid Sussex District Council

2.2.1 Mid Sussex District Council's online search function was used to identify any tree or group of trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) at and/or within the vicinity of the site. At the time of reporting, it is understood that there are two Oak trees within / on the boundary of the site protected by TPO, no. 0004, 2015. These large, mature trees stand to the front of the property. Given their size and age these trees are likely to be vulnerable to change. The site does not lie within a conservation area.

3. SITE ASSESSMENT

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (walkover survey) was carried out on 3 October 2024. The following is based on the findings of that assessment, together with a review of information provided by the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) and Mid Sussex District Council. Photographs taken during the site survey are provided in Appendix C.

3.1 Habitat Assessment

3.1.1 The site is located to the south of Hurst Road, to the west of the Stone Pound crossroads. The site lies within a residential area, with land fronting onto Hurst Road being primarily developed for residential use behind which lies a mosaic of undeveloped agricultural fields, paddocks and small parcels of woodland.

- 3.1.2 The site comprises a detached two-bay garage/annex, a large residential garden to the rear (south), together with areas of soft-landscaping including mature trees and access in the form of a private shingle driveway to the north of the site. The site presently forms a part of 23 Hurst Road, a single residential property, which is to be divided laterally from the main residential dwelling and a section of the residential garden to the south.
- 3.1.3 The detached garage situated within the site is of brick and stone construction with a pitched and hipped, clay-tiled roof and areas of clay tile-hanging on each gable end. The ground floor is divided into two areas; a two-bay garage/storage area accessed via two timber doors on the west side, and a small room with a staircase leading to a first-floor space (converted loft space), as well as an enclosed WC on the eastern side.
- 3.1.4 It is understood that the converted loft space has been used as a guest room and features three dormer windows on the south side and three Velux-style roof windows on the north side.
- 3.1.5 The garden area to the rear (south) of the detached garage comprises amenity grassland, together with areas of ornamental planting and mature trees (please refer to Aboricultural Implications Assessment, Broad Oaktree Consultants LTD, June 2024 submitted in conjunction with this report). A small wooden shed, glass greenhouse, wood store and raised planters can be found within the northwestern section of the garden, together with a four bay composting area to the south of the site.
- 3.1.6 The topography of the garden area is significantly varied and uneven. It is understood that the site was part of a former sand extraction pit. Generally, garden areas within the northern section are raised and slope/step down to low-lying areas in the south. A vegetated retaining wall separates the northern section of the garden from the southern.
- 3.1.7 The amenity grassland within the rear garden area comprises lawn which is maintained to a short sward. Areas of longer-swarded grass can be found on the banks of the low-lying areas.
- 3.1.8 Planting beds can be found throughout the site and include a variety of ornamental and native species including sections of Beech and Holly hedging. Rhododendron and Bamboo are present throughout the southern section of the site together with Cherry Laurel within the northern areas.
- 3.1.9 Dead wood, including old tree stumps and other cuttings, is found throughout the garden including within the northern section of the site where the proposed redevelopment is to take place.

3.2 Designated Sites and Priority Habitats

- 3.2.1 There is one Statutory site within 1 km of the site, as identified by SxBRC; This is South Downs National Park which lies approximately 100 m to the south of the site. There are no other Statutory sites within 1 km of the study site.

3.2.2 There are two Non-Statutory sites within 1 km of the site; Lag Wood & Butchers Wood, two ancient woods designated collectively as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) which lie approximately 700 m to the southeast of the site. Butchers Wood is also a Woodland Trust Site.

3.2.3 The proposed redevelopment of the site, comprising the removal of an existing garage and provision of a single residential dwelling, is not considered likely to have any significant impact on any statutory or non-statutory sites.

3.2.3.1 European sites include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). These, together with Ramsar sites, are protected for their ecological significance. Proposed development should not adversely affect the integrity of European or Ramsar sites. Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA lies within Mid Sussex; however, the site does not lie within the 7 km Impact Risk Zone as identified by Mid Sussex District Council.

3.2.3.2 There will be no direct land take from any designated (or non-designated) sites as a result of the proposed development. Designated site habitat management will not be affected by the proposed development. The potential impact of the proposed development on feature species of the European and Ramsar sites (including lighting impacts) and invasive species is considered in section 3.3 below.

3.2.3.3 The site has been assessed for its potential to include or be part of (BAP) Priority Habitat as listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (NERC Act).

3.2.4 Section 41 Habitats recorded within 1 km of the site include:

- Ancient/Veteran trees
- Chalk Stream
- Open Water
- Traditional Orchard
- Wood-pasture and Parkland
- Ancient Woodland
- Deciduous Woodland

3.2.5 The site comprises a well (regularly) maintained residential garden dominated by lawn and ornamental planting. Areas of deciduous woodland and open water lie adjacent to the site, to the southwest. Significant areas of open water, i.e. ponds and watercourses lie within 500 m of the site. The use of the site will remain generally as existing (residential). The plot is of a significant size and the increase from one to two dwellings is not considered likely to have a significant impact on local priority habitats.

3.3 Protected and Controlled Species

3.3.1 *Trees and Hedgerows*

There is a mixture of both deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs within the site, including Oak and Conifer standards, together with Beech and Cypress hedging. Two Oak trees within the northern section of the site are protected by a TPO

(0004/2014). An Aboricultural Implications Assessment has been produced in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the site. See Appendix D for Aboricultural Implications Assessment, June 2024.

3.3.2 *Plants*

There are a total of 20 records of protected and/or rare flowering plants within 1 km of the site, together with one recorded fungi species, eight lichen species and two mosses.

The site consists of an area of amenity grassland (lawn) which is subject to moderate levels of maintenance, together with areas of ornamental planting including wooden planters for seasonal produce. No rare plant communities were noted during the site walkover, however, there are a number of Sussex and Schedule 9 non-native invasive species including Cherry Laurel, Bamboo and Rhododendron.

A vegetated retaining wall present within the northern section of the site was assessed for any potential to support notable or rare lichen or mosses. Vegetation associated with the wall consisted predominantly of Ivy. No notable lichen or mosses were identified during the site walkover.

The redevelopment of the site will result in the loss of a small area of amenity grassland, together with an area of ornamental planting and the vegetated retaining wall considered to be of low ecological value.

No further botanical surveying is recommended in relation to the current proposal.

3.3.3 *Invertebrates*

Records held by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre indicate the presence of 32 rare, notable and protected invertebrate species. These include records for Stag Beetle (*Lucanus cervus*), and Chalk Hill Blue (*Polyommatus coridon*) and Brown Hairstreak (*Thecla betulae*) butterflies, all three of which are protected under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended).

While the site predominantly comprises of amenity grassland (lawn) which is maintained to a relatively short sward, areas of ornamental planting (including flowering plants) and dead wood, which can be found throughout the site, are thought to offer some potential for a variety of invertebrates including saproxylic species.

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of amenity grassland within the site, together with the loss of an area of ornamental planting. A large, old tree stump within this area will also be removed as part of the clearance.

No further surveying is recommended in this case; however, any areas of ornamental planting lost due to the proposed development should be compensated for elsewhere within the site. Should the tree stump within the northern section of the site be removed, the dead wood should be incorporated within the site

elsewhere for the benefit of saproxylic species. See Section 4 below for further recommendations and mitigation where applicable.

3.3.4 *Amphibians*

Great crested newts (GCN) and natterjack toads are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), making them a European Protected Species. It is an offence (amongst other things) to: deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill an individual of the species; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place, meaning that both the individual and its habitat are protected.

According to the Mid Sussex District Council: Impact Risk Zones map (produced by Nature Space) the site appears to lie within the red/amber zone, indicating that the site lies within an area considered highly suitable/suitable for Great Crested Newts. (Mapping at a scale provided is difficult to read.)

Records from SxBRC indicate extensive amphibian surveying within the local area including 29 records for Palmate Newt, 76 records for Smooth Newt and 56 records for Great Crested Newt within 1 km of the site. Additionally, SxBRC hold 10 records for Common Toad, and 150 records for Common Frog within the local area. Recent records (from 2017-2018) indicate the presence of Smooth Newt, Palmate Newt, and Great Crested Newt within the land associated with 27 Hurst Road which lies approximately 50 m to the west of the site.

There are no water features within the site, however, there are a number of water features (including ponds and other water bodies) within 500 m of the site. The closest of these features appears to lie approximately 100 m to the southwest of the site, within an area of deciduous woodland. However, there may be more unmapped garden ponds within the vicinity.

The short sward amenity grassland (lawn) which makes up the majority of the site, together with the hard standing and building areas, have low potential for GCN and other amphibians. However, the areas of taller sward and planting beds, together with other garden features including the composters, raised beds, dead wood and stepped paving, do provide some suitable terrestrial foraging and shelter which may be used by amphibians including GCN.

The majority of features that could be used by GCN are to be retained under the current plans, the development being generally limited to the existing building footprint, hardstanding and adjacent lawn area. In this case, it is considered that the proposed development will result in no net loss of potential amphibian habitat, however, significant amphibian populations are known to be present within the area, therefore, protection measures for these species will be required.

See Section 4 for recommendations regarding protection and mitigation measures, where applicable.

3.3.5 *Reptiles*

The more widespread reptiles: Grass Snake, Slow-worm, Viviparous Lizard and Adder, are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). It is an offence, amongst other things, to intentionally kill or injure any individual. The more restricted species: Sand Lizard and Smooth Snake, are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making them European Protected Species.

The more common reptile species, as mentioned above, have been recorded within 1 km of the site. Recent survey efforts from 2015 and 2018 have recorded Slow-worm and Grass Snake approximately 700 m to the east and northeast of the site respectively.

The banks with tall sward and planting beds, together with the composters, raised beds, dead wood and stepped paving, do provide suitable foraging and shelter which may be used by reptiles including slow-worm and grass snake. However, the building, adjacent hardstanding and lawn area to be impacted by the proposed development are generally of negligible to low suitability.

In this case, it is considered that the proposed development will result in no significant net loss of potential reptile habitat, however, reptiles are known to be present within the area and are considered likely to use the wider site, therefore, protection measures for reptiles will be required.

3.3.6 *Birds*

All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by UK law. It is an offence to take, kill or injure any wild bird, or to take, damage or destroy any nest (whilst being built or in use) or egg of any wild bird under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. In addition to this protection, those birds and their young listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) must not be disturbed at or near the nest. Part I birds are protected at all times and Part II during the closed season only.

A summary of the notable bird species recorded within 1 km of the site and their protection status was provided by SxBRC and has been reviewed as part of this assessment.

The site comprises typical garden planting likely to be used by passerine species typical of this habitat. The site is not considered likely to be of significance for bird populations.

The areas of amenity grassland within the site are considered to offer low ecological value for birds. However, other features including hedging and mature trees within the site may be used by nesting birds during the nesting season (February to August, inclusive). A north-facing nesting bird box is situated on a Horse Chestnut tree within the southern garden area.

No evidence of nesting within the existing garage/annex was identified during the site walkover, and no significant nesting opportunities within/on the buildings was noted.

It is considered that there will be no significant loss of habitat as a result of the proposed development. However, nesting birds may be disturbed by the proposed development where appropriate mitigation is not implemented. See Section 4 below for recommendations.

3.3.7 *Bats*

All species of bat are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (meaning all species of bat are both UK and European Protected Species).

It is illegal to:

- Kill, injure or capture (take) bats.
- Deliberately disturb bats (whether in a roost or not).
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to a bat roost.

Disturbance is unlawful where bats ability to survive, breed, reproduce, rear/nurture their young, hibernate or migrate is impaired or where local distribution or abundance is significantly impacted. This may occur where actions impact their roosts, flight lines or foraging areas.

Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre hold records for nine bat species within 1 km of the site. The site is set within an area which offers ideal habitat for bats. Comprising a mosaic of farmland, paddocks and small parcels of woodland, all of which are connected via well-established treelines and hedgerow. The surrounding landscape has high ecological value for bats.

A bat survey report has been commissioned in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the site (see Appendix E for Bat Survey Report, Bat Scan Ltd, June 2024). Initial inspection of the existing garage/annex revealed it to offer low, but not negligible potential for bat use. During the dusk emergence check, no bats emerged from the existing garage/annex.

Following the recommendations made by Bat Scan Ltd, no further surveying for bats is required. However, as bats are active within the area, appropriate precautions are required when the building is to be removed. It is also recommended that provisions for bat roosting are incorporated into the new building. See Section 4 below.

3.3.8 *Badgers*

Badgers are protected in the UK under the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 (as amended). It is an offence, amongst other things, to take, injure or kill a badger, or interfere with a badger sett (this includes intentionally or recklessly disturbing a badger when it is occupying a badger sett). To avoid committing an offence a

permit must be obtained to damage, destroy, obstruct or disturb a badger when it is occupying a badger sett.

Records of badgers are restricted for their protection, the area surrounding the site is considered to have high potential for badgers.

No evidence suggesting the presence of badgers, such as well-worn paths, signs of feeding behaviour (snuffle holes) or faecal waste, was identified within the site during the site walkover. However, it is deemed possible that the site could be used by badgers on occasion or in the future.

It is not thought likely that there are any setts within 30 m of the existing garage building. No sett protection measures are indicated in this case.

3.3.9 *Common/Hazel Dormice*

The common (or hazel) dormouse is protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making common dormice a European Protected Species.

SxBRC hold three records for hazel dormice within 1 km of the site. Records from 2019 identified a nest within Stonecroft Copse, which lies approximately 500 m to the southwest of the site. Additionally, SxBRC hold records for dormice within Butchers Wood, which lies approximately 860 m to the southeast of the site.

The surrounding area, comprising small parcels of woodland to the southwest of the site may also offer suitable habitat for dormice. Terrestrial habitat within the site consisting of amenity grassland and ornamental planting is not thought likely to offer any significant suitable habitat for dormice.

The proposed redevelopment, restricted to the northern section of the site is considered unlikely to have a significant impact on hazel dormice. No further recommendations are given in this case.

3.3.10 *Other Protected and Notable Species*

SxBRC hold records for hedgehog and rabbit within 1 km of the site. There are no other records of notable species considered likely to be impacted by the proposed development within 1 km of the site.

Evidence of rabbit activity within the southern section of the site was identified during the site walkover. The site is also considered likely to be used by hedgehog as part of this species wider habitat. The proposed redevelopment of the site for residential use is not considered likely to impact this species. No further recommendations are given in this case.

3.3.11 *Non-native Invasive Species*

Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) lists those non-native species that are established in the wild, but which pose a conservation threat

to native biodiversity and habitats. Schedule 9 aims to regulate further release of these species by making it a criminal offence to release them into the wild.

Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre hold records for nine plant and two animal Schedule 9 species within 1 km of the site:

Recorded plant species include:

- Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*),
- *Rhododendron ponticum*,
- Wall Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster horizontalis*).

Recorded animal species include:

- Eastern Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)

Additionally, SxBRC hold records for six Sussex invasive plant species and four animal species. Plant species include:

- Red Valerian
- Hybrid bluebell
- Least duckweed
- Winter heliotrope
- Cherry laurel
- Evergreen (holm) oak

Rhododendron, Cherry Laurel and Bamboo were identified within the garden area during the site walkover. These species should be managed to prevent their spread (See Section 4 below).

4. MITIGATION

The preliminary ecological appraisal identified some features of ecological value and habitat types of high ecological value that may potentially be used by protected species.

4.1 Trees

An Arboricultural Implications Assessment has been produced in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the site (see Appendix D). Recommendations relating to trees from this report include the removal of two young Western Red Cedars and the inclusion of robust tree protection measures, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 recommendations, to ensure the remainder of the trees within the site are not adversely affected. See Appendix D for specifications.

The Oak trees subject to TPO (0004/2014) within the northern section of the site are not thought likely to be impacted by the proposed redevelopment of the site. No further recommendations are given in this case.

4.2 Invertebrates

The proposed development will result in the loss of a section of ornamental planting which contains some flowering plants, together with a tree stump within the northern section of the site. Post development, new planting should be incorporated into the site to compensate for this loss, and the tree stump should be retained on site elsewhere for the benefit of saproxylic invertebrates (and other species likely to use dead wood for foraging and shelter).

4.3 Amphibians and Reptiles

Whilst the proposed development is considered unlikely to result in the loss of any significant amphibian and/or reptile habitat, amphibians and reptiles, including GCN are known to be present within the immediate area and may use the site as part of their wider habitat. It is therefore recommended that protection measures will be required to avoid impacting any individual during site clearance and redevelopment. Post development site use is considered unlikely to result in any significant habitat change.

A mitigation scheme should be prepared and approved by Mid Sussex District Council / Nature Space. Where it is deemed that appropriate protection can be secured to avoid impacting GCN a licence may not be required. Mitigation measures should include (but not be limited to) the following:

- i. Site clearance, including clearance of the vegetated areas of the site should be undertaken while amphibians (including GCN) are active, to avoid disturbing any amphibians while they are overwintering (and at high risk from disturbance).
- ii. Removal of the wooden sleeper steps and soft landscaping within the northern section of the site, should be carried out by hand (soft strip) following a precautionary approach.
- iii. Should any GCN be encountered during any stage of the proposed development, work should stop, and advice / assistance should be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
- iv. Materials associated with the development should be stored within an appropriate location.

District Level GCN Licensing is offered by Nature Space within this area. This is likely to be the preferred option where required. Alternatively, further surveying and impact assessment would be required to obtain a licence from Natural England. Please see <https://naturespaceuk.com/>

4.4 Birds

The proposed redevelopment of the site will include the removal of an existing garage/annex within close proximity to hedging and trees, which could be used by birds to nest, and the removal of some trees and hedging.

Clearance work should be scheduled outside of the bird nesting season (February – August inclusive). Where this is not possible, a check for nesting birds should be

undertaken immediately prior to the start of works. Should nesting birds be confirmed to be present, works should be delayed until all chicks have fledged.

Roosting/nesting provision should be included within the site, where possible. This may be in the form of nesting boxes provided within the site post development.

4.5 Bats

Recommendations for the protection and enhancement of the site for bats has been given in the Bat Survey Report prepared by Bat Scan Ltd, June 2024, provided in Appendix E. All recommendations given within this report, including the provision of roosting features, should be implemented within the site.

4.6 Non-native Invasive Species

Cherry Laurel, Rhododendron and Bamboo have been identified within the garden area. Measures to prevent the spread of these species associated with the redevelopment should be implemented. Any offsite disposal of these species should be managed to avoid spread to the wild.

Any new planting within the site should exclude the introduction of non-native invasive species.

4.7 Other Protected and Notable Species

If any new evidence of protected species is discovered whilst site clearance and construction work is in progress, Natural England should be informed immediately and appropriate advice on how to deal with the situation should be sought from a qualified ecologist.

5. ENHANCEMENT

5.1 Some ecological enhancement should be included within the development site to secure biodiversity improvement beyond that of the existing site. The following recommendations are given:

- i. Roosting and nesting features for both birds and bats should be included within the proposed redevelopment of the site. The features to be installed for bats should follow the advice given within the Bat Survey Report produced by Bat Scan Ltd, June 2024. The provision of bird nesting features should be positioned onto suitable trees within the garden area and within the fabric of the proposed building.
- ii. Any additional planting within the site should include a variety of native trees, shrubs and flowering plants to increase diversity within the site, foraging habitat, and provide shelter, hibernation, and roosting opportunities. Non-native invasive planting should be avoided.
- iii. The amenity grassland within the garden area is presently managed to maintain a short sward. The ecological improvement of the grassland could be achieved

by allowing the grass in some areas to grow to provide a varied sward length with seasonal cutting to promote grassland flowers.

- iv. Features including log piles, earth mounds, and hibernacula should be incorporated within the site to improve the site for a variety of species including reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates.
- v. A garden pond would offer suitable aquatic habitat for a variety of amphibian species (including Great Crested Newt) that have been extensively recorded within the surrounding area. This, combined with seasonal cutting of the grassland within the site, would provide suitable habitat for amphibians within the local area.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The site comprises a well (regularly) maintained residential garden with lawn, ornamental planting, sections of hedging and mature trees. The site is considered to be of moderate ecological value for the type of habitat (residential garden).
- 6.2 The proposed development, comprising the replacement of the existing garage/annex building with a residential dwelling, is deemed unlikely to have a significant impact on local ecology. However, there is some potential to cause disturbance to notable and protected species for which protection measures and/or licencing will be required. Protection measures have been recommended for the following:
 - Invertebrates – Compensation required.
 - Amphibians – Protection measures required.
 - Reptiles – Protection measures required.
 - Birds – Protection measures required.
 - Bats - Protection and enhancement measures required.
 - Trees - Protection measures required.
 - Non-native Invasive species – Avoidance measured required.
- 6.3 An Aboricultural Implications Assessment (Broad Oak Tree Consultants Ltd, June 2024) has confirmed that two young trees are recommended to be removed due to declining health and that robust tree protection measures, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 recommendations, should be implemented during the redevelopment of the site. The full report can be found in Appendix D.
- 6.4 A Bat Survey Report (Bat Scan Ltd, June 2024) identified no bats to be roosting within the garage/annex which was deemed to offer low, but not negligible potential for bat use. Under the current development plans, no further surveying has been recommended. An appropriate precautionary approach should be implemented when the building is demolished. It has also been recommended that provisions for roosting bats are incorporated into any replacement building. The specifications of these features is detailed in the report, see Appendix E.

- 6.5 The proposed development is not considered likely to have a significant impact on European (SPA and SAC) or Ramsar sites, or wildlife associated with these sites.
- 6.6 Should any new information come to light at any time, advice should be sought and this report should be updated.
- 6.7 It is noted that planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution relating to protected species. Should any protected species be identified before, or during the development, all works should cease, and a suitably qualified/experienced ecologist should be contacted for advice.

☆☆☆☆☆☆

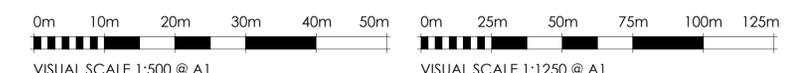
APPENDIX A
Site Location and Existing Site Plans



SITE BLOCK PLAN - AS PROPOSED
SCALE @ 1:500 ON AN A1 SHEET



SITE LOCATION PLAN - AS PROPOSED
SCALE @ 1:1250 ON AN A1 SHEET



REV.	DATE	BY	AMENDMENT	CHK.
*	*	*	*	*

FEASIBILITY

gould baxter

2 Lucastes Mews, Paddockhall Road,
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex, RH16 1HE
(01444) 452604
hb@gouldbaxter.co.uk
www.gouldbaxter.co.uk

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CLIENT:
Mr. & Mrs. Baker

PROJECT:
23 Hurst Road
Hassocks
West Sussex
BN6 9NJ

DRAWING:
Site Block and Location Plans
As Proposed

DATE: 22.03.2024	SCALE AT A1: Varies	DRAWN BY: RH CHECKED BY: GB
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DRAWING NO. FE.06	REV. *
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SITE PLAN - AS EXISTING
SCALE @ 1:150 ON AN A1 SHEET

REV.	DATE	BY	AMENDMENT	CHK.
*	*	*	*	*

EXISTING

gould baxter
2 Lucastes Mews, Paddockhall Road,
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex, RH16 1HE
(01444) 452604
hb@gouldbaxter.co.uk
www.gouldbaxter.co.uk

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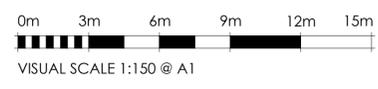
CLIENT:
Mr. & Mrs. Baker

PROJECT:
**23 Hurst Road
Hassocks
West Sussex
BN6 9NJ**

DRAWING:
**Topographical Survey Site Plan
As Existing**

DATE: 22.03.2024	SCALE AT 1: 1:150	DRAWN BY: RH CHECKED BY: GB
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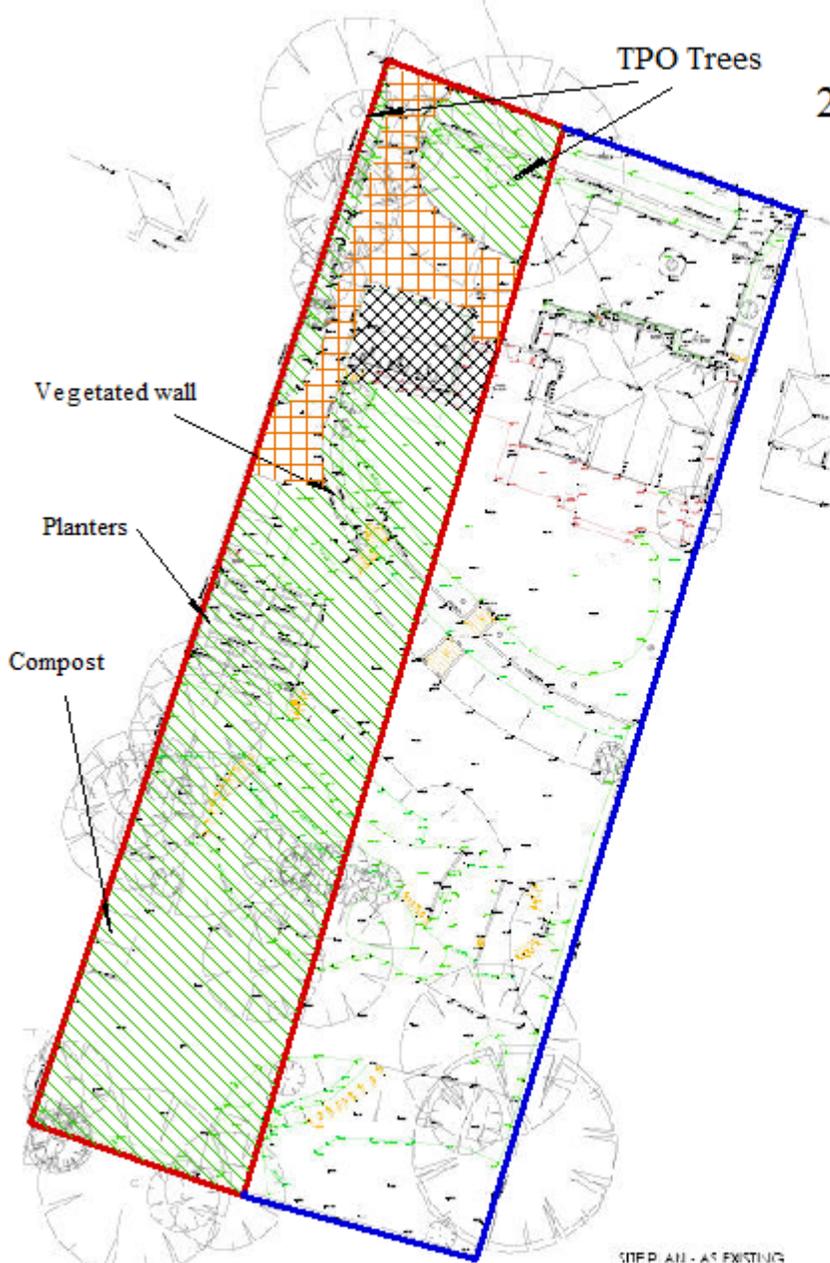
DRAWING NO. EX.01	REV. *
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Mr and Mrs Baker

23 Hurst Road, Hassocks, West Sussex,
BN6 9NJ

Ecological Impact Assessment: Habitat Map October 2024



Key:

-  Hardstanding
-  Loose surfacing
-  Vegetated garden

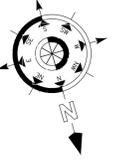
(Including amenity grassland, mature trees,
and ornamental planting)

Not to scale

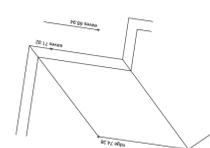
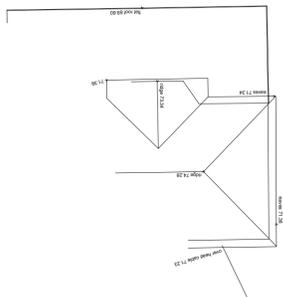
SITP: A11 - A1 EXISTING
SCALE @ 1:100 ON A1/A2 SHEET



APPENDIX B
Proposed Site Plans



- SITE PLAN KEY:**
- 1 - Existing vehicular crossover retained
 - 2 - Existing boundary hedging to be retained
 - 3 - New native hedge planting to proposed mutual boundary
 - 4 - Existing lawn, retained
 - 5 - Existing driveway, replaced over existing extents with a permeable surface dressing
 - 6 - Existing trees retained
 - 7 - Existing gate providing side access for proposed dwelling
 - 8 - New side access path in permeable surfacing (pea shingle)
 - 9 - Raised terrace serving entrance level
 - 10 - Existing elements demolished and removed - shown dashed red
 - 11 - New lower ground floor terrace with a paved finish
 - 12 - Existing greenhouse and shed retained
 - 13 - Existing vegetable patch retained
 - 14 - Existing flower beds
 - 15 - Extent of existing Garage to be demolished



REV.	DATE	BY	AMENDMENT	CHK.

FEASIBILITY

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2 Lucastes Mews, Paddockhall Road,
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex, RH16 1HE
(01444) 452604
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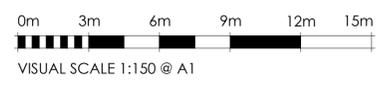
PROJECT:
**23 Hurst Road
Hassocks
West Sussex
BN6 9NJ**

DRAWING:
**Site Plan (Whole)
As Proposed**

DATE: 22.03.2024	SCALE AT A1: 1:150	DRAWN BY: RH CHECKED BY: GB
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DRAWING NO. FE.02	REV. *
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SITE PLAN (WHOLE) - AS PROPOSED
SCALE @ 1:150 ON AN A1 SHEET



APPENDIX C
Photographs



Photograph 1: The site comprises a detached two-bay garage/annex, together with a large residential garden to the rear (south).

The garage detached garage is of brick and stone construction with a pitched and hipped, clay-tiled roof.



Photograph 2: The garden area to the rear (south) of the existing garage/annex comprises amenity grassland, together with areas of ornamental planting, hedging and mature trees.

The grassland is regularly maintained to a short sward.



Photograph 3: A large compost heap with multiple bays is found within the south of the garden area.



Photograph 4: A wood store is situated within a northwestern area of the site.



Photograph 5: A section of ornamental planting and hedging is to be removed during the redevelopment of the site. This area contains a tree stump (dead wood) and Cherry Laurel, a non-native invasive species.



eas ltd

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd

Unit 4B, The Courtyard, Holmsted Farm, Staplefield Road, Cuckfield,
West Sussex, RH17 5JT

Phone : +44 (0) 1444 882552

email : info@easltd.co.uk

web site : www.easltd.co.uk