



ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

RESIDENTIAL ASPECT

THE PRINCE ALBERT

COPTHORNE BANK

CRAWLEY

RH10 3QX

JUNE 2025

UPDATED MAY 2026

ON BEHALF OF WESTCOAST DEVELOPMENTS



The Old Squash Court,
Rempstone Hall,
Rempstone,
Corfe Castle,
Wareham,
Dorset,
BH20 5JQ

www.ecological-services.co.uk

Telephone: 01929 477115

E-mail: enquiries@ecological-services.co.uk

Authorisation

	Name	Date
Report prepared by:	RM	27.04.2026
Report checked and authorised by:	WD	28.04.2026
Report checked and authorised by:	SH	06.06.2026

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Ecological Impact Assessment, prepared by LC Ecological Services Limited (LCES), was undertaken to assess the potential ecological impacts and effects of the proposed residential development of two new dwellings, and associated landscaping and infrastructure at The Prince Albert, Copthorne Bank, Crawley, RH10 3QX approximate Ordnance Survey central Grid Reference TQ 31292 39389.
- 1.2 The scoping information provided by the ecological appraisal summarises the ecological baseline methods and results; evaluates the Important Ecological Features; and indicates the potential impacts and proposes mitigation for the construction and operational of the proposed development.
- 1.3 This Ecological Impact Assessment identified fourteen Important Ecological Features (IEF's) which could potentially be impacted by the development proposals, including Hedgecourt Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI), Turners Hill SSSI, Grattons Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Waterlea Meadows LNR, Tilgate Forest LNR, Copthorne Meadows Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), Copper Coin Pond SNCI, Copper Coin Paddocks SNCI, modified grassland, other native hedgerows, [REDACTED] foraging and commuting bats, nesting birds and reptiles.
- 1.4 A suite of mitigation measures for fauna including [REDACTED], bats, nesting birds and reptiles is detailed in section 7.0.
- 1.5 The zone of influence of the project was determined by the sensitivity of the ecological features to environmental change within the site and the surrounding area in accordance with the guidelines for EcIA (CIEEM, 2018).

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This Ecological Impact Assessment, prepared by LC Ecological Services Limited (LCES), was undertaken to assess the potential ecological impacts and effects of the proposed residential development of two new dwellings, and associated landscaping and infrastructure at The Prince Albert, Copthorne Bank, Crawley, RH10 3QX, (approximate Ordnance Survey central Grid Reference TQ 31292 39389). The site location and survey boundaries are depicted in the plan included in appendix I. The site proposal plan is included in appendix II.
- 2.2 This report summarises the ecological baseline methods and results; evaluates the Important Ecological Features (IEFs); and indicates the potential impacts and proposes mitigation for the construction and operational stages of the proposed development.
- 2.3 The purpose of this report is to outline the following:
- To identify and describe all potentially significant ecological impacts and effects associated with the proposed development.
 - To set out the mitigation measures required to ensure compliance with nature conservation legislation and to address any potentially significant ecological effects.
 - To provide an assessment of the significance of any residual effects.
 - To identify appropriate enhancement measures.
 - To set out the requirements for post-construction monitoring.

3.0 LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Legislation

3.1 Full details of statutory obligations with respect to biodiversity and the planning system can be found in DEFRA Circular 06/2005. Relevant legislation to this application site includes the following:

- **Internationally Designated Sites:** The Conservation of Habitats and Species (amendment) Regulations 2017 have created a National Site Network that includes existing Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and new SAC's and SPA designated under these regulations. These are a network of sites designated for supporting habitats or species of high nature conservation importance in the European context. Any activity that has a detrimental effect on these National Site Networks is made an offence under the Regulations. Where a development is likely to have a significant impact on a National Site Network, the Regulations require a rigorous assessment of the impacts, known as an Appropriate Assessment.
- **Nationally Designated Sites:** Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are protected under section 28 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)*.
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- **Bats:** all species of British bats and their roosts are fully protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)* and the *Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017*.
- **Mammals:** *Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996*.
- **Reptiles:** the adder (*Viper berus*), common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) and slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) receive protection under the *WCA 1981 (as amended)*.
- **Birds:** all birds, their nests, eggs, and young are protected by the *WCA 1981 (as amended)*.
- **Great crested newt** (*Triturus cristatus*). It is illegal to deliberately capture, kill or injure individuals or obstruct access to any structure or place which great crested newts use for shelter or protection or to disturb any great crested newt

while it is using such a place under the WCA 1981 as amended and the *Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017*.

- **The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000:** This Act strengthens nature conservation and wildlife protection. It places a duty on Government Ministers and Departments to conserve biological diversity, provides police with stronger powers relating to wildlife crimes, and improves protection and management of SSSIs.
- **Hedgerow Regulations 1997:** These Regulations establish a set of criteria for assessing the importance of hedgerows. Where a hedgerow is deemed to be ‘important’ its removal is prohibited without consent from the local Planning Authority. Hedgerows are also a priority habitat listed as a habitat of principal importance in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.
- **Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs):** BAPs set out policy for protecting and restoring priority species and habitats as part of the UK’s response as signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity. BAPs operate at both a national and local level with priority species and habitats identified at a national level and a series of Local BAPs that identify ecological features of particular importance to a particular area of the country. The requirement to consider and contribute towards BAP targets was strengthened through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

National Planning Policy

- 3.2 Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) ‘Conserving and enhancing the natural environment’ sets out the Government’s planning policies relating to biodiversity, landscape and geological conservation. The relevant paragraphs within this chapter are from 187, 188, 192 to 194.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.3 The Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 (December 2025) is currently in use for planning applications within West Sussex for the Crawley Borough Council jurisdiction.
- 3.4 Relevant planning policies within this plan include:
- ENV1: Green Infrastructure
 - ENV2 – Biodiversity
 - ENV3: Local green space

Biodiversity Action Plans

3.5 Biodiversity Action plans (BAPs) which may be of relevance to the site include the following:

- Reptiles (all species) (UKBAP)
- Western barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) (UKBAP)
- Bechstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*) (UKBAP)
- Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) (UKBAP)
- Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) (UK BAP)
- Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*) (UK BAP)
- Hedgerows (UKBAP)

4.0 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Study Area

- 4.1 The site is located at the approximate central Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference (TQ 31292 39389) and the study area comprises the site plus the additional surrounding radii detailed below:
- Five kilometres for any international statutory designated sites for nature conservation.
 - Two kilometres for any national statutory designated sites for nature conservation.
 - Two kilometres for any non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation.
 - Two kilometres for all records of protected, notable and invasive species.
 - 500 metres for waterbodies with potential to support great crested newt.
 - [REDACTED]

Sources of Information

4.2 The following sources of information were used to inform the impact assessment:

Table 1: Summary of survey work and sources of information for The Prince Albert

Survey type	Year(s)	Comment
Desk study - biodiversity records search and details of any local non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation	2024, 2026	Information obtained from Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) and Surrey Biodiversity information Centre (SBIC)
Desk study - information on statutory sites designated for nature conservation, granted protected species mitigation licences.	2024, 2026	Information obtained from Natural England's web-based Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)
Ecological appraisal	2024, 2026	LC Ecological Services on 27 th June 2024, and 24 th March 2026.
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Survey type	Year(s)	Comment
Bat roosting suitability assessment	2024, 2026	LC Ecological Services on 27 th June 2024, and 24 th March 2026.
Bat foraging and commuting habitat suitability assessment	2024, 2026	LC Ecological Services on 27 th June 2024, and 24 th March 2026.
Nesting bird habitat suitability assessment	2024, 2026	LC Ecological Services on 27 th June 2024, and 24 th March 2026.
Great crested newt habitat suitability assessment	2024, 2026	LC Ecological Services on 27 th June 2024, and 24 th March 2026.
Hazel dormouse habitat suitability assessment	2024, 2026	LC Ecological Services on 27 th June 2024, and 24 th March 2026.
Reptile habitat suitability assessment	2024, 2026	LC Ecological Services on 27 th June 2024, and 24 th March 2026.

Assessment Process

- 4.3 The EcIA is in accordance with the CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2022).
- 4.4 The starting point was to determine which features should be subject to detailed assessment, that is, those receptors:
- a) Of sufficient value that impacts upon them may be significant (in terms of legislation or policy); and
 - b) Potentially vulnerable to significant impacts arising from the development.
- 4.5 This approach is consistent with the EIA Regulations, which only require investigation of likely significant effects.
- 4.6 The CIEEM guidelines recommend that the value of ecological receptors or features is determined based on a geographic frame of reference that includes the following levels:

Table 2: Level of Value Assigned to each Ecological Feature (adapted from CIEEM, 2018)

Level of Value	Example of Definitions
International	An internationally important site e.g. SPA, SAC, Ramsar (or a site considered worthy of such a designation).

Level of Value	Example of Definitions
	A viable area of a habitat type listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive, or smaller areas of such habitats which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole. A regularly occurring population of an internationally important species (listed on Annex IV of the Habitats Directive).
UK / National	A nationally designated site e.g. SSSI or a site considered worthy of such designation. A viable area of a priority habitat identified within the UK BAP, or of smaller areas of such habitat which are essential to maintain the larger whole. Any recurring population of a nationally important species e.g. listed on Schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). A feature identified as of critical importance in the UK BAP.
Regional (West Sussex)	A site designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), or habitats that meet the designation criteria for SNCIs in West Sussex. Areas of internationally or nationally important habitats which are degraded but are considered readily restored. A regularly occurring, locally significant population of a species listed as being nationally scarce. A regularly occurring, locally significant number of a regionally important species.
Local (the zone of influence including the site and its immediate vicinity, including habitats within or linked to those on site)	Areas of internationally or nationally important habitats which are degraded and have little or no potential for restoration. A good example of a common or widespread habitat in the region.

Assessment Criteria

Predicting and characterising ecological impacts

- 4.7 The assessment of the magnitude of effect assesses whether an impact will be positive or negative; its extent; duration; reversibility and timing and frequency as well as the cumulative effect. A combination of quantitative information and

qualitative assessment based on professional judgment was used whilst considering all of these factors to assign effects on the receptors to one of four categories as detailed in table 3 below.

Table 3: Assessment of the Magnitude of Effects

Category	Definition
High	A permanent or long-term effect on the extent/size or integrity of a site, habitat, species assemblage or community, population or group. If adverse this is likely to threaten its sustainability. If beneficial this is likely to enhance its conservation status.
Medium	A permanent or long-term effect on extent/size or integrity of a site, habitat, species assemblage or community, population or group. If adverse this is unlikely to threaten its sustainability. If beneficial this is likely to be sustainable but is unlikely to enhance its conservation status.
Low	A short-term but reversible effect on the extent/size or integrity of a site, habitat or species assemblage or community, population or group that is within the range of variation normally experienced between years.
Negligible	A short-term but reversible effect on the extent/size or integrity of a site, habitat or species assemblage or community, population or group that is within the normal range or annual variation.

- 4.8 For each ecological feature, the significance of the effects of the proposed development during construction and operation are assessed and the type of impacts are characterised according to their importance and magnitude. Where there is uncertainty over the appropriate level of significance to assign, this will be stated but as a precautionary measure the higher level of significance will be applied. Where impacts will arise, mitigation and enhancement measures are provided.

Direct and Indirect Ecological Impacts

- 4.9 Both direct and indirect impacts are considered within this assessment. A direct impact is a defined action such as the physical loss of a habitat or the immediate mortality of an individual of a particular species. Indirect impacts are attributable to an action, but which affect ecological resources through effects on an intermediary ecosystem, process or receptor e.g. the loss of an important prey species for a predator.

Limitations

- 4.10 The Ecological appraisal and UK Habitat Classification survey were conducted in June 2024 during the optimal botanical survey season. However, some early

flowering species could have missed. This is not considered to be a significant limitation to the widespread and common habitats present. The update survey was conducted in March 2026, recording the same habitats and composition as previous survey, and was not deemed a significant limitation.

- 4.11 The lack of records returned from the biodiversity records centre cannot be used to assume absence of species. It is likely due to under recording in the area.
- 4.12 An area to the south of The Prince Albert was inaccessible due to safety concerns from the landowner, during both initial and update survey. This area was surveyed from a ladder during initial and update survey, with no major limitations encountered in terms of recording habitats and species as a result.

5.0 BASELINE

- 5.1 The key baseline ecological features that have been identified are summarised in this section and an appropriate level of nature conservation value is also assigned to each one.
- 5.2 The relevant desk study information is included as appendix III; the results of the UKHab survey, together with a habitat map of the site, are provided as appendix IV; enhancement measures included in appendix VI, with photographs of the habitats and features recorded on site are included as appendix VII.

Designated sites

- 5.3 A total of five statutory designated sites were located within five kilometres of the site. These included Hedgecourt Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is located 3.55 kilometres east of the site, Turners Hill SSSI which is located 4.71 kilometres south-east of the site, Grattons Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which is located 2.56 kilometres south-west of the site, Waterlea Meadows LNR which is located 4.23 kilometres south-west of the site, and Tilgate Forest LNR which is located 4.74 kilometres south-west of the site.
- 5.4 No records of non-statutory sites designated for nature conservation within two kilometres of the site were returned by SxBRC. Three records of non-statutory sites designated for nature conservation within two kilometres of the site were returned by SBIC. These included Copthorne Meadows Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) located 0.90 kilometres to the east of the site, Copper Coin Pond SNCI located 1.82 kilometres to the north of the site, and Copper Coin Paddocks SNCI located 1.92 kilometres to the north of the site.
- 5.5 The site does not lie within any statutory or non-statutory designated site.

Habitats

- 5.6 The habitat types within the site were noted during the surveys undertaken in June 2024 by experienced ecologist Rob McCalman and updated in March 2026 by the same ecologist. Habitats were classified using the UK Habitat Classification methodology version 2.0 (UKHab, 2023). The survey included directly searching for legally protected and invasive species of plant and categorising any habitats of ecological value that were encountered. A general description of the vegetation was also noted.

- 5.7 The site encompassed areas of land belonging to The Prince Albert public house, including gardens, a car park, and the public house.
- 5.8 The following habitats were recorded on site and are described below. A baseline habitat map is provided as appendix IV.
- Developed land, sealed surface (u1b)
 - Modified grassland (g4)
 - Other native hedgerow (h2a6)

Developed land, sealed surface (u1b)

- 5.9 Various paving and hardstanding footpaths were located throughout the site, with little vegetation colonising these areas. This habitat holds negligible ecological value and no further action is required.

Modified grassland (g4)

- 5.10 The majority of the site comprised modified grassland, in the form of a garden associated with the public house, and a separate, fenced area of long sward grassland with mixed scrub. The garden contains various seating benches and play equipment. Species recorded included dominant perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), abundant and locally dominant Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), occasional false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), and rare wall barley (*Hordium murinum*), with occasional ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), and abundant white clover (*Trifolium repens*). An additional area of modified grassland is located adjacent to the southern and western site boundaries and is separated from the main garden by wooden panel fencing. This area had a similar species composition to the main garden area but has a higher sward as it was unmanaged.

Other native hedgerow (h2a6)

- 5.11 A single other native hedgerow forms the southern boundary of the site and runs parallel to the modified grassland areas. The hedgerow measures approximately two metres in height and one metre in width. Species include abundant amounts of bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), occasional amounts of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), and rare amounts of holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and dog rose (*Rosa canina*). The understory comprises a continuation of species found in the adjacent modified grassland however, occasional amounts of cleavers (*Galium aparine*) is also present.

Assessment of habitats

5.12 The level of value of these habitats is summarised in table 4 below.

Table 4: Level of value of habitats recorded within the site.

Receptor	Evaluation rationale	Value of receptor
Developed land, sealed surface	Sections of paving and tarmac are located within the redline boundary and do not provide substantial ecological value.	N/A
Modified grassland	An area of modified grassland was present in the southern half of the site, consisting of a pub garden, and sealed area of grassland. This is a common habitat at local, county, and national levels with limited ecological value.	Local
Other native hedgerow	A single other native hedgerow is located on the site's southern boundary. This habitat is a common habitat at local, county and national levels which can support a range of flora and fauna.	Local

Habitats and features in the surrounding area

5.13 The site is surrounded by residential housing and road infrastructure in all directions. Scattered urban trees and areas of shrub are located within gardens surrounding the site, with patches of broadleaved woodland and arable fields located approximately 140 metres north, and approximately 590 metres south. Copthorne Brook is located approximately 180 metres to the south of the site. **The surrounding habitats will be unaffected by the proposals and have therefore been excluded from this assessment.**

Protected, notable and invasive species

5.14 An evaluation of the site's potential to support protected and notable species of fauna is provided below. This is based on the suitability of the habitats present both on-site and in the surrounding area, and the desk study information provided by both Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre (SBIC), and Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC).

5.15 Based on the habitat suitability within the development boundary, and records returned by SxBRC and SBIC, protected species surveys were subsequently completed in order to inform the EclA and include:

- [REDACTED]
- Bat roosting suitability assessment

- Bat foraging and commuting habitat suitability assessment
- Nesting bird habitat suitability assessment
- Great crested newt habitat suitability assessment
- Hazel dormouse habitat suitability assessment
- Reptile habitat suitability assessment

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Bats: Foraging and Commuting

- 5.21 Nine species of bat were returned by SxBRC and SBIC, including western barbastelle, whiskered (*Myotis mystacinus*), Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*), Bechstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*), noctule, common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle, and brown long-eared within two kilometres of the site. No European protected species (EPS) licenses for bats were granted within a kilometre of the site.
- 5.22 The habitats on site and the habitats they connect to were assessed for their suitability to support foraging and commuting bats in accordance with the Bat

Conservation Trust guidelines (Collins, 2023). Scattered trees and hedgerows within the immediate surroundings provide some limited foraging and commuting habitat, whilst an area of native hedgerow provides limited commuting value on site. The wider landscape comprises networks of treelines and hedgerows which connect to parcels of woodland, providing good quality foraging and commuting habitat off-site. However, the site is not well-connected to these features. The site has therefore been assessed as holding **low/local** suitability for foraging bats.

Great crested newt

- 5.23 SxBRC returned five records of great crested newt, and SBIC returned a single record within a two-kilometre radius of the site. According to MAGIC one European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence for great crested newts has been granted within two kilometres of the site. This licence was granted 1.46 kilometres to the west and permitted the damage and destruction of a great crested newt breeding and resting place.
- 5.24 The site provides some limited terrestrial habitat for great crested newt. The base of the hedgerow provides suitable resting habitat, and the area of modified grassland with a long sward provides suitable foraging habitat. Short sward areas of grassland are considered to be suboptimal habitat with other areas of the site comprising developed land and sealed surface.
- 5.25 A single pond was located within 500 metres of the site. This pond was situated 400 metres south-west of the development site. The matrix between the site and the pond consists of numerous residential properties and several roads, forming a substantial barrier that would prevent great crested newts from accessing the site.
- 5.26 Suitable breeding ponds are crucial for supporting great crested newt populations. The lack of appropriate water bodies and the fact that most of the site comprises suboptimal terrestrial habitat for this species means that it is highly unlikely that great crested newts are present. **Great crested newts have therefore been screened out of this assessment.**

Hazel dormouse

- 5.27 SxBRC returned seven records of hazel dormouse, and SBIC a single record within a two-kilometre radius of the site. According to MAGIC there have been ten EPSM licences for hazel dormouse granted within two kilometres of the site. These licences were granted 1.31 kilometres west of the site, 1.44 kilometres west of the site, and 1.95 kilometres south-west of the site.

- 5.28 The habitats on site were assessed for their potential to support the hazel dormouse. The hedgerow is considered to be suboptimal habitat for this species, due to a lack of connectivity and food sources. Furthermore, it is not connected to any suitable dormouse habitat off-site. Therefore, there is no means of colonisation or dispersal. **Hazel dormouse has therefore been screened out of this assessment.**

Nesting and foraging birds

- 5.29 The habitats on site were assessed for their potential to support nesting birds in 2024, with an update survey conducted in March 2026. The native hedgerow on-site provides nesting habitat for common bird species such as blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) and robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), with both species observed foraging within the site during survey. No bird nests, or evidence of nesting were recorded during either the initial and update surveys. **Nesting birds have been included within this assessment**, due to the presence of suitable nesting provision.

Reptiles

- 5.30 Habitats on site were assessed for their suitability to support reptile species in accordance with *Reptile surveys: An introduction to planning, conducting and interpreting surveys for snake and lizard conservation* (Froglife, 1999).
- 5.31 Two records of slow worm and two records of grass snake were returned by SxBRC and SERC within two kilometres of the site.
- 5.32 Suitable reptile habitat was present on-site within hedgerow bases on the southern site boundary, and within long sward modified grassland. These habitats provide suitable foraging, commuting and hibernation potential. The habitats on site are deemed to be suitable to support a low-level reptile population.
- 5.33 Due to the presence of suitable habitat for common species of reptile, **reptiles have been included within this assessment.**

Assessment of the site's value for key fauna

- 5.34 The level of value that the site provides for the identified key fauna species and groups is summarised in table 5 below.

Table 5: Site value for the identified key fauna

Key fauna	Evaluation rationale	Value of the site
Bat foraging and commuting habitat	Areas of low suitability for foraging and commuting are available on site, with higher quality habitat situated beyond the site boundary.	Local
Nesting and foraging birds	The site holds suitable foraging and nesting habitat within the hedgerow and scattered trees.	Local
Reptiles	The site holds suitable foraging habitat for common reptile species.	Local

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 6.1 The impacts have been assessed against the development proposals including the inherent mitigation measures described below. Impacts during the construction phase and the operational phase once the two dwellings, and associated infrastructure are completed are considered below.
- 6.2 Impacts of the proposed development are discussed for the IEFs that are of at least local value or subject to legal consideration. The IEFs included from this point on are therefore limited to:
- Hedgecourt SSSI (National value)
 - Turners Hill SSSI (National value)
 - Grattons Park LNR (Local value)
 - Waterlea Meadows LNR (Local value)
 - Tilgate Forest LNR (Local value)
 - Copthorne Meadows SNCI (Local value)
 - Copper Coin Pond SNCI (Local value)
 - Copper Coin Paddocks SNCI (Local value)
 - Modified grassland (Local value)
 - Other native hedgerow (Local value)
 - )
 - Bats: foraging and commuting habitat (Local value)
 - Nesting birds (Local value)
 - Reptiles (Local value)

Construction Phase Impacts

Statutory sites

Hedgecourt SSSI and Turners Hill SSSI

- 6.3 The development site is located approximately 3.55 kilometres west of Hedgecourt SSSI and 4.71 kilometres north-west of Turners Hill SSSI. Due to the nature of the proposed development, it is considered that there will be no direct or indirect impacts on these designated sites. Dust and noise are unlikely to travel the intervening distances with sufficient intensity to cause adverse impacts to the flora and fauna of these statutory designated sites. The IEF is of **national** value, the magnitude of effect **negligible** and therefore **not significant**.

Grattons Park LNR, Waterlea Meadows LNR, and Tilgate Forest LNR

- 6.4 The development site is located 2.56 kilometres north-east of Grattons Park Local Nature Reserve LNR, 4.23 kilometres north-east of Waterlea Meadows LNR, and 4.74 kilometres north-east of Tilgate Forest LNR. Due to the nature of the proposals and the intervening distances from these designated sites, adverse impacts from habitat loss, degradation or disturbance are not anticipated. These IEFs are of **local value**, the magnitude of effect is **negligible** and therefore **not significant**.

Non statutory sites

Copthorne Meadows SNCI, Copper Coin Pond SNCI, and Copper Coin Paddocks SNCI

- 6.5 The development site is located approximately 0.90 kilometres east of Copthorne Meadows SNCI. Building works will not impact the site through noise, due to the distance from the development site. It is also unlikely that impacts through dust and/or pollution will occur as the development site is at a sufficient distance to prevent them. Adverse impacts from habitat loss, degradation or disturbance are also not anticipated. These IEF is of **local** value, the magnitude of effect is **negligible** and therefore **not significant**.

Habitats

Modified grassland

- 6.6 In the absence of mitigation, areas of modified grassland could be impacted and/or destroyed. The habitat could also be degraded through dust pollution and disturbance. The receptor is of **local** importance; the magnitude of the effect would be **low** which is **not significant**.

Other native hedgerow

- 6.7 The area of other native hedgerow on-site is scheduled for removal in its entirety. In the absence of mitigation, areas of other native hedgerow adjacent to the site could be impacted and/or destroyed. The habitat could also be degraded through dust pollution and disturbance. The receptor is of **local** importance; the magnitude of the effect would be **low** which is **not significant**.

Protected and notable species

Bats: foraging and commuting

- 6.8 In the absence of mitigation, external lighting used by contractors during the construction phase has the potential to impact foraging and commuting bats. Bat foraging habitat is a receptor of **local** importance, the magnitude of the effect of lighting would be **low** which is **not significant**.

Nesting birds

- 6.9 There will be a loss of nesting habitat as a result of the hedgerow removal. Without mitigation this would have a low risk of damaging or destroying active nests. Noise and visual disturbance associated with construction activity may impact on species nesting close to the development site. The IEF is of **local** importance, and the magnitude of effect is considered to be **low and is not significant**.

Reptiles

- 6.10 There will be a loss of nesting habitat as a result of the proposed works. Without mitigation this would have a low risk of damaging or destroying active nests. Noise and visual disturbance associated with construction activity may impact on species nesting close to the development site. The IEF is of **local** importance, and the magnitude of effect is considered to be **low and is not significant**.

Operational Phase Impacts

Statutory and non-statutory designated sites

Hedgecourt SSSI, Turners Hill SSSI,

- 6.11 The proposed development is considered to be sufficiently isolated from these designated sites that there will be no direct impacts anticipated from effects such as noise, lighting, and dust, or introductions of invasive plant species, given the type of the development, and distance and location in relation to the designated sites, with the sites located 3.55 kilometres east, and 4.71 kilometres south-east respectively. Turners Hill SSSI is a private estate, and offers no public access, however the development site is close enough to Hedgecourt SSSI that it will likely experience an increase in recreational activity, such as dog walking. Although there may be an increase in recreational activity, it is deemed that any impact will be negligible, due to the number of persons the new dwellings will support. As the IEF is of **national** value, the magnitude of effect is **low** and therefore **not significant**.

Grattons Park, Waterlea Meadows, and Tilgate Forest LNR's

- 6.12 The proposed development is considered to be sufficiently isolated from these designated sites that there will be no direct impacts anticipated from effects such as noise, lighting, and dust, or introductions of invasive plant species, given the type of the development, and distance and location in relation to the designated sites. The development site is close enough to these designated sites that they will likely experience an increase in recreational activity, such as dog walking. Although there may be an increase in recreational activity, it is deemed that any impact will be negligible, due to the number of persons the new dwellings will support. As the IEF is of **local** value, the magnitude of effect is **low** and therefore **not significant**.

Non statutory sites

Copthorne Meadows SNCI, Copper Coin Pond SNCI, and Copper Coin Paddocks SNCI

- 6.13 The proposed development is considered to be sufficiently isolated from the designated site that there will be no direct impacts anticipated from effects such as noise, lighting, and dust, or introductions of invasive plant species, given the nature of the development, and distance and location in relation to the designated sites. The development site is close enough to these designated sites that they will likely experience an increase in recreational activity, such as dog walking. Although there may be an increase in recreational activity, it is deemed that any impact will be negligible, due to the number of persons the new dwellings will support. As the IEF is of **local** value, the magnitude of effect is **low** and therefore **not significant**.

Bats (Foraging and Commuting)

- 7.7 Although the development is considered to have a negligible impact on foraging and commuting bats, there is a legal duty to ensure that bats do not suffer a reduction in natural range.
- 7.8 The development works will include measures to limit lighting impacts during the construction phase as a measure of best practice. To ensure that light-sensitive foraging and commuting bats are not subjected to disturbance impacts during the construction phase, works during the active season (April to October) will be restricted to daylight hours, with no works to start until an hour after sunrise, before sunset, and no works to be conducted during hours of darkness. No external lighting systems will be used.

Nesting and foraging birds

- 7.9 The removal of any suitable habitat should be undertaken outside the breeding season to reduce direct impacts on nesting birds. It should be noted that some species will breed early in mild winters and others, such as wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*), can breed all year round. Vegetation removal timed to occur between September, and the end of February would minimise impacts on nesting birds.
- 7.10 Should vegetation removal be planned during the breeding season (taken to run from March to August inclusive) a suitably qualified ecologist will need to check for evidence of nesting birds before vegetation removal commences. Any nest present will be left, and a five-metre buffer zone will be placed around the nest, excluding any works until the young have fledged.

Operational Phase

Statutory and non-statutory designated sites

Hedgecourt SSSI, Grattons Park, Waterlea Meadows, and Tilgate Forest LNR's, Copthorne Meadows SNCI, Copper Coin Pond SNCI, and Copper Coin Paddocks SNCI

- 7.11 It is likely that Hedgecourt SSSI, Grattons Park, Waterlea Meadows, and Tilgate Forest LNR's, Copthorne Meadows SNCI, Copper Coin Pond SNCI, and Copper Coin Paddocks SNCI will be impacted by an increase of recreational pressure due to increased footfall and activities such as dog walking.

Bats (Foraging and Commuting)

- 7.12 The predicted impact on bat foraging and commuting post-construction was not significant, however, as a method of best practice, mitigation will be implemented to minimise any potential adverse impacts. In accordance with Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK (BCT, 2023), any new lighting to be installed as part of the development should incorporate the following measures to minimise impacts on nocturnal species such as bats:
- All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used. LED luminaires should be used where possible.
 - Direct lighting to be used only where it is needed and away from linear features by using accessories such as cowls or hoods on the luminaries. Luminaries should be placed at a suitable distance from the retained habitats (or dark corridors around them) to ensure that additional light spill dissipates. Retained habitats used by commuting and foraging bats (e.g., hedgerows and woodland fringe) should not be subject to additional lighting above the predevelopment baseline.
 - Keep the height of lighting columns as short as possible, ideally three metres or less.
 - Use of motion sensor activated or Central Management System (CMS) controlled security lighting triggered only when necessary.
 - Light sources should emit minimal ultra-violet light, peak higher than 550nm and be of a warm/neutral colour <2,700 kelvin.
 - Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio (ULR), and with good optical control, should be considered. Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
 - Bollard or low-level downward-directional luminaires should not be used within the developmental design.
 - Internal lighting of new structures should be recessed where possible to prevent external light spill. Where Supporting Habitat is present, glazing treatments such as tinted, frosted or low transmission glazing treatments are not considered suitable ways of fully mitigating light spill.

- Lighting of a resting place or roost is considered an obstruction under the legislation protecting bats. No additional light levels above the predevelopment baseline can be directed at bat roosting locations or potential roosting features in trees.

8.0 ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENTS

- 8.1 A series of ecological enhancements have been proposed in order to promote biodiversity and species diversity on site.
- 8.2 A minimum of two bee bricks will be installed on the western elevations of the newly constructed dwellings, to provide refuge for invertebrate species.
- 8.3 Where any shrub or tree planting is proposed, all species will be native and of UK origin. Suitable tree species and shrubs would include hazel (*Corylus avellana*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), oak, goat willow (*Salix caprea*), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and hawthorn.
- 8.4 Grassland seed mixes from a supplier of seeds of local provenance will be used to seed any new grassland areas within the design of the development, including lawns. Such grassland provides better nectar sources for invertebrates and hence is of greater value for foraging birds and mammals.
- 8.5 A single bird box is to be placed on the eastern elevations of the newly created dwellings, to provide nesting provision for various bird species. The boxes should be placed at a minimum height of three metres and be sheltered from weather as much as possible. Woodstone style box or box of similar construction should be used.

9.0 RESIDUAL EFFECTS

- 9.1 No significant negative impacts from the proposed works were identified during the assessment, assuming all mitigation measures are implemented. The proposed enhancements outlined above will result in a **minor positive impact** overall.

10.0 IN-COMBINATION EFFECTS

- 10.1 A search of the recent planning applications on the West Sussex Council website using the search term 'Cophorne Bank' was undertaken to identify any development proposals or works within the immediate locality that could potentially have significant adverse ecological effects in-combination with the site proposals.
- 10.2 This application is part of a multi-application approach to the site, with a neighbouring application for a commercial development, proposing the construction of a supermarket and associated infrastructure within the grounds of The Prince Albert. Due to the limited scale of the additional application, no combination effects with the residential application are anticipated. There are no other developments identified within the locality that could potentially have significant adverse ecological effects in-combination with the site proposals.
- 10.3 Taking into account the small number of ecological receptors affected and nature of the development proposals, the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures to be incorporated into the scheme, it **is considered that there will not be any significant adverse in-combination effects on identified ecological features within the zone of influence.**

11.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 The proposed development will result in a large-scale residual loss of modified grassland vegetation, and loss of a non-native hedgerow, as a consequence of the land-take required, however this will be adequately off-set by the ecological enhancement measures to be incorporated into the new layout of the scheme, outlined in section 8 above. Therefore, the proposed development and associated ecological mitigation and enhancement measures is expected to result in an overall long-term **minor positive effect** overall.
- 10.2 This survey is valid for 18 months and should the works be delayed past this time then an updated survey will be required.

12.0 REFERENCES

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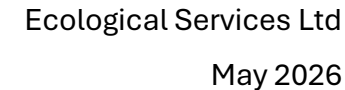
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APPENDIX I: SITE LOCATION PLAN



APPENDIX II: SITE PROPOSALS



APPENDIX III: DESK STUDY INFORMATION (SBIC and SxBRC)

Table 1: Statutory and non-statutory designated sites within five kilometres of The Prince Albert.

Site name	Conservation status	Distance from site (km)	Level of value	Habitat description
Hedgecourt	SSSI ¹	3.55 km East	National	Hedgecourt is the most important wetland site remaining in south-east Surrey. Situated in the upper Eden Brook Valley on alluvial soils overlying Tunbridge Wells sandstones, the site incorporates a range of habitats including woodland, grassland and fen-marginated open water. Hedgecourt lake itself is an ancient mill pond resulting from the damming of the river. These habitats support a wide variety of animal life including several locally distributed beetles (<i>Coleoptera</i>) and a large breeding-bird fauna.
Turner's Hill	SSSI	4.71 km South-east	National	At Turner's Hill a disused quarry exposes the Ardingly Sandstone Member of the upper Lower Tunbridge Wells Formation (upper Hastings Beds Group), Wealden Series. The near vertical plane-cut walls and floor of this site provide excellent three-dimensional sections through the sandstone. These sections display trough cross-bedding (also known as festoon bedding) with cross-bedded units up to 1metre across and 30 centimetres deep as well as large scale ripples known as megaripples.

¹ SSSI – Site of Specific Scientific Interest

Site name	Conservation status	Distance from site (km)	Level of value	Habitat description
Gratton's Park	LNR	2.56 km South-west	Regional	The main habitats found on this site are broad-leaved woodland, stream, and meadows.
Waterlea Meadows	LNR	4.23 km South-west	Regional	A meandering stream flows through the site with flower rich meadows on either side.
Tilgate Forest	LNR	4.75 km South-west	Regional	Habitats included on this site are broadleaved woodland, coniferous woodland, lowland heathland, and tall herb and fern.
Copthorne Meadows	SNCI	0.9 kilometres East	Regional	The site is selected for its species rich grassland habitat at least part of which has probably never been ploughed. 53 plant species typical of grassland of conservation interest in Surrey including 13 species on the England Red List 2014 and 5 regarded as scarce in Surrey (VC17) were recorded on the site between 2009 and 2010.
Copper Coin Pond	SNCI	1.82 kilometres North	Regional	Medium-sized mesotrophic pond surrounded by lines of trees and more extensive stands of broadleaved semi-natural woodland.
Copper Coin Paddocks	SNCI	1.92 kilometres North	Regional	Unimproved mesotrophic grassland with small area of improved grassland.

Protected Species

Records were provided by both SBIC and SxBRC from the last 15 years for most species. A full copy of the data search can be provided on request however a summary is provided below.

Amphibians and reptiles

Records of nine species of amphibian and reptile including common toad (*Bufo bufo*), common frog (*Rana temporaria*), palmate newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*), smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*), great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*), slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*), grass snake (*Natrix natrix*), adder (*Vipera berus*), and common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) were provided from SxBRC and SBIC within two kilometres of the site.

Birds

Records of one hundred and twenty-eight bird species were provided by SxBRC and SBIC within two kilometres of the site, including lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), sand martin (*Riparia riparia*), and Wheatear (*Oenanthe Oenanthe*).

Higher plants

SxBRC and SBIC returned previous records of sixty-one species of higher plant, including pignut (*Conopodium majus*), bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), green-winged orchid (*Anacamptis morio*), corn buttercup (*Ranunculus arvensis*), and pale dog-violet (*Viola lactea*).

Invertebrates

SxBRC and SBIC returned eighty-two records of notable or protected species within two kilometres of the site, including wasp spider (*Argiope bruennichi*), scarce four-dot pin-palp (*Bembidion quadripustulatum*), small heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*) and marsh grey (*Eudonia pallida*).

Mammals

Bat records returned from SxBRC and SBIC included western barbastelle, whiskered bat, Daubenton's bat, Natterer's bat, Bechstein's bat, noctule, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat, bat species (*Chiroptera sp.*), myotis species (*Myotis sp.*), pipistrelle species (*Pipistellus sp*) and long-eared species (*Plecotus sp.*).

SxBRC and SBIC returned eighteen records of hedgehog, one record of brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*), eight records of hazel dormouse, a single record of Eurasian common shrew (*Sorex Araneus*), as single record of Eurasian pygmy shrew (*Sorex minutus*), a single record of weasel (*Mustela nivalis*), three records of roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), and twenty-two records of European rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*).

These records of protected and notable species in the vicinity of the site increase the likelihood of them being present where suitable habitat is identified in the field survey.

APPENDIX IV: BASELINE HABITAT MAP



APPENDIX V: PROPOSED HABITAT MAP



APPENDIX VII: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph 1: Cherry tree adjacent to pub car park. (June 2024)



Photograph 2: Oak tree adjacent to pub car park. (June 2024)



Photograph 3: Leylandii trees present on eastern site boundary. (June 2024)



Photograph 4: Area of ruderal/ephemeral habitat within modified grassland, recently cut. (June 2024)



Photograph 5: Area of ruderal/ephemeral habitat within modified grassland. Silver birch tree present. (June 2024)



Photograph 6: Native hedgerow on southern boundary of the site. (June 2024)



Photograph 7: Native hedgerow on southern boundary of the site, by dividing wooden fencing between grasslands. (June 2024)



Photograph 8: Modified grassland, viewing east. (June 2024)



Photograph 11: Area of longer sward modified grassland within enclosed area, viewing west. (June 2024)



Photograph 12: Area of longer sward modified grassland within enclosed area, viewing east. (June 2024)



Photograph 13: Modified grassland, eastern site area. (June 2024)



Photograph 14: Modified grassland, central area. (June 2024)



Photograph 15: Sealed surface paving and brickwork, with ornamental plantation. (June 2024)



Photograph 16: Pub car park, viewing east. (June 2024)



Photograph 17: Modified grassland, and ruderal/ephemeral vegetation in eastern site area. (March 2026)



Photograph 18: Modified grassland in central site area. (March 2026)



Photograph 19: Modified grassland in east and central site area. (March 2026)



Photograph 20: Area of longer sward modified grassland within enclosed area. (March 2026)