



Dormouse Survey Report 2025

Land South of Burleigh Lane

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LIABILITIES:

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living creatures are capable of migration and whilst protected species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on a site at a later date.

The views and opinions contained within this document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to or during works.

1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by DMH Stallard to undertake an assessment for presence/likely absence of dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) on the proposed development site on land south of Burleigh Lane, Crawley Down, RH10 4LF, hereafter referred to as the 'site' (Figure 1). This follows a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site, undertaken by The Ecology Partnership (The Ecology Partnership, 2025), which identified the deciduous woodland on site as having the potential to support dormice.
- 1.2 This document provides findings of the dormouse surveys completed by The Ecology Partnership in 2025 in order to support the planning application for the proposed development. Section 2 of this report sets out the methodology of The Ecology Partnership's survey, the results in Section 3 and the implications discussed in Section 4.

Site Context and Status

- 1.2 The site is located to the south of Crawley Down (TQ 35134 37154). The site covers approximately 1.7ha and consists of a grassland field, bordered by woodland. The immediate surroundings of the site consist of Burleigh Lane to the north and agricultural fields/ woodland to the east, south and west. The aerial photograph (Figure 1) shows the site and its immediate surroundings. The red line depicts the approximate site boundary and survey area.
- 1.3 It is understood that the current proposals for the site involve the designation of 8 new self-build residential plots, with associated access, parking and gardens.



Figure 1: Approximate location of the red line boundary

Relevant Legislation

1.4 Hazel dormice are a European protected species (EPS) and as such are protected from deliberate killing, injury or disturbance and its breeding sites and resting places are absolutely protected with no requirement to show that their destruction was deliberate or reckless. The aim of this law is to protect the favourable conservation status (FCS) of the species. The dormouse is further protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This law provides protection to individual animals as well as breeding and resting places, making the deliberate killing or injuring of individual dormice unlawful.

2.0 Dormouse Survey Methodology

2.1 Using the methodology provided in the Mammal Society Hazel Dormice Mitigation Handbook a habitat quality assessment of the northern woodland and boundary scrub onsite was undertaken (Wells *et al.*, 2025). This involves a combination of structural complexity and species diversity. On average both habitats were considered to support a high species diversity, as greater than 6 suitable species were present throughout. The

structural complexity of the boundary woodland was considered high suitability; on this basis the habitat was considered to be of 'excellent' quality.

2.2 As such, in accordance with the guidance, a total of 50 dormouse nest tubes were established within the woodland edge habitats around the site's boundary on 23rd July 2025. Each dormouse tube was established as per Natural England guidelines, attached to the underside of a suitable branch. Checks were undertaken once a month in July-October 2025. Surveys were carried out by Alexia Tamblyn's (The Ecology Partnership) accredited agents.

3.0 Results

3.1 Surveys undertaken once a month between August to October 2025, with the results shown within Table 1 below.

Table 1: Survey Dates and Results

<i>Date of check</i>	<i>Observation</i>
23 rd July 2025	<i>Set up</i>
20 th August 2025	No evidence
23 rd September 2025	No evidence
22 nd October 2025	No evidence of dormice. Wood mouse nest with 2x individuals identified on western boundary.

3.2 No evidence of dormice was found during the course of the survey period. Two wood mice were found inside a single nest in the western boundary.

3.3 As such, is considered that dormice are likely to be absent from the site and therefore the development is not constrained by this species and no further survey or mitigation is required in relation to this species.

4.0 Discussion

4.1 The site south of Burleigh Lane, Crawley Down, was surveyed by the Ecology Partnership in August 2025. The potential for the site to support dormice was identified, due to the

presence of deciduous woodland and scrub within the site boundaries, with connectivity to further offsite woodland.

4.2 A total of 50 dormice nest tubes were set up in July 2025 and checks were carried out from August until October inclusively. During these, no dormice or evidence of dormice, such as nests or feeding remains, anywhere on site. As such, it is considered that dormice are likely absent from the site and the proposals for the site would therefore not be constrained by dormice.

4.3 Surveys were conducted on land to the north of Burleigh Lane, undertaken across 2023 by Urban Edge between June and November 2023. The nest tube survey recorded no evidence of hazel dormouse during the survey period. Evidence of other species of mouse, including wood mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus*, were recorded toward the western edge of the survey area, along with one recording at the south-eastern corner. The results of the Ecology Partnership surveys corroborate those of Urban Edge, and it appears local absence of dormice is likely.

4.4 Current proposals involve the construction of an 8 unit self build scheme. The proposals will result in the loss of some suitable dormouse habitat to allow access through sections of the woodland on the northern aspect of the site, with the majority of suitable habitat retained.

4.5 Ecological enhancements are proposed along the woodland habitats. It is recommended that the edges are planted with native species of value to wildlife including: oak, hazel, beech, cherry, hornbeam, spindle, crab apple, rowan and wild service tree. Honeysuckle should also be planted. These species help to provide year-round food sources for dormice and other small mammals and bird species.

4.6 It is considered that where clearance is required, this is conducted in a sensitive manner and under ecological supervision. If any evidence of dormouse found during works, all works must cease and Natural England consulted.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 No evidence of dormice presence was found during the survey period. It is considered that dormice are likely to be absent from the site. It is also noted that dormouse surveys conducted to the north of the site, land north of Crawley Down, undertaken in 2023 by Urban Edge Environmental Consulting, did not identify the presence of dormice within the site boundary. With the lack of survey evidence from the surveys, it is considered that the site is not constrained by dormice.

5.1 As such, no mitigation specific to dormice is considered necessary within the design of the site. However, recommendations for ecological enhancements have been made.

6.0 References

The Ecology Partnership (2025) Land South of Burleigh Lane – Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Wells, D., Chanin, P. & Gubert, L. (2025) *Hazel Dormouse Mitigation Handbook*. The Mammal Society.

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