



Home Farm, Broadmoor, Abinger Common, Dorking, Surrey. RH5 6JY
01306 731150 www.verdantecology.co.uk info@verdantecology.co.uk

January 2024

A
Dormouse Survey Report

from
Land known as Caldyne

For

Mr's Williams, Jacobs And Hooper

Surveys conducted and report produced by:
Jonathan Bradley
BSc, MSc, TechCertArb, MArborA
Consultant Ecologist, Arborist and Land Manager
07785 180656 jonathan@verdantecology.co.uk

Copyright

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be copied or reproduced without prior written consent from Verdant Ecology.

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed and information gathered and contained within the report have been done so competently, whilst using diligence and care but no explicit warranty is provided as to their accuracy or effectiveness. This is especially true where information comes from third parties. We are not lawyers – whilst we seek to understand legislation and stay abreast of changes and case law, where we refer to legislation, this is our interpretation and/or summary. This report has been prepared for use by the commissioning party only. No liability is accepted by Verdant Ecology for any inappropriate use of this report. A protected species survey licence obliges the holder to provide records to local records centres.

1 Executive Summary	3
2 Introduction	3
3 Method	3
4 Results	3
5 Interpretation and Evaluation	4
6 Impact Assessment	4
7 Recommendations/Mitigation	4
8 Summary	4
9 Appendices	5
9.1 Appendix 1. Location of Dormouse Nest-tubes	5
9.2 Appendix 2. Protective Legislation and Policy Pertaining to Dormice	5
9.3 Appendix 3. References	6
!	
!	
!	

1 Executive Summary

- A preliminary ecological assessment report by Calumma, April 2014, recommended dormouse surveys.
- Verdant Ecology was commissioned in July 2019 to conduct a dormouse survey.
- On the 1st July 2019, 52 nest-tubes were erected in suitable habitat.
- By December 2019, enough survey effort had been exerted for it to be reasonable to assume absence.
- Dormice should not be a reason for refusing planning consent.
- On precautionary principles, nest-tubes have been left in place.
- Any work that might negatively affect dormice habitat or disturb individuals can only proceed once a mitigation licence has been acquired from Natural England.

2 Introduction

Mr's Williams, Jacobs And Hooper intend to apply for planning permission to build a new house on land at the corner of Wallage Lane and Turner's Hill Road, RH10 4NB.

The site location can be seen in Appendix 1.

It was designated Ancient semi-natural Woodland. Although some parts of the wooded area are immature silver birch or rhododendron-dominated willow, all offers suitable habitat for dormice but the central part of the site is an open glade without trees, dominated by goats-rue.

3 Method

On the 1st July 2019, 56 dormouse nest-tubes were set out. They were set out open end sloping down slightly, in dense undergrowth, at heights varying from 20cm – 2.5m above ground. They were distributed according to where the development is most likely to affect (the edges of the clearing and the previously-cleared areas) but precise locations were chosen according to apparent suitability/detectability (dense undergrowth/edges/honeysuckle). They were revisited on 1st September and 8th December 2019 and inspected for signs of dormice. They have been left in place for future use.

Month tubes out for	Survey points for 50 nest tubes
July	2
August	5
September	7
October	2
November	2
Total	18
$18/50 = 0.36 \times 56 = 20.16$	Survey points for 56 nest tubes = 20.16

4 Results

No evidence of dormice has been found.

5 Interpretation and Evaluation

Current (and sufficient) evidence suggests dormice are not present.

6 Impact Assessment

Potential Impacts

Potential impacts considered are;

- Physical harm to dormice during work.
- Direct impacts on habitat.
- Indirect impacts such as pollution.
- Habitat fragmentation.
- Post-development impacts.

Predicted Impacts without Mitigation

Currently none.

7 Recommendations/Mitigation

Continue checking survey kit.

It remains possible that dormice will be discovered. If they are, seek fresh advice.

Design the scheme to;

- Ensure the perimeter of the ownership site is maintained as woodland to retain habitat connectivity.
- Develop the clearing and the areas dominated by young trees/rhododendron whilst allowing for retaining or creating a buffer of planting against woodland. 15m is the most widely-prescribed minimum distance and is necessary for ASNW, regardless of dormice presence.
- Have low light pollution (necessary for foraging bats anyway). Devise and comply with a pollution prevention plan in line with the COSHH Regulations and the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines series and including light pollution controls in line with Bat Conservation Trust and Institute for Lighting Engineers (2018). Guidance Note 8 – Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK.

8 Summary

- Dormouse nest-tube survey effort sufficient to be able to assume absence has been exerted.
- No evidence of dormice has been found.
- Dormice should not be a reason for refusing planning consent.
- Habitat on site remains suitable and survey kit remains in place – if dormice are found, fresh advice should be sought.

9 Appendices



9.1 Appendix 1. Location of Dormouse Nest-tubes

9.2 Appendix 2. Protective Legislation and Policy Pertaining to Dormice

The main items of legislation protecting dormice in England are;

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Combining the legislation means it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb or harm dormice, damage, destroy or obstruct access to places used for shelter or protection. Dormice and their habitats are also protected by policy. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 expect those in a position of influence to consider the impacts of their actions on dormice and to seek opportunities to benefit them. Dormice are a material consideration in planning decisions under the National Planning Policy Framework and ODPM 2005, meaning that local planning authorities must consider the potential impacts of development on dormice before granting permission. Dormice may also be indirectly protected by virtue of their association with 'Important' hedgerows (Hedgerow Regulations 1997), trees (also a material consideration), veteran trees and habitats that serve to connect (both specifically mentioned in PPS9) or some special habitats that are protected in their own right (e.g. Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland).

What This Means for You

Legislation and guidance expects you to conduct surveys if dormice are likely to be present and likely to be affected. Planning permission should only be given if the status of the affected protected species can be maintained or enhanced and if measures are taken to avoid harming individuals. Recent changes in legislation and policy are increasing the emphasis on expecting improvements or enhancements.

The onus is on the developer to provide enough information to enable the planning authority to make an informed decision as to whether the development will have negative impacts on the local population and if so, what can be done to conserve/enhance it.

9.3 Appendix 3. References

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hazel-or-common-dormice-surveys-and-mitigation-for-development-projects>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hazel-dormice-protection-surveys-and-licences>
- Natural England (2011). Interim Advice Note - Dormouse surveys for mitigation licensing – best practice and common misconceptions
- Natural England (2006). Dormouse Conservation Handbook. 2nd edition.
- Bat Conservation Trust and Institute for Lighting Engineers (2018). Guidance Note 8 – Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK
<http://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). www.opsi.gov.uk
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (as amended). www.opsi.gov.uk
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species regulations 2010. www.opsi.gov.uk
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. www.opsi.gov.uk
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. www.opsi.gov.uk
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. www.opsi.gov.uk
- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2005). Government Circular 06/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System.
www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1144318
- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2006). Planning for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – A Guide to Good Practice.
www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/143792.pdf
- The National Planning Policy Framework 2012. www.opsi.gov.uk
- HM Government (1995). Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Volume 2: Action Plans. JNCC, Peterborough.
- HM Government (1998). Tranche 2 Action Plans: Volumes I and II. English Nature, Peterborough.
- For the latest on Biodiversity Action Plans, see <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=5155> .
- Institute of Environmental Assessment (1995). Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment. E & FN Spon, London.
- Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2012). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. IEEM, Winchester.
- Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (2016). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the United Kingdom.
- Environment Agency. Pollution Prevention Guidelines (various), www.environment-agency.gov.uk
- Health and Safety Executive (2002). Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations.