

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member and Advisers for Planning, Highways and Street Scene Services
2.	Date:	Tuesday 22 July 2014
3.	Title:	Rotherham MBC Local Wildlife Good Practice Guidance
4.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services Streetpride

5. Summary

The Rotherham MBC Local Wildlife Good Practice Guidance is designed to support developers when considering the natural environment, particularly wildlife habitats and species, within development proposals. The information covers the planning application process and detailed development design. The information can be used by developers, agents or consultants throughout the planning process and can apply to single dwellings or larger developments.

The Rotherham MBC Local Wildlife Good Practice Guidance is published to accompany the consultation on the emerging Sites and Policies Document 2014. Consultation will commence on the draft Sites and Policies Document and its accompanying Integrated Impact Assessment later this year for a 6 week period.

Whilst a number of Evidence Base Studies have already been presented to Members of the Local Plan Steering Group for consideration, Cabinet Member approval is sought for this good practice guidance report.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member notes the contents of this report and the preparation of robust Good Practice Guidance to guide the preparation and decision-making of future planning applications and setting out clear requirements for applicants when submitting their proposals.

That Cabinet Member supports the publication of the draft Good Practice Guidance notes to be made available alongside consultation on the emerging Sites and Policies Document later this year.

7. Proposals and Details

Background

Consultation on the emerging Sites and Policies Document 2014 and its accompanying Integrated Impact Assessment will commence later this year for a 6 week period. A report is to be presented to Cabinet in September to seek approval to consult on the Sites and Policies Document.

Cabinet Member will be aware that the report to Cabinet on 9 July 2014 recommended that the Core Strategy be referred to full Council for adoption in the coming months.

Whilst a number of Evidence Base Studies have already been presented to Members of the Local Plan Steering Group for consideration and their publication to support the Sites and Policies Document, there are further Good Practice Guidance Reports that require Cabinet Member approval prior to their publication.

Rotherham's Local Plan contains strategic objectives and policies that relate specifically to the conservation of the natural environment; these are proposed to be supported by development management policies that set out expectations for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment within the planning system and which are included in the Sites and Policies Document 2014. The Local Wildlife Good Practice Guidance aims to support developers to prepare and submit proposals that are mindful of biodiversity and that support the delivery of these objectives and policies.

The guidance contains information on the principles of wildlife conservation, interpretation of national and local planning policy and planning application validation requirements. It also contains specific recommendations relevant to Rotherham's environmental character that provide opportunities for wildlife mitigation and enhancement.

The document will be published with the 2014 Sites and Policies consultation as guidance supporting the interpretation of SP34 Conservation of the Natural Environment and comments on the purpose and content will be sought. There is the potential in future for the document to be a formal Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) if that is felt appropriate but the current intention is to enable informal consistent advice to be made available.

This report seeks approval for the publication of the Rotherham MBC Local Wildlife Good Practice Guidance with the 2014 Sites and Policies Document consultation to support SP34.

8. Finance

Costs of the production of the guidance have been met from the RMBC Planning Policy budget as staff costs for the Ecology Development Officer.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- The Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) express a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development. Our UDP policies only continue to have any weight where they are in accordance with the NPPF. It is important that Rotherham's Local Plan is in place as soon as possible to

provide an up-to-date planning policy framework for the Borough's future growth and development.

- A failure to achieve timely progress on the Local Plan could delay the spatial strategy required to guide future decision-making on planning applications.
- Having a Local Plan in place will provide a steer for any neighbourhood plans that may emerge under the provisions of the Localism Act.
- Failure to make progress with the Local Plan risks delayed provision of the new homes and employment opportunities that the Borough needs.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The implementation of the Local Plan will make a positive contribution to all of Rotherham's Regeneration priorities. When adopted, the Local Plan will further the objectives of the Corporate Plan and support the delivery of the Rotherham Sustainable Community Strategy by:

- providing sufficient good quality homes
- ensuring well designed, decent affordable housing
- providing employment land to meet the needs of the modern economy and support sustainable communities through access to employment opportunities
- promoting the "town centre first" policy approach to help the regeneration and renaissance of Rotherham Town Centre and other town, district and local centres within the borough.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix 1 Rotherham MBC Local Wildlife Good Practice Guidance

Contact name:

Carolyn Jones Ecology Development Officer
01709 8(22462) Carolyn.jones@rotherham.gov.uk

Helen Sleigh, Senior Planning Officer
01709 823831, helen.sleigh@rotherham.gov.uk

Rachel Overfield, Planning Policy Officer
01709 254746, Rachel.overfield@rotherham.gov.uk

Appendix 1 Rotherham MBC Local Wildlife Good Practice Guidance

This guidance is designed to support developers when considering the natural environment, particularly wildlife habitats and species, within development proposals. The information is collated from a range of design guides, best practice standards and conservation group advice. Links are provided for further details on much of the content (Appendix Four). The information covers the planning application process and detailed development design. The information can be used by developers, agents or consultants throughout the planning process and can apply to single dwellings or larger developments.

The aim of the guidance is to provide general advice and to support the principle of biodiversity protection and gain. Site specific and detailed advice can be obtained on request within the planning process.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development – making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. The natural environment is an essential element of sustainable development and design.

Rotherham's Local Plan contains strategic objectives and policies that relate specifically to the conservation of the natural environment; these are supported by development management policies that set out expectations for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment within the planning system. These guidelines aim to support developers to prepare and submit proposals that are mindful of biodiversity and that support the delivery of these objectives and policies.

Avoid – Reduce – Mitigate – Compensate – Enhance

Planning decisions should prevent harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests. Where granting planning permission would result in significant harm to those interests the local planning authority will need to be satisfied that the development cannot reasonably be located on any alternative sites that would result in less or no harm.

Where it is impossible to avoid negative impact on a feature of biodiversity or geodiversity value through use of an alternate site development should minimise impact by changing the design, layout, size or operation of the development and by the incorporation of suitable mitigation measures.

Where, despite mitigation, there will be residual adverse impact on biodiversity or geodiversity value or on wider ecological networks development should provide an adequate level of compensation. The aim of mitigation and compensation should be to respond to impact or loss with something of greater value; the minimum requirement will be to maintain 'no net loss'.

In addition, development will be requested to make a positive contribution to the natural environment by incorporating biodiversity gain, sustainable design, renewable energy technology and, where appropriate, direct contribution to the green infrastructure network and biodiversity opportunity areas.

Survey and Impact Assessment

The responsibility lies with the developer to demonstrate that proposals identify and consider their effect on the natural environment by the provision of ecological and geodiversity impact assessment, including the submission of detailed, timely and up to date survey, evaluation and records relevant to the proposed development. Survey work should be undertaken by suitably experienced consultants; the provision of outline development proposals in advance of survey work will allow all potential impacts to be assessed and will enable adequate levels of mitigation, compensation and gain to be established. All recommendations arising from survey and impact assessment should be incorporated into detailed design plans and highlighted within the submitted Design and Access Statement. It is important that survey work is completed in advance of application submission in order to inform the detailed development proposals. The submission of survey and impact assessment enables full evaluation of development proposals against all relevant development

management policies. In cases where protected species may be affected it is essential that survey work is undertaken and submitted with the planning application.

Appendix Two contains details of expected survey remit and report content. The aim of survey and impact assessment work can be summarised as follows:

1) Identify likely impacts on the natural environment.	2) Identify measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate for the identified impacts.	3) Identify measures to demonstrate additional enhancement.	4) Demonstrate understanding and incorporation of the recommendations.
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There are optimal times for completing ecological survey work; survey work for certain species groups may be limited to particular months and will require a certain level of survey effort to be demonstrated. A survey calendar is included as Appendix Three to highlight survey opportunities; links to best practice guidance for survey methodologies are also provided. The ability to undertake adequate survey work needs to be considered at an early stage in order to ensure all necessary information is able to be submitted with an application.

Planning Process

The natural environment should be considered at each stage in the planning process:

- Pre-application – identification of current site status, the extent of survey and impact assessment needed, timings for survey work
- Application – submission of ecological survey and impact assessment work, inclusion in the Design & Access Statement of the ecological survey results and demonstration of how ecological recommendations have affected or been incorporated into the proposals
- Planning Agreement – inclusion of conditions to agree biodiversity recommendations
- Delivery – Information to support the discharge of any relevant conditions, demonstration of measures incorporated, results of any agreed monitoring, demonstration of long-term maintenance of features

The level of biodiversity mitigation, compensation and gain proposed should be appropriate to the size and impact of the proposed development. These guidelines include a range of elements that can be incorporated to development proposals to demonstrate measures taken to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

Wildlife Legislation

The protection afforded to protected sites and species under UK and EU legislation is irrespective of the planning system and developers should therefore ensure that any activity undertaken, regardless of the need for any planning consent, complies with the appropriate wildlife legislation.

Opportunities for Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement

Development proposals vary widely in size and design, and their individual circumstances will determine which types of biodiversity action are most applicable. Developers should identify existing biodiversity interest and key features, and the potential to enhance these as part of development and management of site. The following tables highlight actions which can be taken to enhance biodiversity in new development proposals.

General principles to support nature conservation

- Creating habitats appropriate for the relevant character area;
- Identifying and retaining any (semi) natural habitat present within the site;
- Using only locally available soils; not using peat, artificial soil or treated sewage materials;
- Not importing topsoils, i.e. using only subsoils in areas for biodiversity and concentrating the use of existing soils to areas for tree planting;
- Use of tree planting only if the existing soil conditions are sufficient;
- Using mixed native species hedgerows for boundary features and to connect open areas;

- Providing areas of bare ground where habitats can generate naturally;
- Identifying locally suitable plant species mixes and using locally sourced seed / plant materials;
- Creating basic grassland habitats on the understanding that they can be left to develop naturally into more complex grasslands, scrub and possibly eventually woodland;
- Identifying nearby biodiversity assets that can inform and connect to new schemes;
- Including ornamental species planting in limited amounts only and selecting non-native species for their nectar / food source or longer flowering period benefits to supplement the native habitats;
- Agreeing long-term management plans that have biodiversity as an overriding objective.

Landscaping, Planting and Open Spaces

There are significant opportunities to retain existing natural habitats within new landscaping and to create new habitats and features that benefit biodiversity. In residential developments new garden provision will add to biodiversity gain but any structural landscaping and areas of open space should include native species, natural habitat creation and, where possible, areas that are allowed to regenerate or colonise naturally. Boundary features, shelter belts and other linear features can help to place new sites into the wider landscape and setting. Development adjacent to sites of importance to nature conservation may need to incorporate buffer areas of natural planting to protect the sites from adverse impact; such areas should be distinct from the development and should be maintained in the long-term to benefit nature conservation. Development should aim to create or maintain connections and corridors that have been identified in green infrastructure strategies or landscape-scale projects. The following opportunities should be incorporated, wherever possible, into landscaping proposals to enhance biodiversity value. Suitable plant species lists are provided in Appendix One.

Hedgerows

Hedges provide shelter, nesting and foraging sites for a wide variety of species and act as wildlife corridors if they are dense and wide enough.

- Plant hedges consisting of a number of wildlife friendly species so that fruit, seed and nectar will be provided throughout most of the year; a minimum of four species is recommended.
- Provide space for dense hedges to grow to at least 2 metres wide with a wide margin on each side for long grasses to grow at their base.
- Locate new hedges so that they will contribute towards forming a local wildlife habitat network with neighbouring hedges, trees, shrubs, scrub, wildflower rich grassland and watercourses.
- Plant native hedges, such as hawthorn, blackthorn and holly, along boundaries where security is important.
- Ensure adequate access and resources are provided for long-term maintenance

Trees and shrubs

Trees and shrubs provide shelter, nesting sites and fruit for birds. Their flowers provide nectar for bees and other insects. Provision of dead and decaying wood is valuable to a range of invertebrates which depend upon it to complete all or part of their life cycles. Dense scrub provides good cover and food for birds, insects and reptiles.

- Provide native, wildlife friendly tree and shrub species of varying height and structure. A variety of species will also provide a protracted supply of pollen, nectar and fruit.
- Locate trees and shrubs so that they provide continuity with nearby existing habitat.
- Retain trees with holes and dead wood as these are particularly valuable for wildlife such as bats, birds, insects and fungi. Also retain woody cuttings, stumps and fallen branches on site.
- Herbaceous plants and/or long grass in front of shrub/tree areas will provide additional wildlife interest and maintain moisture beneath.
- Retain patches of bare earth for invertebrates to bask, nest and forage.
- Consider generating scrub habitat adjacent to existing wildlife rich habitat.

Climbing plants

Climbing plants such as ivy, clematis and honeysuckle provide nesting, shelter and berries for birds and nectar for insects.

- Locate climbing plants so that they cover otherwise bare walls, fences and gabion baskets.
- Locate climbing plants close to existing hedges, trees, shrubs and flowering grassland, so they will help to connect the local wildlife habitat network.

Wildflower rich grass

Wildflower rich grassland is attractive and provides cover for small mammals and invertebrates and the wildflowers supported are a nectar source for insects. Short grass can be enhanced by adding flowering species tolerant of frequent mowing and trampling. Maintenance involving cutting and collecting will be required at appropriate intervals to achieve optimum results. Maintenance that creates a range of vegetation height, from bare ground to tall grasses will provide the most benefit; cutting different areas on a rotational 2-3 year cycle is recommended.

- Provide wildflower rich grassland as part of informal landscaping, on areas of poor soil or areas of poor drainage, under trees and hedgerows; temporary wildflower areas can be created on empty plots where development will be phased.
- Embed spring flowering bulbs and plugs of nectar rich flowering plants.
- Maintain patches of long grass, enabling plants to flower and seed, and providing habitat for grasshoppers and other invertebrates, and a food source for birds, amphibians and mammals.
- Always remove and compost cuttings from grassland and wildflower areas.

Watercourses, wetlands and their banks

Streams, wet ditches, seasonal watercourses and their banks are important wildlife habitats but many are degraded in urban areas.

- Enhance and restore the naturalness of any existing water course by removing culverts, restoring water channels with soft contouring and suitable wetland planting.
- A vegetated buffer should be created between the top of the bank and any development; a minimum of 5m is recommended, 2m is essential. (A minimum 8m will be required in some circumstances where statutory agency maintenance occurs.)
- Avoid development and hard landscaping adjacent to the watercourse; development should not involve the culverting of existing watercourses.
- Where appropriate, create new wildlife-friendly ponds and wetland areas, especially where existing ponds are to be affected by the development.
- Incorporate elements of sustainable urban drainage that permanently or temporarily hold water, ensuring pollution controls are incorporated.

Living roofs and walls

Living roofs and walls can mitigate for loss of habitat at ground level, particularly open mosaic habitats and where non-developed land is limited.

- Incorporate green or brown roofing wherever suitable; sedum roofing is less desirable.
- A range of roof and wall styles can be considered depending on heating / cooling requirements, structural design, aspect and irrigation.

Biodiversity in the Built Environment

Development should include opportunities to incorporate biodiversity features into the built environment. A range of bird nesting features can be provided, depending on the type, size, scale and location of a development. Nesting features can cater for common species but, wherever possible those species that rely on buildings should be provided for; bird nesting provision can offset the lack of nesting opportunities provided by modern building design. Bat roosting features are also easily incorporated into many building types. Individual property developments should be encouraged to incorporate at least one feature; multiple dwelling and major developments should be encouraged to incorporate features on a good proportion of properties, ideally 20% or greater. Redevelopment of buildings that will involve the reduction or destruction of existing nest or roost features will be required to replace any lost provision and provide additional features; total provision of at least 125% of the original number is recommended.

Common swift

- Incorporate multiple, internal swift boxes at soffits/eaves level.
- Any suitable buildings, proximity of an existing colony reinforces need for new nest sites.
- At least five metres above ground level with unimpeded access.
- A northerly or well shaded aspect is essential; avoid southerly elevations and the immediate vicinity of windows.

House martin

- Incorporate multiple, pre-formed house martin nest cups at soffits/eaves level.
- Suitable for buildings with wide soffits/eaves in close proximity to open space or other green infrastructure, particularly where there are standing or running water features near by.
- At least five metres above ground level. Adequate shelter from sun and prevailing weather, avoid direct south elevations.
- Avoid fixing directly over doors and windows.

Barn swallow

- Incorporate pre-formed swallow nest cups and purpose built ledges inside appropriate open access buildings, such as car ports, porches, storage areas.
- Suitable for buildings in close proximity to open space or other green infrastructure, particularly where there are standing or running water features near by.
- Avoid locations where droppings might become a nuisance.

House Sparrow

- Incorporate multiple boxes / terraces at soffits/eaves level, preferably a minimum of six features in close proximity.
- At least two metres above ground level with somewhere to perch in the immediate vicinity.
- Needs to be shaded; easterly aspect is best, avoid direct south-facing elevations.

Starling

- Incorporate multiple boxes at soffits/eaves level leaving at least 1.5m between each box.
- At least three metres above ground level with somewhere to perch in the immediate vicinity.
- Needs to be shaded, an easterly aspect is best, avoid direct south-facing aspect.
- Starlings can be noisy so their nests are best sited where they won't be a nuisance.

Garden birds

- Install appropriate nest boxes on buildings, retained or new trees, fences or other boundary features, as high as possible to deter predators.
- Locations should be sheltered from direct sunlight and the prevailing weather.
- A mix of boxes with entry holes of different sizes or open fronts should be used to attract a range of species.

Birds of Prey

- Incorporate on sites in sub-urban and urban – countryside interface sites, where there is direct access to suitable hunting grounds.
- Features for diurnal or nocturnal species can be considered.
- Will be suitable on sites where ecological recommendations have specified mitigation or enhancement for these species.

Bat Species

- Provide features, spaces and access points dependant on the species found locally and the style of structure:
 - » Crevice dwelling species (includes Pipistrelles, Brandt's and Whiskered) – create spaces in walls, cladding, eaves, tiles and ridge-tiles; install integrated or external ready-made bat boxes

- » Void dwelling species (includes Noctule, Serotine, Leisler's, Daubenton's) – create access points under eaves or tiles, leave joists or beams exposed, ensure toxic materials are not used and that insulation etc does not create a risk of entanglement
- » Species needing flight space (including Natterer's, Brown long-eared and Grey long-eared) – create open untrussed roof space of at least 2.5m x 5m x 5m (H x W x L)
- Access points should be 2-7m above ground level.
- No artificial lighting should interfere with the access points.
- Roost features can be either north-facing to support male roosts and winter hibernation or south / west facing to support maternity roosts.
- Access points should be accessible from open space; the location of bat features close to hedgerows, watercourses and trees is beneficial for commuting and foraging use by bats.

Appendix One – Suggested Plant Species Lists

The lists provided include common and indicative species for the different habitats; these are based on the Rotherham Local Wildlife Site selection criteria. Many horticultural suppliers can create mixes to suit individual requirements or will stock mixes suitable for a range of soils and conditions that may reflect the species listed here. Native planting supports local biodiversity; ornamental species also provide food and shelter for wildlife and can be incorporated to extend flowering seasons and provide permanent cover.

Trees and Woodlands			
Hedgerow Species <i>Acer campestre</i> <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> <i>Corylus avellana</i> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> <i>Ligustrum vulgare</i> <i>Malus sylvestris</i> <i>Prunus spinosa</i> <i>Ulmus glabra</i> <i>Rosa canina</i> <i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Woodland: Coal Measures Area <i>Betula pendula</i> <i>Corylus avellana</i> <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> <i>Malus sylvestris</i> <i>Quercus petraea</i> <i>Quercus robur</i> <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Woodland: Limestone Area <i>Acer campestre</i> <i>Corylus avellana</i> <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> <i>Quercus robur</i> <i>Sorbus torminalis</i> <i>Tilia cordata</i> <i>Tilia platyphyllos</i> <i>Taxus baccata</i> <i>Ulmus glabra</i>	Wet Woodlands <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> <i>Betula pendula</i> <i>Betula pubescens</i> <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> <i>Quercus petraea</i> <i>Quercus robur</i> <i>Salix Spp. particularly caprea, cinerea & fragilis</i>
Grasslands			
Woodland Ground Flora <i>Ajuga reptans</i> <i>Anemone nemorosa</i> <i>Carex sylvatica</i> <i>Conopodium majus</i> <i>Fragaria vesca</i> <i>Galium odoratum</i> <i>Geum urbanum</i> <i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> <i>Lamiastrum galeobdolon</i> <i>Myosotis sylvatica</i> <i>Oxalis acetosella</i> <i>Primula vulgaris</i> <i>Ranunculus ficaria</i> <i>Scrophularia nodosa</i> <i>Stellaria holostea</i> <i>Veronica Montana</i> <i>Viola riviniana</i> Climbing Plants <i>Clematis vitalba</i> <i>Hedera helix</i> <i>Humulus lupulus</i> <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Acid – Neutral (Coal Measures Area) <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> <i>Cynosaurus cristatus</i> <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> <i>Festuca ovina</i> <i>Ajuga reptans</i> <i>Centaurea nigra</i> <i>Daucus carota</i> <i>Galium saxatile</i> <i>Geranium pratense</i> <i>Hypericum maculatum</i> <i>Lathyrus pratensis</i> <i>Leontodon autumnalis</i> <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> <i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i> <i>Lysimachia nummularia</i> <i>Primula vulgaris</i> <i>Rumex acetosella</i> <i>Rhinanthus minor</i> <i>Stellaria graminea</i> <i>Trifolium medium</i> <i>Trifolium pratense</i> <i>Valeriana officinalis</i>	Calcareous (Magnesian Limestone Area) <i>Brachypodium pinnatum</i> <i>Briza media</i> <i>Bromus erectus</i> <i>Festuca ovina</i> <i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i> <i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i> <i>Campanula rotundifolia</i> <i>Carlina vulgaris</i> <i>Centaurea scabiosa</i> <i>Centaureum erythraea</i> <i>Conopodium majus</i> <i>Dactylorhiza fuchsia</i> <i>Fragaria vesca</i> <i>Galium verum</i> <i>Helianthemum nummularium</i> <i>Leontodon hispidus</i> <i>Leontodon saxatilis</i> <i>Primula veris</i> <i>Hypericum montanum</i> <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> <i>Knautia arvensis</i> <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> <i>Orchis mascula</i> <i>Origanum vulgare</i> <i>Sanguisorba minor</i> <i>Scabiosa columbaria</i> <i>Succisa pratensis</i> <i>Thymus praecox</i>	Wet grassland, pond & stream edges <i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> <i>Alopecurus geniculatus</i> <i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> <i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i> <i>Festuca pratensis</i> <i>Festuca rubra</i> <i>Holcus lanatus</i> <i>Holcus mollis</i> <i>Caltha palustris</i> <i>Cardamine pratensis</i> <i>Carex Spp.</i> <i>Cirsium palustre</i> <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> <i>Galium palustre</i> <i>Geum rivale</i> <i>Hypericum tetrapterum</i> <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> <i>Juncus effuses</i> <i>Juncus inflexus</i> <i>Lathyrus pratensis</i> <i>Lythrum salicaria</i> <i>Mentha aquatica</i> <i>Myosotis scorpioides</i> <i>Persicaria amphibian</i> <i>Ranunculus flammula</i> <i>Ranunculus sceleratus</i> <i>Scrophularia auriculata</i> <i>Valeriana dioica</i> <i>Veronica anagallis-aquatica</i> <i>Veronica beccabunga</i>

Appendix Two – Ecological Survey Requirements

From a planning perspective the information required to be submitted in relation to a proposed development should include:

- Results of consultation with Rotherham Biological Records Centre, and / or other likely holders of biological data,
- Details, with appropriate mapping, of habitats occurring and present vegetation status.
- The presence of or potential for protected and priority species and priority habitats on the site. Including identification of any features that may be used by or support protected fauna (e.g. roosts, nest sites etc).
- Details of the survey methodology employed, including identifications of limitations and recommendations for further survey work if necessary.
- Key factors resulting from the development that are likely to affect the ecological interest identified by the survey work. Including the expected timing, phasing and duration of works.
- Opinion as to whether the site, either in whole or in part, is suitable for development as proposed.
- Details of measures to safeguard features of ecological interest and recommendations for ecological enhancement of the proposed development site.
- Details of direct mitigation measures to be incorporated for ecological interest to be lost or reduced as a result of the proposed development.

Where there is the potential for protected species the following requirements should also be included:

- Details of survey methodology used including survey dates, times, conditions, comparison of survey work undertaken to established best practice methodology, identification of limitations and recommendations for further survey work if necessary;
- Details of evaluation methodology used to assess the survey results;
- Survey staff involved in the survey work, including an outline of their training and experience;
- Description of the need for and the objectives of the survey;
- Description of the site and any structures surveyed including evaluation of potential features of interest, use of images where appropriate;
- Results of site and structure assessment, i.e. details of any evidence of protected species or potential found during survey;
- Evaluation of the survey results including confirmation of protected species presence / absence, estimated species population size, key features of importance;
- Key factors resulting from the development / proposed works that are likely to affect the ecological interest identified by the survey work. Including the expected timing, phasing and duration of works;
- Opinion as to whether the site / structure, either in whole or in part, is suitable for development / works as proposed;
- Details of measures needed to safeguard features of ecological interest and recommendations for ecological enhancement of the proposed works;
- Details of direct mitigation measures to be incorporated for ecological interest to be lost or reduced as a result of the proposed works;
- Opinion as to whether a European Protected Species Licence will be required from Natural England and what measures are likely to be required to meet Natural England's licensing application process;
- Provision of a detailed working method statement to be followed throughout the proposed works to ensure that harm or disturbance to any protected species not found during the survey work is minimised.

Appendix Three – Ecological Survey Calendar

Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Habitats / Vegetation	Phase 1 only (sub-optimal)			Phase 1 and NVC						Phase 1 (sub-optimal)		
Badgers	Limited sett / bait surveys	Bait marking and sett surveys			Limited bait marking and sett surveys				Sett surveys		Limited sett/ bait surveys	
Bats	Inspection of hibernation roosts		Limited activity	Survey for summer roosts, and activity surveys possible for all areas with suitable habitat					Limited activity	Inspection of Hibernation roosts		
	Potential roost, and internal surveys are possible all year round, trees are best surveyed in winter											
Birds	Surveys for Winter Species, i.e. Wintering waders		Breeding bird surveys, and those for migrant species		Breeding bird surveys		Low activity, surveys not recommended		Surveys for migrant species		Surveys for Winter Species, i.e. Wintering waders	
Dormice	Gnawed hazel nut search			Nest tube survey from April to November				Gnawed hazel nut search (best from September to December)				
Great crested newts	Newts Hibernating, no survey possible		Pond surveys for adults / Terrestrial survey / Egg surveys April to mid-June / Larvae surveys from mid-May			Survey for Habitat suitability and the presence of larvae		Survey possible to determine habitat suitability		Newts hibernating, no survey possible		
Otters	There are no distinct seasonal constraints to otter survey, however they may be effected by vegetation cover and weather conditions											
Reptiles	Reptiles hibernating, no survey possible		Peak survey months are April and May				Reduced basking time lowers effectiveness of refugia survey		Peak survey month	Limited activity	Reptiles hibernating, no survey possible	
Water voles	Low activity	Surveys for habitat suitability		Habitat and field signs / activity surveys May be limited by vegetation cover and weather						Surveys for habitat suitability		Low activity
White-clawed crayfish	Low activity, no survey possible			Searching Torching Trapping	Where present likely to have young, hence avoid survey		Substrate search by hand Torchlight and trapping surveys				Low activity, no survey possible	
Surveys recommended		Sub-optimal survey period			Surveys not possible							

Appendix Four – Links to Statutory Agency Advice and Best Practice Methods

Barn Owl Trust: <http://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/>

Bat Conservation Trust: <http://www.bats.org.uk/index.php>

British Standard BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development (2013) BSI

DCLG National Planning Policy Framework (2012): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

DCLG National Planning Policy Framework Guidance (2014): <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Exeter City Council Residential Design Guide SPD (2010):
<http://www.exeter.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=12730>

Freshwater Habitats Trust: <http://www.freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/>

J. Johnston & J. Newton Plants for Roofs and Walls 2004 Greater London Authority

JNCC UK and international nature conservation advice: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5287>

Natural England guidance:

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/information_for/local_authority_and_policy_makers/default.aspx

Natural England – Standing Advice for Protected Species:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningdevelopment/spatialplanning/standingadvice/>

Rotherham Biodiversity Forum Rotherham Biodiversity Action Plan 2012

RMBC Local Wildlife Site Framework & Selection Criteria (2010):

http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200074/planning_and_regeneration/609/a_guide_to_local_wildlife_sites

RHS Plants for Pollinators: <http://www.rhs.org.uk/Gardening/Sustainable-gardening/Plants-for-pollinators>

Swift conservation: <http://www.swift-conservation.org/>

TCPA (2012) Planning for a healthy environment: good practice for green infrastructure and biodiversity

Wildlife Trust Sheffield & Rotherham: <http://www.wildsheffield.com/>

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust: <http://www.ywt.org.uk/>