

ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

PROJECT NAME:	Petersgate Infant School	Ecology ref	12/0848	Cost code	PO9157
This response dated:	15 th August 2012	Ecology group contact:	Adam Eggesfield <i>Senior Ecologist</i>	CCBS contact:	Claire Cockburn <i>Architect</i>
Revision history	Rev no: 1		01962 832334 adam.eggesfield@hants.gov.uk		01962 845564 claire.cockburn@hants.gov.uk

Receptor	Impacts	Actions Required (Avoidance, mitigation, compensation)	Owner of Action (e.g. Ecology group, CCBS, contractor)
1. Wildlife Sites	<i>1.1 Internationally and Nationally Designated Sites:</i>		
	The site is approximately 2.5km from the Butser Hill Special Area of Conservation (SAC) , given strict legal protection under EU law ¹ , and 1.75km from Catherington Down Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) , given legal protection under domestic law ² . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the distances between the work area and the designated sites and the nature and scale of the works, the development will not affect these sites. 	- none	n/a
	<i>1.2 Non-statutory sites:</i>		
	There are no non-statutory sites of nature conservation interest that would be affected either directly or indirectly by this scheme.	- none	n/a

¹ EU Birds Directive and EU Habitats Directive refs, transposed into UK law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Habitats Regulations)

² Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

2. Notable Habitats	<p>Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) requires every public body in the exercising of its functions to ‘<i>have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity</i>’. There is an expectation under the Act that public bodies will refer to certain habitats as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity identified under Section 41 of the Act in complying with this duty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No BAP Priority Habitats or Habitats of Principal Importance have been identified on the development site. The location of the new classrooms is predominantly amenity grassland within the school playing field and associated landscaping (see Photo 1 in Appendix 1). <p>There are also areas of hardstanding and a small herb garden in a brick raised bed at the location of the eastern extension.</p> <p>The development will not result in any adverse impacts to notable habitats</p>	<p>- none</p>	<p>n/a</p>
3. Legally Protected Species	<p><i>3.1 Bats:</i></p> <p>Bats receive strict legal protection under UK law by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and under EU law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is a modern building, of brick construction with a flat roof. The areas affected by the development are single storey. While flat roofs are less likely to support bats, bats can be present if the roof is in poor condition with suitable crevices and access points. <p>The roof was examined, paying particular attention to the condition and materials used around the edges. The top of the roof could be examined from the landscaped bunds to the north, using binoculars.</p> <p>The roof is in generally very good condition, with the metal / plastic edging strips being well-sealed where they meet the external walls. The brickwork is in good condition with no missing mortar. No gaps were noted that could afford access to bats (see Photo 2).</p> <p>It is considered that there is no reasonable likelihood of bats being present and affected by the work.</p>	<p>- none</p>	<p>n/a</p>

<p>3.2 <i>Great Crested Newt</i></p>		
<p>Great Crested Newts (GCN) receive strict legal protection under EU and domestic law.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a small 'wildlife area' to the west of the works area. This supports a number of trees, an area of rough herb-rich grassland and taller herb vegetation. There is a small pond within this area. The pond would appear to provide good habitat for GCN. GCN only use ponds to breed, spending the rest of the year on land, using habitat such as rough grassland, woodland and hedgerows that provide sufficient cover and foraging opportunity. <p>However, the pond is fairly new and from looking at local maps and aerial photos, there are no ponds in the immediate area that would appear to provide suitable GCN habitat. It is therefore less likely that the pond supports these animals.</p> <p>The development will not affect suitable terrestrial GCN habitat. As noted above, the land affected by the work is largely hardstanding or very short mown amenity grassland.</p> <p>As discussed, there is a small herb garden. This is a very small area, approximately 16 sq m in size. It is not immediately accessible by GCN as the planting is contained in a brick bed, with several courses of brick around three sides of the planter. The northern side of the bed is open and would be accessible to GCN if they crossed the hardstanding access track and the amenity grassland. Natural England have produced a 'rapid risk assessment' tool that helps understand the level of risk from any given development. This identifies that if GCN were present in the pond, an offence is unlikely due to the size of the habitat affected.</p> <p>Therefore, in view of the age of the pond and the size and nature of the area affected by the development, it is considered that there is no reasonable likelihood of GCN being present and affected.</p>	<p>- none</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>3.3 <i>Other species:</i></p>		

	<p>In addition, the proposals were assessed for potential impacts on the following other legally protected species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nesting birds, badger, reptiles and hazel dormouse. <p>Due to the habitats present and the scale and nature of the development, these proposals are not seen as having any impacts on these other species.</p>	<p>- <i>none</i></p>	<p>n/a</p>
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Appendix 1 – Photos

Photo 1 – Site of eastern classroom extension, showing amenity grassland , herb garden and rear elevation of school



Photo 2 – Detail of flat roof edging

