

Spencers Wood Primary School Hedgerow Mitigation Strategy

Report Title: Hedgerow Mitigation Strategy
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Executive Summary

The proposed development is for the delivery of a new primary school with associated hard and soft landscaping. Full details of the development should be referred to within other documents forming this reserved matters application.

The development site is located at Church Lane, Hyde End Lane and Hyde End Road, Three Mile Cross, Spencer's Wood, RG7 1TL (Grid ref: SU 77741 93130).

The proposed development site consists of grassland and recently cleared / bareground. No buildings or mature trees are located within the development boundary. There are also no hedgerows within the site boundary, and there is negligible impact to hedgerow H59 as it is approximately 5m away from the eastern boundary of the development site.

The site is considered to be of moderate potential for foraging and traversing bats, due to the open parcels of grassland, suitable connecting habitats (woodland and grassland) and high records of common species within the local landscape. Bat species are light sensitive, and the proposals must incorporate an appropriately designed landscaping scheme, that will enhance the site for traversing and foraging bats.

This report has been written in order to discharge condition 19 of the outline planning application reference F/2013/0347.

The strategy for the design is consistent with the Outline Hedgerow Management Strategy – Final Report P11/06 (EPR, December 2012).

The proposed primary school design ensures that there is appropriate mitigation for the biodiversity impact of the development in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policy CP7.



Aerial view of the development site and surrounds

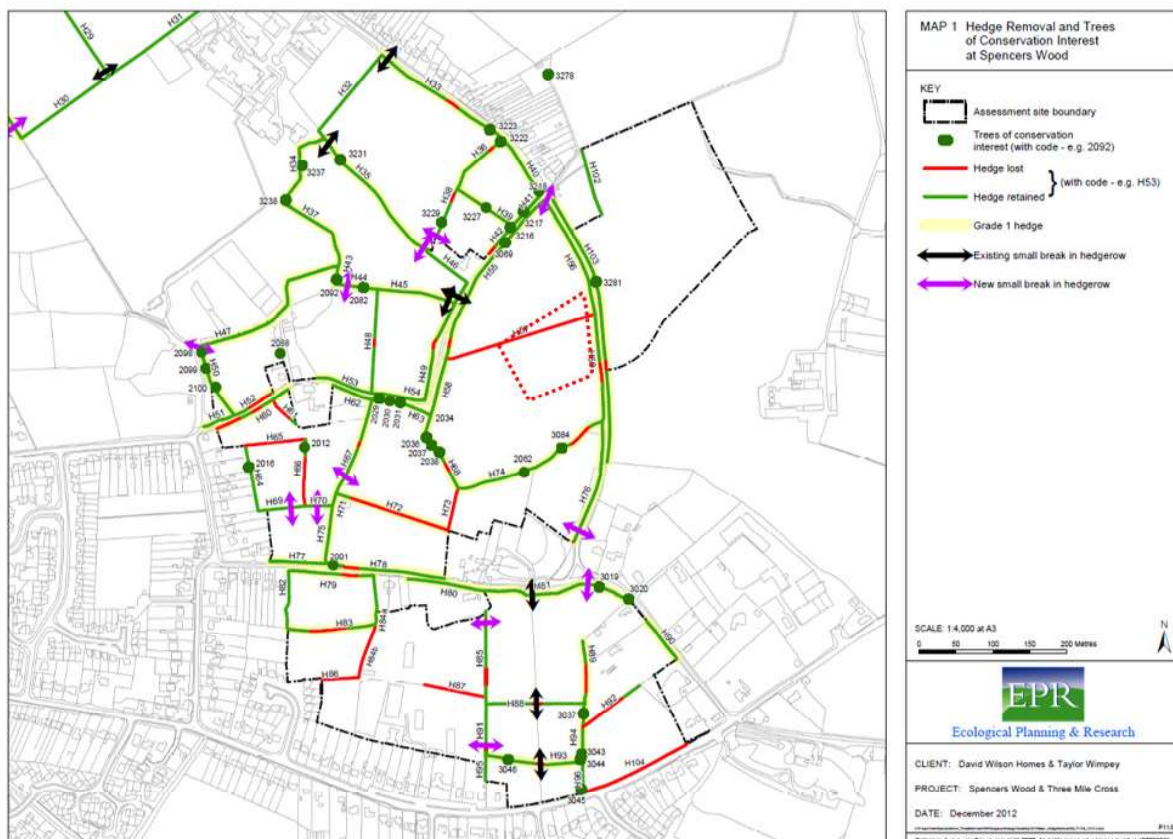
Commentary

Whilst hedgerow H59 borders the eastern boundary of the development site, it is approximately 5m away from the site boundary. Notwithstanding this, the approach to the ecological survey and landscape strategy has assessed the importance of the hedgerow within the proposed design.

An Ecological Appraisal was carried out by a qualified ecologist Daniel Bardley BSc (Hons) MRes on 20 May 2024. Daniel is a qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and holds wildlife licences issued by Natural England for bats CL18 class 2, great crested newts CL08 class 1 and barn owl CL29. The appraisal is appended to this report.

The appraisal states that the proposed development with avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures in place, along with biodiversity enhancements, will not cause negative impacts on the local wildlife and will ensure connectivity within the wider landscape.

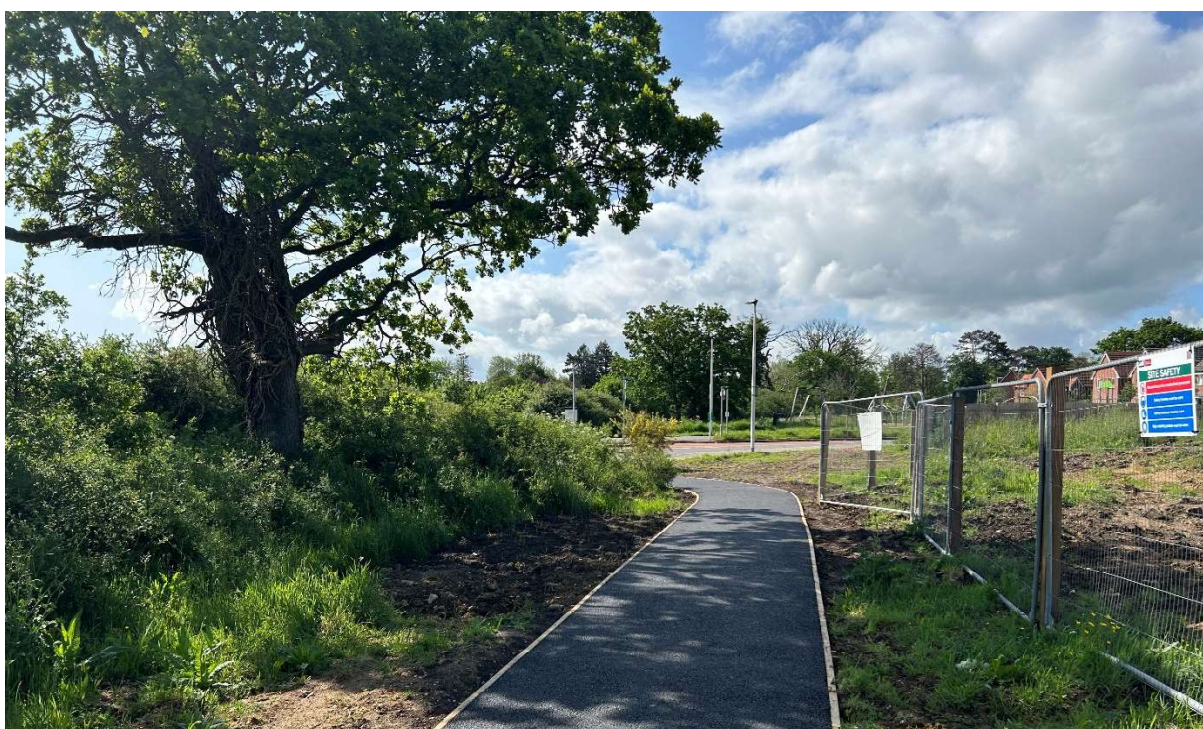
The new landscaping proposal incorporates an appropriately designed landscaping scheme that will enhance the site. This includes new hedgerow planting utilising native species with a known benefit to wildlife including hazel *Coryllus avellana*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, oak *Quercus* and field maple *Acer campestre*. The Landscape Architect's Landscape Approach document is appended to this report.



Hedgerow Removal and Trees of Conservation Interest at Spencers Wood produced as part of the 2014 Outline Planning Application with the approximate boundary of the primary school site highlighted in a red dashed line.



1. View taken on 15 May 2024 looking north up Hyde End Lane with the hedgerow H59 in the foreground. Note the new tarmac pedestrian path which has been recently installed on the western side of the lane.



2. View taken on 15 May 2024 looking south down the new tarmac pedestrian path with the development site on the right hand side.



3. View taken on 15 May 2024 looking north up the new tarmac pedestrian path with the development site on the left hand side circa 5m away.

Responding to the detail of the planning condition 19;

- a) The buffer zone is outside of the development site.
- b) The buffer zones required to protect the hedgerow are free from development.
- c) There are no grade 1 hedgerows to be removed as a result of the development.
- d) There will be no negative impacts to the local hedgerow network as a result of the development.
- e) The landscape within the primary school will be subject to maintenance management.