

BRIEFING NOTE

Project:	South Wokingham Land South of St Anne's Manor	Subject:	Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)
Reference:	20.0032.003 F0	Date:	25 th September 2024
Author:	██████████ ECOSA	Client:	South Wokingham Consortium

Background

A full planning application (Ref. 190900) for the proposed change of use of land from nil use to D2 for proposed Suitable Alternative Greenspace (SANG) with associated landscaping was submitted to Wokingham Borough Council and approved on 24th May 2021.

Condition 8 of the planning consent states:

"Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape and ecological management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved."

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 and TB23. These details need to be considered in conjunction with the landscaping proposals which are fundamental."

A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)¹ was submitted to Wokingham Borough Council in August 2020. The LEMP stated:

"3.3 Protected and Notable Species

- In order to create the woodland paths and prior to any woodland management operations, trees with roosting potential for bats will be mapped, marked and retained (i.e. alternative routes for paths, clearance will be identified)."*

This established the principle that the route of the proposed path within the woodland would be minorly adjusted to avoid unnecessary impacts on protected species.

Summary of Work to Date

██████████ Principal Ecologist of ECOSA, attended a site meeting with ██████████ Principal Transport Planner of Pegasus, ██████████ Director of King Acre Estates, ██████████, Director of DPA Arboricultural Associates, ██████████ Ecology Officer of Wokingham Borough Council,

¹ Ethos Environmental Planning (2020) *Landscape and Ecological Management Plan: Land to the South of St Anne's Manor*. Bristol: Ethos.

■■■■■, Countryside Service Officer of Wokingham Borough Council, ■■■■■, Highways Officer of Wokingham Borough Council and ■■■■■, Senior Surveyor of Wokingham Borough Council on 8th May 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the access approach and working methods to begin the first phase of delivering the footpath through St Anne's woods. During the meeting the construction vehicle route through the existing Buckhurst Meadows SANG to the location of the proposed St Anne's SANG was reviewed. It was agreed vehicles would make use of the existing paths within the SANG but that areas of long grassland adjacent to the paths would be strimmed under ecological supervision to avoid potential killing and injury of any wildlife which may otherwise be present, due to the tracking width of the vehicles.

■■■■■ Ecologist of ECOSA, attended site on Monday 13th May 2024 to supervise the removal of fencing at the entrance to the existing Buckhurst Meadows SANG from the existing car park. She also walked the vehicle route although no strimming or vegetation clearance was undertaken during the visit.

On Tuesday 14th May 2024, ■■■■■, Ecologist of ECOSA attended site and supervised the strimming of grassland adjacent to the proposed vehicle access route. A single adult female slow worm was encountered and was allowed to disperse into adjacent retained suitable habitat. Following this, ■■■■■ walked along the first 20 metres of the route of the footpath through the woodland within the proposed St Anne's SANG. At this point a pond was discovered and the footpath was minorly rerouted to avoid this. Once the route had been established, ■■■■■ supervised the vegetation clearance works along the length of the route, this comprised scrub and small saplings only, no trees required removal. A single frog was the only animal encountered during the vegetation clearance works and was translocated to an area of woodland removed from the working area.

On Wednesday 15th May 2024, ■■■■■, Assistant Ecologist of ECOSA attended site and supervised the soil stripping of the area cleared the previous day. No animals were encountered during this work.

Although the route of the footpath within St Anne's SANG will be subject to a minor amendment, this type of mitigation has been accounted for in the LEMP. Therefore the content of the LEMP remains applicable and no amendments are necessary.