

ANNEX 5: Biodiversity Checklist

The Biodiversity Checklist is designed to identify developments which may have an impact on biodiversity, particularly whether protected, Priority or notable species may be affected by proposals. Protected and Priority species are a material consideration in the planning process, and if there is a likelihood that a development will impact them, further information must be submitted in support of a planning application. Applicants or their agents should use the Biodiversity Checklist to carry out a 'first impressions' check of their application site (stage A1). This should be carried out while on site and does not require ecological expertise.

The Checklist is **not required** for the following types of planning applications - advertisement applications, air conditioning units/air source heat pumps (and similar), changes of use, conversion to flats (if not affecting the roof), crossovers (where no hard standing needs to be created), extract ducting, fences, removal of fire escapes, roller blinds/shutters, satellite dishes, shop fronts, walls and gates, windows and doors.

All other types of development proposal must include a completed biodiversity checklist for the application to be validated. This includes householder applications where the development requires a planning application (not permitted development); listed building consents where the roof will be affected including roof lights, solar panels or floodlighting of churches or trees; full planning applications including single/two storey extensions and residential/commercial new build; and outline planning applications. A checklist may be required for variations.

Failure to complete the Biodiversity Checklist accurately may result in your application not being validated and may cause delay to the determination process.

There are two different Biodiversity Checklists: one for householder applications and one for all other types of planning applications.

The Householder Biodiversity Checklist includes questions to help determine whether Protected or Priority species may be affected and whether further information may be required. If 'the answer is 'yes' to any of the questions listed, an ecological report may be required to assess impacts and provide for appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation.

The Checklist for other types of planning application includes indicative thresholds and criteria which will trigger the consideration of Protected and Priority species, based on the likelihood of these being present and affected by development. It should be used by applicants to identify which ecological surveys are likely to be necessary for an individual development given its condition and location. If the checklist indicates that species may be present and affected, a suitably qualified ecologist should ensure any necessary ecological surveys are undertaken in the appropriate season. Where a suitably qualified ecologist considers that surveys are necessary, these will need to be carried out and submitted alongside the planning application in order for it to be validated.

Householder Applications Biodiversity Checklist

Question	Features	Response
1) Will the proposals affect (e.g. modify or demolish) existing buildings with any of the following features: <i>(These could indicate the likelihood of bats (European protected species – see SPD Section 2.2) being present and affected by the development & may trigger the need for survey & assessment to support an application)</i>	Weather boarding, roof voids and/or hanging tiles that are within 200m of woodland, designated nature sites (see SPD Section 2.1), and/or fresh water	Yes / No
	Pre-1960 detached buildings or structures within 200m of woodland, designated nature sites (see SPD Section 2.1) and/or fresh water	Yes / No
	Pre-1914 buildings or structures within 400m of woodland, designated nature sites (see SPD Section 2.1) and/or fresh water	Yes / No
	Pre-1914 buildings with gable ends, traditional clay tile roofs or slate roofs, hanging tiles or weather boarding (regardless of location)	Yes / No
	Located within, or immediately adjacent to woodland, designated nature sites (see SPD Section 2.1) and/or immediately adjacent to fresh water	Yes / No
	Underground structures including, but not limited to, cellars, ice-houses, air raid shelters	Yes / No
	Any structure with gaps around roof structures such as flashing, ridge tiles, fascia and soffit boards within 200m of woodland, designated nature site (see SPD Section 2.1) and/or fresh water	Yes / No
	Structures where there is known current or historic bat use	Yes / No
2) Do the proposals involve felling, removal or works to:	Woodland	Yes / No
	Native hedgerows and/or lines of trees	Yes / No
	Old and veteran trees (<i>Veteran trees are those which are of interest biologically, culturally or aesthetically because of its age, size or condition. Veteran trees often have decay features such as branch death or hollowing</i>)	Yes / No
	Mature trees with holes, cracks, cavities, or that are covered with mature ivy (including dead trees)	Yes / No
3) Do the proposals involve the removal/modification of mature garden features?	Features including rough grassland; large mature compost heap; large mature log pile; large rockery; scrub; copse; allotment; orchard.	Yes / No
4) Do the proposals involve the removal/modification of a (permanent or temporary) water body, such as a pond?		Yes / No
5) Does the site or part of it lie within a District Licensing Amber or Red Risk Zone for Great Crested Newts?		Yes / No

Notes:

- Woodland can be viewed on magic.gov.uk under the heading of “priority habitats”
- Some wetland habitats, can be viewed on magic.gov.uk
- Locations of designated nature sites can be viewed on the City Plan Policies Map
- Information on the Great Crested Newt District Licensing Scheme can be found on naturespaceuk.com

If you have answered YES to any of the above questions you may need an ecological assessment. In the first instance, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) will be required (see SPD Section 7: A1). A full Ecological Impact Assessment may be required where the PEA indicates that priority habitats or species may be affected (See SPD Section 7: A3). This should be addressed before you submit your planning application by seeking further advice from a [professional and suitably qualified ecologist](#).

Assessments should be proportionate to the size of the site and the nature of the proposals. If your ecologist considers the impacts on ecology are negligible, they should provide justification with clear photographs to explain why. This must include an explanation of how all potential impacts on biodiversity will be avoided and/or why protected and Priority species are not an issue on your site. If the ecological information received does not provide certainty of likely impacts, the application may be refused.

For office use				
1	Have all questions on all sections been completed?	Y/N	If YES, go to 2	If NO, application should not be validated
2	Have any questions been answered “Yes”?	Y/N	If YES, go to 3	If NO, application can be validated
3	Has a separate ecological statement, report or other supporting information been submitted to identify and address potential impacts	Y/N	If YES application can be validated	If NO, application should not be validated