

Technical Note TN09

Project: 240 Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead

Date: 12 March 2025

Ecology - Summary

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Aspect Ecology is advising Elivia Homes Central on ecological matters matters to support a Reserved Matters application for the following development:
- 1.1.2 *“Reserved Matters application for 26 dwellings and associated infrastructure, landscaping and demolition of existing dwellings (to consider appearance, landscaping, layout and scale)”*.
- 1.1.3 This Reserved Matters application follows on from the Outline planning application (ref: 211889) which was granted by the Planning Inspectorate via appeal (ref: APP/X0360/W/22/3295631) in December 2022. A Reserved Matters application (ref: 232298) for the Site was dismissed at appeal (ref. APP/X0360/W/24/3352010) on 21 February 2025.
- 1.1.4 The site is located at 240 Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham, centred at OS grid reference SU 801 647 (see Plan 6087/ECO1).
- 1.1.5 Although ecological matters at the site are not points of contention in the recent RM application reference 232298, this report has been prepared to inform the LPA by providing a summary of ecological considerations that have informed this resubmitted RM application.
- 1.1.6 Ecological matters relevant to the development proposals have been previously provided within the following reports:
 - Ecological Appraisal, May 2021, Ref. 6087 EcoAp;
 - Dormouse Survey Report, September 2021, Ref. 6087 Dormouse Survey Report;
 - Bat Survey Report, October 2021, Ref. 6087 BSR;
 - Bat Survey Report, August 2024, Ref. 6087 Nine Mile Ride TN08 Bat Emergence Surveys;
 - Various Technical Notes informing Biodiversity Net Gain, with an agreed version dated 2022 that informed the S106 for the proposals;
 - Biodiversity Enhancement Plan, June 2024, Ref. 6087 BEP;
 - Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), June 2024, Ref. 6087 CEMP.

2 Ecological Baseline

2.1 Studies and Surveys

- 2.1.1 The application has been informed by a range of ecological studies and surveys as set out in Table 2.1 below.

- 2.1.2 The original Phase 1 Survey undertaken in 2020 determined that habitats within the site were suitable for use by bats, Badger and Dormouse, and further survey was undertaken for these groups. Habitats within the site were assessed as unsuitable to support other faunal groups and further survey of these groups was not undertaken.

Table 2. Error! No text of specified style in document. 1. Ecological studies and surveys undertaken.

Survey/Study	Description	Date Originally Undertaken and Most Recent Update
Desk Study	Desk study of ecological sites and species records within 2km of the site	2021
Phase 1 Survey	Habitat Survey of the site and immediate area	2021, last updated 2024
Bats – Activity	Surveys using handheld detectors and static bat detectors	2021
Bats – Emergence	Emergence surveys of buildings within the site	2021, 2024
Dormouse	Dormouse nest tube surveys	2021

2.2 Ecological Designations

- 2.2.1 There are no ecological designations within the site or in the immediate vicinity. Ecological designations are shown on Plan 6087/ECO2.
- 2.2.2 The site is within 4km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and SANG provision was agreed at an extension to Buckhurst Meadows SANG to offset possible impacts.
- 2.2.3 There are no areas of Ancient Woodland or veteran trees within or adjacent to the site.

2.3 Habitats

- 2.3.1 The following habitat types are present within the site, as shown on Plan 6087/ECO3:

- Buildings and Hardstanding;
- Amenity Gardens;
- Woodland;
- Trees; and
- Invasive Species.

Buildings

- 2.3.2 Three buildings are present in the site. All were investigated for evidence of roosting bats, and historical evidence in the form of bat droppings was found in the roof void of two of the buildings. DNA analysis confirmed the droppings to be those of Common Pipistrelle and Brown Long-Eared Bat. Bat emergence surveys were subsequently undertaken at all buildings.

Amenity Gardens

- 2.3.3 These are of negligible ecological value.

Woodland

- 2.3.4 The southern part of the site is occupied by woodland, dominated by Birch with occasional Oak, Sweet Chestnut and Scots Pine. The woodland conforms to the requirements of Priority Habitat and is identified as such on the MAGIC database. The woodland is therefore an important ecological feature, although it is becoming degraded by encroaching *Rhododendron*. A proportion of the woodland will be removed by the proposals.
- 2.3.5 Elivia Homes Central has made a commitment to improving the woodland and in this regard a Woodland Management Plan is secured by the outline S106.

Trees

- 2.3.6 Mature and semi-mature trees are present scattered throughout the site. While some trees will be lost to the proposals, the majority will be protected and retained. Improving on the previous scheme, 18 cypress trees (nos. 213-215 and 227-241) growing to the west of Oak Manor and to the east of plots nos. 5 to 9 previously shown for removal are now to be retained.

Invasive Species

- 2.3.7 The Schedule 9 invasive species *Rhododendron*, *Montbretia* and Wall Cotoneaster are present within the site, with *Rhododendron* encroaching within the woodland. It is an offence to cause the spread of these species in the wild and appropriate control measures would be implemented as part of the proposals.

2.4 Fauna

Bats – Foraging and Commuting

- 2.4.1 Activity Surveys were undertaken from May to October 2021 by walked transects and static bat detectors. Bats detected were commoner species, with the vast majority of registrations corresponding to Common Pipistrelle and Sorano Pipistrelle. Much lower numbers of 'big bat' (Noctule/Serotine) and extremely low numbers of Myotis sp. and Brown Long-Eared Bat were detected by static detectors. In summary the site is used by common bat species but is not of elevated interest for bats.

Bats – Emergence from Buildings

- 2.4.2 No bats were detected emerging from any building during surveys undertaken in 2021 and 2024. Because of the presence of historic bat droppings the buildings are confirmed bat roosts and their demolition will require a bat licence, however, it is highly unlikely that bats will be adversely affected by the loss of these structures.

Dormouse

- 2.4.3 No evidence of Dormouse was found during the surveys undertaken.

Badger

- 2.4.4 No evidence of Badger or their setts were found during any surveys of the site. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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Invertebrates

- 2.4.5 It was noted that features within the site are suitable to support Stag Beetle and because of this, recommendations to retain dead wood within the proposals to enhance this species have been made.

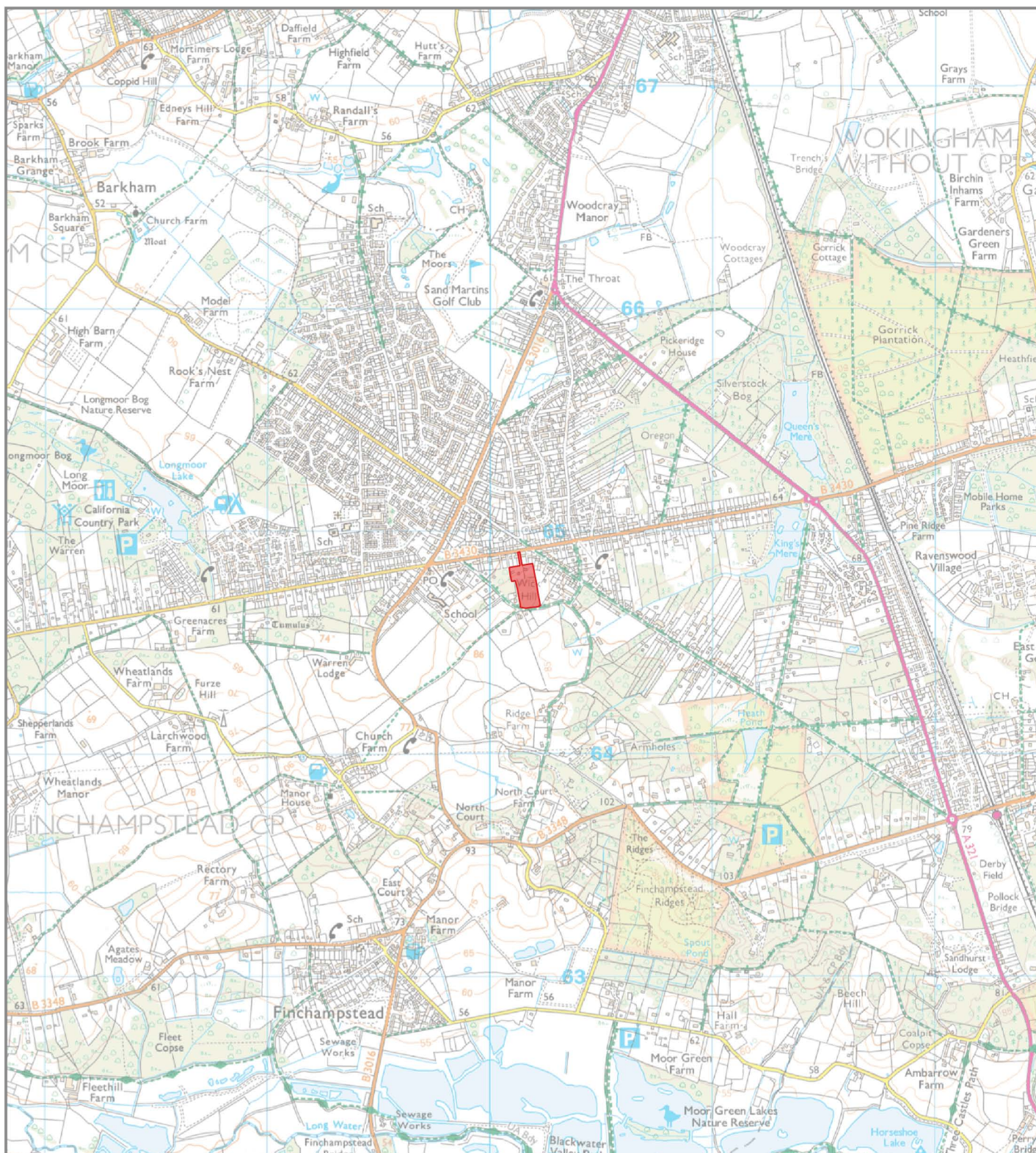
3 Mitigation and Enhancement

3.1 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 3.1.1 The original outline application was supported by a BNG assessment using the DEFRA 2.0 Metric. This predicted a net biodiversity loss within the site and offsite measures to address this loss were agreed with the LPA. These measures were set out and agreed in the outline S106 agreement and remain valid and appropriate (no objection was raised in the recent RM application 232298).

3.2 Mitigation Measures

- 3.2.1 A range of mitigation measures were recommended in the original Ecological Appraisal and these were taken forward and presented as Conditions of Planning Approval. These remain relevant and appropriate.



Key:



Site Location

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Land at and to the rear of 240
Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham
Site Location

6087/ECO1

February 2021

PROJECT

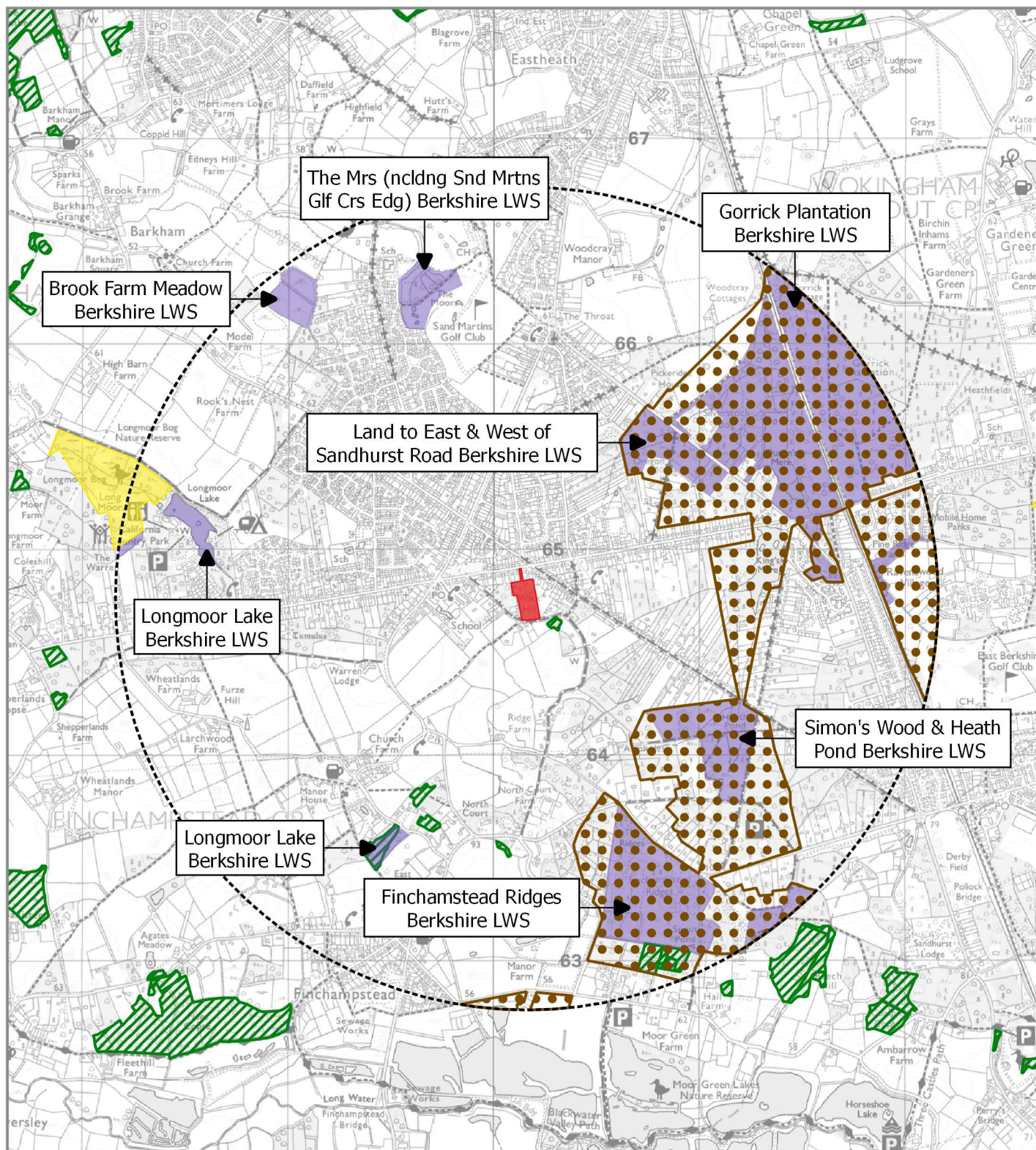
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REV

DATE





Key:

- Site Location
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Berkshire Local Wildlife Site (LWS)
- Biodiversity Opportunity Area
- Ancient & Semi-natural Woodland (ASW)
- Local Records Centre 2km Search Area (only non-statutory designations occurring within 2km of the site are shown)

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Land at and to the rear of 240
Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham
Ecological Designations

6087/ECO2

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- Key:
- Site Boundary
 - Woodland
 - Hardstanding
 - Building
 - Mown Grass Lawn
 - Amenity Planting/Shrub Beds and Borders
 - Mature Conifers
 - Ornamental Pond
 - Tree
 - Tree with Low Bat Roosting Potential
 - Tree with Moderate-high Bat Roosting Potential
 - Schedule 9 Invasive Species (*Crocodymia x crocosmiiflora*)
 - Schedule 9 Invasive Species (*Cotoneaster horizontalis*)
 - Schedule 9 Invasive Species (*Rhododendrom pondicum*)



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Land at and to the rear of 240 Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham Habitats and Ecological Features	PROJECT
	TITLE
	DRAWING NO.
	REV
February 2021	DATE