

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



Environmental Business Solutions

Land at Middlesex Stadium, Breakspear Road,
Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 7SB

Grid Ref: TQ 0800 8860

Quality Management

Job No			
Project	Construction of Multiple Football Pitches.		
Location	Land at Middlesex Stadium, Breakspear Road, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 7SB. Grid Ref: TQ 0800 8860		
Title	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal		
Document Type	PEAR	Issue / Revision	01
Date	10/08/24		
Prepared by	Bill Gaudie	Signature (for file)	
Checked by		Signature (for file)	

Revision Status / History

Rev	Date	Issue / Purpose / Comment	Prepared	Checked
			WG	WG

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the scheme

Environmental Business Solutions was instructed in Dec 2023 to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for the proposed creation of numerous football pitches on land at Middlesex Stadium, Breakspear Road, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 7SB (Grid Ref: TQ 0800 8860).

The client, Middlesex Stadium, proposes the creation of 6x football pitches on an area of improved grassland, approximately 2.40ha, currently utilized playing fields. The proposals submit that waste inert materials be deposited and landscaped to create flat pitches with drainage. Haul roads will be limited to existing areas of hard standing and improved grassland.

1.2 Site context

The Site is located at National Grid Reference TQ 0800 8860 and comprises of approximately 2.40 ha of improved grass land with some hard standing (See figure 1). The application Site is located in a semi-rural area of Middlesex on the outskirts of the town of Ruislip. It is adjacent to Breakspear Rd, which lies immediately to the south east. It is surrounded by further sports facilities and open countryside with the town of Ruislip to the east.

Figure 1. Extent of site in wider context



Figure 2: Site in closer context



1.3 Purpose of this report

This report has been produced to set out the methods, results, and conclusions of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA). This will inform the need for any further ecological surveys as required in order to fully assess the impacts of the proposals.

For the purposes of this study, the term 'protected and notable species' is defined in Appendix 1.

Further information on legal protection of those species which are formally protected is defined in Appendix 2.

2 Methods

2.1 Desk study

Sources of information used in the desk study are presented in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 Desk Study sources and information

Source	Date consulted	Information sought
MAGIC website www.magic.gov.uk	07/24	Locations of statutorily-designated wildlife sites within 1km of the site boundary
Natural England https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/	07/24	Relevant SSSI citations
JNCC http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/	07/24	Information on European wildlife sites Details of relevant Section 41 species and habitats
OSmaps online www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk	07/24	Ponds and waterbodies within 250m of the site.

2.2 Fieldsurvey

The site was subject to a field survey 11/12/23. The weather conditions were clear, breezy, with a maximum daytime temperature of 11°C. Surveys were undertaken by Bill Gaudie and Kelly Barker. The survey was repeated on 20/07/24.

Bill Gaudie BSc hons (Wildlife Conservation), MCIEEM is an ecologist and has 18 years experience undertaking ecological surveys, including Preliminary Ecological Appraisals. Kelly Barker BSc hons (Wildlife Conservation) is an assistant ecologist and has 10 years experience undertaking ecological surveys.

The methods were based on the standard 'Phase 1' habitat survey technique (JNCC 2010), which was extended (IEA 1995) to include any relevant information on evidence or suitability for use by protected or notable species.

3 Results

3.1 Deskstudy

There is 1 SSSI sites within 2km of the proposed development site. Ruislip Wood SSSI lies approximately 400m north and 500m east of the Site. Ruislip Wood is classified as Ancient and semi natural

3.2 Field survey

3.2.1 Habitats on site

The habitats on site, and accompanying Target Notes are presented in Appendix 3, and described in more detail below. The area is dominated by improved grassland. Areas of scrub are also present. Mature and semi mature trees and scrub border the site.

Scattered Scrub is dominated by Bramble (*Rubus fruitcosus*), Dog rose (*Rosa canina*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Maple (*Acer spp*), Old mans beard (*Clematis vitalba*) and also small immature ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

Improved Grassland is present within the proposal area. This habitat is made up mainly of swards of perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Timothy grass (*Phleum pretense*), rough meadowgrass (*Poa trivialis*), and white clover (*Trifolium repens*), with variable amount of other species including Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), crested dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), soft-brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*), common mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), greater plantain (*Plantago major*) and broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*).

Mature Trees. A number of mature trees are found on the boundary of the Site including Ash and Oak. These trees will not be impacted by the proposal.

3.2.2 Habitats off site which require consideration

Scrub and mature as above.

3.2.3 Species and species groups which may be present

Table 3.2.3 indicates the species, species groups, designated sites and habitats which are given further consideration in this appraisal.

Table 3.2.3 Species and species groups requiring further consideration

Species / species group	Field evidence	Rationale for consideration
Birds	Signs of foraging.	There is suitable nesting habitat in scrub and trees on site

Bats (foraging)	Open field with surrounding scrub	There is suitable foraging habitat for bats on site
-----------------	-----------------------------------	---

3.2.4 Species and species groups which are unlikely to be present

Table 3.2.4 indicates the species, species groups, designated sites and habitats could be present / affected based on a very basic knowledge of the site, but aren't given further consideration in the appraisal due either to the lack of suitable habitat or the lack of an effect caused by the development.

Table 3.2.4 Species and species groups which are not given further consideration

Species / species group	Field evidence	Rationale for exclusion from the appraisal
Bats (roosting)	None	A number of trees adjacent to the site have features suitable for use by roosting bats; however, no trees are to be affected by the development
Water vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>)	None	No suitable water bodies within immediate area of the site.
Otters	None	No suitable water bodies within immediate area of the site.
Great crested newt (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>)	None	No suitable water bodies within immediate area of the site.
Reptiles	None	No suitable habitat.
Badger (<i>Meles meles</i>)	None	
Dormouse	None	No suitable habitat on site.
Designated Sites	N/A	Due to the size of the proposed project, it is not thought that any adverse effects will happen on any designated site.

3.3 Constraints to the survey

The following constraints applied to the field survey:

- Site visit occurred over 2 days in mid December 2023 and July 2024.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Protected and notable species

Based on the findings of the PEA, the following additional surveys / mitigation would be required to inform a complete ecological baseline;

- Breeding birds
- Foraging bats
- Trees / Hedge

These are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

4.1.1 Breeding Birds.

Any tree or scrub clearance should be conducted outside of the breeding bird season (March – September). If this is not possible then a breeding bird survey should be conducted by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to works commencing. If nesting birds are discovered then the area around the nest shall be isolated and works halted until nesting has finished.

4.1.2 Trees / Hedges

Any trees / hedges on Site to be retained and those adjacent to the Site but outside the redline boundary should be protected to BS5837 recommendations.

4.1.3 Foraging bats.

Any works / vegetation removal should be phased so as not to disturb the foraging facilities for bats.

4.2 General mitigation and opportunities for enhancement

Where possible, trees should be retained bordering site. Suggestions for biodiversity enhancement include the provision of bat and bird nesting boxes (if possible), and the creation of habitats through planting of native trees and hedgerows.

All construction activities should comply with general environmental best practice measures including;

- the measures set out in the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines;
- excavations should be sealed overnight or should have at least one shallow-sloping side allowing animals to escape should they fall in;
- an ecologist should be contacted for advice should any protected species be discovered during construction; and,
- appropriate measures to suppress dust should be put in place during hot, dry, or windy weather.

- broadleaved trees, scrub and the ruderal vegetation on site are suitable to be used by nesting birds. Therefore, vegetation removal should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (which is from March to August inclusive). If this is not possible, a suitably experienced ecologist should check the habitat for breeding bird activity no more than 48 hours before clearance. If nesting activity is found, it will need to be left in situ until the nesting effort has been completed.

5 Summary

A desk-based study and a field study were conducted in order to identify habitats and determine the suitability for any 'protected and notable' species to occur on site.

The habitats present on site are common and widespread and are not of significant ecological value in their own right. Notwithstanding this, they are suitable to support a number of protected species.

Further surveys maybe required for the following species

- Birds
- Bats
- A walkover survey to establish the presence or absence of foraging badgers (*Meles meles*) is also recommended.

Suggestions for biodiversity enhancement include the provision of a tree planting scheme that should be agreed with the LA prior to the commencement of any works undertaken. the creation of habitats through planting of native trees and hedgerows is to be encouraged.

Construction would also need to be managed appropriately to comply with best practice, as well as with any constraints posed by the outcome of further surveys.

6 References

IEA (1995). Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment. E & F Spon.

JNCC (2010). Handbook for Phase One Habitat Survey – 2010 Edition. England Field Unit, Nature Conservancy Council, reprinted JNCC.

Appendix 1 – Habitat Map and Photographs

Phase 1 Habitat Map – Middlesex Stadium – July 2024



Site Photographs.



Appendix 2 – Proposed Development

APPENDIX 3. Proposed Development