

# Ascerta

Landscape, Arboricultural & Ecological Solutions  
for the Built Environment

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## Avoidance of Harm to Amphibians, Badger and Hedgehog During Construction

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Ash Lane, Mancot  
Ref: P.1884.23

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September 2023

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**P.1810.23**

**Avoidance of harm to amphibians, badger and hedgehog  
during construction**

**for**

**Ash Lane, Mancot**

**Castle Green Homes**

**September 2023**

|                      |                                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Document Author      | Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons)             |
| QA Review & Approval | Ciaran Power – Operations Manager |

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to identify the impact to amphibians, badger and hedgehog in regard to any works within the site and to provide avoidance, mitigation or compensation measures to ensure completion of these works without the risk of disturbing these species.

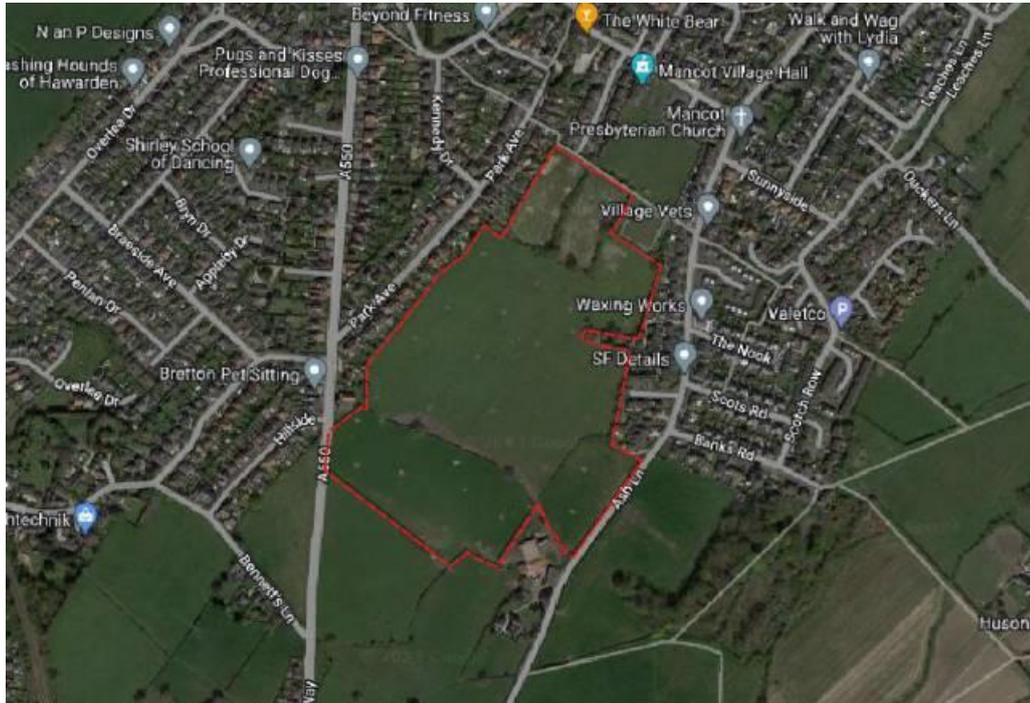
Based on the findings following the site visits, Reasonable Avoidance Measures have been prepared to ensure no harm to the above species. These include the following:

1. Vegetation clearance applies to all habitats cleared in daytime air temperatures above 5°C. Works must be avoided in cold temperatures or if prior overnight temperatures have been less than 1°C. prior to the cutting of the vegetation the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will check the areas of vegetation for hedgehog, amphibians and badger;
2. The cut material is to be chipped and placed in discrete piles outside the working areas or removed from the site;
3. Following the cutting of the vegetation, a hand search of the area will be undertaken. If any or hedgehogs or amphibians are found, they will be removed to a predetermined receptor area by the ECoW;
4. The cut vegetation should be remain at the mown length;
5. Existing tracks should be utilised for vehicle movements where possible;
6. Any hedgehogs or amphibians within the works area will be captured and moved to a predetermined receptor area by the ECoW. If GCN are found, all works must stop immediately and Ascerta (0845 463 4404) contacted;
7. Throughout the works all trenches must be covered at night or ramps provided to prevent hedgehog from getting stuck. Large pipes must also be covered to prevent badger access and risk of these species getting stuck;
8. Construction material will be stored on pallets to avoid creating habitat for hedgehog; and
9. To comply with legislation protecting nesting birds, clearance of any vegetation or the demolition of buildings should ideally be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season that is considered to run between 01 March to 30 August inclusive, unless it is established that nesting birds are not present via an appropriately timed ecological nesting bird check.

Provided that the above measures are secured, it is considered that amphibians, badger and hedgehogs will not be harmed by the proposals.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Ascerta has been instructed by Castle Green Homes to produce a Reasonable Avoidance Method Statement for amphibians, badger and hedgehog for the land at Ash Lane, Mancot (hereafter referred to as the site). The site OS grid reference is SJ 3176 6672 and the What3Words reference is edges.constants.wage. The extent of the site is displayed in photograph 1.1 below.



**Photograph 1.1: Extent of site**

The information contained in this Method Statement is based on data gathered during the site visit on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 by Liz Kenyon.

The site lies to the south of Mancot and is bound by Ash Lane to the east and Park Avenue to the west. Within the wider landscape lies agricultural land use and residential dwellings. The site comprises predominantly semi-improved grassland that is divided into fields that are unmanaged and grazed. Species poor hedgerows and scattered trees demarcate the field boundaries. A ditch partially lines a section of the eastern site boundary, with tall ruderal vegetation and bramble scrub present with the margin of the fields to the north of the site.

## 2.0. Precautionary Working Methods

Prior to the start of works, all site operatives working within the site will receive a Tool Box Talk (TBT) by the Ecological Clerk of Work (ECoW). The TBT will include information on the ecology, identification and legislation, where relevant, related to hedgehog and breeding birds. All operatives must sign a register to confirm they have received the TBT and understand the legal protection of these species once the TBT has been given.

The following will be undertaken to ensure no harm to hedgehog, badger or hedgehog during the works:

1. The vegetation clearance will be undertaken at a slow walking pace and using directional clearance from the centre of the site to the boundaries. The clearance method will encourage any active hedgehog, amphibians and badger to move towards connecting and retained habitat surrounding the working area. This directional cutting applies to all habitats cleared in daytime air temperatures above 5°C. Works must be avoided in cold temperatures or if prior overnight temperatures have been less than 1°C.
2. The cut material will be chipped and placed in discrete piles outside the working areas or removed from the site. Where this is not possible, cut vegetation is to be chipped and spread thinly across the site as instructed by the ECoW.
3. Existing tracks should be utilised for vehicle movements where possible. Where new vehicle routes or tracks are required, the ECoW will recommend on appropriate measures to be undertaken prior to vegetation clearance for track construction.
4. Any hedgehogs or amphibians found within the works area will be captured and moved to a predetermined receptor area by the ECoW.
5. Throughout the works all trenches and holes will be covered at night or ramps provided to prevent hedgehog, amphibians and badger from getting stuck.
6. Construction material will be stored on pallets to avoid harm to hedgehog and

To comply with legislation protecting nesting birds, clearance of any vegetation or the demolition of buildings should ideally be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season which is considered to run between March to August inclusive. Should this not be feasible, all areas of suitable nesting bird habitat will be inspected by the ECoW to determine the presence / absence of any nesting birds (including ground nesting species) prior to any clearance. In the event of an active nest being identified, a temporary exclusion zone would need to be placed around the nest in which works would be put on hold until the nesting attempt has finished, which may be several weeks. Safe working distances will be determined by the ECoW and the distances will be dependent upon the bird species present.

### **3.0. Post Development**

To enable hedgehog continued use of the site gaps of at least 13cm by 13cm will be installed within any fence panels to create a hedgehog highway to interlink gardens and provide connectivity to the surrounding habitats. If concrete bases are required to secure any fences or boundary treatments a base panel/ gravel board with hedgehog holes will be installed.

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# Appendix 1

## Precautionary Method of Works (PMoW)

### Actions to be taken prior to the commencement of works

Prior to works commencing on the site, the following small mammal, amphibians and hedgehog Reasonable Avoidance Measures will be implemented. If works have not commenced on site by February 2025, an updated survey is advised to confirm the details of the PMW are still appropriate.

|   | Works                   | Methods  | Timing         | Person Responsible   | Person Required to carry out the work | Completed (Name, Company and Signature) |
|---|-------------------------|--|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Ecological Toolbox Talk | Talk to site operatives and contractors explaining amphibian, hedgehog and badger ecology, responsibilities and work methods. The initial talk to be given by the ECoW / Ecologist and subsequent talks to be given by the Environmental Champion. | Prior to works | Main site contractor | ECoW/<br>Ecologist                    |   |

|   | Works   | Methods  | Timing         | Person Responsible                 | Person Required to carry out the work | Completed (Name, Company and Signature) |
|---|---|--|----------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 2 | The vegetation clearance will be undertaken in two stages under ecological supervision. | The vegetation clearance will be undertaken at a slow walking pace and using directional clearance from the centre of the site to the boundaries. This directional cutting applies to all habitats cleared in daytime air temperatures above 5°C. Works must be avoided in cold temperatures or if prior overnight temperatures have been less than 1°C. The cut material is to be chipped and placed in discrete piles outside the working areas or removed from the site. Where this is not possible, cut vegetation is to be chipped and spread thinly across the site as instructed by the ECoW. | Prior to works | Developer/<br>Main site contractor | Ecologist                             |   |

|   | Works   | Methods   | Timing         | Person Responsible                 | Person Required to carry out the work | Completed (Name, Company and Signature) |
|---|---|---|----------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 3 | Hand search for the area for any small mammals, amphibians or hedgehogs | Following the cutting of the vegetation a hand search of the area will be undertaken, If any hedgehogs, amphibians or badger are found, they will be removed by the approved accredited agent to suitable habitat within the local area.              | Prior to works | Developer/<br>Main site contractor | Ecologist                             |   |
| 4 | The cut material is to be chipped and placed in discrete piles.         | The cut material is to be chipped and placed in discrete piles outside the working areas or removed from the site. Where this is not possible, cut vegetation is to be chipped and spread thinly across the site as instructed by the Ecologist.      | Prior to works | Main site contractor               | Main contractor                       |   |
| 5 | Utilise existing tracks to access the site.                             | Existing tracks should be utilised for vehicle movements where possible. Where new vehicle routes or tracks are required, the Ecologist will recommend on appropriate measures to be undertaken prior to vegetation clearance for track construction. | Prior to works | Main site contractor               | Main contractor                       |   |

### Actions to be taken during the construction phase

The following Measures will be implemented during the construction phase:

| Works                                  | Methods  | Timing and Frequency                             | Person Responsible   | Person Required to carry out the work | Completed (Name, Company and Signature) |
|--|--|--|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Monitoring/<br>site inspections        | All protective fencing and exclusion barriers will be checked weekly and repaired where necessary.<br><br>The protective buffers will be walked weekly, and any signs of protected species will be reported to the ECoW. | Throughout construction/<br>weekly               | Main site contractor | Main contractor                       |   |
| Excavation of Trenches                 | All steep-sided excavations will be covered overnight or fitted with ramps to prevent any hedgehogs from getting trapped within them; these will be checked to make sure they are in place at the end of each day.       | Throughout Construction/<br>daily as appropriate | Main site contractor | Main contractor                       |   |
| Pipe work                              | Any exposed open pipe systems will be capped to prevent and hedgehogs gaining access. These will be checked to make sure they are in place at the end of each day.   | Throughout Construction/<br>daily as appropriate | Main site contractor | Main contractor                       |   |
| Water Sources                          | Water sources will always be safeguarded.  | Throughout construction                          | Main site contractor | Main contractor                       |   |
| Fires and Chemicals                    | Fires and chemicals will not be used within 20 metres of suitable hibernacula features.  | Throughout construction                          | Main site contractor | Main contractor                       |   |
| Pile driving, Loud Noise and Vibration | No pile driving will take place within 100m of suitable hibernacula features. Disturbances, such as loud noise or vibrations, that might agitate hibernating small mammal, amphibians and hedgehogs.                     | Throughout construction                          | Main site contractor | Main contractor                       |   |

| Works                     | Methods   | Timing and Frequency    | Person Responsible | Person Required to carry out the work | Completed (Name, Company and Signature) |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Consideration to wildlife | Staff will remain vigilant throughout works. Should any protected species be encountered during the works, works will cease and advice will be sought immediately from the appointed Ecologist. | Throughout construction | All site staff     | All staff                             |   |

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# Appendix 2

