

Summerfield
Tauntfield
South Road
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 3ND

Attention of Richard Mead

Our ref: P398/HT/2000/12
20 July 2012

Dear Richard

**Preliminary Baseline Letter Report
Liddymoor Road, Watchet**

I am writing to provide our ecological review for the proposed development site at Liddymoor Road, Watchet. I have appended a Designated Sites Plan and Phase 1 Habitat Plan (including target notes), both of which should be read as part of the review.

Ecological value of site

Designations

There are no statutory designated sites within or immediately adjacent to the site boundary. The nearest statutory site is Blue Anchor to Lillstock Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which lies 0.55km to the north and has been designated for its geological interest; refer to attached Designations Plan. The nearest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is Exmoor and Quantock Oakwood, which lies approximately 6km to the east. This has been designated for its woodland and barbastelle bat population. West Somerset Council has set up a Bat Consultation Zone to protect suitable foraging and commuting habitat potentially used by the bats roosting within this SAC. The site is approximately 1.1km to the north of this zone. The nearest non-statutory designated site is Mount Fields Local Wildlife Site (LWS), which is approximately 60m to the northwest of the site boundary. This has been designated for its complex of scrub, unimproved calcareous grassland and broadleaved plantation woodland.

Habitat and species within site boundary

The site consisted predominantly of improved grassland fields bordered by fences and hedgerows (species-rich and species-poor). Hedgerows are a UK BAP Priority. A stream ran through the northern part of the site; streams are a UK BAP Priority Habitat.

The stream provided potential habitat for otter and water vole, which are both legally protected and UK BAP Priority Species. The stream, grassland and hedgerows provided foraging habitat for bats. Hedgerows also provided nesting/foraging habitat for hazel dormouse and birds. Bats, hazel dormouse and nesting birds are legally protected; hazel dormouse and several bat and bird species are also UK BAP Species.

The grassland and hedgebanks provided potential foraging habitat for badger. However, no setts were recorded during the survey.

No breeding habitat occurred for amphibians within the site boundary although a pond is present approximately 95m to the east of the site. As great crested newts readily move up to 250m from a breeding site, it is possible that the species could be present within terrestrial habitat within the site boundary e.g. grassland and hedgerow. Great crested newt is legally protected and is a UK BAP Priority Species. Grassland and hedgerows also provided potential habitat for reptiles e.g. slow-worm, common lizard and grass snake. All three species are legally protected and are UK BAP Species.

Surrounding habitats

The site was bounded to the south and east by pasture fields and to the west and north by residential development. A complex of farm buildings occurred approximately 15m to the east of the site boundary and some of these buildings had potential to support roosting bats and barn owl. A pond occurred approximately 95m to the east of the site.

Suitability for development

There are no over-riding ecological constraints to the development of the site. No designated sites of nature conservation value would be affected by the development proposals. The key ecological constraints to the development of the site relate to the following habitats and protected/notable species:

- Potential presence of 'important' hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
- Potential habitat for hazel dormouse;
- Potential habitat for otter and water vole;
- Potential foraging habitat for bats;
- Potential habitat for badgers;
- Potential foraging habitat for notable birds (including barn owl); and
- Potential basking, foraging and hibernation habitat for other reptiles and amphibians, potentially including great crested newt.

Further ecological survey is recommended for the above species to inform the development layout and ecological impact assessment; refer to 'Recommendations' below. It is considered that potential adverse effects could be mitigated through the careful design of the development layout and/or further species-specific mitigation measures e.g. timing of vegetation removal; zoning and fencing of areas during construction; and movement of species outside of the areas of development.

Recommendations for ecological inputs for a planning submission

The following ecological surveys are recommended to inform further the development design and ecological impact assessment.

Recommended survey	Survey period
Hedgerow survey according to the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (as amended)	Single survey visit between May – June 2013
Great crested newt survey	Inspection of ponds within 250m of the site boundary at any stage between July 2012 and February 2013 to determine suitability for species (HSI Assessment); only possible if landowner access obtained. If suitable, minimum of four surveys of ponds undertaken between mid-March and mid-June 2013; two of the surveys to be undertaken between mid-April to mid-May 2013.
Reptile survey	Seven survey visits at any stage between April – September 2013.
Breeding bird survey	Three breeding bird survey visits between April -June 2013.
Hazel dormouse survey	Five survey visits between April – September 2013.
Water vole survey	Single survey undertaken at any stage between May and September 2013.
Otter survey	Single survey to be undertaken at the same time as the water vole survey to minimise costs.
Badger survey (including 30m outside of the site boundary wherever possible)	Single survey visit undertaken anytime.
Bat activity and static detector surveys	Four manual and automated surveys undertaken between May - September 2013.

An ecological impact assessment should be produced following guidelines provided by IEEM, 2006 and should comprise the following:

- Baseline ecological information for the site and immediate surrounds;
- Assessment of effects of the proposed development;
- Mitigation measures for adverse effects; and
- Residual effects.

Consultation should be undertaken with West Somerset Council to confirm the scope of the further ecological surveys, the approach to the ecological impact assessment and the proposed development layout. The ecological impact assessment should be submitted with the planning application for the development of the site. Based on the above survey programme, a report could be produced at the end of September 2013; this date could potentially be brought forward should some of the surveys be undertaken e.g. some of the bat and hazel dormouse surveys.

Fee

Our proposed fees for the completion of the above are provided below; all fees are exclusive of VAT and expenses.

Survey	Fee (£)
Hedgerow survey; one ecologist	320.00
Great crested newt (HSI inspection)* ¹ ; two ecologists	320.00
Reptile survey; one ecologist	1,600.00
Breeding bird survey; one ecologist	660.00
Hazel dormouse survey; one ecologist	1,600.00
Otter, water vole and badger survey; two ecologists	360.00
Bat surveys – activity surveys; two ecologists	1,600.00
Bat surveys- static detector survey	520.00
Ecological Impact Assessment and Analysis	3200.00
Consultation; desk-based based and one meeting	685.00
Design inputs; desk-based and one team meeting	635.00
Total	11500.00

*¹ Further proposal to be provided if additional survey for great crested newt required in March-June 2013.

Thank you once again for commissioning us to undertake the ecological review. If you would like to discuss any of the above or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

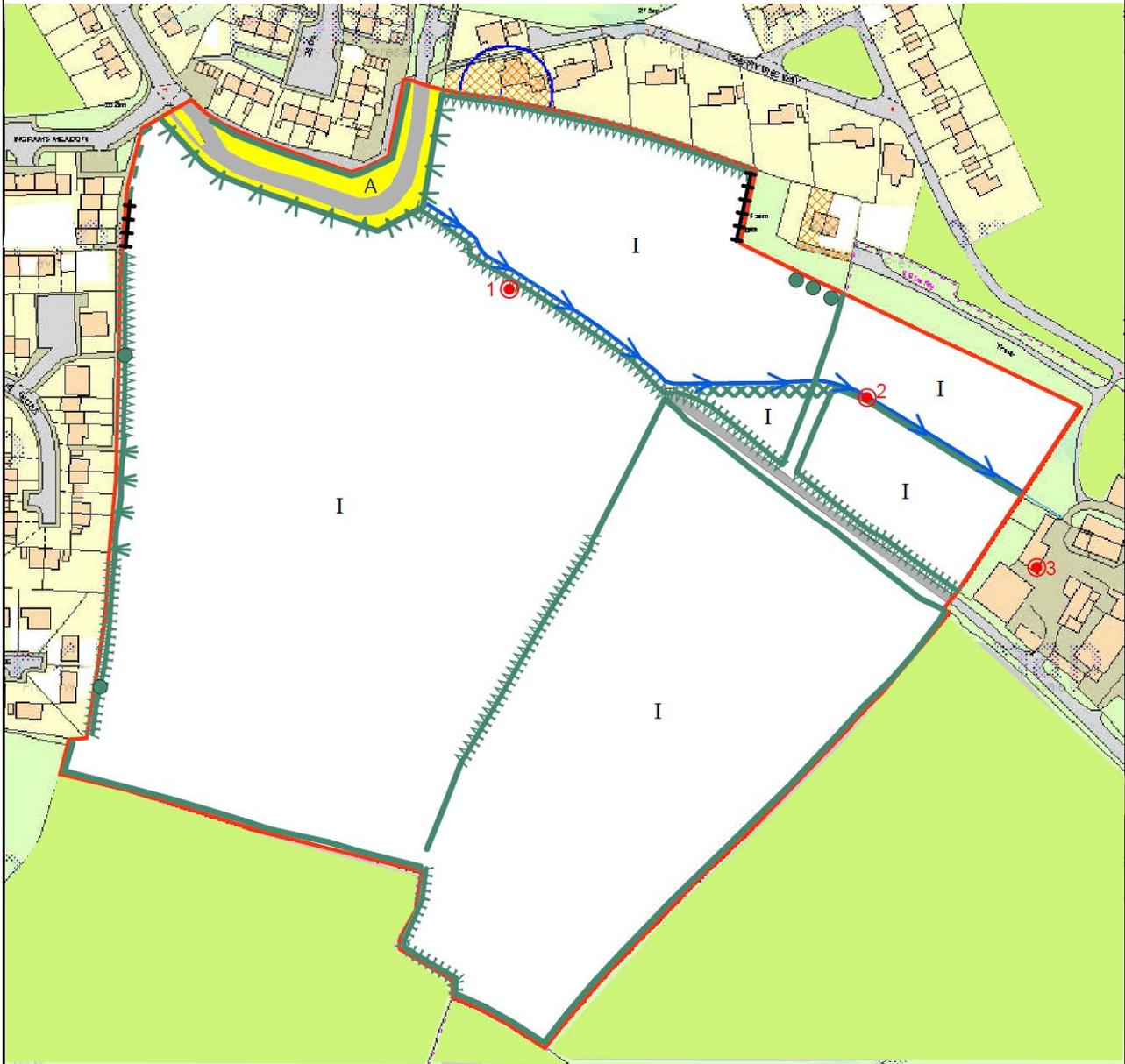


Matt Jones
 Director
 BSc MSc MIEEM CEnv
 Enc: Designated Sites Plan
 Phase 1 Plan & Target Notes

Target notes	
1	Several ivy clad dead elms; cracks and crevices likely higher up tree (Category 2, BCT 2012)
2	50cm wide stream, 20cm deep at the time of survey with earth banks. Partly overgrown with hemlock water-dropwort, fool's watercress with occasional Himalayan balsam.
3	Off-site farm complex with potential to support roosting bats and barn owl
4	



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Key

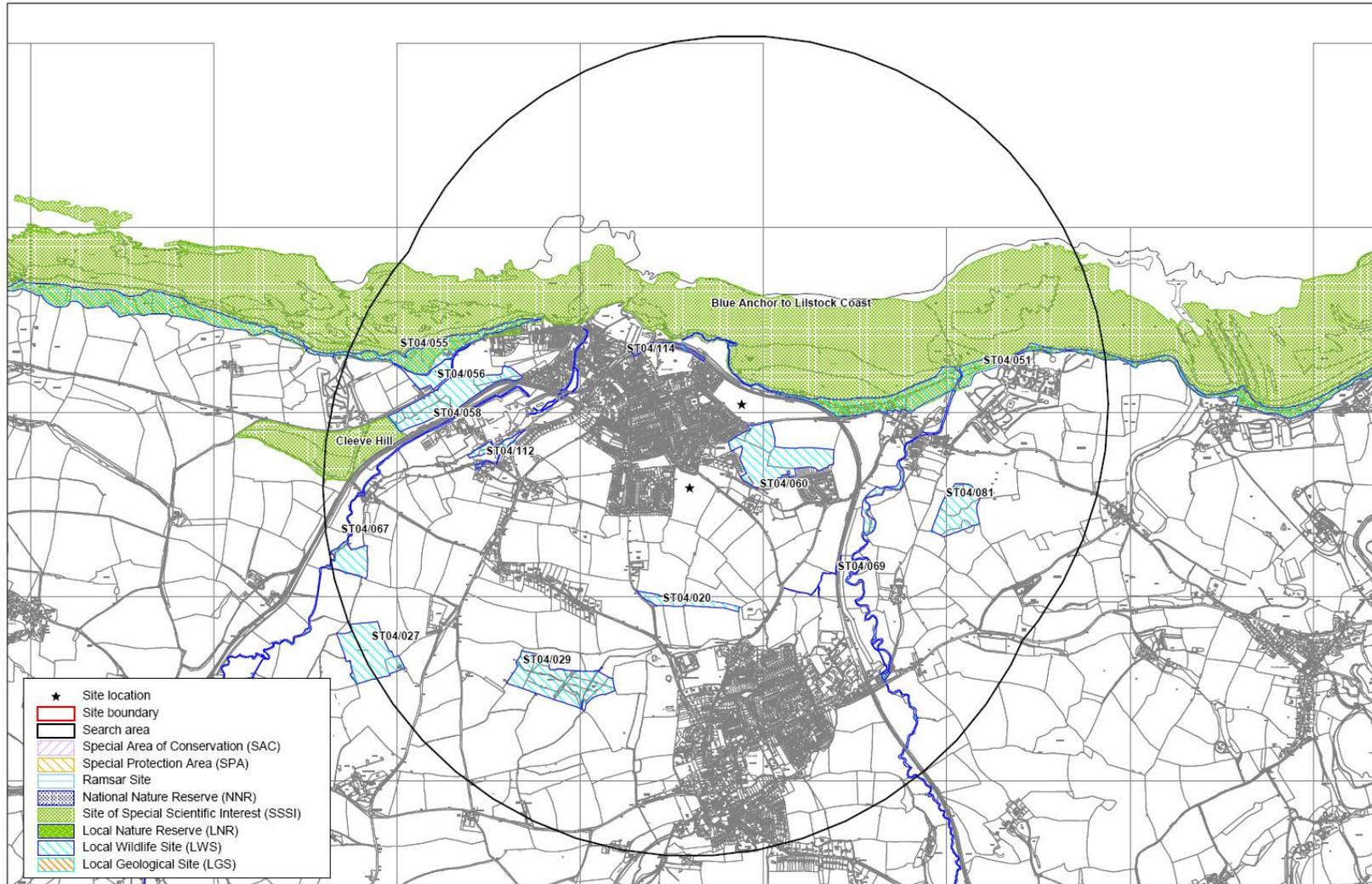
Amenity grassland	Mature tree	Species-rich hedgerow with trees
Defunct hedgerow	Scrub hedge	Stream
Fence	Species-poor hedgerow	Survey boundary
Hardstanding	Species-poor hedgerow with trees	Target note
Improved grassland	Species-rich hedgerow	



Summerfield Developments

Liddymore Farm, Watchet

Phase 1 Habitat Plan



Evaluated Sites found within search area: 2km buffer around sites at ST 077 428

For EAD Ltd July 2012

Job no: 2194

Client ref: Liddymoor farm and Doniford road





Evaluated Site Details

Date: 09/07/2012
Client: EAD Ltd
Job number: 2194
Project name: Liddymoor farm and Doniford road, Watchet
Location: Watchet
Search Area: 2 km around sites at ST 077 428

Refer to accompanying Sites Map for locations

Evaluated sites with statutory designations recorded within the area of search:

Grid Ref	Name	Status
ST146446	Blue Anchor to Lilstock Coast	SSSI
ST056428	Cleeve Hill	SSSI

Evaluated sites with non-statutory designations, Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and/or Local Geological Sites (LGS), recorded within the area of search:

File Code	Name	Description	Status	Criteria ¹
ST04/051	Blue Anchor to Lilstock Cliff	Coastal cliffs, with unimproved calcareous grassland and scrub habitats from Blue Anchor to Lilstock.	LWS	H3.2, S1.2
ST04/055	Daws Castle	Unimproved neutral grassland and scrub.	LWS	H3.2
ST04/069	Doniford Stream	Stream with key protected species.	LWS	S3.1
ST04/081	Rydon Hill	Mosaic of scrub, semi-improved and unimproved calcareous grassland on westfacing slope.	LWS	H3.2
ST04/020	Lappersham	Unimproved and semi-improved grassland with high diversity of species.	LWS	5H2.1
ST04/027	Furzy Ground Plantation	Semi-natural broadleaved woodland on tithe-map woodland site.	LWS	H2.3
ST04/029	Outmoor Wood	A substantial block of ancient (tithe-map) semi-natural broadleaved woodland occupying level but rather wet-lying ground.	LWS	5H1.1
ST04/114	Watchet Station	Station and adjacent trackside areas with Somerset notable vascular plant species.	LWS	5S1.2

Evaluated Site Details

File Code	Name	Description	Status	Criteria ¹
ST04/056	Minster Field Road Verge	Species-rich, unimproved calcareous road verge.	LWS	H3.2
ST04/058	Tuck's Brake	Ancient broadleaved woodland and species-rich unimproved calcareous grassland.	LWS	H2.2, H3.2
ST04/060	Mount Fields	Complex of scrub, unimproved calcareous grassland and broadleaved plantation woodland.	LWS	5H2.1, 5H8.1, 5S1.2, 5S3.3.1
ST04/112	The Coach House	Hazel in garden and nearby associated scrub with legally protected species.	LWS	5S3.3.1
ST04/067	Washford River	River with indicators of high biological quality.	LWS	H6.3.2.3

¹Criteria– Reasons for Selection for Local Wildlife Sites

Refer to:
Guidelines for the selection of County Wildlife Sites in Somerset - 1991
CountyWildlifeSiteGuidelines1991.pdf <http://www.somerc.com/downloads>

For code prefixed by '5' refer to:
County Wildlife Site Selection Guidelines (Somerset) Version 5.4 August 1997, criteria for designation.
CountyWildlifeSiteGuidelinesV54.pdf <http://www.somerc.com/downloads>

The following three Local Wildlife Sites are located within 500 m of the two sites. Please see enclosed site files.

File Code	Name	Description
ST04/060	Mount Fields	Complex of scrub, unimproved calcareous grassland and broadleaved plantation woodland.
ST04/051	Blue Anchor to Lilstock Cliff	Coastal cliffs, with unimproved calcareous grassland and scrub habitats from Blue Anchor to Lilstock.
ST04/114	Watchet Station	Station and adjacent trackside areas with Somerset notable vascular plant species.