Woodland Management Plan

Brooklands College, Weybridge

Ecosupport Ltd
K4 Keppel,
Daedalus Park,
Lee-on-the-Solent
PO13 9FX

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Report	Woodland Management Plan
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Client	Cala Homes Ltd
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background & Relevant Policies

Ecosupport Ltd has been instructed by Cala Homes (Thames) Ltd to prepare an updated Woodland Management Plan to satisfy both Condition 44 of planning permission 2023/1359 and the associated s106 Agreement. Condition 44 states:

*"*Prior to first occupation of any part of the residential element, a woodland management strategy have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local authority. Details must include long term objectives of at least 20 years, management responsibilities, restoration and enhancement measures, and invasive plant species eradication / preventative measures (as set in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as Amended)) for all woodland sites. The woodland management thereafter shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*"*

In addition to the creation of a SANG area comprising of an area of mixed woodland habitat situated along the site's western boundary (see Framework SANG Management Plan) adjacent to the Brooklands College development site, additional woodland parcels situated beyond the scope of the SANG are also present along the sites northern, eastern and southern boundaries (Fig 1). The proposals allow for the retention of woodland within the site, with development proposals including measures to safeguard the woodland habitat by providing appropriate buffers and other safeguards. In addition, it is proposed to bring all of the woodland retained within the red line boundary under favourable woodland management.

This Framework Woodland Management Plan will be updated with additional information related to the ongoing management of this feature prior to commencement of development.

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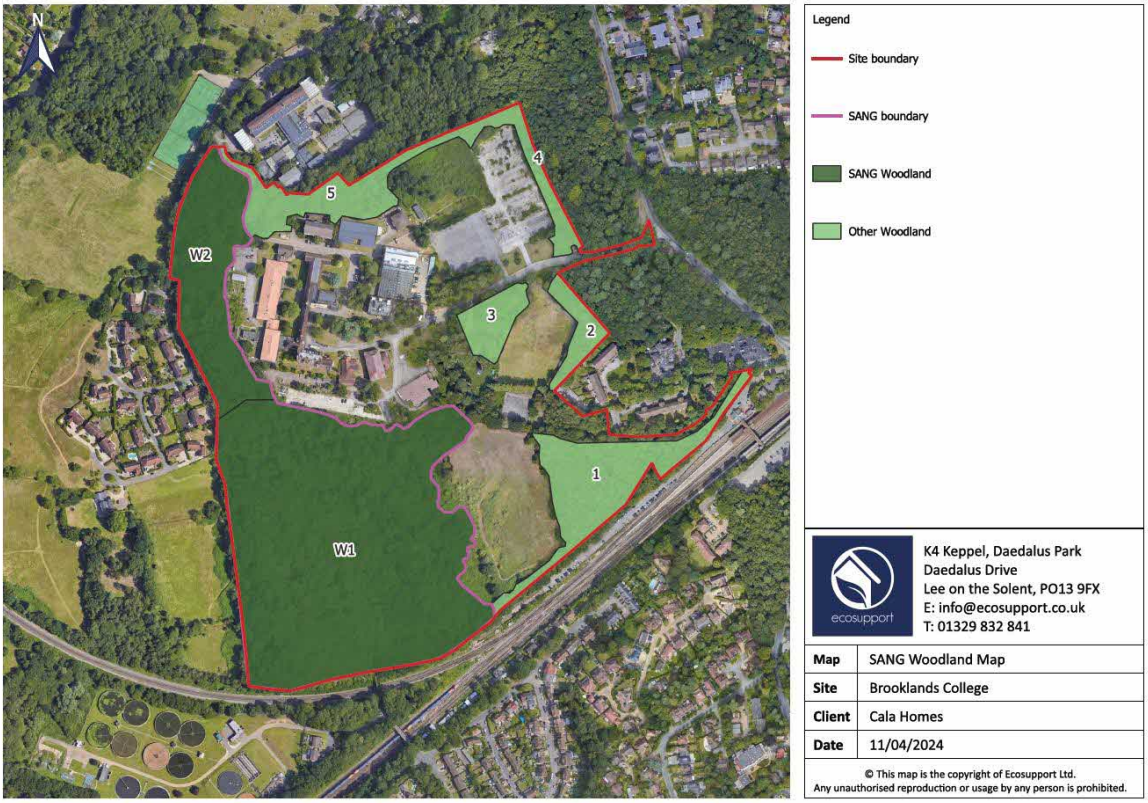
Figure 1. Map of the site with approximate redline boundary provided with the approximate extent of the area of woodland parcels beyond the scope of the SANG within the wider site boundary.



1.2 Objectives

The initial baseline assessments relevant to this report were undertaken by Aspect Ecology in February 2019, February 2021 and June 2022, with an updated site assessment undertaken by Ecosupport Ltd in February, 2024 This report has incorporated the recommendations from the 'Ecological Baseline' (Aspect Ecology, 2023) and the 'SANG and Woodland Management Plan' (Aspect Ecology, 2023) which were submitted as part of the development application.

The following objectives are considered for this report in order to prepare an ecologically sensitive management strategy:

1. To enhance and preserve existing habitat to provide the greatest benefit to wildlife;
2. To manage potentially sensitive ecological receptors such as roosting/foraging bats and Badgers;
3. To protect and enhance woodland habitat both within the site;
4. To create and maintain new habitat features for bats, invertebrates, mammals and birds;
5. Achieve net gain through the enhancement of mixed woodland habitat in 'moderate' condition to broadleaf woodland in 'good' condition;
6. To detail management responsibilities and practices.

The management outlined within this report includes the following:

- Establishment of capital works;
- Thinning/ removal of non-native species;
- Identification and management of dead, dangerous and dying trees (DDD) that pose a risk to public health and safety;
- Management and removal of non-native invasive species;
- Creation of native mixed scrub and woodland;
- Creation of native hedgerow.

The proposed management prescriptions will also take into the account and implement the objectives and recommendations outlined within the associated 'Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment' (Aspect Ecology, 2023) report for the Brooklands College site. Within this document the following recommendations regarding the management of the woodland is outlined below in Table 1 :

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Table 1. Reproduction of Table 4.2 from the 'Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment' (Aspect Ecology, 2023) outlining the recommended post-development habitat enhancements to achieve net-gain within the wider Brooklands College scheme.

Habitat	Target Condition	Condition Rationale
Woodland – Other woodland mixed to Woodland – Other woodland; broadleaved	Moderate - Good	Retained areas of mixed woodland at the site will be subject to ecologically sensitive management prescriptions in order to maximise diversity and value for wildlife. This will include the removal of non-native conifer species and the re-establishment of more native broad-leaved species. It is therefore assessed that the woodland will be enhanced to other woodland; broadleaved of good condition

1.3 Site Location & Description

The Brooklands College site is located to the south-east of the town of Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 8TT (centered on grid reference TQ 07119 63778) (Fig 2). The site is bounded by Network Rail owned land (railway) to the south, with The Heath SINC situated adjacent to the site's eastern boundary. A small residential development is situated along as section of the site's western boundary, with a mixture of amenity/rough grassland habitat situated either side of the development. The northern boundary comprises of a mixture of woodland, residential development and commercial properties. The wider environ comprises predominantly of urban infrastructure with the settlements of Weybridge, Byfleeet and Addlestone surrounding the site, with open countryside supporting the River Wey situated beyond the sites western boundary. The site comprises of a number of buildings associated with the Brooklands College Weybridge campus in addition to areas of hardstanding and amenity grassland which are surrounded by a sizable area of woodland habitat.

In addition to the SANG area that comprises of an area of mixed woodland habitat situated along the site's western boundary, additional woodland parcels of mixed woodland habitat situated beyond the scope of the SANG are also present along the sites northern, eastern and southern boundaries which are the focus of this woodland management plan (Fig 1).

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2.0 BASELINE DATA

2.1 Habitats

An updated walkover visit was undertaken by Ecosupport Ltd 15th February 2024 following surveys undertaken by Aspect Ecology in February 2019, February 2021 and June 2022. The habitats on site were considered to be broadly similar to those identified within the Ecological Baseline report (Aspect Ecology, 2023) :

2.1.1 Woodland Compartment 1 – w1h Other Woodland; Mixed (30 – Semi-natural woodland, 524 – Invasive non-native species)

"The canopy in compartment 1 is dominated by Sweet Chestnut (Castanea sativa), together with frequent Silver Birch (Betula pendula) and occasional English Oak (Quercus robur). Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus), Beech (Fagus sylvatica) and Scots Pine (Pinus sylvestris) were also recorded. Nonnative trees include Cherry Laurel (Prunus laurocerasus) and False-acacia (Robinia pseudoacacia). The understory is once again dominated by Rhododendron (Rhododendron sp.), particularly towards the south of the compartment, with occasional small areas dominated by Holly (Ilex aquifolium) or Cherry Laurel. Bracken is relatively abundant in the ground layer. Small Balsam (Impatiens parviflora) is occasional within C2 but locally abundant. A range of other non-native herb species are present, including the invasive Montbretia Crocosmia x crocosmiflora, Few-flowered Garlic (Allium paradoxum) and Green Alkanet (Pentaglottis sempervirens). A Bamboo species (Bambusoidea) was also recorded." (Fig 2)

Figure 2. Image showing a section of woodland compartment 1 taken along the eastern boundary facing south (March, 2024)

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2.1.2 Woodland Compartment 2 - w1h Other Woodland; Mixed (30 – Semi-natural woodland, 524 – Invasive non-native species)

"Compartment 2 is dominated by Holly, which casts a heavy shade such that a herb layer is largely absent, with only occasional Ivy (Hedera helix) recorded. Occasional English Oak, Scots Pine and Sycamore were also recorded. Rhododendron is again prominent, while non-native trees include Coast Redwood (Sequoia sempervirens), occasional Juneberry (Amelanchier lamarckii) and Cherry Laurel. A single, small Strawberry-tree (Arbutus unedo) is present on the northern edge of the compartment, close to the main entrance to the campus. Where compartment 2 adjoins the off-site built development, a number of naturalised garden plants were recorded, including a dense area of Greater Periwinkle (Vinca major), together with occasional Butterfly-bush (Buddleja davidii)."

2.1.3 Woodland Compartment 3 - w1h Other Woodland; Mixed (30 – Semi-natural woodland, 524 – Invasive non-native species)

"Compartment 3 comprises an area of mature trees over grassland close to the centre of the campus and bisected by the main road to the college buildings. Tree species include frequent Sweet Chestnut and English Oak together with occasional Sycamore and Silver Birch, with a variety of non-native species including Cypress (Chamaecyparis sp.) and a number of Wellingtonia, Flowering Cherry (Prunus sp.), Maples (Acer sp.) and - Horse Chestnut (Aesculus hippocastanum), whilst Rhododendron is occasional. The trees within compartment 3 grow over an area of short-sward acid grassland, with Common Bent (Agrostis capillaris) dominant and Squirrel-tail (Fescue Vulpia bromoides) and Sheep's Fescue (Festuca ovina) prominent among the grasses, while herb species include Early Forget-me-not (Myosotis ramosissima), Bird's-foot (Ornithopus perpusillus), Slender Parsley-piert (Aphanes australis), Sheep's Sorrel (Rumex acetosella), Little Mouse-ear (Cerastium semidecandrum), Buck's-horn Plantain (Plantago coronopus) and Common Stork's-bill (Erodium cicutarium). A variety of other herb species were recorded including Bluebell, Bugle (Ajuga reptans), Cuckoo-flower (Cardamine pratensis), Cowslip (Primula veris), Green Alkanet and garden Daffodil, although none of these were more than occasional within the sward." (Fig 3)

Figure 3. Image showing a section of woodland compartment 3, taken from along the eastern boundary facing north-east (March, 2024)

2.1.4 Woodland Compartment 4 - w1h Other Woodland; Mixed (30 – Semi-natural woodland, 524 – Invasive non-native species)

*"*The canopy layer largely comprises English Oak and Sycamore, with occasional Sweet Chestnut, Willow (Salix sp.), a Cedar of Lebanon (Cedrus libani) and occasional other conifers. Smaller trees and shrubs include Goat Willow (Salix caprea), Rowan (Sorbus aucuparia), Holly, Bird Cherry (Prunus padus), Yew (Taxus baccata), Butterfly-bush, Rhododendron and Elder (Sambucus nigra). The herb layer is relatively diverse, with some areas of the narrow strip being relatively lightly shaded, but no species of elevated ecological value were noted. Bluebell was rare but locally abundant. Non-native species are again relatively prominent, with Small Balsam and Few-flowered Garlic both recorded.*"* (Fig 4)

Figure 4. Image showing a section of woodland compartment 4, taken from along the northern boundary facing south-west (March, 2024)

2.1.5 Woodland Compartment 5 - w1h Other Woodland; Mixed (30 – Semi-natural woodland, 524 – Invasive non-native species)

"At the south-western end of woodland compartment 5, trees are largely mature English Oak with occasional Sweet Chestnut, some of which may have been coppiced in the past, Silver Birch and non-native conifers. There is a small area of Rhododendron, plus Elder and Bramble (Rubus fruticosus agg.) but otherwise there is no understory and the herb layer comprises grassland supporting a range of species including some characteristic of acid or otherwise free-draining soils. Grassland species recorded include Sheep's Fescue, Rat's-tail Fescue (Vulpia myuros), Yorkshire Fog (Holcus Lanatus), Small Mouse-ear, Bird's foot Trefoil and Cat's-ear (Hypochaeris radicata). The canopy cover becomes denser to the north of woodland compartment 5 with abundant Holly forming the understorey and Sweet Chestnut and occasional Oak, Silver Birch and Scots Pine the canopy. Sycamore and Beech were also recorded. The herb layer is once again either absent or dominated by Small Balsam. Further east, Bracken appears, together with Nettle and occasional Garlic Mustard (Alliaria petiolate), but Small Balsam remains common.

2.2 Existing Fauna

2.2.1 Reptiles

2.2.1.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC returned 5 records of common reptile species from within 2 km of the site, comprising of Grass Snake (Natrix helvetica) (3) and Adder (Vipera berus) (3). The closest record was located approximately 1.08km south of the site, within the grounds of Brooklands SINC located to the east of the site.

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2.2.1.2 Site Assessment

Surveys undertaken by Aspect Ecology between May and June 2022 identified a low population of Slow Worm (Anguis fragilis) present along the northern and eastern woodland edges of the woodland associated with the SANG area and along the western boundary of woodland parcel 2 (Fig 1).

2.2.2 Bats

2.2.2.1 Pre-existing Information

The data request from SBIC returned the following records within 2km of the site (Table 4)

Table 4. List of Bat records within 2 km of the site (SBIC, 2024)

Taxon Name	Species Name	Number of Records	Distance & Direction to nearest record
Plecotus auritus	Brown Long-eared Bat	15	0.13km North
Pipistrellus pipistrellus	Common Pipistrelle	22	0.76km South
Myotis spp.	Myotis Bat species	9	0km (Along the sites eastern boundary)
Nyctalus noctula	Noctule Bat	17	0.97km North - East
Pipistrellus spp.	Pipistrelle Bat species	5	0.56km East
Eptesicus serotinus	Serotine	9	0km (Along the sites eastern boundary)
Nyctalus leisleri	Lesser Noctule	2	0.9km East
Pipistrellus pygmaeus	Soprano Pipistrelle	24	1.05km East
Barbastelle barbastellus	Western Barbastelle	1	1.85km South-East
Myotis daubentonii	Daubenton's Bat	3	0.87km South - East

2.2.2.2 Site Assessment

Aspect Ecology undertook a suite of activity transects alongside automated static detector deployments between April to October 2022. During this period the majority of bat registrations were recorded both within and along the boundary of the south-western woodland parcels within the SANG area, with Soprano Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pygmaeus) representing the most frequently recorded species within the site (accounting for approximately 63% of all registrations recorded across the site). Common Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus), Myotis species, Nathusius' Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus nathusii) (single registration recorded in August), Serotine (Eptesicus serotinus) and Noctule bat (Nyctalus noctula) were also recorded during the survey period. Within the woodland parcels situated beyond the SANG area, the highest levels of bat activity were recorded within parcels 5 and 4 along the northern boundary of the site.

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It is anticipated that a ground level truth assessment (GLTA) will be undertaken of all trees to be impacted by the works following the completion of the 'Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Preliminary Method Statement' provided by RPS (2023) (Plan Ref: JSL4446_720). It is intended that this updated assessment will ultimately from an appendix to this report. Whilst the majority of the woodland habitat will be retained on site, it is anticipated that some small areas will require removal/ thinning to facilitate development works with the largest proposed area of impact taking place between woodland parcels 1 and 2.

2.2.3 Nesting Birds

2.2.3.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC provided a number of records of birds within 2km of the site boundary, including a number of red listed species which includes (relevant species to the site); Fieldfare (Turdus pilaris), Mistle Thrush (Turdus viscivorus), Kestrel (Falco tinnunculus), Starling (Sturnus vulgaris), Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (Dryobates minor), Greenfinch (Carduelis chlois) and House Martin (Delichon urbica).

2.2.3.2 Site Assessment

Breeding bird surveys were undertaken by Aspect Ecology in April, May and June 2022. During this period a total of 30 species of bird were recorded across the site, with 24 considered likely to be breeding within the site. The majority of breeding bird activity recorded was associated with the woodland habitat on site, with notable species recorded including Mistle Thrush (Turdus viscovorus), Wren (Troglodytes troglodytes) and Song Thrush (Turdus philomelos).

2.2.4 Hazel Dormice

2.2.4.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC returned no records of Hazel Dormouse (Muscardinus avellanarius) from within 2km of the site boundary.

2.2.4.2 Site Assessment

The woodland, hedgerow and scrub habitats identified within the site were assessed as suitable to support Dormice, with subsequent nest tube surveys undertaken in 2022 by Aspect Ecology. No evidence of dormice was identified during this period, and as such Dormice are considered to be likely absent for the site.

2.2.5 Badger

2.2.5.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC returned no records of Badger (Meles meles) from within 2km of the site boundary.

2.2.5.2 Site Assessment

An updated Badger survey was undertaken by Aspect Ecology in June 2022. No Badger setts or associated activity (i.e. latrines, dung pits, snuffles holes etc.) was noted within or immediately adjacent to the site during this visit, with a small number of mammal runs identified throughout the woodland. An updated Badger survey was undertaken by Ecosupport on 15th February 2024.

One sett comprising of at least five entrances was recorded within an area of Bracken habitat, along the eastern boundary of the SANG, with a second potential sett comprising of two entrances located within another area of Bracken habitat situated to the south of this location. Whilst no evidence of recent excavation was noted, five of the seven entrances were largely clear of vegetation which may indicate recent use, with well used tracks through the Bracken leading to the woodland to west and to the grassland to the east also noted. Based on the size of setts and the observed level of use, it is considered that this sett would likely be initially characterized as either a main or annex sett, with the southern sett likely a subsidiary or outlier sett (Further surveys are currently being undertaken at the time of writing which will provide further information regarding the level of use and provide an accurate classification).

Two additional setts were also identified within the northern section of the proposed SANG, with evidence of recent foraging and a used latrine also noted. Based on the size of these setts and the observed level of use, it is considered that these setts would likely be initially both characterized as either subsidiary or outlier setts (Further surveys would be required to determine the level of use and provide an accurate classification).

N.B. Due to the confidential nature of these records, the location maps for the setts have not been included within this report. These can be found within the appended 'Badger Sett Location Maps' document.

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3.0 VISITOR ACCESS STRATEGY

The chapter outlines the key elements which control the visitor access for the woodland and how they have a direct effect on visitor recreation.

3.1 Pedestrian and Cycle Access

The woodland currently has no provision of public access, with access to the woodland restricted to users of the Brooklands College educational facility. Existing vehicle access to the campus is via Old Heath Road to the east of site, with another access road which cuts through a section of the woodland to the north situated off Brooklands Lane which runs along the western boundary of the site.

There is an existing hardstanding path along the northern boundary of woodland compartment 1 which leads to Caenwood Close to the east of the site. This will be expanded alongside local clearance of woodland habitat to incorporate an access road to newly created residential dwellings (Fig 5). The eastern portion of this area will be enhanced through the application of a self-binding gravel surface. A pre-existing informal woodland footpath will also be further established running along the southern boundary of this woodland compartment.

Figure 5. Location of the proposed pedestrian access walkways within woodland compartment 1 (Define, 2023, Drawing No DE499_PL_213).

A tarmac surface for use as a footpath/ cycleway will also be incorporated along the northern boundary of woodland compartment 5 (Fig 6) which will link the footpath running through the north-eastern portion of the development and the proposed formalization of the access route

cutting through the eastern parcel of woodland compartment 4 which is already utilized by students of the campus facility.

Figure 6. Location of the proposed pedestrian/cycle access along the northern boundary of woodland compartment 5 (Define, 2023, Drawing No DE499_PL_213).

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4.0 SPECIES SPECIFIC MITIGATION & ENHANCEMENTS

The following chapter addresses the species-specific mitigation that will be included within the proposed woodland management to provide appropriate protection and habitat enhancements for species found within the site.

4.1 Habitats

4.1.1 Arboricultural Fencing (Protection of Woodland, Hedgerows and Trees)

The woodland and trees will be retained will be protected from damage during the adjacent development works using the methods outlined within the 'Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Preliminary Method Statement' provided by RPS (Plan Ref: JSL4446_720, 2023). For trees/ shrubs beyond the boundary of the development within the woodland areas, these will be protected using the methods outlined within an appropriate tree protection plan once a suitable arboricultural impact assessment has been undertaken.

This will also provide protection for wildlife species that may be using the woodland as well as the margins of the site including bats, birds, invertebrates and other mammals.

No vehicles will enter the protective ring fencing and no materials will be stored beyond their circumference, access will only be granted with authorisation from the relevant LPA.

All protective fencing must be in place prior to any construction machinery arriving on site, before any works on site get underway, and will remain in place until all work is completed.

This will minimise the level of disturbance within the woodland, boundary habitat / buffer areas during the works and ensure the habitats and any wildlife species that may be using them are protected.

4.2 Reptiles & Amphibians

4.2.1 Sensitive Clearance of Suitable Habitat / Passive Dispersal

Suitable areas of reptile/ terrestrial amphibian habitat that will be impacted by management works (i.e. tree felling, footpaths) will adopt a precautionary approach. During the active season for reptiles and amphibians (April – September) suitable areas of grassland / scrub will undergo a strim and push exercise to encourage reptiles/ amphibians on the site to move away from the works area naturally. The habitat within the works area will be made unsuitable by strimming in temperatures above 12°C when reptiles/ amphibians are more mobile. The strimming will be carried out in a two strim cycle with the first cut to 15cm and the second to ground level. A period of at least 24hrs (were appropriate) will be observed between the first and second cuts to give any reptiles and amphibians a chance to leave the area of impact.

Any log / stone piles or features with potential to be used as reptile refugia will be carefully checked and removed by hand, under supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist.

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4.3 Bats

4.3.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment (Trees)

It is understood that that a number of trees within the woodland will likely require removal or remedial works (e.g. crown reduction), to facilitate development works and remove potential public health and safety risk to residents and users of areas of public open space. It is anticipated that an updated ground level truth assessment (GLTA) will be taken following a formal Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) of these trees that require removal/ remedial works. It is intended that this updated assessment will form an appended document to the management plan upon completion.

4.3.2 Further Survey Work (Trees)

Following a GLTA of any trees the arborist deems require removal as part of the development or delivery of the woodland management plan, considered to be classified as PRF-Is (Potential Roost Features - Individual) with stem diameters in excess of 50mm should be soft- felled following the inspection of potential features by a suitability qualified ecologist. If any cavities/crevices/voids that may support roosting bats are uncovered during works, the tree will require further assessment through endoscoping of potential features and felling under the supervision of a suitability qualified ecologist.

N.B. If any bats are encountered, works on the trees in question must cease and an ecologist must be contacted immediately.

As per best practice guidelines (Table 5), trees classified as PRF-M's (Potential Roost Features – Maternity) will require further close inspection aerial surveys to establish the presence / likely absence of roosting bats and to inform a detailed impact assessment with regards to roosting bats on site as necessary (NB if it is not feasible to climb any trees with PRF-Ms, then emergence surveys with the sue of Night Vision Aids (NVAs) will be an adequate substitute).

Table 5. Recommended approach to aerial inspection surveys for bats in trees (from Table 6.4 (BCT, 2023).

Type of Bat Activity	Approach to PRF-M aerial (close) inspection surveys
Pregnancy, nursey and mating	3 visits between May and September, with at least two in the period May to August (Spaced at least 3 weeks apart). Where access is not possible, these can be replaced by emergence surveys supported by NVAs.

Should bats be found to be roosting in the trees, mitigation measures will be required to reduce potential impacts, and mitigation/compensation features may be required. It may be necessary to apply for a European Protected Species license for works to proceed if bats are using the tree. Any necessary mitigation/compensation will be determined following the completion of the close inspection aerial surveys.

N.B. Advanced licensed bat survey techniques (ALBST) including trapping and radio-tracking may be considered more appropriate depending on the assessed suitability of the area of woodland and the number of trees that require management/ removal.

4.3.3 Enhancement Bat Boxes

In order to provide additional roosting opportunities for local bat populations, a number of bat boxes will be installed within the SANG area and surrounding woodland habitat. These will comprise of a total of 46No tree mounted bat boxes comprising of 35No 2F Schwegler Bat Box (Double Front Panel) and 16No 2FN Schwegler Bat Boxes (or similar if unavailable) (details of the proposed locations of these features is shown in the CEMP document).

4.4 Birds

4.4.1 Avoidance of Impacts to Nesting Birds

In order to avoid disturbance of nesting birds or damage to their nests, clearance of any vegetation will be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (typically March – August dependent on weather). If this is not possible, sections to be cleared should be thoroughly checked by a suitability qualified ecologist immediately prior to clearance. If any active nests are found they should be left undisturbed with a suitable buffer of vegetation (5m) until the nestlings have fledged.

4.4.2 Enhancement Bird Boxes

In order to provide additional nesting opportunities for local bird assemblages identified on site, and provide compensation for the loss of trees, scrub and unmanaged grassland within the adjacent development scheme, a number of bird boxes will be erected across both within the SANG and the areas of wider woodland habitat. A total of 46No tree mounted bird boxes erected within the woodland habitat across the site (predominantly within the SANG). These will comprise of a mixture of Vivara Pro Seville 32mm Woodstone nest boxes (15), Vivara Pro Seville 28mm Woodstone nest boxes (15) and Vivara Pro Barcelona Woodstone Open nest boxes (16). It is considered that the erection of nest boxes in trees and integrated within new buildings on site will provide compensation for the loss of trees, scrub and unmanaged grassland on site.

4.5 Badgers

4.5.1 Avoidance of Impacts to Badgers/Setts

A number of Badger setts have been identified within the SANG area located within the western portion of the site. With confirmed Badger activity identified within the site and potential for further setts to be present within the site, the following precautions should be taken: (As a general guideline, the following mitigation measures/ precautions should be taken when working within 30m of suspected Badger setts).

No heavy machinery should be used within 20m of any potential setts to avoid collapsing the setts and potentially trapping badgers.

All mammal holes should be left clear of any of the cut vegetation.

Trees within 20m of the potential setts should be soft felled to prevent the setts from collapsing and potentially trapping badgers.

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All works within 10 metres of the nearest sett entrance must be undertaken using hand tools only.

Chemicals and refueling within 20m of setts must be undertaken on spill mats and safety stored away from setts to avoid contamination.

If feasible to do so, scrub clearance must be avoided directly over the tops of the setts and close to sett entrances, with paths/ runs cleared of felled timber and scrub wherever possible.

Furthermore, due to the dense understory vegetation which limited access to sections of the woodland (and therefore there is potential for setts to have been missed) and the potential for setts to be created in interim period between the survey and the works, it is recommended that immediately prior to the commencement of works a walkover of the entire working area will be carried out by staff (or at least always ensuring 30m ahead of where machinery is operating / felling taking place has been checked). If any new mammal holes are noted, these will be subject to the same working precautions outlined above.

N.B. Due to the confidential nature of these records, the location maps for the setts have not been included within this report. These can be found within the appended 'Badger Sett Location Maps' document.

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5.0 IMPLEMENTATION – MANAGEMENT SCHEDULES

This section includes details on how capital and habitat management works will be carried out and managed to facilitate recreational use and achieve long-term biodiversity improvement.

5.1 Management Responsibilities

The management responsibilities associated with the woodland within the Brooklands College site are in the process of being transferred to a third-party organisation such as the Land Trust (or similar) which will be secured through the associated S106 (this organisation will also take management of the SANG). Cala Homes (Thames) Ltd (the client) has experience of transferring to the Land Trust (Bucklers Park in Bracknell Forest ref. 13/00575/OUT).

As requested by Natural England, a fallback option in the unlikely failure of the Land Trust (or similar) has been investigated to ensure that the funding of associated management and maintenance within the wider woodland is secured. It is understood that in the first instance, Elmbridge Borough Council will have first refusal on taking over the management of the wider woodland, however if this option is not taken up, the remaining assets of the woodland will be transferred to another charity or charities having charitable objectives similar to the Land Trust (or similar), including all land, money and associated agreements or a third party management company in agreement with the Local Authority. The above responsibilities will be outlined and secured within the associated s106 agreement.

5.2 Management Costs

The financial model that will be implemented by the Land Trust (or similar) will ensure that the initial lump sum paid to the Land Trust as part of the land transfer, will be invested with the interest raised used to cover the ongoing management and maintenance costs of the wider woodland management in perpetuity. Through this provision, new residents will not be impacted by the requirement to support ongoing management and maintenance costs.

5.3 Woodland

The objectives of the management of this feature are to protect and enhance the existing woodland habitat to provide the greatest benefit to wildlife. The proposed management prescriptions will also take into the account and implement the objectives and recommendations outlined within the associated 'Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment' (Aspect Ecology, 2023) report for the Brooklands College site, with the targeted condition and habitat type from mixed woodland to broadleaf woodland.

5.3.1 Removal/ Treatment of Non-native Invasive Plant Species

Dense stands of Cherry Laurel and Rhododendron were noted throughout the woodland understory and initial management will involve the removal of all invasives species. Additional areas of non-native invasive species including Few-flowered Garlic and Montbretia were also recorded, and these will be removed and disposed of appropriately.

5.3.2 Selective Thinning & Native Species Planting

Selective thinning of non-native tree species (i.e. conifers) will be targeted to create the desired target habitat type of 'other broadleaved woodland (w1g)'. In order to achieve this, coniferous tree cover will be removed to an extent that broadleaf tree species will comprise of >80% over the

overall woodland tree cover. Removal of invasive species alongside selective thinning will re-invigorate the development of understory vegetation and woodland ground flora through increasing light levels and reduce competition from removing aggressive colonizing species.

5.3.3 Native Species Planting (Understory)

The development of the understory and the overall woodland structure following the removal/ thinning operations will be encouraged through the planting of native species including Hazel (Corylus avellana), Yew (Taxus baccata), Field Maple (Acer campestre) and Small-leaved Lime (Tilia cordata). To ensure a successful establishment of the newly planted trees, it is recommended that mycorrhizal treatment to the tree roots is conducted during the planting, to reduce the risk of tree mortality and increase the long-term tolerance of these trees to periods of drought or adverse soil conditions thus ensuring a higher chance of successful long-term establishment.

In addition to the implementation of biodegradable rabbit/ deer guards to protect planted trees to ensure establishment, all newly planted trees must have a 1-metre exclusion zone whereby weeds are routinely and pro-actively removed for the first 2 – 3 years. Bark mulch is also recommended around each tree and will act as an effective management method to also supress weed colonisation.

5.3.4 Retention of Deadwood

Suitable arisings and deadwood generated from the thinning operations will be retained and used to create deadwood habitat piles within suitable locations throughout the woodland. Standing deadwood (with suitable trees reduced to a safe height) will also be created were possible to create additional features and opportunities for wildlife. The creation/ retention of deadwood features will provide a range of microhabitats that can be utilize by invertebrates, birds and small mammals.

5.3.5 Native Species Planting

In addition to the replanting and enhancement of the woodland understory, replacement planting of native broadleaved trees will also be undertaken in suitable areas to fill the gaps created by thinning operations. Appropriate species will include English Oak (Quercus robur), Field Maple (Acer campestre), Wild Cherry (Prunus avium), Silver Birch (Betula pendula), Hornbeam (Carpinus betulus), English Elm (Ulmus procera) and Yew (Taxus baccata).

5.3.6 Management

The following measures will be undertaken with regard to long term management of the woodland:

- Newly planted trees and shrubs will be monitoring to ensure establishment, with replacement planting works undertaken as required.
- Non-native invasive species growth will be monitored, with removal/ treatment continued until permanent eradication has been achieved.
- The woodland will be divided into coupes with the understory coppiced on a 5-7 year rotation. Arisings will utilized to create dead hedges to protect new growth from browsing pressure.

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Annual walkovers of the site will be undertaken to identify potential risks to public health and safety, with appropriate remedial measures implemented.

A risk assessment of the trees within the site will be undertaken every three years with appropriate tree surgery operations implemented as required.

Selective thinning of mature trees/ shrubs will conducted as required to promote a vigorous and dense understory, with the optimal canopy cover targeted at 75% to allow the greatest development of the understory to create a more diverse woodland.

A suitability qualified ecologist will be consulted with regard to prospective tree remediation works, with appropriate ecological surveys undertaken as required.

5.4 Access

5.4.1 Management

The following measures will be undertaken to maintain access routes across the woodland:

Regular checks of walkways/ cycleways will be carried out to ensure that footpaths are safe and accessible, with necessary repairs or vegetation management undertaken.

Regular maintenance of vegetation adjacent to the walkways will be undertaken with a 1m strip maintained either side of the access route.

6.0 MONITORING

This section sets out the ongoing monitoring that will be undertaken on the site to ensure that the management strategy achieves the overall objectives and vision for the wider woodland habitats.

6.1 Management Responsibilities

Management and maintenance of the newly created and enhanced habitats will initially be the responsibility of the client to ensure all management works are completed and qualified ecologists, arborists or landscape managers are contracted, where required. All management works as described above should be secured through an appropriate Section 106 agreement for the site that will legally oblige the client or other agreed party to carry out the works. An annual management timeline of all habitats has been provided in Section 7.0. The management responsibilities associated with the woodland are in the process of being transferred to a third-party organisation such as the Land Trust (or similar) which will be secured through the associated S106. Cala Homes (Thames) Ltd (the client) has experience of both transferring to the Land Trust (Bucklers Park in Bracknell Forest ref. 13/00575/OUT). The current preference for ongoing management at Brooklands College is through a third party such as the Land Trust.

6.2 Ecological Baseline

The initial baseline assessment of the woodland was undertaken by Aspect Ecology in February 2019, February 2021 and June 2022, with an updated site assessment undertaken by Ecosupport Ltd on 15th February 2024.

6.3 Annual Walkover

An annual monitoring walkover survey will be scheduled to be undertaken in September each year by the site manager and where necessary an ecologist, whom will identify required management activities within the site. In addition to specific habitat management recommendations, this survey will target routine maintenance to trees, access routes and infrastructure (e.g. interpretation boards). The results of the survey will feed into the management plan for the site.

6.4 Review Process

Routine monitoring of the site will be undertaken by the responsible management body on an annual basis for the duration of the management plan timeframe. In addition to the annual monitoring, in years 5, 10 and 20 of the plan period, an updated habitat survey will be undertaken by a suitability qualified ecologist, to review the progress of management activities and record changes resulting from the management works. Additional monitoring surveys of identified features/ habitats will be scoped in where a requirement is identified. Following this survey, the objectives and management prescriptions for the woodland will be reviewed, led by the results of the annual monitoring and periodic updated ecological surveys. This information will be included within a report that will be provided to the responsible management body (along with Elmbridge Borough Council as required) outlining the recommended changes to be implemented within the management plan. In year 20 of the plan period, a full review of the management plan will be undertaken to inform management in perpetuity and an updated management plan will be produced detailing ongoing management to be agreed with Elmbridge Borough Council as required.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN SUMMARY

Schedule of monitoring and management in Years 1 –20 for all habitats.

General Activity	Year	Specific Activity	Dates / Timing	Description
Protection of Woodland, Hedgerows and Trees	1	Arboricultural Fencing (Section 4.1.1)	Set up pre-commencement to works and retained throughout the works.	The woodland and trees will be retained will be protected from damage during the adjacent development works using the methods outlined within the 'Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Preliminary Method Statement' provided by RPS ((Plan Ref: JSL4446_720, 2023). For trees/ shrubs beyond the boundary of the development within the woodland, these will be protected using the methods outlined within an appropriate tree protection plan once a suitable arboricultural impact assessment has been undertaken.
Woodland Management	1 & Ongoing (until eradicated)	Removal of non-native invasive species	September - February	Dense stands of Cherry Laurel and Rhododendron within the understory will be removed/ treated. Additional areas of non-native invasive species including Few-flowered Garlic and Montbretia will be removed and disposed of appropriately. Non-native invasive species growth will be monitored, with removal/ treatment continued until permanent eradication has been achieved.
	1 - 20	Selective Thinning	September - February	Woodland will be thinned (targeting non-native & coniferous species) to benefit retained trees, promote regeneration and achieve the targeted habitat objectives.

					Broadleaf tree species canopy cover targeted to comprise of >80% over the overall woodland tree cover. The targeted optimal canopy target is 75% cover, which allows greater development of the understory to create a more diverse woodland.
	1 - 3	Native Species Planting	October - April		The development of the understory and the overall woodland structure following the removal/ thinning operations will be encouraged through the planting of native species. Replacement planting of native broadleaved trees will also be undertaken in suitable areas to fill the gaps created by thinning operations. Biodegradable rabbit/ deer guards will be used to protect planted trees to ensure establishment. All newly planted trees must have a 1-metre exclusion zone whereby weeds are routinely and pro-actively removed for the first 2 – 3 years.
	2 - 20	Replacement of Failed Plants	October - April		Newly planted trees and shrubs will be monitoring to ensure establishment, with replacement planting works undertaken as required.
	2 - 20	Coppice Rotational Management	September - February		The woodland will be divided into coupes with the understory coppiced on a 7-year rotation. Arisings will utilized to create dead hedges to protect new growth from browsing pressure.
	1 - 20	Tree Risk Assessment	September - February		A risk assessment of the trees within the site will be undertaken every three years with

					appropriate tree surgery operations implemented as required. Risk to public health and safety will also be identified through annual walkovers of the site. A suitability qualified ecologist will be consulted with regard to prospective tree remediation works, with appropriate ecological surveys undertaken as required.
Pedestrian and Cycle Access	1	Vegetation Management (Access)	September - February		Vegetation will be removed to create public access for the proposed footpath routes throughout the woodland.
	1	Creation of footpaths/ cycleways	January – December		Informal and formal footpaths/ cycleways are proposed within select areas of the woodland habitat within the site. The informal paths will comprises of natural log edging provided where it is deemed necessary to define sections of the route to prevent trampling of ground vegetation.
	2 - 20	General Site Maintenance	January – December (Routine monitoring walkover undertaken annually)		General site maintenance including, removal of fly tipping, litter collection, remedial works to footpaths.
Monitoring	1 - 20	Annual Walkover	September		An annual monitoring walkover survey will be undertaken each year by the site manager and where necessary an ecologist, whom will identify required management activities within the site.

	5, 10 & 20		March - September	In addition to the annual monitoring, in years 5, 10 and 20 of the plan period, an updated habitat survey will be undertaken by a suitability qualified ecologist, to review the progress of management activities and record changes resulting from the management works. Following this survey, the objectives and management prescriptions for the woodland will be reviewed, led by the results of the annual monitoring and periodic updated ecological surveys. This information will be included within a report that will be provided to the responsible management body (along with Elmbridge Borough Council as required) outlining the recommended changes to be implemented within the management plan.

8.0 REFERENCES

Aspect Ecology (2023) 'Brooklands College, Weybridge, Ecological Baseline', April 2023

Aspect Ecology (2023) 'SANG and Woodland Management Plan', October 2023

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-978-1-7395126-0-6

Elmbridge Borough Council (2011) 'Elmbridge Borough Council Core Strategy', Adopted July 2011

Elmbridge Borough Council (2022) Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy

UKHab Ltd. (2023). UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (July, 2023

APPENDIX

Appendix A : Map showing locations of woodland compartments
Appendix B : Detailed landscape plans of the Brooklands College project (Define, 2023)

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Legend

- Site boundary
- SANG boundary
- SANG Woodland
- Other Woodland

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T:

Map	SANG Woodland Map
Site	Brooklands College
Client	Cala Homes
Date	11/04/2024