

**ARC BUILDING & PROJECT MANAGEMENT LTD
ON BEHALF OF DAYS RENTAL**

LAND AT NEWPORT RETAIL PARK, SPYTTY ROAD

DORMOUSE PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHOD



May 2026

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Issue	Revision	Stage	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Signed
1	-	Draft for Review	12 May 2026		Dr Matthew Watts (Director)	M. WATTS
2	n/a	For Submission	13 May 2026		Dr Matthew Watts (Director)	M. WATTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Soltys Brewster Ecology were commissioned by ARC Building & Project Management on behalf of Days Rental to prepare a Dormouse Mitigation strategy in advance of site enabling/preparation works to install new perimeter fencing at the site on Newport Retail Park. A plan showing the proposed layout and alignment of the security fencing is included as Appendix I. The scheme has received planning approval (Ref: 24/0604) from Newport City Council with Condition 2 requiring that:

‘No development including any site clearance shall take place within the hatched area marked on "Drawing No. 01 – Development Exclusion Zone" attached to this decision notice until a dormice mitigation strategy for that area has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The clearance of that area shall then be undertaken in full accordance with the approved strategy at all times.’

- 1.2 The current report is intended to set out the protective measures for Dormice (and other species such as nesting birds) associated with the clearance work for installation of the fence. These works will be supervised by a suitable experienced and licensed ecologist and have been informed by the likely absence of Dormice at the application site established during the survey work in 2024 (SBE, 2024).

2.0 PEA SURVEY FINDINGS

- 2.1 Site conditions were established during a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) in August 2024, with dense scrub identified along the eastern boundary of the site. This was described (SBE, 2024) as *'Parcels of dense and continuous scrub vegetation can be found along the site's peripheries, sprawling out from the eastern boundary treeline and lining the raised embankments which mark the site's northern and western boundaries..... This scrub largely consists of dense Bramble thickets interspersed with young strands of Hawthorn, Buddleia, Ash and Dogwood.'* In the absence of any management or other site works, this vegetation remains on site, and clearance will be required in order to install the perimeter fencing. Some vegetation management work was undertaken (under ecological supervision) in May 2025, but this was confined to the western and northern areas of the site.
- 2.2 As described in the PEA report (SBE 2024), the desk study identified that Hazel Dormice are known to be present within the local area, with several recent records (all unoccupied dormouse nests found between 2017 - 2019) associated with a parcel of woodland/scrub found to the south of the Llanwern Golf Club, approximately 900m from the application site boundaries. Several barriers including a road, a railway line and several waterways/ditches separate this area of woodland/scrub from the habitats found at/adjacent to the application site, and these are likely to impede any movement of dormice between the two areas. The single record of dormouse found to the south of the application site is also separated by several major roads and industrial development, all of which likely represent significant barriers for dispersing dormice. During the 2024 PEA survey, no fallen nuts baring characteristic signs of being gnawed by dormouse were found and the site was generally lacking in fruiting Hazel. The eastern boundary treeline did contain a number of other potential food resources (e.g. Hawthorn, Bramble and Oak) however, the small/narrow characteristic of this feature means that it is unlikely to contain enough food resources to support a source population of dormouse. As such the likelihood of dormice being present within the scrub found at the site was considered to be very low.

3.0 VEGETATION CLEARANCE

3.1 Based on the findings of the PEA survey, the likelihood of Dormice being present within the scrub to be cleared is considered very low and on this basis, a licence from NRW would not be needed to implement the proposed vegetation clearance works. However, in order to satisfy the requirement of Condition 2, the following measures will be implemented as part of a Precautionary Working Method (PWM):

- A suitably experienced, licensed named ecologist will be appointed and retained for the duration of the vegetation clearance works;
- All clearance of scrub habitat within the 5m development exclusion zone (see Appendix I) will be undertaken under an ecological watching brief by the licensed named ecologist or a suitably experienced accredited agent;
- Prior to scrub clearance, all site operatives will be provided with a toolbox talk by the named ecologist or accredited agent(s) alerting them to the low risk that Dormice could be present, their ecology and habitat preferences, their legally protected status and the working methodology required to avoid harming them (see Example in Appendix II);
- Scrub habitats which are to be cleared or disturbed by clearance works will be subjected to a pre-works inspection in the form of a finger-tip search by the named ecologist or accredited agent(s) to check for dormouse and dormouse nests;
- Clearance work will be undertaken in a staged, directional manner, working towards the retained boundary vegetation (i.e. east of the proposed fence) so as to encourage small mammals or other species to move of their own accord. Clearance work will be undertaken using handheld tools (e.g. chainsaws, hedge trimmers or brush cutters) or by using a small machine capable of cutting to a set height under direction of the ecologist;
- Timing of the clearance work will depend on the discharge of Condition 2 but is anticipated to occur over summer/autumn 2026, prior to the winter hibernation period (i.e. completed prior to November 2026).

3.2 The vegetation clearance works are programmed to commence from summer/autumn 2026 using a combination of hand tools (chainsaws, strimmers etc.) and some plant/machinery suitable for cutting and removal of woody vegetation. All cutting work will be undertaken under ecological supervision with vegetation initially topped or side trimmed to allow for visual inspection by the ecologist to check for any nests – Dormice or nesting birds. Once a section has been checked, it will be cut to a height of ca. 150mm with all arisings removed so as to remove potential nesting habitat. Cut material will either be shipped/shredded into areas of bare ground at the site or disposed of off-site.

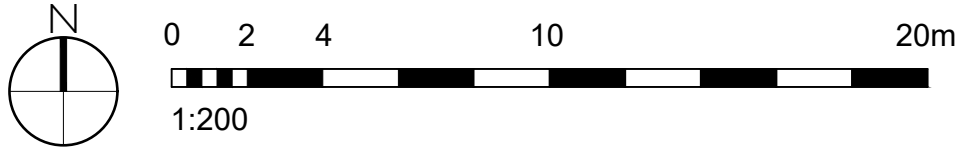
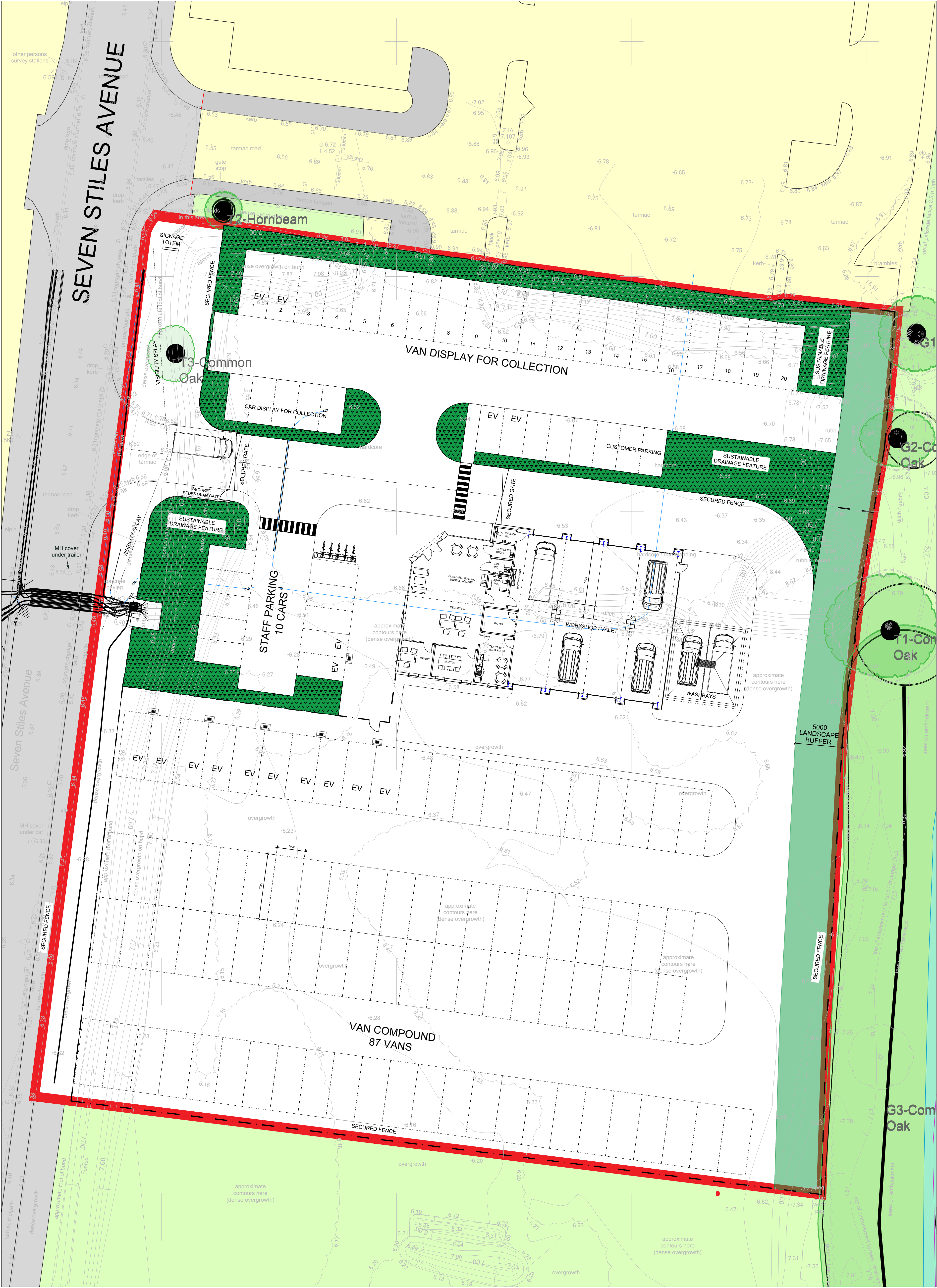
- 3.3 **In the unlikely event that a Dormouse or Dormouse nest was found at any point during the clearance works, all activity will stop immediately and a NRW contacted – in this scenario, it is likely that a licence will need to be obtained to allow works to recommence.**
- 3.4 Timing of vegetation clearance between May and August 2026 also risks encountering nesting birds within the scrub. **In the event that an active bird nest (i.e. containing eggs or dependent young) was found during the visual/physical checks of the scrub, it will be left in place along with a minimum 3m buffer until no longer in use** – dependent on the species concerned, the nest may have to remain in place for several weeks/months before it can be considered as inactive.

REFERENCES

Soltys Brewster Ecology (SBE). 2024. *Proposed Days Rental Site, Newport. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.*

Document Ref : E24126401/Doc 01 – September 2024.

APPENDIX I PROPOSED WORKS & NEW FENCE ALIGNMENT



PRE PLANNING

E	Amendments further to Client comments	NC 10/24
D	Amendments further to Planning and Consultant comments	NC 09/24
C	Perimeter Fencing and Gates added	NC 05/24
B	EV and drainage areas added	NC 05/24
A	Tex Prep/Parts amended	NC 04/24
Rev.	Description	By Date

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Client DAYS RENTAL

Project NEWPORT LEISURE RETAIL PARK

Title SITE PLAN AS PROPOSED

Project No. 22424

Scale 1:200 @ A1

Drawing No. SK-SP-01 Rev. E

Date APRIL 2024

Drawn By NC Checked By JO

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APPENDIX II EXAMPLE DORMOUSE INDUCTION NOTE

DORMOUSE INDUCTION NOTE

This induction note has been prepared by Soltys Brewster Ecology on behalf of ARC and Days Rental

Dormice may be present in the works area, and this note is intended to inform site operatives on the legal status of dormice, what to look out for during vegetation management and what action to take should dormice be encountered during supervised works.

Identification:

Dormice are easily identifiable by their golden yellow colour, furry tail and large, dark eyes (Figure 1). During the summer and early autumn dormice nest in hedges and trees in distinctive, tightly woven nests (Figure 2). In the winter dormice hibernate in new nests at ground level. Hibernation nests may be located in hollow tree stumps, coppice stools, under logs, dead leaves or moss and at the base of hedges or trees.

Figure 1: Dormouse



Figure 2: Dormouse Nest (autumn)



Legal status of dormice

Dormice are fully protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) this means it is illegal to:

- Damage or destroy a dormouse nest; or
- Deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or disturb a dormouse

Working method

Survey work undertaken in 2024 did not identify evidence to confirm presence of Dormice at the site. However, they are known to be present in the local area and the scrub proposed for clearance along the eastern boundary of the site could potentially support Dormice. A precautionary working method (PWM) is required and will be followed for the proposed vegetation clearance ahead of development works. This will involve a prior check of vegetation by an ecologist and supervision of clearance works.

In the event that a Dormouse nest was found at any point, work will stop immediately. It is likely that a licence will need to be secured before works can recommence if a nest is found.



DO

- Ensure that vegetation works are completed prior to November 2026 to avoid the winter hibernation period.
- Ensure all affected areas have been fingertip searched for dormouse nests by a suitably experienced Ecologist prior to starting works;
- Cutting of scrub to height of ca. 150mm working towards retained vegetation in the east of the site. All arisings to be removed or chipped/shredded on site;
- Any machinery used to be sited outside of scrub habitats unless access/exit route has been searched by the ecologist;
- No vegetation clearance, storage or access in retained areas of woodland or scrub;
- Stop work and contact the ecologist immediately if a dormouse or dormouse nest is found (including dormouse boxes or nest tubes);



DONT

- Break ground, grub up roots or cause unnecessary disturbance to the ground where dormice may be present unless a prior check has been done by the ecologist;
- Bring vehicles into areas of scrub, hedgerow or woodland prior to vegetation clearance and ecologist check;

ACTION TO TAKE ON FINDING A DORMOUSE NEST:

In the event that a dormouse or dormouse nest is found and the ecologist is not on site, stop work immediately and contact the Ecologist for advice on (**Mobile No. TBC**) or **033 0013 0012**. Works within 5m of the nest or nest box will be suspended and a connective corridor of woody vegetation maintained between the nest and the edge of the works area.

Please sign below to confirm you have read and understood this toolbox talk.

[illegible]