

Site Assessment Survey

PROJECT TITLE: Proposed creation of one detached, five bedroom, two storey residential dwelling with attached double garage and garden extending to the south.

SITE ADDRESS: Bramley, Catsash Road, Langstone, NP18 2NU

DATE: 20th August 2025

The applicant is seeking planning consent to develop a parcel of land at Bramley, Catsash Road, Langstone, NP18 2NU. Planning permission is sought to build one detached, five bedroom, two storey residential dwelling with attached double garage and garden extending to the south. The site consists of an overgrown tarmac entrance track, hard core building waste pile (presumably from the previous residential property on site), hedgerows, tree lines, semi-improved grassland including recently disturbed areas, trees, Bracken, bare earth, woody scrub and brash piles.

The site is centred at approximately ST 36974 90066. An aerial image showing the development site within the context of the wider complex is provided in Appendix 1 at the end of this report. This report focuses on the land and habitats within the site boundary only.

Site Location

The proposed development site is roughly rectangular in shape, with the longest edge siting on a north to south axis. A narrow tarmac entrance track leads west off of Catsash Road between the residential properties of Swyn Y Dwr to the north and Woodside to the south. The entrance track joins the building plot close its north east corner on the eastern boundary and extends west beyond the western boundary of the site to the adjacent residential property of Oakwood. Oakwood has a main driveway leading in from the south via Silure Way. It is not known if Oakwood residents use the site entrance track to access Catsash Road to the east or even if they have rights to use the entrance track.

The proposed site is located close to the northern outskirts of Langstone which is a village community located to the north east of Newport city. Residential dwellings located close to the proposed development site are typically made up of detached and semi-detached properties. Green areas within and beyond the community of Langstone include; gardens, hedgerows, tree lines, scrub, pockets of broad-leaved woodland, arable land, livestock grazing land, and golf course.

The development site is located close to several large roads; Catsash Road leads north from the A48 trunk road and is located approximately 255m away to the south. The M4 motorway is located approximately 408m away again to the south and the A449 trunk road is located approximately 260m away to the north west of the site. The area to the south of the site is cross crossed by minor residential roads.

The River Usk is the closest significant watercourse and meanders roughly north east to south west, with the closest section of the river approximately 1.85km away to the north west. Several small presumably spring-fed streams are located to the north and within the community of Langstone. One such small stream flows north to south through the rear gardens of the houses along the west side of Catsash Road and passes under the site entrance track to the east of the main body of the site. The stream then continues south through rear gardens and presumably joins Monk's Ditch, which is located approximately 250m away to the south at its closest section.

There is just one pond apparent on an OS map within the 1km data search radius, the pond is located approximately 240m away to the south west and just north of the A48 trunk road (see Figure 1. below). The presence of ponds in nearby gardens and woodland areas cannot be discounted.

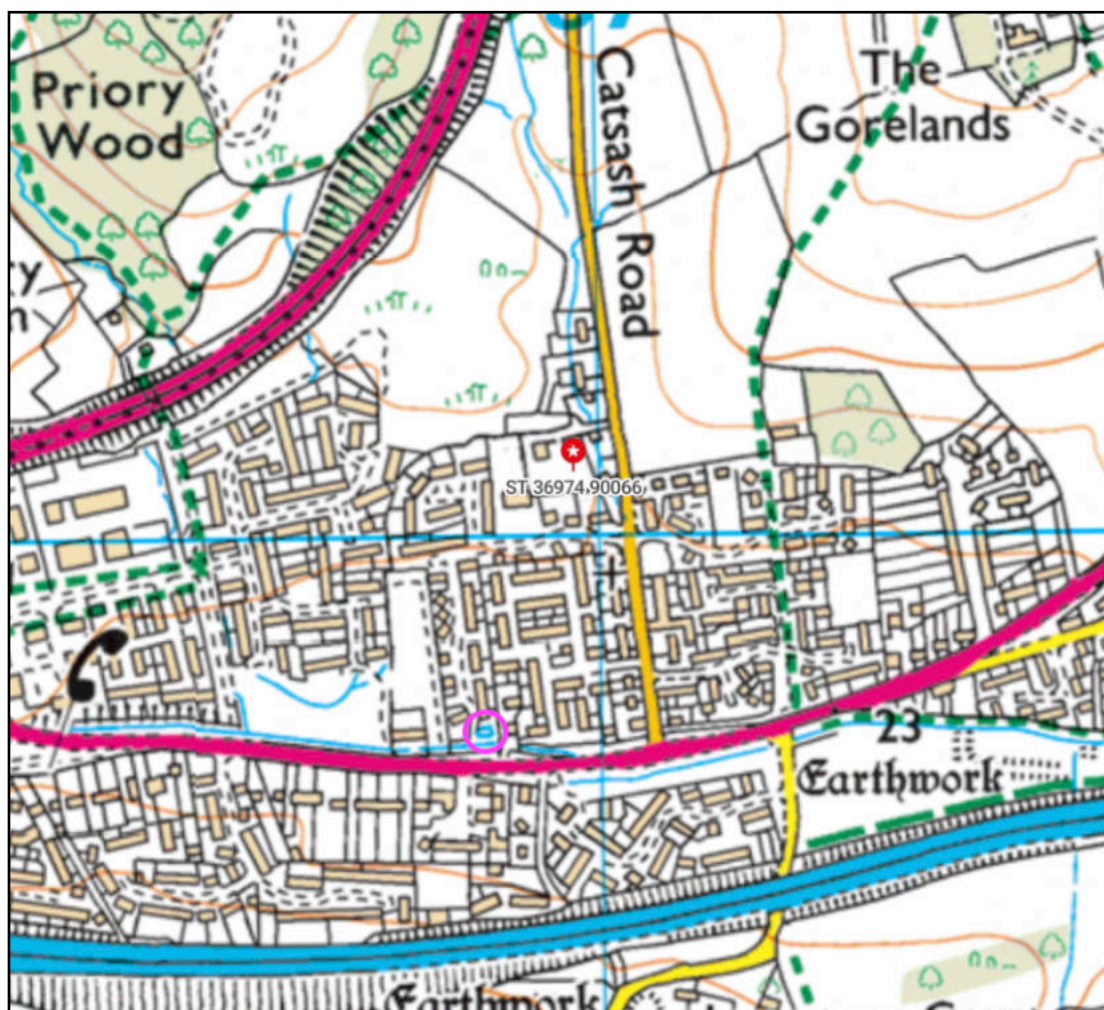


Figure 1. Location of one pond within 500m of the site approximately 240m away to the south west

Desktop Study

A data search was requested from SEWBReC. The data search (LERC Reference: 0256-335) took a 1km buffer around a central point of the proposed development site. The site does not lie within or directly adjacent to a statutory protected site. Protected sites returned as part of the data search include:

- There are four Local - Non-statutory designated Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) within 1km of the proposed development site. Delbury Grasslands SINC and Coed Rhedyn/Scotch Wood SINC are the closest such sites and are equidistant from the site boundary, being approximately 765m away to the south east and south west at their closest boundaries.
- There are ten sites of Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) within 1km of the site. These are broadleaf woodlands comprising mainly native tree and shrub species which are believed to have been in existence for over 400 years. The ground vegetation will reflect the naturalness of these woodlands and will frequently feature species which provide clear indication of long and continued woodland cover. They will have been woodland for centuries and contribute substantially to our natural and cultural heritage. The closest such area of woodland lies approximately 112m away to the north at its closest boundary.
- There is one site of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site within 1km of the site. These are sites which are believed to have been continuously wooded for over 400 years. They have been replanted with native or non-native species, most commonly with conifers. They currently have a canopy cover of more than 50% non-native conifer tree species. They will have varying levels of remnant features of ASNW. The area of woodland lies approximately 495m away to the south west at its closest boundary.
- There is one NRW Priority Area (Woodland - PAWS) within 1km of the proposed development site. NRW Priority habitat areas are large scale areas which were prioritised for targeted conservation work, based on factors including the habitats within them. The area of NRW Priority Area (Woodland - PAWS) is located approximately 495m away to the south west at its closest boundary.

Given the localised and small scale nature of the development proposals it is highly unlikely any protected sites will be impacted as part of the proposed works.

Protected species records of note returned within 500m of the site include:

- Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*) - One record was returned from the 1km data search and is located approximately 51m away to the east and involved an unspecified field observation.

- Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) - Five foraging/commuting records were returned from the 1km data search, the closest record is located approximately 60m away to the north east.
- Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) - Eight records were returned from the 1km data search, the closest record is located approximately 107m away to the west and involved a field record.
- Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) - Fifteen records with the majority associated with the A449 trunk road were returned from the 1km data search, the closest record is located approximately 225m away to the north west and involved diagnostically gnawed Hazel nuts.
- Badger (*Meles meles*) - Seven road mortality records from the A449 and M4 motorway were returned from the 1km data search, the closest record is located approximately 255m away to the north west
- Otter (*Lutra lutra*) - Two records were returned from the 1km data search, the closest record is located approximately 347m away to the west and involved a spraint found on a culvert.
- Birds - Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (WCA1.1) include; Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*) and Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*).
- Birds - Species listed under Section 7 (S7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (EWA 2016) include; Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*), Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), Linnet (*Linaria cannabina*), Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*) and Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).
- Red Hemp Nettle (*Galeopsis angustifolia*) - One record was returned from the 1km data search and is located approximately 368m away to the north east.

Protected species records of note returned beyond 500m and within the 1km data search include:

- Bat roost - Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*)
- Bats foraging/commuting - Nathusius' Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*)
- Polecat (*Mustela putorius*)
- Birds - Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (WCA1.1) include; Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*), Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*), Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*).
- Birds - Species listed under Section 7 (S7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (EWA 2016) include; Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*), Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*) and Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*).

- Moths - Species listed under Section 7 (S7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (EWA 2016) include; Buff Ermine (*Spilarctia luteum*), Centre-barred Sallow (*Atethmia centrargo*), Dusky Thorn (*Ennomos fuscantaria*), Ghost (*Hepialus humuli*), Grey Dagger (*Acronicta psi*), Knotgrass (*Acronicta rumicis*) and White Ermine (*Spilosoma lubricipeda*).
- Plants - Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*)
- Dwarf Bristle Moss (*Seligeria pusilla*)

Site Visit

Lee Gregory from Ecological Services attended site on 7th August 2025 to assess the potential ecological impacts of the proposed works. The site visit was completed during early August which is within the optimal timeframe for undertaking such surveys. Photographs of the site can be found in Appendix 2. A habitat map is provided within Appendix 3. **This report concentrates on the land within the proposed development site boundary only.**

The site is accessed via a slightly overgrown **tarmac entrance track** on the west side of Catsash Road between two residential properties. A small section of well pruned approximate 1.5m high Leylandii (*Cupressus x leylandii*) hedge is present along the north eastern boundary of the road. The rest of the boundary is an approximate 1.5m high wood panel fence with trellis along the top and sits on top of a low brick wall. A rendered garage wall and then an approximate 1.2m high wooden vertical slat fence run along the southern end of the access road.

The **tarmac entrance track** is covered along most of its length by a shallow layer of earth and dead plant material. Plant species growing along the length of the track are mainly species typical of **short perennial vegetation** and along the edges more typical of an **ecotone edge** with a garden plant influence. Species recorded from the entrance track include; Barren Strawberry (*Potentilla sterilis*), Bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), Bush Vetch (*Vicia sepium*), Cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), Cleavers (*Galium aparine*), Columbine (*Aquilegia vulgaris*), Common Field Speedwell (*Veronica persica*), Creeping Cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), False Brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*), False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*), Fleabane sp. (*Erigeron* sp.), Hedge Binweed (*Calystegia sepium*), Hemp Agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*), Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Lungwort (*Pulmonaria officinalis*), Montbretia (*Crocasmia x crocosmiiflora*), Nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*), Perennial Rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Petty Spurge (*Euphorbia peplus*), Purple Toadflax (*Linaria purpurea*), Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), Red Valerian (*Centranthus ruber*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Scarlet Pimpernel (*Lysimarchia arvensis*), Smooth Sow-thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), Upright Hedge-parsley

(*Torilis arvensis*), Wall Lettuce (*Lactuca muralis*), White Clover (*Trifolium repens*), Wood Avens (*Geum urbanum*) and Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Along the south side of the entrance track are two trees including with approximate heights; 4m Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*) and 7m very slim Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

A low approximate 0.8m high **stone wall** is located either side of the entrance track, beneath which runs a very narrow stream. The stream flows north to south through the rear gardens of the houses along the west side of Catsash Road and passes under the site entrance track, to the east of the main body of the site.

The small area of land included in the site boundary to the north of the west end of the entrance track includes a recently cut approximate 1.5m high **hedgerow** with the following species recorded; Ash, Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Dog-rose (*Rosa canina agg.*), English Oak (*Quercus robur*), Goat Willow, Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). To the north of this hedgerow is a narrow strip of **broad-leaved woodland**, the very eastern end of the woodland is wider and bulges out forming an almost circular end to the woodland strip. Tree species from the woodland include; Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Hazel - dominant, Hawthorn, Holly, Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) and Sumac (*Rhus glabra*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*). The understory of this woodland is mostly **bramble scrub** with the occasional other plant species including; Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Ivy, Lords and Ladies (*Arum maculatum*), Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Hoary Willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*), Wood Avens (*Geum urbanum*) and Wood Dock (*Rumex sanguineus*).

The main body of the site is bounded on its west side by an approximate 4m high pruned Leylandii **hedgerow** with occasional Barberry sp. (*Berberis sp.*), Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), Hazel and Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) for approximately two thirds of the north end of the boundary. The approximate southern one third of the western boundary is also an approximate 4m high **hedgerow** but is unpruned with more species including; Bramble, Cherry Laurel, Elder, English Oak, Goat Willow, Hedge Bindweed, Japanese Rose (*Rosa rugosa*), Purple Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides* 'Crimson King') and Virginia Creeper.

The southern boundary of the main body of the site is an approximate 1.8m high vertical lap **wooden fence** with some Bramble and Ivy growing over in places.

The approximate 1.8m high **wooden fence** also extends approximately half way along the southern end of the eastern main body boundary. A double five bar wooden gate is located along the fence and allows access into the residential garden of Nant Yr Onnen to the east. The northern end of the eastern main body boundary is an approximate 5m+ high **tree line** and forms the boundary with Woodside Cottage to the east. Species recorded from the **tree line** include; Ash, Black Bryony (*Dioscorea communis*), English Oak, Hazel,

Holly, Leylandii and at the south end of the tree line an approximate 12m high Spruce sp. (*Picea sp.*).

In the north east corner of the main body of the site is a small **tree group** including the following trees with approximate height; 10m multi-stemmed Cypress sp. (*Cypressus sp.*) with another cut down and long dead next to it, 4m Hazel and 5m Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*).

Just south of the entrance track at the north end of the main body of the site is a pile of cut branch **brash** and pile of old scrap wood likely to be from broken windows and door frames from a house previously on site. To the south of the brash pile is a large mound of **building hardcore** and contains mostly bricks, the mound runs east to west across the north end of the site. Covering and surrounding the brash pile and hardcore mound is a mixture of **woody scrub** and **tall ruderal vegetation** including the following species; Buddleia (*Buddleia davidii*) - dominant, Bramble, Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Goat Willow, Great Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), Hawthorn - saplings, Hazel, Marsh Thistle (*Cirsium palustre*), Rosebay Willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*) and Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*).

Leading south from the western end of the entrance track, inside of the western boundary hedgerow and to the west of the hardcore mound, is a grassy track which heads south before opening up into a clearing. The clearing occupies approximately there quarters of the main body of the site. In the north east corner of the clearing is a strip of **Bracken** (*Pteridium aquilinum*) which runs south along the eastern boundary tree line. Part hidden and covered by the Bracken patch is a pile of wooden panels which is likely the remains of a garden shed.

Several **trees** are growing around the boundary of the clearing including; an approximate 4m high Apple tree along the southern boundary fence, and approximate 8m high Leylandii and a small Hazel in the south east corner of the site and a large multi stemmed Cherry sp. (*Prunus sp.*) along the western boundary. The Cherry tree is covered in very dense, bushy Ivy out of which flew a pair of Woodpigeons (*Columba palumbus*) on more than one occasion and it was thought likely that a nest was hidden in the Ivy. Below the Cherry tree is a mound of soil covered in Nettles. Approximately 12m to the north east of the Cherry tree is a recently cut tree stump which also appears to be a Cherry tree going by the distinctive horizontal striped bark pattern. Looking at undated Google Maps aerial photos of the site the tree before it was cut down appears to have been long dead.

The same undated Google Maps aerial image of the site shows the southern end of the site to have been previously well vegetated and appears to have been covered in dense Bracken and Bramble scrub. The clearing at the south end of the site during the site visit was mainly **species rich semi-improved grassland** with small areas of low growing **Bramble regrowth** and occasional plants more associated with **tall ruderal vegetation**. Plants recorded from the approximate three quarter of the southern end of the site

clearing include; Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus coniculatus*), Bittersweet, Bramble, Bristly Ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), Broad-leaved Dock (*Rumex obtusifolium*), Cat's-ear, Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Common Mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*), Corn Mint (*Mentha arvensis*), Creeping Thistle, Dandelion, Dogwood - saplings, English Oak - sapling, Fleabane sp, Greater Plantain (*Plantago major*), Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), Hedge Bindweed, Hemp Agrimony, Herb Robert, Hogweed, Ivy, Marsh Thistle, Meadow Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), Nettle, Perennial Rye-grass, Ragwort, Ribwort Plantain, Scarlet Pimpernel, Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*), Small-flowered Willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*), Smooth Sow-thistle, Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Spear Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Square-stemmed St John's-wort (*Hypericum tetrapterum*), Tall Fescue (*Schedonorus arundinaceus*), Tufted Vetch (*Vicia cracca*), Wall Lettuce, White Clover, Willowherb sp (*Epilobium sp.*), Wood Avens, Wood Sedge (*Carex sylvatica*) and Yorkshire Fog.

Some recent vegetation clearance near the southern end of the site presumably to control the bramble scrub from recolonising was evident with several bare patches of earth with fresh tyre tracks and a **cut brash pile** sitting central within the clearing.

A Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) was heard calling from bramble scrub during the site visit.

Gatekeeper (*Pyronia tithonus*), Large White (*Pieris brassicae*) and Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*) butterflies were recorded from the site on what was a quite dull overcast day.

Legislation

Birds

All breeding birds are protected under schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended. Under this Act it is an offence to:

- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

Enhanced protection is afforded to species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act, this additional protection makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Bats

All British bats are a European protected species and are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. In summary, they are protected from:

- Deliberate capture, killing and injuring,
- Deliberate disturbance of a breeding site or resting place,
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place.

Schedule 5 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) also protects all species of British bat and their roosting locations. British bats are protected from intentional or reckless disturbance and or obstruction of their roosting places. Barbastelle Bat (*Barbastella barbastellus*), Bechstein Bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*), Noctule Bat (*Nyctalus noctula*), Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*), Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Greater Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*) and Lesser Horseshoe Bats (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) are also listed in section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which makes them a key species to sustain and improve biodiversity.

Hazel Dormouse

The Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) is a European protected species and is protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. In summary, they are protected from:

- Deliberate capture, killing and injuring,
- Deliberate disturbance of a breeding site or resting place,
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place.

Dormouse is listed on schedule 5 of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 which protects them from intentional or reckless disturbance or obstruction when using a structure or place for shelter and / or protection. It is also an offence to sell, offer or expose for sale a native dormouse. Dormouse is listed in section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which makes them a key species to sustain and improve biodiversity.

Reptiles & Amphibians

Reptiles such as Slow Worm (*Anguis fragilis*), Common Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), Adder (*Vipera berus*) and Grass Snake (*Natrix natrix*) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) from killing injury and sale. All four common reptiles are also listed as 'Section 7' species in Wales. In Wales Sand Lizard (*Lacerta agilis*), Smooth Snake (*Coronella austriaca*), Adder, Grass Snake, Slow Worm and Common

Lizard are listed in section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which makes them a key species to sustain and improve biodiversity.

The four widespread species of amphibian i.e. the Smooth Newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*), Palmate Newts (*Lissotriton helveticus*), Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*) and Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*), are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) by Section 9(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This section prohibits sale of these species. Common Toad is listed in section 6 of The Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Potential Development Impacts

The proposed development will likely result in the loss of an area of woody scrub, bramble scrub, bracken, semi-improved grassland, brash, building hardcore and some small trees. Indicative plans show that the majority of building works will take place to the south of the entrance track and within the northern approximate half of the main body of the site. The habitats within the site are considered to have biodiversity value at a local level only.

- The bramble scrub, woody scrub, hedgerow and trees within and around the site boundary are considered likely to be suitable for use by nesting birds. Any vegetation removal or work immediately adjacent to such features has potential to disturb nesting birds during the bird nesting season of March to August inclusive. All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- The bramble scrub, woody scrub, hedgerow and trees within and around the site boundary are considered likely to be suitable for use by Hazel Dormouse. Fifteen records with the majority associated with the A449 trunk road were returned from the 1km data search. The closest record is located approximately 225m away to the north west. There is good habitat connectivity between the previous Dormouse records and the proposed development site.
- Any vegetation removal or work immediately adjacent to such features has potential to disturb Hazel Dormouse either nesting or hibernating. Hazel Dormouse is listed on schedule 5 of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and is a European Protected Species. A Dormouse survey of the site is not recommended as the site is not large enough to undertake a robust survey and the suitable habitat for dormouse within the site boundary is limited. Instead it is recommended that vegetation clearance is undertaken following a dormouse method statement.
- No evidence of well used mammal paths through the site were noted during the site visit. The site is fenced on three sides and unfenced along its northern boundary which likely hinders the direct passage of mammals across the site. The site is

likely to be used by a range of mammals such as Badger and Hedgehog for foraging purposes on occasion only.

- The semi improved grassland, woody scrub, bramble scrub, hedgerow interface within the site boundary has potential to support low numbers of reptiles during the summer months and the bramble scrub, tree roots and building hardcore for hibernation. The clearance of vegetation and hardcore prior to and to facilitate the proposed development could impact on common reptile species such as Common Lizard and Slow Worm.
- Amphibians could use the site during the terrestrial stage of their life, however the site is quite isolated from known areas of still water. Only one pond was apparent on an OS map within 500m of the site, the pond is located approximately 240m away to the south west. Care will need to be taken during the construction stage of the build and any amphibians found will need to be relocated to a safe location
- Any additional external lighting, may impact on nocturnal species, such as bats and invertebrates using the site for feeding and commuting. Light spill from windows and security lighting could cause disturbance to such species. This is especially important to avoid the tree line of the eastern site boundary which follows the course of a small stream and the hedgerow of the western site boundary which links woodland to the north to gardens and potential roost sites to the south. These boundaries are likely to be used as commuting and foraging routes across the site.
- Hedgerow is a section 7 habitat of importance for protection under The Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Any hedgerow loss must be avoided and appropriately mitigated for if undertaken. Additional hedgerow planting within the site of native species with an appropriate aftercare regime must be provided. The translocation of already established hedgerow should also be considered.

Biodiversity Enhancements & Green Infrastructure Considerations

Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (version 12), paragraph 6.2.5 requires Green Infrastructure considerations to be included with all planning applications. Development proposals must detail how green infrastructure considerations which are proportionate to the scale and nature of the plans are being provided.

Some vegetation clearance has been undertaken within the southern portion of the site, with recent areas of cleared vegetation revealing bare earth. It is thought likely the clearance work has been undertaken to control bramble scrub. Assessments of the site via Google Maps aerial mapping show that the site was previously in a much more heavily vegetated condition being mostly dense Bracken and Bramble scrub at the southern half of the site. As per paragraph 6.4.16 of Planning Policy Wales (version 12) the biodiversity value of a site is based on the site condition prior to vegetation clearance works.

Green infrastructure features currently found within the site boundary are limited to hedgerow, broad-leaved woodland, trees, woody scrub, bramble scrub, bracken and semi-improved grassland. The site is fenced on three sides with just the northern boundary being open, beyond the site boundaries to the south are busy roads and buildings, therefore direct connectivity to surrounding habitat in this direction is limited. Habitat connectivity to open countryside to the north west is optimal and to the north east is slightly limited as open countryside is located beyond a busy road. The current biodiversity value of the site is considered to be of local value only.

The proposed plans indicate that the habitats at the northern end of site, north of the access road will be retained. The scrub, trees and grassland habitat just south of the access road within the proposed residential dwelling footprint will be lost during development. It is anticipated that habitats around the site boundary and the majority of habitats in the southern half of the site can be retained and enhanced. Direct habitat loss implications within the development site can be limited if compensatory planting can be incorporated within the site plans.

The proposals must seek to improve the remaining habitat as part of the development proposals to increase the quality of green infrastructure and overall biodiversity value within the site. Development plans could seek to plant a range of native pollinator friendly species within the flower beds, additional tree planting and provide native hedgerow around the site boundaries. The plans will also provide additional bat and bird boxes within the newly built residential building, providing additional habitat for such species not currently found at site.

Planning Policy Wales - Trees and Planning in Wales (January 2024 update) advises that compensatory planting for trees lost should be sought at a ratio of **3 for 1**. Compensatory planning must be equivalent to the quality, environmental and of ecological importance of the tree(s) lost - this must be preferably onsite or immediately adjacent to the site.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Planning permission is sought to build one detached, five bedroom, two storey residential dwelling with attached double garage and gardens extending to the south. Given the potential impacts of the proposed development the below mitigation measures are proposed:

- A buffer zone of 5m between the building development and the hedgerow to the west and tree line to the east is recommended. Providing a suitable buffer to the tree line habitat will ensure the habitat and local species are not disturbed via light spill from the new building, that a suitable root protection zone is provided and access is maintained for management of the features.

- A root protection zone (RPZ) must be implemented around any retained trees which lie adjacent to or within the boundary of the proposed development site. British Standard BS 5837, *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations* will be followed. Measures will include clear marking of the RPZ to guarantee no machinery is used or digging carried out in that area. This will ensure that there is no detrimental impact to the trees and the flora or fauna it supports.
- Any hedgerow removal must be avoided. If hedgerow impacts cannot be avoided the consideration to hedgerow translocation must be given. Should new hedgerow creation be required it is recommended that 2m of native hedgerow planting is created for every 1m of hedgerow lost.
- **Any scrub or tree removal must be completed outside of the bird nesting season of March to August inclusive.** If this is not achievable an ecologist must inspect any habitat with the potential for birds to be present, for active birds' nests prior to any works beginning. If an active nest is identified a buffer zone of at least 5 m around the nest must be observed until the chicks have fledged. Only then can the vegetation be cleared. Greater buffer zones around nests may be required depending on the species and habitat the nest is within.
- A minimum 5m wide buffer zone will be provided along the entire southern boundary of the development site. The buffer zone will be fenced off during construction works and maintained during all construction work. Once construction is completed temporary fencing will be removed and post and rail fencing will be provided in its place. The buffer zone will be left unmanaged to establish into natural habitat.
- The semi improved grassland, woody scrub, bramble scrub, hedgerow interface within the site boundary on site are considered suitable for small numbers of common reptile species. **A reptile mitigation strategy will be required to inform the development.** Vegetation clearance must be undertaken in two stages as below and during the summer months of April to September inclusive to ensure reptiles are active. The vegetation clearance will start at the north end of site and aim to encourage reptiles to move under their own will to retained habitats in the south of the site.
 - o First Stage Cut - All vegetation including grasses and flowers are to be cut no shorter than 150mm. Once the cuttings have been collected and removed from site the site must then be left for 24hrs.
 - o Second Stage Cut - Once all steps within the first stage cut have been undertaken the remaining vegetation can be cut to 50mm high or shorter. Cutting will look to push any resident reptiles north into adjacent habitats

beyond the site boundary. All cuttings must be collected and removed from site.

- o The machinery to be used for cutting vegetation depends on the ground conditions and contractors. Owing to the small scale of the site ideally hand held trimmers and or brush cutters may be suitable and the tailings hand raked and removed from site.
- The bramble scrub, tree roots and building hardcore within the site boundary on site are considered suitable for small numbers of common reptile for hibernation. A finger tip search of the vegetation by an experience ecologist will need to be undertaken before any cutting takes place. The building hardcore piles will need to be hand dismantled to prevent any harm to reptiles which would be very likely if machinery was involved.
- Any bramble scrub, woody scrub, hedgerow and trees cutting or removal within and around the site boundary which could affect any potential Hazel Dormouse present. A dormouse method statement is required to inform vegetation clearance works. The method statement will require an NRW licenced dormouse ecologist to supervise the clearance works at an appropriate time of year. Vegetation clearance will be required in two stages. **If dormice or evidence of the presence of dormouse are found during clearance works, all works must cease and the relevant licenses applied for from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) prior to the resumption of works.**
- Any external lighting required as part of the development proposals will be focused / directional lighting which is hooded or cowled to prevent light spill. The external lighting will be placed on a timer and motion activated. Sensitive lighting will reduce any negative impacts to nocturnal wildlife which use the area. This is particularly important for foraging bats and invertebrates that are likely to use the site.
- All lighting must meet recommendations in the BCT Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/08/bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night-ilp-guidance-note-update-released>
- All excavations within the site will be securely covered over if left unattended. Any excavations that have a depth in excess of 0.5m and that are left open overnight will have a means of escape left for any mammals (e.g. hedgehog) that may fall into them. A wooden board or equivalent will be left from the bottom to the top of the hole at an angle no steeper than 45°. This will allow any mammal to escape and avoid increased stress from being trapped.
- Compensatory planting will be proposed within the site plans, these could include planting a range of native pollinator friendly species within the flower beds,

additional tree planting of locally sourced native trees and creation of hedgerow planting around the site boundaries. Given the suburban nature of the development site, some native species may not be suitable within the growing conditions available. Thus it is advised that species chosen for planting are beneficial to pollinators. **A detailed planting scheme will be required to support any future planning application for the site.**

The Environment Act (Wales) 2016 places a duty on competent authorities such as Newport City Council to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The below bullet points are some simple measures that could be achieved to enhance the biodiversity of the site. It is recommended at least 2 of the below measures are implemented :

- The provision of one integrated bird box into the building within the development site. Integrated boxes must be located as high as possible on the building and avoid south facing elevations to prevent overheating.
- The provision of one integrated bat box into the building within the development site. Integrated boxes must be located as high as possible on the building preferably on a south facing elevation to take advantage of the heat of the sun and be at least 2m away from any external light source.
- Gaps can be cut into any fencing proposed around the site to allow the movement of reptiles and small mammals across the area. 13cm x 13cm gaps will be cut every 3m along the fence line which encompass the site.
- A reptile hibernacula can be created within the grounds of the development site using rubble and brash from on site clearance works. The hibernacula must at least measure 0.5m in depth, 2m wide and 2m long each. It will be made by creating layers of wood, brash, rubble and soil. The hibernacula will create a mound approximately 0.3m above ground level which will be covered over with soil and seeded using a native seed mix. A diagram of a Reptile Hibernacular is located in Appendix 4 for reference.
- The use of native species within the soft landscaping works on the site. Suitable long term management of soft landscaping also helps ensure spaces are useful to wildlife. An appropriate mowing regime of the grassland areas across the remaining site would encourage more species diversity within the sward benefiting a range of small animals and invertebrates. Long term habitat management to benefit wildlife within the site would help improve biodiversity levels.

Best Wishes

**Lee Gregory
Ecologist
Ecological Services Ltd**

Signed: Lee Gregory Date: August 2025

Appendix 1 - Aerial Image of Development Site



Appendix 2 - Site Photographs



Site entrance track, viewing west from Catsash Road



Site entrance track, viewing west



Site entrance track, viewing west



Site entrance track, viewing west



Hedgerow and narrow strip of woodland to the north of the entrance track at its western end



Hedgerow and narrow strip of woodland to the north of the entrance track at its western end



Understory of narrow strip of woodland north of entrance track



Stone wall either side of track where small stream passes under entrance track



Tree group near the north east corner of main body of the site, viewing east from entrance track



Brash pile and scrap wood pile to the south of entrance track



Building hardcore waste covered in woody scrub, viewing south east



Building hardcore waste covered in woody scrub, viewing north



Grass track viewing south to clearing from west end of entrance track



Western boundary hedgerow and large Cherry tree, viewing south



South west corner of site with areas of recently cleared vegetation



Southern boundary fence, viewing east



South east corner of site, viewing east



Eastern boundary, viewing north east



View north across the site from the south east corner of the site, showing cleared areas



Bracken patch inside of eastern boundary tree line, viewing north east



View south east across site



Old Cherry tree stump and brash pile to the left, viewing south



View north west across northern end of clearing



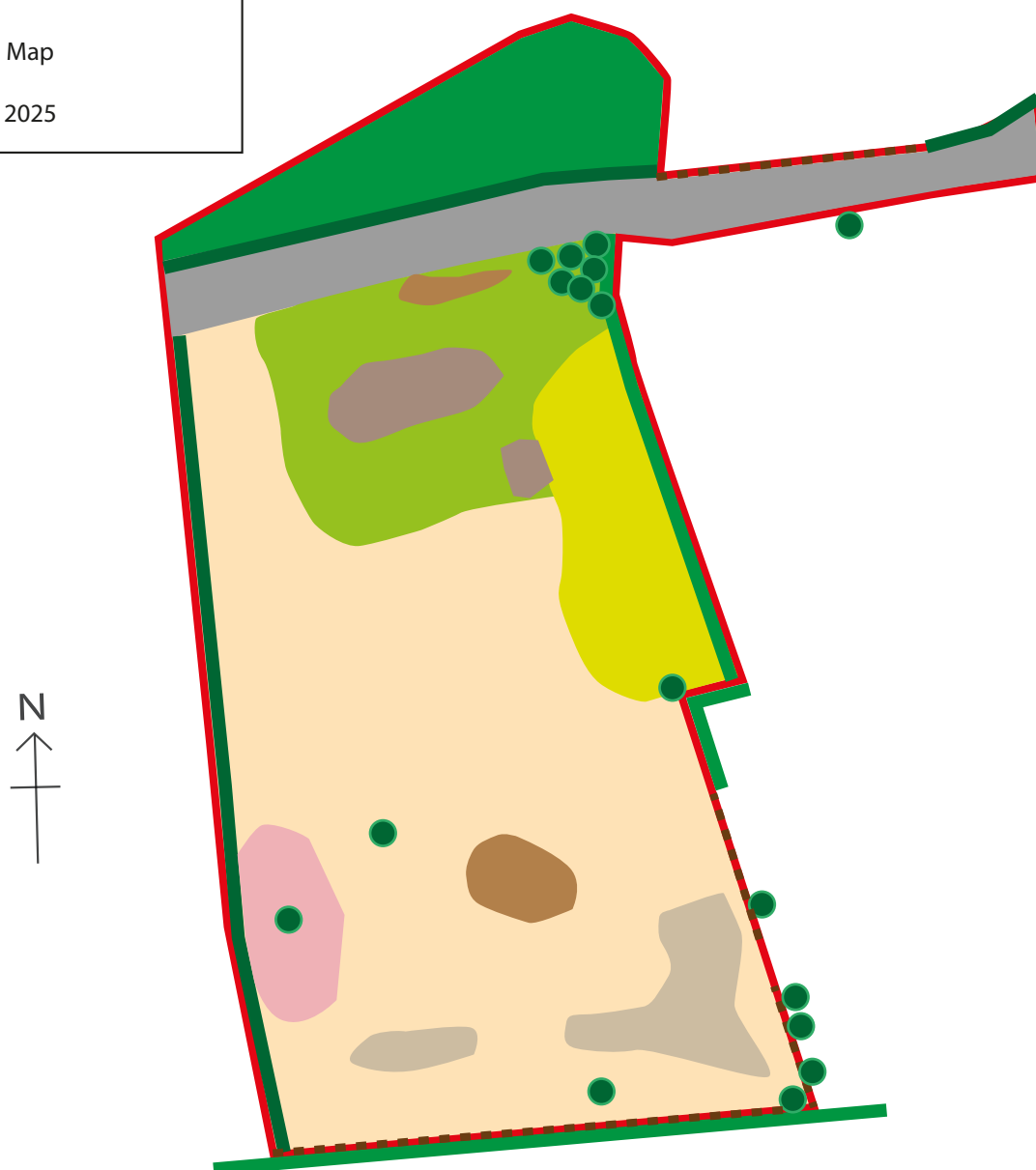
View south across clearing

Appendix 3 - Habitat Map

BRAMLEY, CATSASH ROAD,
LANGSTONE

Habitat Map

August 2025



	Broadleaved Woodland		Bracken Scrub
	Brash Pile		Scrub
	Bare Earth		Building Rubble
	Tall Ruderal Vegetation		Semi improved Grassland
	Tarmac		Tree
	Tree Line		Hedgerow
	Site Boundary		Wooden Fencing

Hibernaculum is filled to just above ground level, then capped with layer (50 - 100 mm thick) of turf or moss. If neither is available, topsoil may be used.

The addition of a geotextile membrane may be used to prevent erosion of the capping layer into the cavities beneath. This would be particularly important where the capping layer is composed of topsoil or other loose material.

