

Ecology and Trees Checklist

This checklist is required for **ALL** planning applications. Understanding the ecology on and near a site and taking action can avoid delays in planning, create a better quality scheme and avoid criminal prosecution.

Tick all features present and those that **could** be affected by any aspect of the proposal, including:

- Development above and below ground, including matters such as the connection of utilities
- Large vehicles accessing the site, such as cranes or delivery lorries
- Materials storage and where building works would take place

Are the following within or adjacent to the red line boundary? Are they affected or unaffected by the proposal?	Yes – affected by the proposal	Yes – unaffected by the proposal	No
1. Buildings and features			
Agricultural buildings (e.g. farmhouses and barns)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A pre-1960 building within 200m of woodland and/or water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A pre-1914 building within 400m of woodland and/or water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pre-1914 building with gable ends or slate roofs, regardless of location			
Underground structures (such as cellars or tunnels)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bridge structures, aqueducts or viaducts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All buildings with weather boarding and/or hanging tiles that are within 200m of woodland and/or water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposals involving the lighting of churches and listed buildings or flood lighting of green space within 50m of woodland, water, field hedgerows or lines of trees with obvious connectivity to woodland or water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have answered yes (affected) to any of these questions:			
<p>You must submit the completed checklist. For minor and major applications you must also submit an Ecology Report (guidance below) with your planning application. For householder applications you must submit as a minimum a desk study and a protected species survey</p>			
If you answered entirely “No” / “Yes – unaffected”			
<p>Please submit the completed checklist with your planning application. After that, there is no further action for you to take. Please note that if it is later found that a feature is affected, development work may be stopped immediately, and legal action taken.</p>			
2. Trees and hedges			
Ancient, Champion, and veteran trees on or adjacent to the site (older than 100 years)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trees with a girth of 1m or greater at chest height on or adjacent to the site			
Protected Trees (covered by Tree Preservation Order) on or adjacent to the site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trees on or adjacent to the site in a conservation area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have answered yes (affected) to any of these questions:			
<p>You must submit the completed checklist and a Tree Report (guidance below) with your planning application.</p>			
If you answered entirely “No” / “Yes – unaffected”			
<p>Please submit the completed checklist with your planning application. After that, there is no further action for you to take. Please note that if it is later found that a feature is affected, development work may be stopped immediately, and legal action taken.</p>			

3. Habitats			
Special Protection Area or Special Area of Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
National Nature Reserve	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
County Wildlife Site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Nature Reserve	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Priority Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Character BAP Habitats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
'Derelict land' (brownfield sites), allotments and railway land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposals affecting woodland, or field hedgerows and/or lines of trees with obvious connectivity to woodland or water bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pond/ moat within <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100m for all minor/ householder proposals • 500m for major/large proposals 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposals within 200m of rivers, streams, lakes, or other aquatic habitats such as reed bed, grazing marsh and fen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Farmland or field margins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have answered yes (affected) to any of these questions:			
You must submit the completed checklist. For minor and major applications you must also submit an Ecology Report (guidance below) with your planning application. For householder applications you must submit as a minimum a desk study and a protected species survey			
If you answered entirely "No" / "Yes – unaffected"			
Please submit the completed checklist with your planning application. After that, there is no further action for you to take. Please note that if it is later found that a feature is affected, development work may be stopped immediately, and legal action taken.			

Have any of the following species been known to use land/buildings within the red line site?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Nesting birds	<input type="checkbox"/> Dormice	<input type="checkbox"/> Otters
<input type="checkbox"/> Bats	<input type="checkbox"/> Great Crested Newts	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Voles
<input type="checkbox"/> Badgers	<input type="checkbox"/> Reptiles	<input type="checkbox"/> White-clawed Crayfish
If you have ticked the box for any species identified in the species table:		
You must submit a protected species survey.		

Great Crested Newts are often found in ponds in the district, surveys show they are in around a third of ponds in Central Bedfordshire. Even if the pond is not on site it may need consideration. Central Bedfordshire Council have been granted a District Licence for Great Crested Newts as part of a regional conservation scheme that is delivered by NatureSpace. Further information can be found on our website [Natural environment | Central Bedfordshire Council](#)

- I have completed the above form to the best of my knowledge
- I have included the required supporting documents as identified by the checklist
- Tree Report
 - Ecology Report
 - Protected Species Survey
- I understand if I do not provide the required surveys as identified in the 'what to do next' section then I cannot provide these during the application and I will need to withdraw the application and resubmit with the required information

Further Advice

Preparing an Ecology Report

1. The preparation of an Ecology Report should follow this 3 step process:
 - a. Survey and Assessment (to understand the ecology of the area)
 - b. Design (to minimise, mitigate and compensate impacts and maximise benefits)
 - c. Implementation (ensure that the agreed protection and enhancement takes place)
2. The best format for an Ecology Report is usually a [Preliminary Ecological Appraisal \(external website\)](#). It may include:
 - a. A desk study – including a search of Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre’s records
 - b. A walkover survey – identifying signs of species and habitats requiring further consideration
 - c. A phase 1 Habitat Survey – mapping the habitats on site
 - d. Recommendations – for further surveys or specific measures to avoid harming wildlife.
3. Any surveys must be carried out by a suitably qualified person. Some can only be carried out at certain times of the year, so we recommend you start researching this now. (see table 1)

Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Badgers	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal
Bats (Hibernation Roosts)	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Bats (Summer Roosts)	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Bats (Foraging/Commuting)	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Birds (Breeding)	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Birds (Over Wintering)	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal
Dormice	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Great-crested Newts	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Invertebrates	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Natterjack Toads	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Otters	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal
Reptiles	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Water Voles	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
White-clawed Crayfish	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Habitats/Vegetation	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal	Optimal

Key:
 Optimal time to survey
 Survey can be completed

Table 1: Ecological Survey Seasons

Preparing a Tree Report

1. A Tree Report must include:
 - a Tree Constraints Plan (this should also show the Root Protection Area of each tree)
 - a tree survey carried out by a suitably qualified person.
 - An Arboricultural impact assessment
 - A Tree Protection Plan
 - Arboricultural Method Statement

Tree Survey

The tree survey should be carried out in accordance with BS 5837 (2012) (full copies are available to purchase from the [British Standards Institution](#)). It should contain the following information about each tree on the site that has a stem diameter above 75mm measured at 1.5m above ground level, and those trees of smaller diameter that are of particular interest or potential value:

- A tree reference number (this should relate to a Tree constraints plan)
- Tree species
- Height
- Stem diameter taken at 1.5m from ground level
- Branch spread
- Height of crown clearance above ground
- Age class
- Physiological condition
- Structural condition
- Preliminary management requirements
- Estimated safe useful life expectancy
- Category grading

Tree Protection Plan

Trees are particularly vulnerable on development sites and may be affected either immediately if removal or pruning is necessary to accommodate a development, or in the longer term.

This may be as a result of disturbance during the development process or following pressure to remove or prune trees from the occupants of new buildings.

The design layout should take these issues into account.

Once it has been decided which trees, hedges or shrubbery are to be incorporated into a design layout it is important to ensure that they will survive the development process.

A Tree Protection Plan is an essential aspect of tree protection with regard to development.

The Tree Protection Plan is a scale plan showing:

- Any proposed or existing buildings or structures
- All retained trees both on and neighbouring the site and their corresponding Root Protection Areas and crown spreads (N, E, S and W)
- The location of protective fences or barriers (details of how these are to be constructed must also be supplied)
- Proposed location of all plant and materials storage
- Drainage runs, roads and driveways
- Existing and new accesses

- Any other surface or underground features that may affect the trees on or neighbouring the site

Arboricultural Method Statement

If there is any construction, storage, or mixing of materials proposed within the Root Protection Area of a tree, or if any part of the development process is likely to detrimentally affect any retained trees, then an Arboricultural Method Statement will be required.

An Arboricultural Method Statement details the methodology for the implementation of any aspect of development, that has the potential to result in the loss of or damage to a tree, and explains how this damage will be avoided.

Any additional mitigation measures would need to be identified prior to any construction on site to ensure that the trees are protected.

Further Information

Additional Information on Trees and Hedges

[Countryside hedgerows: protection and management - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[BS 5837:2012 | 30 Apr 2012 | BSI Knowledge \(bsigroup.com\)](http://bsigroup.com)

[Arboricultural Association - Help for Tree Owners \(trees.org.uk\)](http://trees.org.uk)

Find a professional to help:

[Arboricultural Association - Registered Consultant Directory \(trees.org.uk\)](http://trees.org.uk)

[ICF > Directory of Consultants \(datawareonline.co.uk\)](http://datawareonline.co.uk)

Additional Information on Habitats

Using the interactive maps on [DEFRA \(external website\)](#) you can locate your site and view nationally designated sites for wildlife conservation and priority habitats.

For advice on habitats with the highest level of protection, see [Natural England's guidance \(external website\)](#).

Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre [BRMC - Beds and Luton LERC \(bedscape.org.uk\)](http://bedscape.org.uk) (external website)

[Identifying requirements for Biodiversity & Geological Conservation as part of your planning application](#) (Central Bedfordshire weblink)

Natural England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)