The Ecology Consultancy

Rother Valley Railway / Site-Specific Ecological Assessment – Additional Info / **Report for Rother Valley Railway Ltd**

Rother Valley Railway (Track Reinstatement between Austen's Bridge and Junction Road)

Site-Specific Ecological Assessment – Additional Information

Report for Rother Valley Railway Ltd

Version	Author	Checked by	Approved by	Date	Type
1.0	Rosanna Marston ACIEEM BSc MSc	Charlie Dwight BSc CEcol, MCIEEM	Giles Coe	20/12/2018	FINAL
2.0	Rosanna Marston ACIEEM BSc MSc		Rosanna Marston ACIEEM BSc MSc	19/02/2019	FINAL

The Ecology Consultancy, 3 Upper Stalls, Iford, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 3EJ.
T. 01273 813739 **E.** sussex@ecologyconsultancy.co.uk **W.** www.ecologyconsultancy.co.uk

Contents

1 Introduction

BACKGROUND

1.1 The Ecology Consultancy was commissioned by Rother Valley Railway Ltd to prepare a stand-alone document that captures all of the additional information required to discharge planning condition 3 for the Rother Valley Railway site (Track Reinstatement between Austen's Bridge and Junction Road), Robertsbridge, East Sussex.

1.2 It should be noted that planning permission and conditions apply to the whole scheme - reinstatement of the Rother Valley Railway from Northbridge Street, Robertsbridge, to Junction Road, Bodiam. The environmental statement for this scheme that supported the planning application was drafted in respect of the entire route and in the absence of survey data, was based on assumptions of presence and the likelihood of different habitats and species being present.

1.3 This document covers **only** the section of the site from Austen's Bridge to Junction Road only and will be updated for the other sections as the scheme progresses. This and other supporting documents have been created after site specific surveys for this section of the track only.

1.4 Planning condition number 3 (Application Number RR/2014/1608/P) issued by Rother District Council is as below:

No development shall take place until a further detailed site-specific ecological assessment, carried out by suitably qualified and experienced ecologists has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment must employ best practice and should include, but not be limited to:

a) surveys of the proposed development site as well as its immediate surroundings

b) identifying and evaluating existing ecological features including any key species, including protected species, invasive species, and habitats

c) precise recommendations for minimising negative impacts and maximising net biodiversity gains thorough habitat management, enhancement, creation of compensatory habitat and habitat restoration.

SCOPE OF THE REPORT

1.5 This document provides details as requested by Dr Kate Cole (County Ecologist for East Sussex County Council) in her letter dated 22 August 2018 (ref: RR/2018/2095/DC). These details include (where necessary) the qualifications and experience of ecologists whom undertook the surveys and the justification for survey standards and effort.

1.6 This document has been written by Rosanna Marston BSc MSc ACIEEM, an Ecologist who has over six years' consultancy experience.

1.7 This document has been prepared with reference to best practice guidance as detailed in British Standard *42020:2013 Biodiversity - Code of Practice for Biodiversity and Development* (BSI, 2013).

SITE CONTEXT AND STATUS

1.8 The site is the stretch of track between Austen's Bridge and Junction Road B2244, east of Robertsbridge, East Sussex. The site covers approximately 1.659 hectares (ha) in total and is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference TQ 7688 2414.

1.9 The site comprises a wooded embankment (former railway line) with smaller areas of dense scrub, tall ruderal vegetation, bare ground and poor semi-improved grassland. To the north and east of the site are grassland fields. To the west is the River Rother (running under Austen's bridge) and to the east is Junction Road B2244.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

1.10 Current proposals for the site involve the reinstatement of the railway line between Austen's Bridge and Junction Road B2244. This will result in the loss of approximately 0.427ha of semi-natural habitats including 0.410ha of woodland and scrub.

1.11 The heritage railway only runs for 6 months of the year, during the summer. During this period, there would only be 10 trains a day (five in each direction), except for seven days of the year when there would be 14 trains (seven in each direction). All trains would be outside the hours of peak traffic flow (rush hours) and run from

approximately 10:40 – 18:00. The trains are restricted to a maximum of 25 mph (40 kph).

2 Site-Specific Ecological Assessment – Additional Information

BREEDING BIRDS

Justification for Survey Standards and Effort

Overview

2.1 The Environmental Statement Addendum (November 2016) states that a wider suite of birds than originally assumed is likely to be present, including some listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). However the entire length of the proposed route to which the Environmental Statement Addendum refers to is made up of a more diverse number of habitats than the site itself, which consists nearly entirely of scrub and secondary woodland habitats. These habitats are considered largely unsuitable for any Schedule 1 species that might occur (see below). For these reasons, it was not deemed necessary to undertake breeding bird surveys, on the assumption that a range of common bird species would be present.

Barn Owl

2.2 An assessment of the site for its potential to support barn owl *Tyto alba* was undertaken on 28 November 2018 by Bob Antonini – whose CV is presented in Appendix 1.

2.3 Just one tree was identified on-site with low potential to support a barn owl roost, this was a mature double stem crack willow with broken limbs. One of the broken limbs had left a large cavity on the trunk with an upward facing aspect.

2.4 This tree was located off the main embankment and therefore the main trunk will remain unaffected by the proposed works. There remains the possibility that the branches of this tree will require remedial works, and if this is the case this tree will be climbed prior to any remedial works to inspect it for the presence of barn owls.

Nightingale

2.5 An assessment of the site for its potential to support nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* was undertaken on 28 November 2018 by Bob Antonini.

2.6 Most of the site was assessed as being of low potential to support nightingale, as it was heavily shaded and the scrub was not very well developed. The exception to this was sporadic open patches with thicker bramble cover. Overall the site was deemed to lack the scrub cover nightingales prefer, and is unlikely to be a key site that requires protection.

Other Schedule 1 Birds

2.7 The Environmental Statement Addendum (November 2016) states that a wider suite of birds than barn owl should be assumed present along the proposed route including kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* (Schedule 1), lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, meadow pipit *Anthus pratensis* and skylark *Alauda arvensis*. The proposed route is made up of a more diverse number of habitats than the site however, which consists nearly entirely of scrub and woodland habitats. These would not typically support breeding kingfisher, lapwing, meadow pipit or skylark.

BADGERS

Surveyor Qualifications and Assessment of Setts

2.8 The badger *Meles meles* survey (CLM, 2018a) was undertaken by Jonathan Bramley - whose CV is presented in Appendix 1. Jonathan has surveyed for badgers since around 2000, and worked on mitigation projects since around 2008. A recent example of his work (2018) is the closing of an active sett and replacement with two setts on a site near Ashford.

2.9 The assessment of the badger setts for the Protected Species Plan, Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) was made following site visits carried out by Rosanna Marston and Giles Coe on 29 March 2018. Rosanna and Giles CV's are also provided in Appendix 1.

2.10 The visit carried out by Giles and Rosanna on 29 March 2018 supersedes the assessment made by CLM (2018a) and the mitigation has been based on this visit.

BATS

Justification for Survey Standards and Effort

2.11 The bat surveys undertaken by CLM were intended to be a mixture of both activity surveys (transect) and emergence/re-entry surveys. They successfully identified the presence of a maternity roost of soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and Daubenton's bats *Myotis daubentonii* and established that the woodland/scrub edge was used by foraging and commuting common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle and Daubenton's bats.

2.12 Although the site was assessed as having high suitability to support bats, the proposed scheme is not considered high impact, given that just 0.427ha of habitats will be lost (excluded the bat roost) and the woodland edge used for foraging and commuting will be retained. There is considered to be a low likelihood of train strikes by bats given the low speed of trains and their ceasing to run after 18:00. There is the potential for habitat removal on the embankment to improve the sites function for foraging bats. Bats within woodland are more closely associated with foraging in rides and clearings than within cluttered habitat. The opening up of this area for the passage of trains will therefore in effect create a woodland ride. For these reasons, it was deemed sufficient to undertake one survey visit per month during the peak activity period (July to September).

2.13 It is acknowledged that the surveys did not employ the use of static detectors. The use of these detectors would likely have provided additional information on which species are using the site and the way in which they are using the site. However, given the likely low to neutral impact of the proposed development, it is unlikely to have altered mitigation design.

2.14 The dusk emergence/activity surveys began approximately 15 minutes before sunset and continued for 1.5-2 hours after sunset. The dawn surveys commenced 1.5-2 hours before sunrise and continued approximately 15 minutes after sunrise. This is the accepted best practice approach for dusk emergence surveys (Collins, 2016) and is also an accepted approach for activity surveys. The sunset, sunrise and survey timings for the surveys carried out by CLM were as outlined in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Survey timings (CLM, 2017)

Survey Number	Sunrise/Sunset Time	Survey Start Time	Survey End Time
1 (1 July 2017)	21:15	21:03	23:00
2 (17 August 2017)	20:14	20:01	21:45
3 (26 September 2017)	06:50	05:07	07:01

2.15 The recommended survey effort for trees with high bat roost potential to give confidence in a negative result is three separate survey visits (with at least one dusk and one dawn). Two dusk surveys and one dawn were undertaken by CLM which established the presence of a bat roost in the ash tree at the eastern end of the site.

2.16 An assessment of the site for other trees with potential to support a bat roost was carried out on 28 November 2018 by Bob Antonini. The only other tree with high bat potential identified on or near to the embankment was the mature double stem crack willow, as mentioned above as having low barn owl roost potential. In addition to a large cavity this tree had woodpecker holes and dense ivy cover. Nine trees on or near to the embankment were identified as having moderate potential to support a bat roost and 12 trees were assessed as having low potential to support a bat roost.

2.17 The good practice guidelines (Collins, 2016) state that although three surveys are recommended for high potential trees and two surveys for moderate potential trees, they are unlikely to give confidence in a negative result (due to the inherent difficulties of surveying bats in trees). An accepted alternative approach is to climb trees and use torches/endoscopes to inspect features and establish bat presence/likely absence. This will be carried out for climbable trees with moderate to high bat roost potential immediately prior to them being felled, and any trees found to contain a bat roost will be protected until such time that a licence is in place to facilitate their removal.

2.18 For those trees with low value to roosting bats, they will be section felled avoiding any visible cavities. Sections with cavities will be lowered by rope and left for a minimum 24hrs on the ground before chipping or removing from site. Sections of trunk or limbs, with no cavities, and brash can be removed on the day of the trees works.

GREAT CRESTED NEWTS

Justification for Survey Standards and Effort

2.19 The great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* survey report (CLM, 2018c), states that habitat suitability indexes were calculated for two ponds found 'found relatively close and south of the railway line'. Further surveys (eDNA sampling) were undertaken of these ponds and a negative result returned, demonstrating that great crested newts were likely absent from these ponds. These ponds were located 220m and 400m south of the site respectively.

2.20 A search on Ordnance Survey maps (magic.defra.gov.uk) indicate that the two ponds surveyed are the only two ponds located within 500m of the site.

2.21 Ditches were present along the majority of the length of the site, which held very little water in them during the site visits undertaken by Rosanna Marston and Giles Coe on 29 March 2018. These ditches apparently held no water during the great crested newt survey carried out on 15 June 2017 by CLM and therefore could not be surveyed. Ditches that dry out are generally considered to be less suitable for great crested newts, as any eggs and larvae present would not survive.

2.22 Overall and considering the above it is considered that great crested newts are likely absent from the site and no further surveys or specific mitigation for this species are required.

REPTILES

Justification for Survey Standards and Effort

2.23 It is acknowledged (by Kate Cole) that reptile surveys were undertaken 'broadly in accordance with best practice'.

2.24 Low populations of common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* and grass snake *Natrix helvetica* were established as present at the edges of the site (likely to be using the adjacent field edge for basking and foraging). These reptiles will be maintained on-site during and post-development, using on-site log piles as receptor locations if any reptiles are found during clearance works. A minor loss of habitat (mainly suitable for hibernation) will occur, however the injury or killing of reptiles will be avoided by undertaking a two-phased cut of vegetation as supervised by a suitably qualified

ecologist. The timings of this work will be guided by the detail put into the mitigation for hazel dormice (see Protected Species Plan and CEMP).

References

CLM (2018a) *Badger Survey: Rother Valley Railway (Track Reinstatement between Austins Bridge and Junction Road)*. Unpublished report.

CLM (2018b) *Bat Survey: Rother Valley Railway (Track Reinstatement between Austins Bridge and Junction Road).* Unpublished report.

CLM (2018c) *Primary Great Crested Newt Survey: Rother Valley Railway (Track Reinstatement between Austins Bridge and Junction Road).* Unpublished report.

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn).* The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Appendix 1: CV's for Suitably Qualified Ecologists

JONATHAN BRAMLEY BSc (Hons), MPhil, MCIEEM

PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

Bramley Associates: Founder and Ecological Consultant (1998 to current)

Main Responsibilities:

- Ecologist
- Project management (from individual species surveys to management of a complete suite of ecological issues on large and complex sites, such as M25 works)
- Ecological fieldwork, specialising in Protected Species and habitat surveys (Phase 1 and NVC)
- Input into ecological assessments, impact assessments and management plans
- Contract and project management
- Reporting, to include cartography and data analysis

Key Field Skills:

- Baseline ecological survey
- Botanical survey NVC & condition assessment;
- Protected species survey work for bats, great crested newt, hazel dormouse, reptiles, badger, otter, water vole, native crayfish, birds and other groups and species.
- Ecological surveys in terrestrial, marine and freshwater environments.

EDUCATION AND MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES

- BSc (Hons) Ecology University of London, MPhil Aquatic Ecology University of Kent
- Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (1998-present)

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS, MEMBERSHIPS AND POSITIONS (currently/previously) HELD:

- Bats – NE Level 2 survey licence
- Great crested newt – NE Level 1 survey licence
- Dormouse – NE survey licence
- Otter – NE survey licence
- Water vole - NE survey licence and CL31 site management licence
- Barn owl – NE survey licence
- Native crayfish – NE survey licence
- Held/hold/worked within NE licences for development and mitigation works for water vole, badger, dormouse, bats and other species
- First Aid at Work
- CSCS Ecologist/Professional card
- River Habitat Surveyor certificated
- Founding member, Kent County Recorder and Chair Person of Kent Mammal Group
- Steering Group Committee member for national Mammal Society
- Member of the British Ecological Society
- Member of the Freshwater Biological Association
- Founder member of the Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group
- Member of the East Kent Badger group since 1998.
- Certificated tree climber/rescue climber (Unit 38 NPTC)
- Certificated brush cutter and chainsaw operative (Lantra HO0016782 and CS30, 31A, 31B, CS36 NPTC)
- HSE/BSAC SCUBA Diver. BSAC OWI. Nitrox Gas Blender (ITDA).
- Marine Mammal Observer certificated. SeaWatch County Recorder.

- Seasearch (SCUBA) founder Kent & trainer at Observer and Survey level.
- Shoresearch founder Kent.
- Visiting undergraduate and postgraduate lecturer for University of Greenwich, University of Kent and Christ Church University. External Examiner for Greenwich University
- External Examiner for Undergraduate courses in Conservation Biology and Habitat Management at Greenwich University.
- Trainer in a range of ecological field skills, including otter, water vole, marine surveys, bat, herptile, freshwater plants, chalkland plants, NVC, Scoping surveys and Phase 2 surveys
- Enclosed Spaces trained

RELEVANT EMPLOYMENT (PRIOR TO 1998)

- Reserve Manager (Essex Wildlife Trust)
- Otter and River Project Officer (Kent & Sussex Wildlife Trusts)
- Researcher Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology, Kent University, UK
- Researcher Ecology Research Group, Christ Church University, UK
- Researcher, University of Cape Town, SA

ECOLOGICAL SURVEY SKILLS

- Project management and delivery
- Survey design lead and report to CIEEM standards.
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Phase 1+).
- Lead surveyor: detailed species surveys (Phase 2) for bats, great crested newt and other amphibians, hazel dormouse, reptiles, badger, otter, water vole, beaver and other mammals.
- Survey skills for other UK Protected species, and groups including marine and freshwater invertebrates and algae.
- Data flow and management including digital field data collection, GIS.

Curriculum Vitae

The Ecology Consultancy

Giles Coe
DIRECTOR

An ecologist with a wide range of experience in commercial practise, ranging from surveys and assessment to acting as expert witness and negotiating with statutory agencies and local planning authorities. Giles' current role within the company includes overall responsibility for the development of our regional offices in Sussex, Norfolk, Midlands, and the North of England, and the development of our GIS services.

Tasked with establishing a regional office for TEC in Sussex in 2007, staff numbers have risen under his supervision to 14 full time ecologists, with the project portfolio currently including district-wide appraisals and numerous large-scale housing developments. The progress of the Sussex office has been characterised by steady, sustainable growth with an emphasis on client-focussed service and high-quality technical expertise. Giles' project management achievements include building a relationship with DP World at the London Gateway, where he has been responsible for the successful delivery of £1.75 million of ecology works from 2012 onwards. Giles has advanced TEC's profile by presenting to the Environmental Action Group at the London Gateway, a biannual stakeholder meeting, where he showcased the ecology works to the regulators and answered questions on project delivery and compliance. Giles provides regular CPD presentations to clients and Natural England, and delivers ecological training via a CIEEM course on Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, a course that he and Ben Kimpton have run since 2014.

As well as developing TEC in Sussex, Giles has also implemented company-wide improvements, spearheading the establishment of working groups and encouraging technological innovation such as our eDNA service. In addition to holding protected species survey licences, Giles acts as named ecologist on EPSM development licences for bats, great crested newts, disturbance & damage licenses for badgers, and is a Registered Consultant on Natural England's new Bat Low Impact Class Licence scheme.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	**Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Card**, 2017
	Bats, Level 2 Class Survey License 2008 - 2018
	Bats, BLICL Registered Consultant 2015 – 2018
	Badgers, Badger Class Licence, 2018
	Great Crested Newt Survey License 2006 - 2018
	EPSM, named ecologist, Bats and Great Crested Newts, 2011 – 2018
	CSCS Card Skilled Operative, 2008 – 2021
	CIEEM, Full Member, 2005 - 2017
EDUCATION	**BSc (Hons)** Environmental Management, University of North London 2001
PROFESSIONAL HISTORY	**Director,** The Ecology Consultancy, 2018
	Technical Director, The Ecology Consultancy, 2016 – 2018
	Principal Ecologist, The Ecology Consultancy, 2014 – 2016
	Senior Ecologist, The Ecology Consultancy, 2008-2014
	Ecologist, The Ecology Consultancy, 2007-2008
	Assistant Ecologist, The Ecology Consultancy, 2005-2007
	Field Assistant, The Ecology Consultancy, 2003-2005
	Seasonal Ecologist, Bullens Consultants, 2002-2003

Giles Coe - CV
The Ecology Consultancy

KEY SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

- Lead ecologist on large scale infrastructure, housing developments and habitat creation projects
- Proof of evidence for public inquiry and expert witness
- Holds both survey and European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) mitigation licences for bats and great crested newts and is a registered consultant on the BLICL scheme
- Production of the ecology chapter of environmental statements, Ecological Management Plans, EPSM licences, mitigation strategies, Construction and Environment Management plans and Ecological Constraints and Opportunity Plans
- Business development and client liaison
- Provides ecology training to infrastructure engineers, stakeholders and operatives

SELECTED PROJECTS

DP World, London Gateway (2012 – present)

Lead project manager for TEC, providing ecological advice and support to the environment team at this significant port development and Logistics Park. Responsibilities have included monitoring existing EPSM licences for great crested newts, implementing a newt translocation and two reptile translocations, writing and implementing a water vole translocation licence across a 50ha site and designing a habitat compensation scheme. Giles also delivers a presentation detailing the ecology activities associated with the scheme to the biannual Environmental Action Group attended by statutory agencies and other stakeholders. Currently at the end of a four year process of site surveys/assessment, ecological evaluation, licensed mitigation works for water voles and the design and implementation of a novel mitigation process for Schedule 1 breeding birds over a 76ha area of farmland known as Site X. This site is due to have a 700m length of sea wall removed to promote the accretion of extensive mudflats for the benefit of birds using the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA/SSSI/Ramsar site.

Hastings Borough Council (2014)

Giles worked with the council to carry out a preliminary ecological appraisal and technical advice for land earmarked for development under the emerging local plan. This included survey and assessment followed up with a series of stakeholder engagement sessions for local interest groups, leading to the production of Ecological Constraints and Opportunities maps and a recommendation to split the land allocation partly for housing and partly for the creation of a local wildlife site. Giles appeared as an expert witness on behalf of the council at a planning meeting that was assessing housing allocation under the emerging Local Plan.

Various / Network Rail - Other Rail Work (2009-11)

Other recent infrastructure work has included surveys and reporting for a range of protected species on rail projects such as: Portsmouth Northern Road Bridge, Cardiff Stations platform extensions, Balcombe rail bridge, Mutley and Polperro tunnel refurbishment, Luton Station scoping surveys, Westbury Local Distribution Centre and Tesco Gerrards Cross. These projects all involved the surveying of long sections of linear habitats within the rail corridor and the development of practical mitigation measures.

Amey/Network Rail - Taunton, Standish and Dorrington (2009 – 2010)

Signalling upgrades over 26, 14 and 6 mile sections of the permanent way. Collected Phase 1 habitat information for the trackside habitats on both Up and Down embankments for each of the individual works areas within the three routes. Additional information was collected to assess any likely constraints to works from legally protected species including; bats, badgers, breeding birds, great crested newts and reptiles. A detailed desk study was also conducted to locate and map any records for protected species as well as the boundaries of any protected areas that were intersected by the working areas. A detailed scoping report was produced for the client to inform the works with a new format devised to allow ease of interpretation of ecology data for these long linear routes.

Curriculum Vitae

The Ecology Consultancy

ROSANNA MARSTON
ECOLOGIST

Rosanna Marston BSc MSc ACIEEM is an ecologist with 6 years' experience in consultancy. She is a skilled field ecologist with an understanding of the planning process and the needs of the client.

Her particular focus whilst working with The Ecology Consultancy has been within the commercial and residential sectors in the south east of England. Her particular strength is carrying out protected species surveys and GIS mapping.

Rosanna will be responsible for carrying out habitat and protected species surveys, writing reports, GIS mapping, project management and client liaison.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	**Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM),** Associate member, 2014 **Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Card**, 2012 **Network Rail**, Personal Track Safety, 2015 **Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC)** Level 4, 2014 **UKasl,** Asbestos awareness, 2017 **St John's Ambulance,** First aid at work, 2017 **Hazel dormouse** Survey License (Level 1) **Great Crested Newt** Survey License (Level 1)
EDUCATION	**BSc (Hons)** Zoology, University of Reading, 2010 **MSc** Biodiversity Survey, University of Sussex, 2011
PROFESSIONAL HISTORY	**Ecologist**, The Ecology Consultancy, July 2013 - present **Ecologist**, Chris Blandford Associates, March 2012 - July 2013
KEY SKILLS & EXPERIENCE	• Project management, including stakeholder engagement / liaison and input into project delivery • Watching Brief and Ecological Clerk of Works roles • Client liaison and involvement at design stages • Phase 1 habitat, Ecological scoping, BREEAM & CfSH assessments • Production of fee quotes, PQQs and tender documents • GIS Mapping • Hedgerow surveys including historical map/archaeological analysis • Protected species surveys including dormouse, badger, bat, reptile and great crested newt • Design of Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Programmes • Ecological masterplanning incl. Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plans (ECOP)

Rosanna Marston - CV
The Ecology Consultancy

SELECTED PROJECTS

Rye Harbour Holiday Park – Corsican Associates (2017 – present)

As project officer for this site, Rosie took the lead on writing the badger licence and overseeing the mitigation works to close a sett. This involved working closely with the client, the general manager of the holiday park and the residents of the caravans under which badger setts were present.

Wilderness, Phase 3 – Gleeds Management Services (2017)

As project officer for this residential development site, Rosie took the lead on the surveys, report writing and mapping. This involved badger, bat and reptile surveys during which the presence of fox and grass snake were discovered on site. Appropriate mitigation was thus recommended.

One Preston Park – One Preston Park LLP (2016 – present)

Rosie acted as Project Officer for this proposed housing development in Brighton. Surveys carried out to-date for which Rosie has taken the lead on include a Preliminary Ecological appraisal (PEA), bat and reptile surveys. The site has also undergone a reptile translocation.

Castleham Estate, St. Leonard's-on-Sea – Hastings Borough Council (2015-2016)

Rosie acted as Project Officer for this project to create an industrial unit within an existing estate. Surveys carried out to-date for which Rosie has taken the lead on include a PEA, tree assessment for bats, reptile survey, badger survey and eDNA survey for great crested newt. Rosie worked closely with the project architects (BBM Sustainable Design) to design a scheme layout which would have the least detrimental impact on biodiversity and also best conform to the client's timetable of works. Following planning approval in 2015, Rosie has produced a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (ECOP) in line with British Standards for Biodiversity BS42020:2013. This was to guide the necessary mitigation required including a reptile translocation.

Rock Lane, Hastings – Savills (2014-2015)

As Project Officer for this proposed housing development, Rosie has taken the lead on the majority of work carried out to-date. This includes a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, reptile survey, Habitat Suitability Index assessment for great crested newt and dormouse survey. A composite ecological report and ECOP following BS42020:2013 was produced, and planning approval was given in 2015.

Land at Silverdale, Coldwaltham – Stonewater (2014-2015)

Rosie acted as Project Officer for this proposed housing development and undertook surveys including a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and reptile survey. A reptile translocation was required at the site, for which Rosie wrote the reptile mitigation strategy report for and also undertook the mitigation work.

Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping (BOM) for Central Lincolnshire – Greater Lincoln Nature Partnership (GLNP) (2013)

Played a key role in developing the BOM methodology and report for the Greater Lincoln Nature Partnership. She produced all of the GIS mapping, helped run public workshops and attended meetings with representatives from the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, City of Lincoln Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Environment Agency and Natural England amongst others who are partners in the GLNP.

Walthamstow Wetlands Conservation Management Plan (2013)

Plans to develop Walthamstow Wetlands into an urban wetland and nature reserve made it the winner of the prestigious 2012 London Planning Awards under the 'Best Conceptual Project' category. Rosie provided ecological advice to inform the CMP, report writing and GIS mapping.

Gatwick Airport Flood Storage Attenuation & Pollution Lagoons – British Airports Authority/Gatwick Airport Ltd (2013)

Rosie undertook the bulk of ecological survey work in 2013, including a great crested newt translocation, hedgerow survey and reptile survey. She worked alongside representatives from Carillion and the Gatwick Greenspace Partnership, including members of the Sussex Wildlife Trust. She also produced associated reports and maps.

Bob Antonini
PRINCIPAL ECOLOGIST

Bob Antonini BSc MCIEEM CEnv is a principal ecologist with 30 years' experience in ecological consultancy. He spent 20 years running his own business undertaking mainly botanical surveys for conservation charities in Sussex and on agri-environment schemes for ADAS and undertaking habitat management and creation on various habitat types throughout Sussex.

At Halcrow/CH2M he developed skills in protected species and holds survey licences for great crested newts and dormouse. He has held EPSM licences for both species. He is currently working towards a bat class survey licence. He also spent much time working on infrastructure and flood defence schemes as environmental clerk of works and has developed skills in client and stakeholder liaison whilst managing all aspects of environmental and ecological issues on site.

As a new starter with The Ecology Consultancy, Bob has picked up several ongoing projects including ecological monitoring schemes at DP World. He has yet to develop a portfolio of projects at TEC to include below but, instead, several historic schemes that he has worked on are detailed to highlight his experience. Bob will be responsible for project management and client liaison including attendance of meetings, budget and programme management, quality assurance, reviewing reports and mentoring more junior colleagues.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	**Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)**, Full member since mid-1990's
	Society for the Environment, Chartered Environmentalist since 2004
	Association of Environmental and Ecological Clerks of Work, Full member since 2015
	Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS), White, Professionally Qualified person valid till 2019
	Great Crested Newt Survey Licence (Level 1)
	Dormouse Survey Licence
	NPTC chainsaw and knapsack sprayer certification
EDUCATION	**BSc (Hons)** Biology 1st Class Hons, University of Sussex 1984 - 1987
PROFESSIONAL HISTORY	**Principal Ecologist**, The Ecology Consultancy, August 2017 - present
	Senior Ecologist, Halcrow/CH2M, March 2008 – August 2017
	Sole Trader/Ecologist, Ecological Land Management, Dec 1988 – March 2008
KEY SKILLS & EXPERIENCE	• Protected species surveys including dormouse, bat, badger, water vole, reptile and great crested newt
	• Production of ecological management plans, mitigation strategies and EPSM Licences.
	• Design of Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Programmes
	• Phase 1 habitat, NVC and other detailed botanical surveys, Phase 2 surveys
	• Client liaison and involvement at design stages
	• Project management, including stakeholder engagement / liaison
	• Mentoring of junior staff

- Habitat creation and management

SELECTED PROJECTS

Cross Rail, United Kingdom: Cross Rail, 2012 to 2015

Halcrow Group Ltd is one of the delivery partners for this project to link railway networks to the east and west of London.

Based at Canary Wharf, Bob's remit, as lead ecologist, on the project was to manage all ecological issues associated with the project, such as reviewing contractors' environment management plans.

He was heavily involved in the Wallasea Island Project, a managed retreat and habitat creation scheme using clay extracted from tunnelling in London. The island supported large populations of water voles and reptiles that had to be displaced/translocated. Bob was involved both in the field and overseeing sub-consultants employed by the Ban Nuttall.

Lyme Regis Environmental Improvements Phase IV: West Dorset District Council, 2013 to 2019

A multi-million pound scheme to protect properties in Lyme Regis from a landslip. Bob became the dormouse licence holder in this existing coastal cliff defence scheme in 2013. He took over the monitoring visits for dormice, carried twice yearly, in May 2015 and will continue till 2019 when CH2M were commissioned to complete the whole monitoring scheme till 2019.

M4 Smart Motorways Project: Highways England through Arcadis/CH2M JV, April 2016 to December 2016

Bob acted as lead ecologist on a largescale GCN survey associated with this project, providing Arcadis with weekly updates of survey results. The role also entailed a great deal of engagement with the relevant landowners about access as well as co-ordinating the two teams of ecologists to ensure the survey was delivered on time. The role also involved close liaison with Arcadis whilst they wrote the report and gathered evidence for an EPS licence application.

Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls: Environment Agency, July 2016 to 2018

This flood scheme occurs on the River Adur, Shoreham, West Sussex from the mouth through the town and beyond to the A27. This whole area is covered by various environmental designations.

As Environmental Clerk of Works on the project, Bob's role is to manage all environmental risks associated with the scheme within this mostly urban site. The major constraints are noise and vibration in the town relating to sheet piling and its potential impact on fisheries as well as people. Reptile translocation has been required on several reaches and Bob has liaised with the designer's ecologists during this process.

The other aspect of Bob's role is to interpret relevant wildlife legislation to the client, the main contractor and subcontractors by giving tool box talks to operative staff and liaison with the client whilst on site and at progress meetings. Bob inputs an environment report into the monthly progress report and regularly updated the EAP.

Sandwich Town Tidal Defences, United Kingdom: Environment Agency January, 2013 to August 2015

This was a major flood alleviation scheme around the town of Sandwich, Kent and into the adjacent countryside likely to last for 2.5 years.

As Environmental Clerk of Works on the project, Bob's role is to manage all environmental risks associated with the scheme, updating the EAPs for each reach. The major constraints on this scheme include water voles, reptiles, ground nesting birds and the proximity of the scheme to large tracts of designated wildlife sites.

The other aspect of Bob's role is to interpret relevant wildlife legislation to the client, the main contractor and subcontractors by giving tool box talks to operative staff and liaison with the client whilst on site

and at progress meetings. This role was preceded by Bob carrying out a number of survey projects including the initial Phase 1 Ecological Scoping Survey followed by reptile, great crested newt, bat, botanical and badger surveys. The role also involved supervising other ecologists carrying out mitigation works.

River Avon River Restoration Project: Environment Agency, January 2016 to September 2016

Bob worked as an ecologist on one particular scheme at Norton Bavant, Wiltshire where a straightened mill channel was replaced with a meandering section of river, connecting it to the floodplain once more. The main constraint, here, was water voles. Bob undertook a survey to locate the populations, designed a displacement strategy and liaised with the EA water vole licence holder to work under their organisational licence as an accredited agent. Bod supervised all works associated with the displacement. A GCN survey, including eDNA sampling, was also undertaken for this scheme.

During the construction phase, Bob provided an ecological clerk of works presence along with environmental colleagues. He liaised closely with the cline throughout the whole project.

Sandhurst to Newenden Main Lay, United Kingdom: South East Water 2011

This scheme involved the installation of two kilometres of mains water pipe. Bob was the European Protected Species Licence holder for great crested newt in relation to this main lay. His role involved the supervision of the installation of exclusion fencing prior to construction in accordance with the method statement, regular monitoring of fence condition throughout the project and requesting necessary repairs. Finally, he provided a watching brief during the removal of the fencing post construction and sending EPS report to Natural England.

This role followed an initial Phase 1 Ecological Scoping Survey and subsequent great crested newt survey.

Ecological Land Management 1988 – 2008

Bob was the proprietor of Ecological Land Management for almost twenty years. This involved:

- Project management of all contracts, all aspects of business administration, locating and tendering for contracts, site visits and liaison with clients, providing ecological advice and arrangement of grant aid, where appropriate. It also involved the managing of subcontractors used on projects.
- Undertaking ecological survey work in a wide variety of habitats, including chalk and neutral grasslands, woodland, aquatic and riparian habitats. Survey methods used ranged from simple Phase I through to detailed quadrat methodologies and NVC. I have also undertaken bird and lepidopteron surveys, including a Pollard Butterfly Transect monitored from 1988 to 2007.
- Habitat management work undertaken included scrub clearance on the Sussex Downs, coppicing and general woodland management, reedbed management, tree planting, pond creation, meadow management. Estate management work carried out includes various types of fencing, Rights of Way furniture erection and Rights of Way maintenance.

Major clients at E.L.M have included:

- Sussex Wildlife Trust
- National Trust
- South Downs National Park
- RSPB
- ADAS
- Local Authorities

The Ecology Consultancy is part of the Temple Group.

Making places better for people and wildlife

London - Tempus Wharf, 33a Bermondsey Wall West, London, SE16 4TQ
T. 020 7378 1914 **W.** www.ecologyconsultancy.co.uk **E.** enquiries@ecologyconsultancy.co.uk

- **Sussex** - 3 Upper Stalls, Iford, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3EJ **T.** 01273 813739
- **East Anglia** - 60 Thorpe Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 1RY **T.** 01603 628408
- **Midlands** - 1-2 Trent Park, Eastern Avenue, Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 6RN **T.** 01543 229049
- **North** - Trinity Walk, Unit G37b, Market Walk, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 1QR **T.** 01924 683558