

**Addendum to Ecological appraisal of:**

Harebreaks Wood  
Leggatts Way  
Watford  
WD24 5NE

**Prepared for:**

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### APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Woodland habitat map

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background & Scope**

1.1.1 Dendra Consulting Ltd was commissioned by Southern Green to undertake an ecological appraisal of Harebreaks recreation ground, Leggatts Way, Watford. The original scope of the contract was to undertake a Phase 1 Habitat survey and protected species assessment to help inform design proposals for the decommissioning of an existing play area and the creation of a new play area within the wooded recreation ground. This additional survey work was requested in order to further inform the proposals as a more fixed location for the new play equipment has now been agreed.

### **1.2 Details of Proposals**

1.2.1 Plans showing the likely development area were provided along with an indication of the type of play equipment that will be installed. These include wooden play equipment, inclusive play equipment and a large multi-play unit. The current preferred location is along the eastern side of the woodland.

### **1.3 Field Survey Methodology, Timing and Personnel**

1.3.1 The survey was undertaken by Barry Anderson and Frances Mudd, both of whom are experienced ecologists and full members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. Weather conditions during the survey were dry and fine. There were no significant visibility constraints.

## 2.0 SURVEY RESULTS

### 2.1 Woodland habitats

2.1.1 The survey area consists mostly of broad-leaved woodland and forms the south western corner of Harebreaks Wood. Within the survey area the main canopy is dominated by mature pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*) with occasional mature beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). The canopy has attained an approximate height of 20m with stem diameters up to approximately 800mm measured at 1.5m. The canopy cover is between 50-60% although this might appear denser in the summer months when the trees are in full leaf. Below the main canopy is a scattered shrub layer to around 10m in height. The shrub layer is very patchy in distribution with less than 20% overall cover. Species present in the shrub layer include wild cherry (*Prunus avium*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*). Other species including ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) were also recorded.

2.1.2 The woodland flora can be divided into three broad types. These are:

- Bramble scrub
- Grassland (Acidic grassland and neutral/managed grassland)
- Bare ground/existing recreation ground.

2.1.3 The bramble scrub is relatively dense and around 1m in height. It is relatively species poor. It is a typical ground flora cover in many oak woodlands. The scrub present in the survey area did not have any special ecological value in terms of rare or notable plant species.

2.1.4 Much of the woodland ground floor is dominated by grassland. This is usually more typical of management such as grazing. However in the case of Harebreaks it is most likely to be due to high levels of use and trampling of vegetation. This can damage more natural woodland flora in favour of grass

species In some areas this grassland is more acidic in nature with sheep's fescue (*Festuca ovina*) and wavy hair grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*) present. These areas are marked on the attached plan. In other areas the grasses are dominated by a mixture of more typical woodland species, such as rough meadow grass (*Poa trivialis*), and by more typical neutral grassland species such as Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Again, as with the scrub, these habitats were not considered to have a particularly high ecological value and there were no rare or notable plant species present.

- 2.1.5 The existing recreation ground had the poorest ground flora due to hard surfacing and high levels of activity resulting in a large proportion of bare ground. From an ecological perspective this is the poorest part of the survey area.

## **2.2 Bat risk assessment of trees**

- 2.2.1 The trees were inspected from ground level using binoculars. The trees were assessed for potential roosting features (PRFs) including features such as ivy, woodpecker holes, splits in branches, rot holes, etc. The results are provided in figure 1 below. The numbers correspond to the numbering in the arboricultural report prepared by Duramen (ref: 16018) and therefore the drawing for the tree report should be used to cross reference.

Figure 1 – Results of bat risk assessment

Tree number	Species	Potential Roosting Feature (PRF)	Risk
G1	Sycamore, Horse chestnut	-	Negligible
2	Oak	-	Low
3	Oak	-	Low
4	Oak	-	Low
5	Oak	-	Low
6	Oak	-	Low
7	Oak	Hollow upper stem	Medium
8	Oak	-	Low
9	Oak	Stem cavity	Medium
10	Oak	Stem cavity	High
11	Oak	-	Low
G12	Birch, Willow	-	Negligible
13	Oak	-	Low
G14	Hazel, Beech, Oak	-	Negligible
15	Cherry	-	Negligible
G16	Willow, Ash, Hawthorn	-	Negligible
17	Oak	-	Low
18	Oak	-	Low
19	Oak	-	Low
20	Oak	Ivy	Medium
21	Oak	Ivy	Medium
22	Oak	Woodpecker hole	High
23	Oak	-	Low
24	Oak	-	Low
25	Oak	-	Low
26	Oak	Ivy	Medium
27	Oak	-	Low
28	Oak	-	Low
29	Oak	-	Low
30	Oak	Ivy	Medium
31	Oak	Branch cavity	Medium
32	Oak	Ivy	Medium
33	Oak	-	Low
34	Oak	-	Low
35	Oak	-	Low
36	Oak	-	Low
37	Oak	Upper stem cavities	Medium
38	Oak	Stem cavity	Medium
39	Oak	-	Low
40	Oak	-	Low

Tree number	Species	Potential Roosting Feature (PRF)	Risk
41	Oak	Ivy	Medium
42	Beech	-	Low
43	Beech	-	Low
44	Beech	-	Low
45	Oak	Woodpecker hole	High
46	Oak	-	Low
47	Oak	Stem cavity	Medium
48	Oak	-	Low
49	Oak	Ivy	Medium
50	Oak	Ivy	Medium
51	Oak	Ivy	Medium
52	Oak	Ivy	Medium
53	Oak	Ivy	Medium
54	Oak	Ivy	Medium
55	Oak	Ivy	High
56	Oak	Ivy	Medium
57	Oak	Ivy	Medium
58	Oak	Ivy	Medium
59	Oak	Ivy	Medium
60	Oak	Ivy	Medium
61	Oak	Ivy	Medium
62	Oak	Ivy	Low
63	Oak	Ivy	Medium
64	Oak	Ivy	Medium
65	Oak	Ivy	Medium
66	Oak	Ivy	Medium
67	Oak	Ivy	Medium
68	Oak	Ivy	Medium
69	Oak	Ivy	Medium
70	Oak	Ivy	Medium
71	Oak	Ivy	Medium
72	Oak	Ivy	Medium
73	Oak	Ivy	Medium
74	Oak	-	Low
75-78 and others	Oak	Loose bark, stem cavities, ivy. Group of trees not marked individually on plan	Medium
79	Oak	Loose bark	Medium
79a	Oak	Stem cavity	Medium
80	Oak	Multiple stem cavities	High
81	Oak	-	Low
82	Oak	-	Low
83	Oak	Branch cavities	High
84	Oak	Stem cavity	Medium
84a	Oak	-	Low

Tree number	Species	Potential Roosting Feature (PRF)	Risk
85	Oak	Gap behind reaction wood	Medium
86	Oak	Woodpecker hole	High
87	Oak	-	Low
88	Oak	Ivy	Medium
89	Oak	-	Low
90	Oak	-	Low
91	Oak	-	Low
92	Oak	Split in upper stem	Medium
93	Oak	Ivy	Medium
94	Oak	Cavity in lower branch	High
95	Oak	-	Low
96	Oak	-	Low
97	Oak	-	Low
98	Oak	Loose bark in upper stem	Medium
99	Oak	-	Low
100	Oak	-	Negligible
101	Oak	-	Negligible
102	Oak	-	Negligible
103	Oak	-	Low
104	Oak	-	Low
105	Oak	Branch cavity	Medium
106	Oak	Branch cavity	Medium
107	Oak	Branch cavity	Medium
108	Oak	Branch cavity	Medium
109	Oak	Woodpecker hole	High
110	Oak	Ivy	Medium
111	Oak	Ivy	High
112	Oak	Ivy	Medium
113	Oak	Ivy	Medium
114	Oak	Ivy	Medium
115	Oak	Ivy	Medium
116	Oak	-	Low
117	Oak	-	Low
118	Oak	-	Low
119	Oak	-	Low
120	Oak	-	Low
121	Oak	-	Low
122	Oak	-	Low
123	Oak	Broken branch	Medium
124	Oak	-	Low
125	Oak	-	Low
126	Oak	-	Low
127	Oak	-	Low
128	Oak	-	Low



<b>Tree number</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Potential Roosting Feature (PRF)</b>	<b>Risk</b>
129	Oak	Branch cavity	Medium
130	Birch	-	Negligible
131	Oak	-	Negligible
132	Ash	-	Negligible

### **3.0 CONCLUSIONS**

#### **3.1 Woodland ground flora**

3.1.1 The woodland ground flora does not contain large numbers of ancient woodland indicator species relevant to the area. This is discussed in detail in the original report.

3.1.2 The current recreation area has the poorest ground flora within the woodland due to high levels of disturbance and existing hard standing/play equipment.

3.1.3 The current proposals will likely require some bramble scrub clearance in order to allow the erection of the play equipment. The ecological impacts of this will be minor given the scale of the proposals.

3.1.4 Overall the impacts of the proposals to install the equipment at the eastern end of the woodland will be low level and not highly significant in terms of the loss of woodland ground flora. Vegetation clearance should not be undertaken during the bird nesting season of mid-March to August inclusive.

#### **3.2 Bats and trees**

3.2.1 The current proposals will involve the erection of play equipment next to a small number of low and moderate risk trees.

3.2.2 The proposals will not require the removal of any trees. The proposals will not require the installation of any lighting. The current proposals do not present a significant risk to bats or a bat roost.

3.2.3 From an aesthetic perspective it might be desirable to to remove ivy from trees. This is best done by severing ivy late in year and leaving to die and fall from the trees. This work should not be undertaken during the bird nesting season of mid-March to August inclusive.

#### **4.0 REFERENCES**

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

**JNCC (2010)** *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A technique for Environmental Audit*. JNCC, Peterborough.

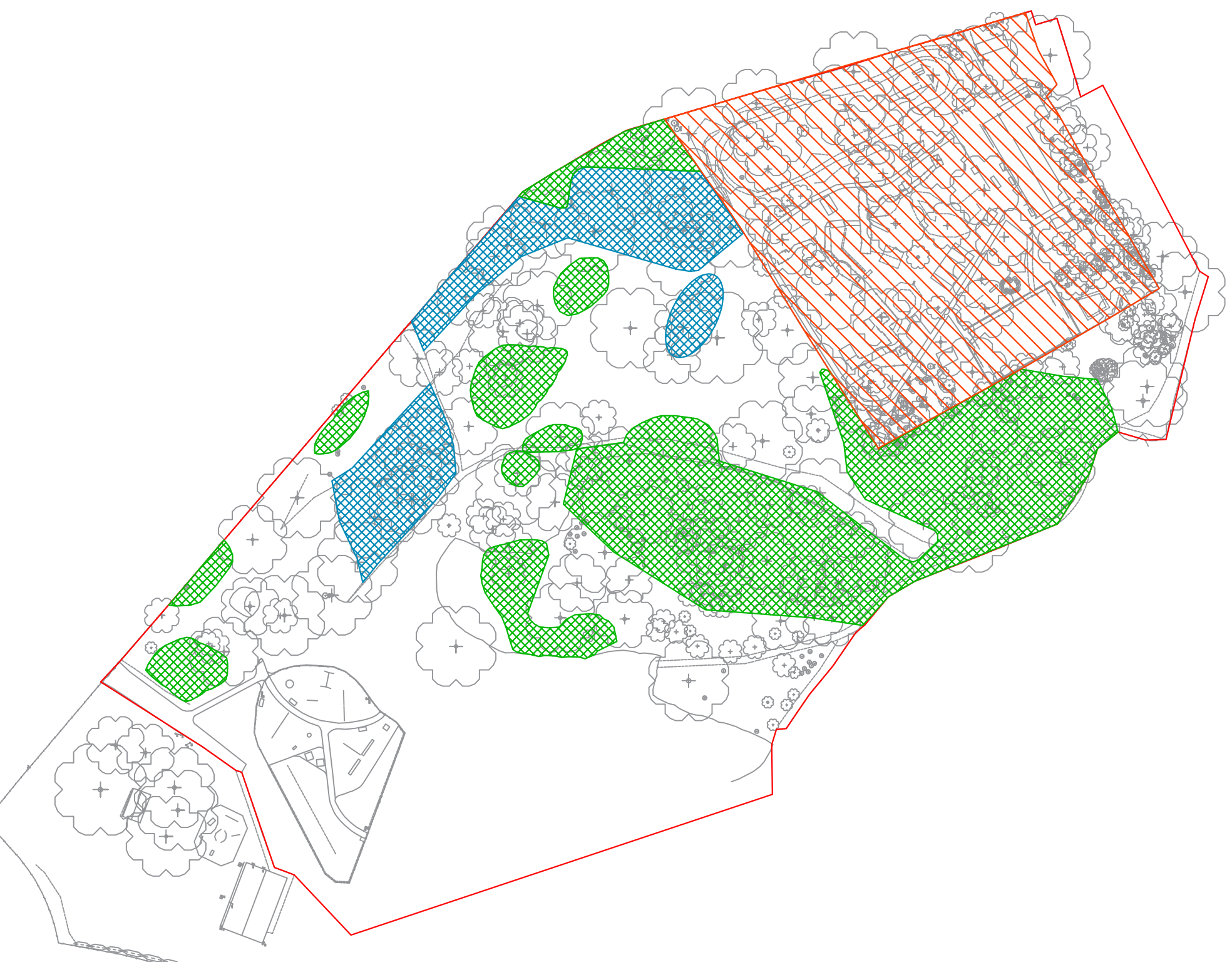
**Report end**



**Appendix 1**  
**Woodland Habitat Map**

**Key**

Acidic grassland type ground flora	
Neutral/managed grassland ground flora	
Scrub (Bramble) dominated ground flora	
Existing recreational area - sparse ground flora	
Site boundary	



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