

## When to consult SDU on *nature conservation* issues

The landscape team has specialist skills and is professionally qualified to deal with issues regarding protecting, conserving and enhancing the environment, via the planning process. Planning officers should specifically consult **SDU's nature conservation officer** in the landscape team, **if a positive answer is likely in the following questions.** (Relevant UDP policies are shown in brackets.)

- **Is the site on or adjacent to a designated nature conservation site?** (these are shown on the UDP proposals map or as themes on Map Explorer) – N50, N51;
- **Is there a possibility of an indirect impact on a designated nature conservation site?** Examples include off-site requisition sewer routes, increased recreational pressure on sites, noise, lighting;
- **Could the development affect protected species?** *Bats* – demolition of buildings, removal of mature trees, works to existing buildings. *Badgers* – developments affecting or adjacent to woodlands. *Great crested newt* – developments within 500m of existing ponds or waterbodies. *Otter* – any riverside development, including the city centre. *Water vole* – developments including or adjacent to ponds, watercourses and ditches. *Barn owls* – barn conversions or demolition. *Little ringed plover* – open ground with little vegetation, normally close to water. These are examples of the circumstances where protected species may occur, however the list is by no means exhaustive. If in doubt, ask! (*Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and amendments, etc*)
- **Are any of the following on or adjacent to the site?** Mature trees, hedgerows, woodlands, scrub, ponds, watercourses, species rich grassland (does it look different from mown amenity grassland or improved grazing?) N49;
- **Is the site in an Urban Green Corridor?** (shown on the UDP proposals map) N8, N9;
- **Is there potential for habitat creation?** Is it a large site, with significant areas for landscape planting? Is an area of greenspace being created/retained? N51;
- **Are there opportunities for securing habitat enhancement and long term management?** Examples include where habitat features are retained as part of a development or where there are adjacent habitat areas in the same ownership;
- **Has an Environmental Statement or ecological assessment been submitted?** These should always be referred to nature conservation for comment;
- **Have there been any letters of representation mentioning wildlife issues?** Members of the public are often well informed on wildlife issues and may have valuable survey information;

This recently published “*Biodiversity and Development Guide*” provides information on how biodiversity issues can be taken into account in new developments. It emphasises the importance of providing adequate information on the wildlife value of sites as part of planning application submissions. Please refer developers/agents to this guide at pre-application stage. Its available from SDU, DEC or is downloadable from the website's Landscape, Trees and Wildlife page.