



0043: Spurr House, Unsworth

Protected Species Method Statement (RAMS)



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Introduction

This Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement (RAMS) has been prepared to discharge the planning condition relating to protected species for the Spurr House development.

The condition requires measures to avoid harm to mammals (including hedgehog), amphibians and other wildlife during site clearance and construction.

This document has been informed by the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and supporting site drawings, including:

- Site Clearance & Demolition Plan
- Traffic Management Plan

The measures outlined below will be implemented throughout the site clearance and construction phases.

Site Description

The site comprises previously developed land containing:

- Existing buildings and hardstanding (to be demolished and removed)
- Scattered trees and scrub vegetation
- Areas of grassland and landscaping

The Site Clearance & Demolition Plan confirms:

- Removal of all existing structures and hardstanding
- Tree removal within the site boundary
- Excavation to foundation level across the development footprint

The Traffic Management Plan confirms:

- Site access via Pole Lane
- Defined construction compound and working areas
- Temporary lighting provision during construction

Ecological Context

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identified:

- No confirmed presence of protected species
- Potential for the following species groups:
 - Hedgehog within grassland and scrub habitats
 - Amphibians using terrestrial habitat (low suitability)



- Nesting birds within trees and vegetation (seasonal)

The site is therefore considered to support common and widespread species, requiring precautionary working methods.

Programme of Works

- Site start: April 2026
- Site clearance (including vegetation and tree removal): August – November 2026
- Construction duration: approximately 18 months

The clearance period overlaps with the bird nesting season and hedgehog active period and therefore requires precautionary controls.

Reasonable Avoidance Measures

Toolbox Talk

A toolbox talk will be delivered to all site personnel prior to commencement of site clearance.

The toolbox talk will cover:

- Identification of relevant species (hedgehogs, amphibians, nesting birds)
- Legal responsibilities under wildlife legislation
- Site-specific ecological risks
- Procedure to follow if wildlife is encountered

Attendance will be recorded and retained on site.

Vegetation Clearance

Vegetation clearance will be undertaken using a two-stage approach:

Stage 1: Initial Cut

- Vegetation cut to approximately 150mm height
- Works undertaken in a directional manner towards retained habitat boundaries

Stage 2: Final Clearance

- Following a minimum 24–48 hour period
- Vegetation reduced to ground level

Additional measures:

- Clearance undertaken during daylight hours
- Dense vegetation and refugia dismantled by hand where necessary

Tree Works

- Trees to be removed will be inspected for nesting birds prior to works
- If active nests are identified, works will be delayed until nesting has completed



- Tree removal will be undertaken in a controlled manner to minimise disturbance

Demolition and Hardstanding Removal

Demolition and removal of hardstanding will be undertaken in accordance with the Site Clearance & Demolition Plan

Precautionary measures include:

- Careful, controlled demolition using appropriate plant
- Inspection of voids, cavities and debris prior to removal
- Avoidance of sudden collapse of structures where possible

Earthworks and Excavations

Excavators will be used for site strip and construction activities.

Precautions:

- All excavations left overnight will:
 - Include a suitable escape ramp, or
 - Be covered
- Open excavations will be inspected each morning prior to works commencing

Hedgehog Protection

- Site kept clear of unnecessary debris and refuge features
- No use of netting or materials that could entangle wildlife
- Excavations checked regularly

If a hedgehog is encountered:

- Works will cease in the immediate area
- The animal will be allowed to move away naturally
- If injured, a suitably qualified ecologist or wildlife rescue organisation will be contacted

Amphibian Protection

- Gradual removal of vegetation and topsoil
- Avoidance of rapid, large-scale clearance

If amphibians are encountered:

- They will be carefully moved to adjacent suitable habitat where safe to do so
- Ecological advice will be sought if required

Lighting

Temporary lighting during construction will be managed to minimise ecological impact:

- Lighting directed away from site boundaries and retained vegetation
- Use of directional, downward-facing luminaires



- Lighting used only when necessary

Construction Phase Controls

- Works confined to the defined development footprint
- Storage of materials within designated compound areas
- No unnecessary disturbance of surrounding habitats
- Implementation of standard pollution prevention measures

Ecological Watching Brief

A precautionary ecological watching brief will be implemented during:

- Initial vegetation clearance
- Early stages of groundworks (as required)

The project ecologist (Thomson Associates) will be available on a call-out basis.

Procedure if Protected Species are Encountered

If any protected or notable species are encountered during works:

1. Works will stop immediately in the affected area
2. The Site Manager will be informed
3. A suitably qualified ecologist will be contacted
4. Works will only recommence following appropriate advice

Compliance

All works will be undertaken in accordance with this RAMS and relevant legislation, including:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- Relevant planning policy and conditions

Conclusion

The implementation of these Reasonable Avoidance Measures will ensure that:

- The risk of harm to protected and notable species is minimised
- Works are undertaken in accordance with best practice and legislation
- The development complies with the relevant planning condition