JAMES BLAKE ASSOCIATES

Hedgerow Survey
of
Phases 2 – 6 and Relief Road
Haverhill,
Suffolk

on behalf of

Persimmon Homes Suffolk

August 2019

© JBA Consultancy Services Ltd. 2019

The Black Barn, Hall Road, Lavenham, Suffolk CO10 9QX
tel: **01787 248216** fax: **01787 247264** email: **jamesblake@jba-landmarc.com**
Chairman: James Blake BA (Hons) Dip LA (Hons) CMLI
Company Secretary: Louise Blake BSc PGCE
Directors: Elzbieta Zebrowska MSc Eng LArch MScEnvSc CMLI : Kevin Slezacek DipArb MArborA
Associate Directors: Vivienne Jackson : Jenny Beck BA (Hons) : Marie Lowe

www.jba-landmarc.com

Registration no. 08169866 VAT no. 512 4127 91

Revision	Purpose	Originated	Checked	Authorised	Date
		AC	SR	JBA	August 2019
Job Number: JBA 17/364 & 18/351		**Title:** Hedgerow Survey of Phases 2 – 6 and Relief Road, Haverhill, Suffolk			

Disclaimer

James Blake Associates Ltd have made every effort to meet the client's brief. However, no survey ensures complete and absolute assessment of the changeable natural environment. The findings in this report were based on evidence from thorough survey: It is important to remember that evidence can be limited, hard to detect or concealed by site use and disturbance. When it is stated that no evidence was found or was evident at that point in time, it does not mean that species are not present or could not be present at a later date: The survey was required because habitats are suitable for a given protected species, and such species could colonise areas following completion of the survey.

This report was instructed by Persimmon Homes Suffolk. Neither James Blake Associates Ltd nor any associated company, nor any of their employees, nor any of their contractors, subcontractors or their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or any third party's use of the report.

*© **James Blake Associates Ltd 2019** (Copyright of this report remains with James Blake Associates Ltd: Content must not be reproduced, in whole or part, without formal written consent)*

CONTENTS

Executive Summary

James Blake Associates (JBA) was commissioned by Persimmon Homes Suffolk to carry out a hedgerow survey on land proposed for Phases 2-6 and the Relief Road, Haverhill, Suffolk. The site was surveyed on 25th June 2019 under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

9 hedgerows were assessed; 4 hedgerows were classified as 'important' under the Hedgerow Regulations (1997). It is recommended that these hedges are retained with a buffer by the proposed developments and managed to conserve and enhance their ecological interest where appropriate.

Hedgerows provide wildlife habitat and 'ecological corridors' for species such as breeding birds, bats, badgers and dormice. The ecological value of the hedgerows for their flora and fauna will be provided in separate reports.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background to the survey

1.1 James Blake Associates was instructed by Persimmon Homes Suffolk to carry out a survey to assess the importance of hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations (1997) on land proposed for Phases 2-6 and the Relief Road, Haverhill, Suffolk.

Site description

1.2 The site is located north of Haverhill and to the west of Haverhill Road (A143) (see Figure 1). Arable fields border most of the site with residential housing to the south. The wider landscape to the north is largely arable fields with scattered woodland. The River Stour lies approximately 1.8km east of the site and the Stour Brook is situated approximately 300m to the south. The site has no designated conservation status associated with it. However, Ann Suckling Way County Wildlife Site (CWS) is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the Relief Road and Norney Plantation CWS, an area of ancient replanted woodland, is situated approximately 50m north of the site boundary.

1.3 The site itself is comprised of five fields separated by hedgerows. Lines of trees and shrubs border residential properties but they were not assessed by this survey as they did not appear to be traditional hedgerows. Nine hedgerows were identified for survey; these were assessed according to the criteria laid down in the Hedgerow Regulations (1997). The hedgerow locations are shown in Appendix A.

1.4 The site was surveyed on the 25th June 2019 by Dr Alison Collins MCIEEM and Daniel Blake BSc (Hons) Qualifying CIEEM of James Blake Associates Ltd.

Aims and objectives

1.5 The aim of this survey was to identify the importance of the hedgerows at this site under criteria 6 to 8 of the Hedgerow Regulations (1997), to advise which hedgerows should be retained by the development and to provide suggestions for ecological enhancement of retained hedgerows.

Previous survey results

1.6 RPS carried out a hedgerow survey in 2007 (RPS, 2009) which covers part of the current area surveyed. See map in Appendix C.

Definitions

1.7 The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 define 'important' hedgerows as those:

- With an average of 7 or more woody species in the surveyed section(s)
- With an average of 6 woody species in the surveyed section(s) and 3 or more features in Paragraph 4 of the Regulations
- With 6 woody species and at least one rare tree
- With an average of 5 woody species in the surveyed section(s) and has 4 or more features listed in Paragraph 4
- With 4 woody species in the surveyed section(s); is adjacent to a footpath, bridleway or BOAT and has 2 or more features listed in Paragraph 4.

1.8 Paragraph 4 of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 includes

- A wall or bank along half of the length
- A ditch along half or more of the length
- An average of 1 standard tree or more per 50m
- Gaps which do not add up to more than 10%
- 3 woodland species
- A parallel hedge within 15m
- Connections scoring 4 points.

1.9 Species-rich hedgerows contain five or more native woody species on average in a thirty-metre length.

Figure 1: Site location

Reproduced from Magic Map Application by permission of licence number 100059700 (c) Crown Copyright and database rights 2019

2. METHODS

2.1 The hedgerows on the site were assessed on the 25th June 2019 following the guidelines laid out in the Hedgerow Regulations (1997). These methods vary slightly dependent upon the length of the hedgerow, but generally involve surveying the hedgerow in 30m sections to identify the number of woody species present and other associated features.

2.2 Additional features of ecological interest, such as any evidence of protected species, ancient woodland indicator plants, connectivity to water features or woodlands, associated banks and ditches and standard trees were also recorded.

2.3 These features are then scored to give a total value, according to the Hedgerow Regulations, to define a hedgerow as being 'important'.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Appendix B details the results of the survey with the numbering and location of hedges shown in Appendix A. Photographs of the hedgerows are given at the end of the report.

3.2 An ecological description of the hedgerows in terms of the plant species present is given in JBA (2019) Botanical Survey (including Sulphur Clover Survey) Report (in progress).

3.3 The survey was carried out in June; this was within the optimal time of year for hedgerow surveys. Most ground flora, woody species and associated features were identifiable and the hedgerows could all be accessed along their entire lengths.

3.4 Four hedgerows were categorised as 'important' according to the criteria set out in the Hedgerow Regulations (1997). All field hedges were associated with ditches, either within the hedge or on one side of the hedge. Hedgerows numbered 5 and 7 are next to a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT).

3.5 All hedges except H6 were considered to be species-rich.

3.6 H2 contained several large stands of the Nationally Scarce Sulphur Clover (*Trifolium ochroleucon*) in the ground flora margins where it was locally dominant in places. However, this species was not found in association with any other hedgerows.

3.7 In comparison with RPS 2007 survey, the same hedgerows were identified as being 'important' as were identified as 'important' by this survey. The 2007 survey also considered ancient and/or species-rich category. Based on this survey, H3 and H8 (not 'important' hedges) were considered to be species-rich; these were not considered as ancient and/or species-rich by the previous survey. However, it is possible that since 2007, species such as Field Rose (*Rosa arvensis*) have colonised to increase the number of woody species.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Hedgerows on the site which have been classified as important should be retained in their entirety by the development; these are hedgerows numbered H2, H4, H5 and H7. These hedgerows should be afforded a wide buffer zone (at least 4m from hedge base) on both sides to ensure that the hedgerows and their associated ground flora are not adversely affected by the development and can be managed safely.

4.2 JBA is currently carrying out site surveys for breeding and wintering birds, foraging and commuting bats and dormice which may use the hedgerows. The retention of the hedgerows which are valuable for other species groups will be discussed in the respective species reports when surveys are complete.

4.3 The management of the hedgerows in the long term is essential to ensure the maintenance of their ecological value. It is recommended that an Ecological Management Plan is drawn up for the site.

4.4 The principles of hedgerow management are to cut about one third of hedgerows per year in a rotational manner to ensure that there is always a supply of good quality habitat, berries and nuts throughout the winter.

4.5 Management of the ground flora should also be on a rotational basis with margins cut every 2 to 3 years. Footpaths with public access may need more frequent cutting.

4.6 There may be opportunities to enhance hedgerow habitats on site post development through gapping up with site-native tree and shrub species; the ground flora can also be enhanced by wildflower seed mixes or plug planting.

4.7 Lighting of hedgerows must be avoided if they are to function properly as wildlife corridors. A sensitive lighting scheme should be drawn up which demonstrates the absence of light spill within any hedgerows which are shown to be important for breeding birds, bats, dormice etc.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 A survey has identified the presence of 4 hedgerows considered to be 'important' under the Hedgerow Regulations (1997). The retention of these hedgerows in their entirety by the development is recommended.

5.2 A buffer zone of 4m extending from the hedgerow base on either side is recommended to provide an ecological corridor and to allow access for management.

5.3 The hedgerows on site are also valuable for the wildlife they support, such as breeding birds, foraging and commuting bats and potentially other species groups. A co-ordinated approach to masterplanning must take all these factors into account when designing the scheme.

5.4 Hedgerow management will further improve the biodiversity value of the hedges. Ideally trimming should take place on a rotational basis with hedgerows being cut every two to three years to allow a constant supply of good quality habitat, fruits and berries. This should be detailed within an Ecological Management Plan for the site.

5.5 Connectivity within the site and the wider landscape would be improved by infilling gaps in hedgerows with native tree and shrub species to form a conduit for movement of wildlife, such as small mammals, invertebrates and bats. Ground flora diversity could be improved and protected by planting native species.

References

The Hedgerow Regulations (1997):
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/1160/contents/made

Hedgerow Survey Handbook
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hedgerow-survey-handbook

RPS (2009) *Land at North-west Haverhill: Ecological surveys and assessment ES Technical Appendix 2;* April 2009

JBA (2019) *Botanical Survey (including Sulphur Clover Survey) Report* (in progress)

Photographs

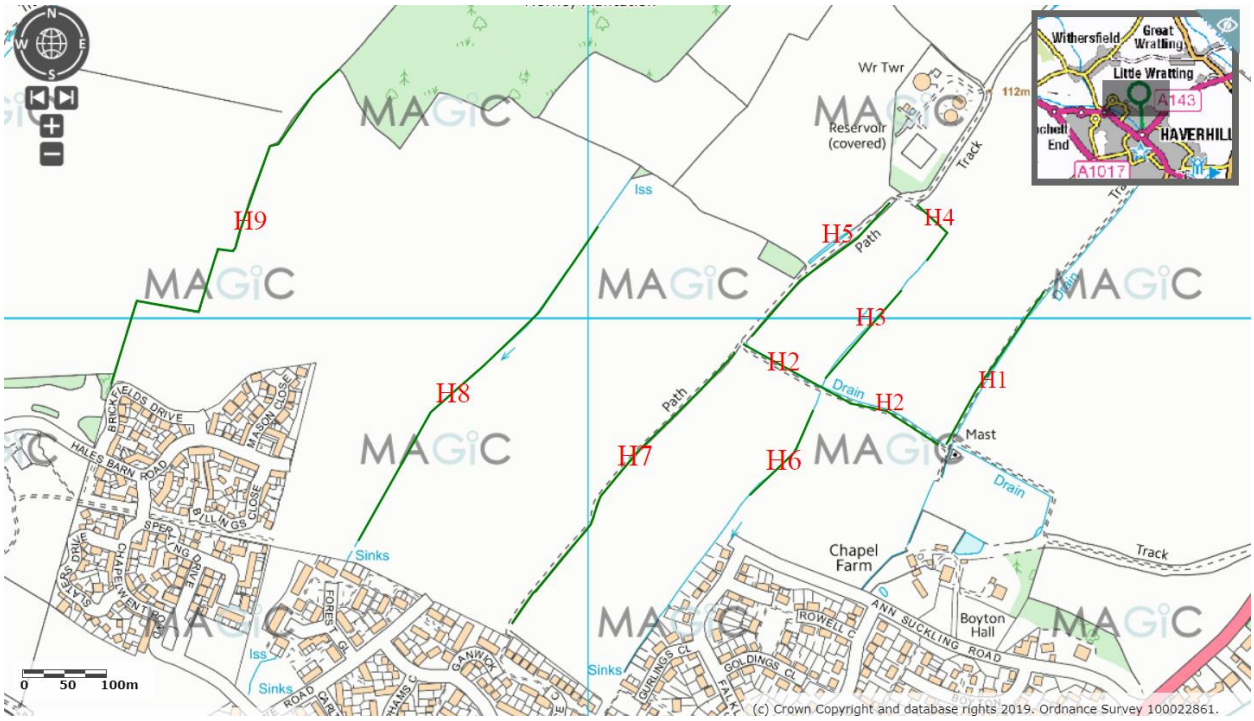
1. Hedgerow H1**:** not important

2. Hedgerow H6**:** not important

3. Hedgerow H2: important

4. Hedgerow H7: important

Appendix A: Site map with hedge numbers



Appendix B: Hedgerow Regulations Assessment table

Hedgerow	Length (approx) m	Woody Species	Woodland species	Footpath	Connections (woodland or hedge)	Bank or wall	Ditch	Parallel hedge	Gaps <10%	Standard Trees
H1	130	5	0	N	1	N	Y	N	N	N
H2*	285	8	0	N	5	N	Y	N	N	Y
H3	140	6	0	N	2	N	Y	N	Y	N
H4*	105	8	0	N	2	N	Y	N	N	N
H5*	230	5	0	Y	2	N	Y	Y	N	N
H6	106	4	0	N	1	N	Y	N	Y	N
H7*	455	6	0	Y	1	N	Y	N	N	Y
H8	426	6	0	N	0	N	Y	N	Y	N
H9	547	5	0	N	1	N	Y	N	N	N

Hedges marked with an asterix * are judged to be important under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

Species-rich hedgerow assessment

Hedgerow	Length (approx.) m	Woody Species	Species-rich
H1	130	5	Y
H2*	285	8	Y
H3	140	6	Y
H4*	105	8	Y
H5*	230	5	Y
H6	106	4	N
H7*	455	6	Y
H8	426	6	Y
H9	547	5	Y

Appendix C: Hedgerow survey 2007 (RPS, 2009)