

## Ecology Briefing Note

Cotham School, August 2024

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### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This note has been prepared by CSA Environmental on behalf of Cotham School, to support an application for the installation of new CCTV cameras within the school grounds for safety and security purposes.
- 1.2 This note provides an overview of ecological considerations relevant to the proposals. It is informed by a Site visit completed by Kate Kibble MCIEEM and Lucy Moorhouse ACIEEM on 30 May 2024.

### 2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 With reference to the Technical Design Report prepared by Global MSC Security (Version 1.2, 30th July 2024), the proposals comprise installation of three pole-mounted CCTV cameras located in north-east and eastern areas of the school grounds.
- 2.2 The exact location of the cameras is flexible to c. 2m, as detailed within the Design Report. The poles are 4m tall and require a concrete base to be installed (minimum 1.1m<sup>2</sup> by 0.55m deep). 'Mole ploughing' would be used to lay 50mm ducting below ground to connect the cameras to the existing infrastructure for power and data transmission. The proposed route of the cabling and camera positions is shown within the Design Report. No additional night-time lighting is currently included within the proposal, but if this was required it would be infra-red and thus have negligible impact on nocturnal wildlife such as bats.

### 3.0 Ecological Overview

- 3.1 Ecological impacts arising from the proposals are limited to small scale ground works for the installation of CCTV pillars and associated ducting.
- 3.2 The camera locations are proposed for areas of amenity grassland of low ecological value, with scattered immature to semi-mature trees (including field maple *Acer campestre*, *Acer* sp. and silver birch *Betula pendula*). The grassland is short mown and heavily used for recreation by school pupils. Species include common and widespread species such as perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, annual meadow-grass *Poa annua*, white clover *Trifolium repens*, daisy *Bellis perennis* and greater plantain *Plantago major*. Proposed Camera 1 is also located near a section of mixed native and ornamental scrub.

3.3 Photos 1 to 4 below show the current habitats within the proposed camera and/or ducting locations.

3.4 No evidence of protected species (e.g. badger) was confirmed during the Site visit, though there is potential for nesting birds within more substantial trees and shrubs around the school grounds.

	
<p><b>Photo 1:</b> Boundary scrub and trees, grassland and immature tree near proposed camera 1.</p>	<p><b>Photo 2:</b> Short grassland and immature trees in position of proposed camera 2</p>
	
<p><b>Photo 3 (left):</b> View south across proposed camera 2 location to proposed camera 3 location.</p>	<p><b>Photo 4:</b> Area affected by duct route for proposed camera 2.</p>

## 4.0 Conclusion

4.1 With reference to the nature and condition of current habitats to be impacted by the proposed camera installation, and the limited scale of the works, ecological constraints to the scheme are considered to be negligible.

- 4.2 There is potential for conflict with the roots of existing trees and shrubs, and actual placement of the camera poles and concrete bases should be chosen to avoid this. The flexibility in their location helps to minimise the risk of conflict. Given the small size of the trees, avoiding a distance of c. 1.5-2m from the stem should be sufficient to avoid the underlying roots, however specialist advice from an arboriculturist should be sought where this is not possible. The proposed route of the ducting is not anticipated to impact any trees or significant habitat features, and the mole ploughing method will greatly minimise disturbance to the ground.
- 4.3 As a result, it is concluded that the proposed CCTV installation will not have any significant ecological impacts.