

Habitat Surveys NIEA Specific Requirements

Priority habitats under the Habitats Directive and/or the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy are material considerations in planning.

On assessing your application NIEA considers that there is reasonable likelihood of priority habitat being affected by the proposed development. To ensure your development proposals complies with planning policy, NIEA has recommended to the Planning Authority that an appropriate habitat survey should be carried out prior to the determination of your planning application.

Please note NIEA reserve the right to determine whether the survey is adequate or when additional information is required.

In order to ensure an adequate assessment the following specifications should be followed:

- **Habitat on site should be mapped and described in accordance with Phase 1 Habitat Classification or National Vegetation Classification (NVC) dependant on the complexity of the habitats on site, or as specified by NIEA. <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1425>**
- NIEA recommends that all works comply with British Standard 42020:2013, *Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development*. This provides recommendations and guidance for those engaged in planning and development, whose work might affect or have implications for conservation, or the enhancement of biodiversity.
- The applicant must ensure that the commissioned surveyor(s) has the necessary experience and qualifications to carry out this work. The qualifications and experience of all surveyors must be included in the survey report. NIEA recommends that the surveyor(s) is a member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).
- The survey information must be presented in a written report including an appropriately scaled habitat map with target notes and photographs.
- Survey dates and times must be recorded in the written report.
- Surveys should be carried out at an appropriate time of year, or as specified by NIEA.
- If necessary, the report should recommend the most appropriate ways in which any European or Northern Ireland priority habitats can be protected from the impacts of the proposed development. Mitigation measures should cover all phases of the development - before, during and after construction.
- Surveys should be submitted to the Planning Authority within one year of being carried out.
- In the event that the planning application goes to appeal or public inquiry, the consultant contracted may be required to appear and/or give evidence.
- For more information please refer to the following publications and websites:

NIEA Development Management website

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/development-management>

Information on UK Habitats Classifications can be found on the JNCC website
<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1425>

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
www.cieem.net

