



# **PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL**

**The Cow Shed, Holt Lane, Bishops Caundle, Dorset DT9 5LY**

Prepared for: Wanda & Paul Stainer, Bishops Farm, Holt Lane, Bishops Caundle, Dorset DT9 5LY

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## Summary

No protected species, evidence of protected species, or habitats for protected species were observed on site, with the exception of the boundary hedges and hedgerow tree which will all be retained and enhanced. The buildings on site are not being used by bats to roost and have negligible bat roost potential. Enhancements are proposed in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) and the Environment Act 2021.

### 1.0. Introduction

1.1. Survey - The ecology survey aimed to confirm the presence/absence of; any protected/notable plant or animal species, suitable habitats for protected species, such as bats, barn owls and other nesting birds on the site, badgers, reptiles, and amphibians.

Local Planning Authorities must consider nature conservation issues, incl. species and habitats protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 when making planning decisions. Local Planning Authorities also aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity (National Policy Planning Framework 2021 (NPPF)) and to have regard to conserving biodiversity, which includes restoring and enhancing a population or habitat under the Natural Environment & Communities Act 2006 (NERC 2006)).

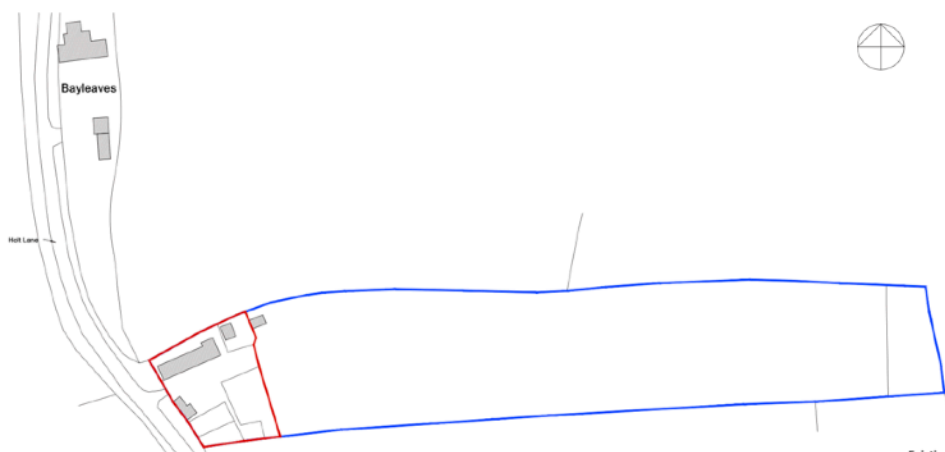
1.2. Report - The report aims to set out the survey results, highlighting any effects of the proposed development on any protected species or habitats suitable for protected species on or adjacent to the site and provide mitigation and/or enhancement as appropriate.

1.3. Location of the site - The site is The Cow Shed, Holt Lane, Bishops Caundle, Dorset DT9 5LY (Fig. 1), grid reference ST 69078 13428. Area of site is < 0.1ha.

1.4. Description of Site - The site is in a rural location, to the NE of the village of Bishops Caundle, along Holt Lane. It is surrounded by agricultural land with a good network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

1.5. Description of Proposals - The proposed works are for the demolition of the existing barn and sheds and replacement with a new dwelling house and outbuildings, with reference to the Class Q approval P/PAAC/2022/06115. The type and scope of the survey is appropriate to the nature and extent of development and scale of impact.

Figure 1. Block Plan



## 2.0. Method

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) is an assessment of the ecological features present, or potentially present, within a site and its surrounding area (the zone(s) of influence) regarding a proposed development.

The key objectives of a PEA are to:

- identify the likely ecological constraints associated with a project;
- identify any mitigation measures likely to be required;
- identify any additional surveys that may be required to inform an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA); and
- identify the opportunities offered by a project to deliver ecological enhancement.

2.1. Desk Study - The Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) was used to search for data on protected habitats.

2.2. Field Survey - The ecology survey was carried out, assessing the site for species and/or habitats protected by The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), The Hedgerow Regulations 1997, and The Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Surveys were carried out following all relevant guidelines (see Reference section). The weather was fine, still, and clear.

2.2.1. Bats & Buildings - All the external walls, roof coverings, soffits, fascias, internal spaces, beams, ledges, windowsills, floors, holes and cavities, etc., were checked for evidence of use by bats. Regular use is indicated by staining, droppings and worn surfaces. Bat roost features were noted, ie, gappy tiles, lifted lead flashing, gaps/holes in soffits/fascias, missing mortar around roof, etc.

2.2.2. Bats & Trees - The trees on site were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats based on suitable bat roosting features, such as cracks, splits, woodpecker holes, deadwood, scratch marks and ivy. An assessment was also made of the suitability of the site and the surrounding landscape to support foraging and/or commuting bat species. The trees were assessed as having high, medium or low bat potential.

2.2.3. Other Protected Species - The survey assessed the site for signs of use by protected species that could be affected by the proposed development, e.g., for nesting birds – nests, nesting material, etc., for badgers – badger holes, latrines, hair on wire fencing, snuffle holes, etc., for reptiles/amphibians – suitable habitat, presence in/under various materials, e.g., in wood piles, etc., for dormice - nests, hedge type, and connectivity, signs of feeding, etc., for water voles - droppings, burrows, feeding stations, signs of feeding and otter - holt, spraint, footprints, etc.

2.3. Field Equipment - Equipment used to carry out the survey, incl. torch, ladder, endoscope, binoculars, compass, notebook, and pen.

2.4. Details of Surveyor - Katie Pollard BSc, MSc, PhD, MCIEEM. Director and Principal Ecologist at KP Ecology. Ecologist for over 20 years. Natural England Licences held; Bat Class Licence 2015-11253-CLS-CLS, Barn Owl Class Licence CL29/00032.

### 3.0. Constraints to Survey

The site visit provides a 'snapshot' of the ecological features and habitats present on site during the survey. It doesn't take into account the seasonal variation of flora or fauna. Therefore habitats and species may have been overlooked due to the constraints of the season. However, the ecologist is confident that the findings of the survey and the conclusions reached are correct.

### 4.0. Results

#### Ecological Assessment

The results of the Ecological Assessment carried out on 12th July 2022 and 17th May 2023 are presented below;

- Buildings (Figs. 2 - 9)

Barn - The existing barn is located in the NW corner of the site. It is a single-storey timber frame barn with a concrete floor and horizontal timber clad walls to the sides under a pitched sheet roof (Figs. 2 - 4, 8 & 9).

Sheds - There are three small sheds on the site, all of which are timber-framed, with horizontal timber clad walls and flat corrugated metal roofs. Two of them are open on one side (Figs. 2, 5 & 6).

Caravan - There is a disused caravan on the site (Figs. 2 & 5).

No bats, bat droppings or other evidence of bats was found in any of the buildings. They have negligible bat roost potential. No evidence of birds or bird nests were found in any of the buildings.

Figure 2. View of across the site from the E



Figure 3. S elevation of barn



Figure 4. N elevation of barn



Figure 5. Sheds and caravan



Figure 6. Shed on N boundary



Figure 7. Adjacent field for biodiversity enhancements





Figure 8. Inside area of barn



Figure 9. Inside area of another part of barn



- Area around the buildings

There is a tarmac access track from Holt Lane up to the SW of the site which is a gravel/stone hard standing. There are also two square concrete hardstandings areas to the south of the barn, in front of the large double timber doors.

The area around the buildings and boundaries is closely mown grass. Species incl: Common nettle *Urtica dioica*, Broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, Cleaver *Galium aparine*, Perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*, Common dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, White clover *Trifolium repens*, Creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Pineappleweed *Matricaria discoidea*, Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum* and Cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*.

- Trees & Hedges

There are hedges with hedge trees on three of the boundaries of the site. All of the hedges will be retained and the proposed dwelling is further from the boundaries than the existing buildings. The hedge along the N boundary is Hazel *Corylus avellana* and Rose *Rosa sp.* This hedge is regularly managed by flailing. Along the other boundaries the hedge species are Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Field maple *Acer campestre* and Hazel, with a Horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* hedgerow tree. There is also a small self-seed apple *Malus sp.* tree on the site.

#### 4.2. Protected Species

There are no protected or notable species, protected habitats, or habitats to support protected species on the site, except for the hedges and hedgerow trees which are suitable for nesting birds. All of these will be retained.

4.2.1. Bats - No bats or evidence of bats were observed during the survey. Bats are not using any of the buildings to roost. The buildings have negligible bat roost potential. No work is planned to the tree within the hedgerow. No further action is required.

4.2.2. Badgers - There was no evidence of badgers or suitable habitats for badgers on site. Therefore there will be no adverse impacts from the proposed development on badgers. No further action is required.

4.2.3. Nesting Birds - The Horse chestnut tree provides suitable habitat for nesting birds, as does the hedge. although none were observed during the survey. The hedges and hedge trees will be retained. The buildings are not suitable for barn owls and no evidence of barn owls was observed in the buildings.

4.2.4. Great Crested Newts & Other Amphibians - The area affected by the works does not provide suitable habitats for great crested newts or other amphibians. There are no ponds within 500m of the site. Therefore great crested newts (GCNs) and other amphibians are considered absent from the development site, and there will be no adverse impacts on GCNs. No further action is required.

4.2.5. Reptiles - As with amphibians, the area affected by the works does not provide suitable habitats for reptiles. There will be no adverse impacts on any reptiles. No further action is required.

#### 4.3. MAGIC Search

There are no statutorily protected sites within 1km of the site.

### 5.0. Conclusion

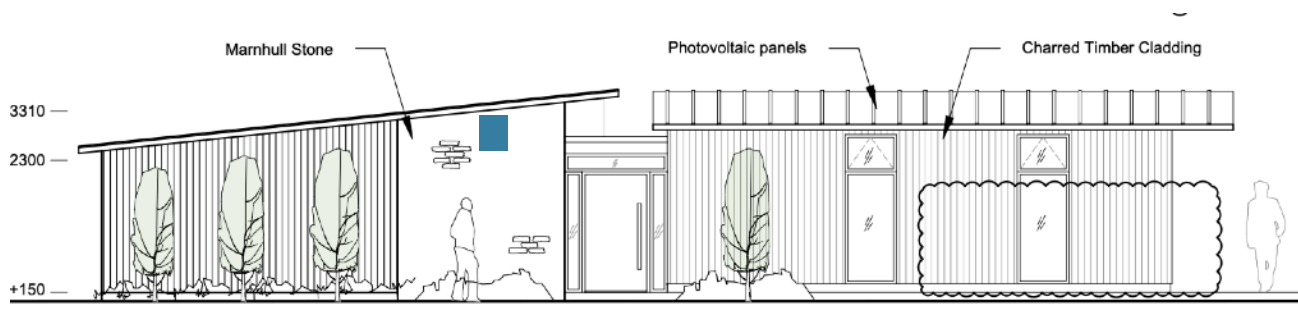
No protected species or habitats for protected species are present on the site, except for the Horse chestnut tree and hedges that provide suitable nesting opportunities for birds. These will be retained.

No further survey work is required.

### 6.0. Biodiversity Net Gain

- Bats - The new dwelling will have an integral bat tube built into the SW elevation.
- Wildflower Meadow - An area of approx. 0.8ha of the grassland on site will be sown with a wild flower mix. A professional ecologist will provide a method statement for establishment and aftercare. This will include; ground preparation for establishing a wildflower meadow in autumn, specifying a seed mix to be sown (suitable for the soil conditions) and management of the area to increase chances of good establishment eg, four x a year cutting. The ground will be sown with meadow mix suitable for soil type, which contains a good range of the wild flowers and grasses. For example Boston Seeds <https://www.bostonseeds.com/products/wildflowers-seed/> provide a good range of seed mixes. All wild flower seed within the mix is of Native British provenance, and includes species from the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) list of Perfect for Pollinators.

Figure 10. Bat brick in SW elevation



- **Hedges** - A 25m new mixed native species hedge will be planted along the S boundary to enhance this area for wildlife and any gaps in the existing hedges will be gapped up. Please refer to Hedgelink <https://hedgelink.org.uk/guidance/hedgerow-management-advice/> for further advice.

## 7.0. References

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## Ecologist Signature

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