LC Ecological Services

WILDLIFE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

CROSS KEYS INN
UPPER CHUTE
SP11 9ER

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UPDATED JANURARY 2024

ON BEHALF OF S & A MOORE LTD

The Old Squash Court,
Rempstone Hall,
Rempstone,
Corfe Castle,
Wareham,
Dorset,
BH20 5JQ

www.ecological-services.co.uk
Telephone: 01929 477115
E-mail: enquiries@ecological-services.co.uk

Authorisation

	Name	Date
Report prepared by:	SH	04.10.2023
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SUMMARY

1. LC Ecological Services Limited were commissioned by S & A Moore Ltd to produce a detailed Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Scheme to discharge planning condition 7 of application PL/2023/00207 for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of one detached dwelling with associated parking, turning, landscaping, private amenity space and access at Cross Keys Inn, Upper Chute, SP11 9ER.

2. This plan covers species-specific method statements to follow during the construction phase, and enhancement measures to achieve a net gain on site.

3. The owner will be responsible for the overall implementation of this mitigation plan and will appoint suitable professionals to undertake all habitat creation/enhancement measures, ongoing habitat management prescriptions, and ecological monitoring.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

LC Ecological Services Limited were commissioned by S & A Moore Ltd to produce a detailed Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Scheme to discharge planning condition 7 of application PL/2023/00207 for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of one detached dwelling with associated parking, turning, landscaping, private amenity space and access at Cross Keys Inn, Upper Chute, SP11 9ER.

Condition 7

"No demolition or removal of trees or shrubs shall take place until full details of a Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include:

- *i) Details of proposed measures that will be taken to avoid harm to wildlife, including timing of works to avoid nesting birds, and pre-commencement checks for protected species including bats, birds, reptiles and amphibians.*
- *ii) A plan specifying the location(s) and type(s) of feature(s) to enhance the site for biodiversity.*
- *iii) Planting plan of habitats to enhance the site for biodiversity.*

Reason:
To avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity.

This report sets out a detailed strategy for the implementation of the approved ecological mitigation, enhancement, and management measures, as well as any ecological monitoring of the site. In addition, this report provides a concise working document, including species-specific method statements, to ensure the development of the site is carried out in full compliance with wildlife law and recognised best practice and all reasonable precautions have and will be undertaken to avoid killing or injuring wildlife during the construction works.

2.0 PROTECTED SPECIES

2.1 Bats

2.1.1 Summary

The buildings at Cross Keys Inn have been surveyed since 2018. The following bat roosts have been confirmed through phase 2 surveys in 2018 and 2023:

Building 1

- Serotine day roost for a single bat.
- Three common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) day roosts by a single bat per roost (3 bats in total).
- Satellite roost by at least six common pipistrelle bats was recorded in 2018 which relates to the point above.
- Brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) day roost used by one bat in loft void 4.
- Brown long-eared day roost used by two bats in void 3.
- Brown long-eared feeding perches recorded internally.

Building 3

- Single natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*), day roost recorded in the barn.
- Single common pipistrelle bat, day roost.
- Single barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) bat, day roost.

2.2.2 Mitigation strategy

Protected Species Licence

Prior to demolishing the main public house building and building 3, a Protected Species Licence will be applied for to Natural England to detail this mitigation statement.

Pre-site checks

The named/accredited ecologist will erect temporary bat boxes on mature trees nearby to act as temporary roosting features for any bats found during the works.

The named/accredited ecologist will conduct a tool box talk with all contractors with regards to the bat species recorded on site, the roosting locations and cover the legal protection of bats.

Prior to the demolition of the buildings on site, pre-site checks will be conducted by the named/accredited ecologist. The ecologist will conduct an internal and external search of the buildings to check for any roosting bats. In the event that a bat(s) are discovered, the

named/accredited ecologist will capture the bat safely with gloves or a net and place them into a cotton bag and move them to a the pre-erected bat boxes on mature trees within the site.

During demolition

During the demolition process, the named/accredited ecologist will supervise all features used by bats or have potential to be used by bats. This includes the removal of the roof tiles and wooden cladding. Tiles will be removed in a vertical rather than horizontal sliding motion, in order to ensure that any bats underneath are not harmed. This allows time for the ecologist to capture the bat safety and move them to one of the dedicated bat boxes.

All works will be supervised during the demolition of the main public house (Building 1) and the wooden barn (Building 3) to ensure no bats are harmed during the works.

Timing of works

The roosts identified were non-breeding summer day roosts. In accordance with the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2023), non-breeding day roosts and feeding perches have no timing restrictions.

In order to reduce impacts on roosting bats, works will be conducted at a time of the year when bats are likely to be absent from the building. There are no months to avoid for the roosts identified and the buildings have limited potential to support hibernating bats due to the condition of the buildings and unstable temperatures.

2.3.3 Compensation and Enhancement Measures

Temporary roosting features

During the construction period, temporary bat boxes will be installed on mature trees to ensure that bats have continued roosting features on site. These will include the following:

- 1 x woodstone large multi-chambered bat box
- 3 x Chilton woodstone bat box

Permanent roosting features

The provision of permanent replacement roosts will be included within the design proposals and will comprise the creation of a concealed integral void within the new building. The concealed void will be required to measure a minimum of four metres wide by five metres in length and 2.5 metres from floor to ridge. The dedicated bat roost will be required to be designated for bats only with no access for storage items. Access into the void will be provided by the creation of eave access points and roosting features for long-eared bats will be provide through the use of a rough-cut beam and squeeze boxes installed. The void will be lined with bitumastic felt.

In addition, the void in the outbuilding to the north of the site will be retained and converted into a 'bat house' to accommodate an additional void suitable for roosting bats. This building measures seven metres by five metres and has a height of 2.5 metres from the floor to the apex. This will require the modification of the building to hold a taller roof void which will be internally fitted with both squeeze boxes and a rough cut ridge beam. Access to this feature will be provided by access points at the eaves and at the gable ends of the building. The roof void is six metres long and five metres wide. The roof void will be increased to a minimum height of six metres and re-clad in slate salvaged from the main house during demolition to increase its thermostability. External lights will be removed or fitted with a red filter to prevent light disruption to bat species.

Common pipistrelle roosts will be like for like where possible.

The approved Natural England licence (2023-66541-EPS-MIT) figure E3: Mitigation Plan is shown in appendix II.

2.2 Nesting birds

2.1.1 Summary

Although no birds were observed nesting in any of the buildings on site, there is suitable access for birds to enter the buildings for nesting.

The western, northern and eastern boundaries will be retained as part of the proposals. The existing access along the southern boundary of the site will be retained.

During the demolition of the buildings on site, there is potential for disturbance of nesting birds, if the works are conducted during the nesting bird season.

2.2.2 Mitigation strategy

The following methods of work will be employed to ensure the protection of nesting birds during the construction works:

- Demolition of the buildings and removal of any trees/vegetation will avoid the nesting bird season where possible (March to August, inclusive). If avoiding the nesting bird season is not possible, the buildings and areas of vegetation to be removed will be checked carefully by the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW). The appointed ECoW worker will identify any nesting birds and advise on appropriate safe working distances to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation.
- Active nests will be left undisturbed until all young have fledged. It is advised to leave an appropriate safe buffer of five metres where no works will be permitted until the ECoW has confirmed all breeding attempts are finished.

2.3 Reptile and amphibians

2.3.1 Summary

The grassland on site provides suitable habitat for reptiles and amphibians. The boundary hedgerows provide suitable commuting, foraging and hibernation habitat for reptiles. The proposals will retain the boundary features however, there will be loss of grassland habitat on site as a result of the proposals.

2.3.2 Mitigation strategy

The loss of grassland habitat on site has the potential to injury/kill reptiles if present. The construction area will undergo habitat manipulation with the following strim and push exercise followed:

- Vegetation clearance will be supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist at all times.
- Vegetation clearance works will only be conducted during suitable, dry weather conditions, with temperatures above 10°C, between March and October (inclusive).
- Long grass and scrub vegetation will be cut by hand using handheld strimmers and/or brush cutters.
- The vegetation clearance will be undertaken in a directional manner to encourage reptiles to move towards the nearest areas of adjacent suitable off-site habitat.
- The vegetation will be cut to a minimum length of 10 centimetres on the initial cut. This will encourage reptiles to disperse into adjacent suitable off-site habitat that is nearest to the clearance area. Subsequent cutting to ground level can be undertaken no sooner than one hour after the initial cut.
- All arisings will be cleared from the area and removed from site to ensure that reptiles do not colonise the cut vegetation.
- Once the vegetation clearance work is complete this will be followed by a supervised destructive search of the cleared areas to render them unsuitable for reptiles. The destructive search will entail a topsoil strip and removal of any shrub stumps or roots systems, and this work will be supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist at all times. The destructive search will be conducted during suitable, dry weather conditions, with temperatures above 10°C, between March and October, to ensure that any hibernating reptiles are not harmed.

3.0 HABITAT ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

This section summarises the ecological enhancement for the site which is required to achieve a net biodiversity gain in line with national and local planning policies (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government., 2023)

3.1 Habitat creation and enhancement measures

A summary of all the individual elements of the ecological enhancement strategy for the development is provided below. The plan included as appendix I illustrates the locations of these elements within the development layout.

3.1.1 Grassland

Where possible areas of longer grass will be left at the base of the boundary hedgerows to provide a tussocky grassland margin for reptiles and amphibians to move around the site. Longer grassland is also beneficial for foraging birds as this habitat will attract invertebrates.

3.1.2 New Hedgerow

A new hedgerow will be planted to the east of the access and extend to the west of the house (Refer to Appendix I planting plan for location). The new hedgerow will be planted to provide a mixture of native species such as hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna)*, blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), hazel (*Corylus avellana)*, holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and dog rose (*Rosa canina)*.

Once established, the hedgerow will provide a food source for birds throughout the year and provide nesting and foraging habitat for birds and bats. In addition, invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and hedgehogs are likely to benefit from this enhancement.

3.1.4 Ornamental planting

Ornamental planting will be created on site in the landscaped garden. Species that should be considered should include plants that provide benefits for wildlife such as lavender (*Lavandula angustofolia*), borage (*Borago officinalis)* and foxgloves (*Digitalis purpurea*).

4.0 TIMETABLE OF WORKS

The proposed schedule for the habitat creation measures is summarised in table 1 below.

Table 1: Proposed timetable of works

Site enhancement feature	Activities	Timing
Bats	Demolition of the dwelling	No restrictions however autumn-spring advised to avoid the key period when bats are present.
	Installation of temporary and permanent bat roosting features.	Any time. Temporary features to be installed in line with the protected species licence between October-March. Permanent features will be installed as the project allows.
	Bat boxes and integrated bat roosting features.	Throughout the year
Birds	Demolition of the dwelling	October-February, inclusive
	Installation of bird boxes	Any time
Reptiles and amphibians	Clearance of vegetation such as rough grass or shrubs	March-October, inclusive
Hedgerow planting	Planting of new hedgerow	Planting should be undertaken in spring or autumn, when there is no frost or heavy rain.

5.0 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2023) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines.* London

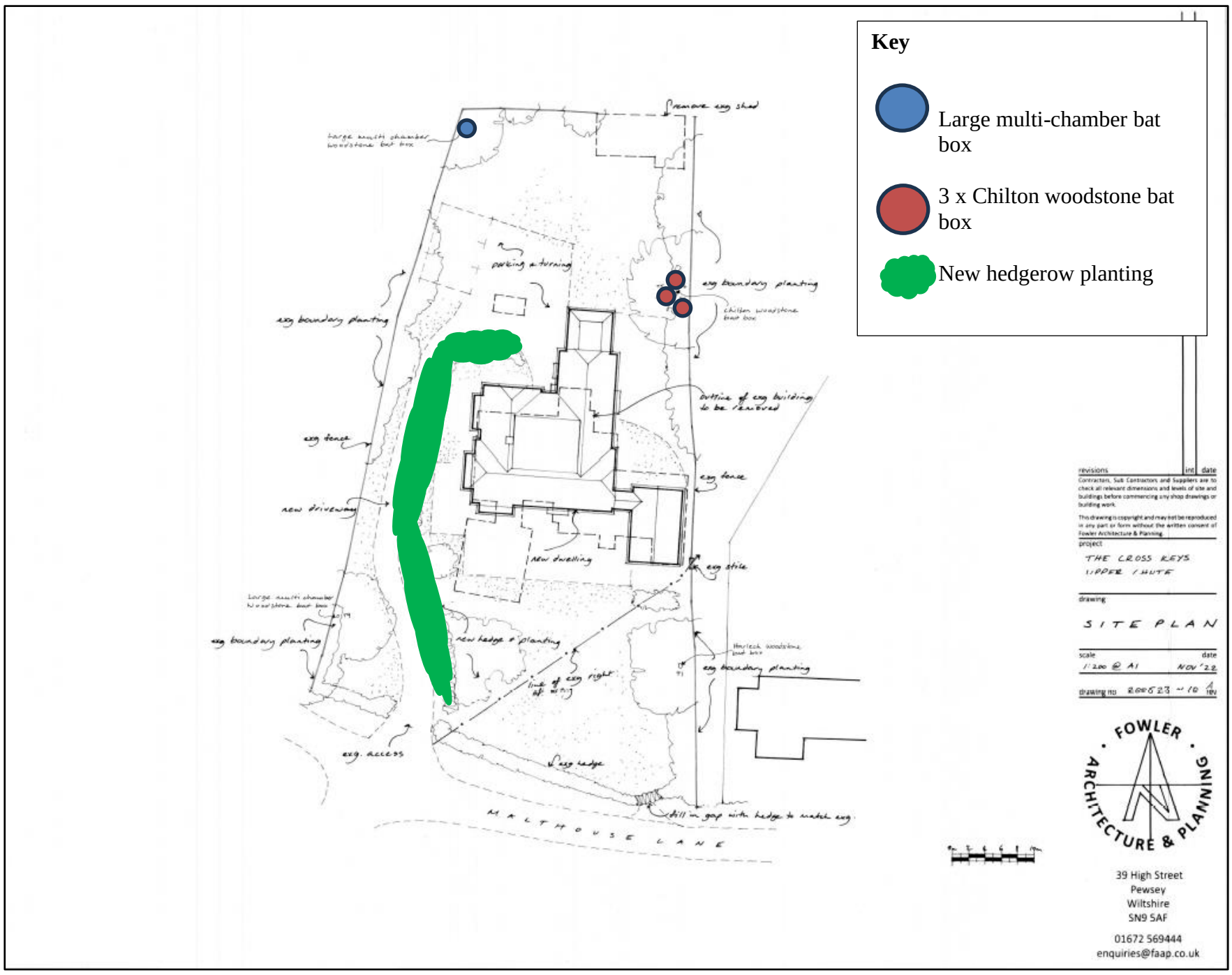
British Standards Institute (2012) *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations BS5837:2012.*

LC Ecological Services (2023) *Ecological Impact Assessment Cross Keys.*

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2023) *National Planning Policy Framework.*

NHBS (20223) *nhbs wildlife/ecology/conservation.* Website available at: https://www.nhbs.com/

APPENDIX I: Ecological enhancement plan



APPENDIX II: Natural England licence approved Figure E3: Mitigation plan

