
**RESIDENTIAL DWELLING AT
42 YARD LANE, BROMHAM, WILTSHIRE**

ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

On behalf of

MR E. DALBY

Final Report

11th November 2025

Prepared by



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1 Introduction

The client is seeking to submit an outline planning application to Wiltshire Council to construct a single self-build residential dwelling and associated garden on 0.28 ha of land at 42 Yard Lane, Bromham, Wiltshire, SN15 2DT (NGR ST 9764 6528), see Appendices A and B. There are no detailed plans of the proposed house at this juncture.

42 Yard Lane is located to the east of Bromham, and the application site is located immediately west of the existing residential dwellings at 42 Yard Lane and comprised a managed grassland (domestically grazed paddock). The site is set within a farming landscape comprising a mix of arable and pasture.

As part of the planning process an ecological survey and appraisal of the site and proposed development has been undertaken. This report contains appropriate ecological baseline information, and an appraisal of predicted, potential impacts on designated sites and protected/notable habitats and species. Any potential adverse impacts are addressed with proposals for mitigation/compensation, while opportunities to provide ecological enhancement are also identified. As this is an outline application there are no detailed drawings of the proposed dwelling available, however, general recommendations for the integration of wildlife features have been made in this report.

The ecological survey was undertaken by Dr Stephen Dangerfield and Anton Kattan who have a combined 50 years' professional ecological survey and appraisal experience, and both are full members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

Stephen holds a Natural England bat survey licence Level 1 Class CL17 (Licence No. 2015-11600-CLS-CLS) and a Natural England great crested newt survey licence Class CL08 (Licence No. 2015-17068-CLS-CLS) and Anton holds a Natural England bat survey licence Level 2 Class CL18 (Licence No. 2015-12201-CLS-CLS).

This planning application is exempt from formal Biodiversity Net Gain as it covers:

- **a development of a single self-build dwelling (as defined in Section 1 (A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015) on land less than 0.5ha.**

2 Methodology

2.1 Desk-based study

A review of OS maps and satellite imagery was undertaken to establish the local context within which the study area sits and to identify whether any natural features of interest, particularly ponds, were located within 250m of the site.

Records of designated sites and protected/notable species from the last twenty-five years within a 1km radius of the development site (2km for bats) were obtained from the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) on 10th September 2025.

The Magic map (www.magic.defra.gov.uk) was reviewed for statutory designated nature conservation sites within a 2-10km radius of the study area, priority habitats within 1km radius and priority species within 1-4km radius. These zones are considered to be appropriate for the type / size of proposed development, and allows relevant notable sites, habitats and species to be taken into consideration through the ecological appraisal process.

A previous protected species survey of the main farmhouse¹, which was undertaken in 2017, was reviewed to provide context setting for previous bat use.

2.2 Habitat and ecology survey

A habitat and ecological survey of the application site was undertaken on 11th September 2025. The survey focused on:

- ❖ A habitat survey to determine type, quality and extent of habitats present. Botanical lists of each habitat type were recorded. Rare/scarce and invasive plants were highlighted if found.
- ❖ A survey to determine the presence of, or the potential for the study area to support, protected and rare/scarce animals, which included looking for the following:
 - Potential/actual badger (*Meles meles*) setts, as well as latrines, tracks and other signs (foraging holes, hairs, etc);
 - Potential reptile habitat and terrestrial habitat for amphibians, particularly great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*);
 - Waterbodies that had the potential to support great crested newt or water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*);
 - Potential habitat to support or signs of dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*); and
 - Potential for nesting birds to use the site.

An assessment of trees within the application site for the potential to support roosting bats. The bat roost potential survey was undertaken by licensed bat surveyors in accordance with best practice bat survey guidelines^{2,3}.

¹ Malford Environmental Consulting (2017). 42 Yard Lane, Bromham – Protected Species Survey and Mitigation

² Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London

³ Andrews, H (2018). *Bat Roosts in Trees – A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-Care and Ecology Professionals*. Pelagic Publishing

The aim of the preliminary building, habitat and ecology survey is to identify the habitat types present and their relevance to nature conservation, based on species assemblage and structural diversity. It is also to identify the actual or likelihood of protected species inhabiting or frequenting the study area based on field signs or habitat quality/structure etc.

The identification of protected or notable habitat or species within the development site or potentially affected by the proposed development could trigger the need for, and subsequent recommendation, for further Phase 2 surveys at an appropriate time of year.

No further ecological surveys are considered relevant for this study.

2.3 Building bat roost inspection

The application site is located just within the northern edge of a 'core area' for lesser horseshoe bats (Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC consultation zone) – see Sections 4.1 and 4.5.

There are no buildings located within the application site / directly affected by the proposed development. However, an inspection of six buildings within the adjacent 42 Yard Lane residential curtilage or associated with the wider paddock was undertaken on 11th September 2025 to determine whether any building is currently being used by horseshoe bats for roosting or as a place of rest. This helps to set the application site grassland within context of use of the local landscape / features by horseshoe bats.

The building inspection for horseshoe bats was undertaken by licensed bat surveyors in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust guidelines⁴. Evidence of bats, considered during the search included:

- ❖ Droppings.
- ❖ Live roosting bats, bat skeletal remains or dead bats.

Bat roost potential was established using the following scale:

1. *Negligible potential/not a roost*: no suitable features
2. *Low potential*: one or more suitable features that could be used by individual bats opportunistically
3. *Moderate potential*: one or more suitable features that could be used by bats, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status
4. *High potential*: one or more suitable features that are suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a regular basis
5. *Confirmed roost*: evidence of current/recent bat occupation

⁴ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London

2.4 Impact appraisal

2.4.1 Appraisal process

The ecological appraisal of the proposed development is undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine⁵, which are in full accordance with the mandatory requirements of the UK EIA Regulations. The ecological assessment will seek to obtain the best possible biodiversity outcomes by integrating the following key principles:

- ❖ Avoidance: seek options that avoid harm to ecological features (for example, by locating on an alternative site).
- ❖ Mitigation: Adverse effects should be avoided or minimised through mitigation measures, either through the design of the project or subsequent measures that can be guaranteed (for example, through a condition or planning obligation).
- ❖ Compensation: Where there are significant residual adverse ecological effects despite the mitigation proposed, these should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures.
- ❖ Enhancements: Seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation or compensation.

2.4.2 Defining important ecological receptors and value

The CIEEM EcIA guidelines state that one of the key challenges in EcIA is to decide which ecological features (habitats, species, ecosystems and their functions/processes) are important and should be subject to detailed assessment. Such ecological features will be those that are considered to be important and potentially affected by the project. It is not necessary to carry out detailed assessment of features that are sufficiently widespread, unthreatened and resilient to project impacts and will remain viable and sustainable.

However, effort should be made to safeguard biodiversity in its entirety, as emphasised by the Convention on Biological Diversity and developed in the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020. The EU Strategy and national policy documents emphasise the need to achieve no net loss of biodiversity and enhancement of biodiversity.

The importance of an ecological feature will be considered within a defined geographical context. The following frame of reference will be used:

- ❖ International and European
- ❖ National
- ❖ Regional
- ❖ Metropolitan, County, vice-county or other local authority-wide area
- ❖ River Basin District
- ❖ Estuarine system / Coastal cell
- ❖ Local

Various approaches can be adopted for defining local importance, including assessment within a district, borough or parish context or within another locally defined area.

⁵ CIEEM (2018). *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

2.4.3 Characterising ecological effects

When describing ecological impacts and effects, reference should be made to the following characteristics as required:

- ❖ Positive or negative
- ❖ Extent
- ❖ Magnitude
- ❖ Duration
- ❖ Frequency and timing
- ❖ Reversibility

The assessment only needs to describe those characteristics relevant to understanding the ecological effect of the impacts and determining its significance.

2.4.4 Defining significance of ecological effects

The CIEEM guidelines define an 'ecologically significant effect' as an effect that either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for 'important ecological features' or for biodiversity in general. Significant effects should be qualified with reference to an appropriate geographic scale. However, the scale of significance of an effect may not be the same as the geographic context in which the feature is considered important.

Significant effects encompass impacts on structure and function of defined sites, habitats or ecosystems and the conservation status of habitats and species (including extent, abundance and distribution). A significant effect is sufficiently important to require assessment and reporting so that the decision maker is adequately informed of the environmental consequences of permitting a project.

2.5 Biodiversity Net Gain exemption

The Environment Act 2021 covers targets, plans and policies for, *inter alia*, 'improving the natural environment' and 'nature and biodiversity'.

The Act brings in new requirements in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Environment Act establishes the precedent for achieving a biodiversity gain as a condition of planning permission and establishes that a biodiversity gain is met if the biodiversity value attributable to the development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat by at least 10%. Furthermore, any habitat enhancement must be maintained for at least 30 years after the development is completed.

The UK Government have set out the types of development that are exempt from mandatory BNG requirements (www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments). This planning application is exempt from BNG as it falls below the threshold in that it is a development of a single self-build dwelling (as defined in Section 1 (A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015) on land less than 0.5ha.

2.6 Survey limitations

There are no constraints on the ecological survey. The application site and all six buildings were fully accessible, and weather conditions during the survey were good (17°C, 50% cloud, sunny/clear, dry, BS2).

3 Planning Policy

3.1 National

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024, requires that the planning system should conserve and enhance the natural environment (Section 15) by, *inter alia*, 'protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity value' and 'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures' (para 187).

To protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should 'safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them', 'promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the restoration and recovery of priority species' and 'identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity' (para 192).

Local planning authorities should apply the following principles (para 193):

- a) If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) Development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any border impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- c) Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland or ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

3.2 Wiltshire

The Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015) sets out the relevant policies relevant to biodiversity, as follows:

Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and geodiversity

Protection

Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource, and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.

All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.

Any development potentially affecting a Natura 2000 site must provide avoidance measures in accordance with the strategic plans or guidance set out in paragraph 6.70 above where possible, otherwise bespoke measures must be provided to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effect upon the Natura 2000 network. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy.

Biodiversity enhancement

All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character.

Local sites

Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts:

- i. Cannot reasonably be avoided
- ii. Are reduced as far as possible
- iii. Are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest and
- iv. Where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning obligations or agreements.

Development proposals affecting local sites must make a reasonable contribution to their favourable management in the long-term.

4 Baseline Conditions

4.1 Designations

The application site is not covered by any local, national or European nature conservation designations.

There are no European designated sites within 10km of the application site, which are not discussed further in this report.

The application site is located within a core foraging area (Bat Consultation Zone) for a colony roost of lesser horseshoe bats associated with the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation, see Appendix A. The implications for the proposed development and horseshoe bats are discussed in Sections 4.5 and 5.3.

There is one nationally designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located within 2km of the application site, which is Roundway Down & Covert SSSI with the nearest part located 1.6km to the east. Roundway Down is an extensive tract of chalk downland which supports unimproved grassland with smaller areas of mixed scrub. The adjacent Roundway Covert is a mix of woodland, scrub and chalk grassland. The site supports an outstanding assemblage of chalk downland butterflies.

There are no National or Local Nature Reserves within 2km of the application site.

The site is within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone but does not cover residential development.

There is one non-statutory, Local Wildlife Site (LWS) located within 1km of the application site, which is Wyatt's Wood & The Coppice LWS (Ref. ST96.032), which is located 980m to the northwest of the application site (see Appendix A). This site supports wet broadleaved woodland.

Given the scale and location of the proposed single dwelling development, there are no identified impact pathways between the national / local wildlife sites and the application site / proposed development, and as such these designated sites are not discussed further in this report.

4.2 Priority habitats

The application site does not include any UK Priority Habitats. Priority habitats located within 1km of the site include:

- ❖ Deciduous woodland. Small blocks located between 700m and 1000m south, northeast and northwest (not ancient and semi-natural woodland).
- ❖ Traditional orchard. Very small blocks located between 420m and 780m southeast and southwest.

There are no identified impact pathways between the priority habitats and the application site / proposed single dwelling development, and as such these habitats are not discussed further in this report.

4.3 Habitats and botany

4.3.1 Overview

There is no pond within the application site or located within 250m of the site. There are three ponds shown on the 1:25,000 OS map located within 500m of the development site, which are 400m north, 470m southwest and 500m south of the application site. These ponds are discussed further in Section 4.9.

There are records of eight nationally notable plants within 1km of the development site, which are bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), stinking chamomile (*Anthemis cotula*), corn spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*), weasel's-snout (*Misopates orontium*), field woundwort (*Stachys arvensis*), dwarf spurge (*Euphorbia exigua*), wild pansy (*Viola tricolor*) and rye brome (*Bromus secalinus*).

There are records of six county notable plants within 1km of the development site, which are fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), spotted medick (*Medicago arabica*), bifid hemp-nettle (*Galeopsis bifida*), cut-leaved dead nettle (*Lamium hybridum*), rat's-tail fescue (*Vulpia myuros*) and common rampion (*Fumaria muralis*).

Most of these plants are associated with arable/ waste land with a few associated with woodland and grassland.

A Habitat Plan is presented in Appendix A, with target notes (TN) listed in the following sections shown on this plan, and photographs of the site are shown in Appendix B. The proposed development site is divided into the following habitats:

- ❖ Grassland
- ❖ Trees
- ❖ Boundary habitats

4.3.2 Grassland

The application site is part of an intensively managed grassland field comprising very species-poor semi-improved [nutrient enriched] grassland that is continually grazed by a combination of horses/ponies, donkeys, sheep and ducks that maintains a very low-level sward of very restricted botanical diversity with patches of bare ground.

The grassland sward supports a few common grasses including rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), rough meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*) and cock's-foot (*Dactylus glomerata*), while forbs are dominated by yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) and ribwort / broad-leaved plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*, *P. major*), which make up 50% of the sward. Other less frequent forbs include dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg), dissected-leaved-crane's-bill (*Geranium dissectum*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and hawkweed (*Hieracium* agg).

The road verge along Yard Lane is generally the same composition as the application site field, with a few other forbs including ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*) and ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*). The road verge is regularly mown as opposed to grazed maintaining a low sward.

4.3.3 Trees

Scattered through the grassland paddock are relatively recently planted trees, which include a combination of native and non-native/ornamental varieties. These include variegated-leaved and red-leaved maples (*Acer* spp) [T1 and T4], silver birch (*Betula pendula*) [T2], c.f. whitebeam (*Sorbus* sp) [T3], medlar (*Mespilus germanica*) [T5], horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) [T6] and oak (*Quercus* sp) [T7].

Along the road verge is a row of newly planted cherry (*Prunus avium*) trees [T8].

4.3.4 Boundary habitat

The northern boundary of the paddock is a formal, ornamental Leyland cypress (*Cupressus x leylandii*) hedge [H1] maintained at 2m high, which separates the application site from the road. The base has been grazed out leaving patches of nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and burdock (*Arctium* sp) ground flora. The remaining part of the northern boundary of the wider paddock is post & rail fence with vehicle access gate. Beyond the hedge is the road verge of Yard Lane as described in Section 4.3.2.

Running through the paddock, forming part of the western boundary of the application site garden, is a formal, ornamental Leyland cypress (*Cupressus x leylandii*) hedge [H2] maintained at 3m high. The base has been grazed out leaving bare soil and very small patches of nettle (*Urtica dioica*).

The western boundary of the paddock field is delineated by a post & rail fence behind which is a newly planted species-poor and gappy hedge [H3] dominated by hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) with occasional spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) and dog rose (*Rosa canina* agg), which is maintained at 2m high.

The eastern boundary is delineated by a post & rail fence separating the paddock from the residential dwellings / garden.

4.3.5 Notable habitats or plants

There are no notable habitats within the application site. The very poor semi-improved agricultural grassland paddock is widespread habitat of low ecological value. The application site boundary hedges are both non-native / ornamental cypress of very low ecological value. The scattered trees are all recently planted / small and mainly non-native / ornamental of low ecological value.

All plants recorded are common/widespread species, and no notifiable invasive plant species were recorded within the site.

4.4 Buildings

Below is a brief description of each building or structure associated with 42 Yard Lane residential curtilage or the wider paddock (see Appendix A) that were inspected for presence of or potential to support horseshoe bats. It is not intended to provide detailed building descriptions but instead to provide a summary of the built environment of 42 Yard Lane, which is then used to support the bat appraisal as discussed in Section 4.5.

- ❖ Building 1 (Farmhouse, B1). Ground and first floor is living space. One attic which is an open timber A-frame structure with a single, narrow ridge board. The roof is lined with close-fitting timber sarking that is fixed tightly above the roof timbers. Gable end walls and chimney stacks are sealed. The floor is boarded out and lined with rockwool. No obvious external flyways leading into / out of the attic. **No horseshoe bat roosting potential.**
- ❖ Building 2 (Annex, B2). Ground and first floor is living space. The first floor has a vaulted ceiling with no attic space and small sealed side cupboards. **No horseshoe bat roosting potential.**
- ❖ Building 3 (Garages, B3). A modern building constructed ca. 5 years ago. The majority of the ground floor and all of the first floor is living space. One attic which is an open timber A-frame structure with a single, narrow ridge board. The roof is lined with close-fitting synthetic (Tyvac) roof liner that is fixed tightly above the roof timbers. Gable end walls are sealed. The floor is boarded out and lined with rockwool. No obvious external flyways leading into / out of the attic. One ground floor room left as open-fronted storeroom with timber and glass walls and plastered ceiling, which provide no perches, is very light and draughty, and suffers human disturbance. **No horseshoe bat roosting potential.**
- ❖ Building 4 (Shed, B4). A small single-storey structure comprising three separate compartments, each of which is sealed with a close-fitting door maintained closed and preventing access by bats. Walls are blockwork and single-skin timber ship-lap, and the roof is unlined corrugated fibreboard or clay tiles. Compartments are used as a chicken coop or for general storage and suffer regular human disturbance. **No horseshoe bat roosting potential.**
- ❖ Building 5 (Small stable, B5). Timber-framed stable building with walls clad in timber ship-lap with the lower internal walls lined with OSB. The roof is unlined corrugated metal. The building has two open-fronted compartments, making this building very light and draughty, and suffers human disturbance. **Negligible horseshoe bat roosting potential.**
- ❖ Building 6 (Large stable, B6). Timber-framed stable building with walls clad in timber ship-lap with the lower internal walls lined with OSB. The roof is corrugated metal which is lined with OSB. The building has three compartments (two open-fronted) and one with a door, and the building is very light and draughty, supports donkeys, ducks and chickens, and suffers human disturbance. **Negligible horseshoe bat roosting potential.**

4.5 Bats

4.5.1 Existing data

There are WSBRC records for three bat species located within 1km of the application site including: common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*) and brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*). All three species have known roosts.

There are three Natural England European Protected Species (Bats) Mitigation Licences granted within 4km of the application site as follows:

- ❖ 2020-45330-EPS-MIT located 2.3km south and covering a non-breeding site for common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and lesser horseshoe bats.
- ❖ 2018-37207-EPS-MIT located 3.4km southeast and covering a non-breeding site for common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bats.
- ❖ 2017-31969-EPS-MIT located 2.8km north and covering a non-breeding site for common pipistrelle bats.

The previous protected species survey of Building 1 (Farmhouse) in 2017 found no evidence of bat roosting or bat use within the attic and noted that the attic was filled/lined with established spider webbing.

4.5.2 Roosting bats

Buildings

All buildings associated with 42 Yard Lane provide either no or negligible potential for supporting roosting horseshoe bats. The current survey found no evidence to suggest that these buildings are currently being used or have ever been used by horseshoe bats or other bats for roosting or as a place of rest. No bats (live or dead) were present, no bat droppings (either accumulated or scattered) were found and no other evidence to support presence of bats (e.g. insect feeding remains) were found, while established spider webbing was present in most buildings.

Furthermore, the Farmhouse and a storage shed, since demolished, also did not support roosting horseshoe or other bats when surveyed in 2017.

Application site trees

All trees scattered through the paddock do not support potential bat roosting features given their young age / small size and condition that do not provide features such as cracks, holes, lifted bark etc. All trees are classed as Category 1 (not a roost / negligible potential).

Roosting horseshoe and other roosting bats are not a constraint for the proposed development and no further bat roost survey is required.

4.5.3 Foraging / commuting bats

The development site is located just within a bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) consultation zone being located within a core foraging area for a known colony roost of lesser horseshoe bats that forms a functional part of the Bath & Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC.

Bats forage in a range of habitats that support high invertebrate prey numbers, with lesser horseshoe bats particularly adapted to foraging within 'cluttered environments' such as woodlands, wooded riparian corridors and mature tree lines / hedgerows. Bats, including lesser horseshoe bats, use established 'corridors' to commute between their network of summer (maternity), winter and transitory roosts, and to and from foraging areas. Commuting routes are generally well vegetated, sheltered linear habitats such as hedgerows and tree lines, woodland edges, riverine corridors and embankments/cuttings associated with transport links.

The grassland within the development site is of very low value for foraging lesser horseshoe bats being very species-poor grassland that is continually grazed by horses/ponies, donkeys, sheep and ducks (with dung cleared away), which will have a corresponding very restricted invertebrate diversity and biomass. Furthermore, the amount of the paddock lost (developed land associated with house and drive) or changed (vegetated garden) to the proposal is small (0.28 ha) and maintains much of the existing paddock (0.89 ha) is retained.

The field within which the development sits has either no vegetated boundaries or very poorly vegetated boundaries comprising grazed out non-native / ornamental cypress hedges that are disconnected from prime foraging habitat. Subsequently, the application site / paddock field does not provide optimal / good quality foraging and commuting habitat for lesser horseshoe bats or indeed other bat species.

This conclusion is supported by the fact that there is no evidence of horseshoe bats (or other bats) using any of the buildings within the adjacent 42 Yard Lane dwelling curtilage or the wider paddock.

Furthermore, the new property can incorporate new mixed native hedgerow along the southern garden boundary and the new dwelling can be designed to minimise light spill.

It is concluded that there are no predicted significant adverse effects on foraging/commuting bats (see Section 5 for more detail) associated with loss / change of use of grassland paddock, and therefore bat activity surveys are not considered necessary, which is in accordance with BCT guidelines.

Foraging / commuting horseshoe and other bats are not a significant constraint for the proposed development and no further bat activity survey is required.

4.6 Other mammals

There are a few records of badger (*Meles meles*), hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*) within 1km of the application site, with all three species recorded in Bromham.

The ecology field survey did not identify any evidence of protected/notable mammal species inhabiting or using the application site, with the following observations made:

- ❖ There is no badger sett and no confirmed evidence of badger foraging/commuting activity (e.g. no latrines / dung pits, no well-worn paths, no foraging holes).
- ❖ The interior and boundary trees and hedges are not suitable for supporting hazel dormouse.
- ❖ There is limited habitat for hedgehog given the heavily managed grassland, but given the rural setting of the site there is low potential for hedgehog and other common animals to move through the site at certain times.

Other protected mammals are not a constraint. Other locally notable / common mammals are not a significant constraint for the proposed development and no further mammal survey is required.

Precautionary mitigation can be implemented during site clearance and construction work to ensure complete protection of locally notable / common mammals.

4.7 Nesting birds

There are records of notable (Red list / Amber list / WCA) birds within the local landscape including:

- ❖ Farmland species: skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*), linnet (*Linaria cannabina*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), meadow pipit (*Anthus pratensis*), yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) and lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*).
- ❖ Building species: swift (*Apus apus*), house martin (*Delichon urbicum*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), collared dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) and stock dove (*Columba oenas*).
- ❖ Garden species: greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*), dunnock (*Prunella modularis*), wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) and whitethroat (*Curruca communis*).
- ❖ Thrushes: redwing (*Turdus iliacus*), fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*) and mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*).
- ❖ Birds of prey: barn owl (*Tyto alba*), red kite (*Milvus milvus*), kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*), hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*) and sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*).

During the ecological survey no birds were seen or heard within the application site. No nesting birds were recorded within any of the buildings associated with 42 Yard Lane. There is no evidence that a barn owl (*Tyto alba*) is using any of the stable buildings. No nesting birds were or had used the small medlar tree scheduled for removal, and this tree provides negligible potential to support nesting birds in the near future. There is a very low potential for birds to nest within the short length of cypress hedge scheduled for removal, although no evidence of nesting birds was found during the survey.

The grass paddock / development plot is totally unsuitable for supporting ground nesting birds comprising a small and enclosed area of grassland (with boundary hedges providing perches for birds of prey), which is intensively grazed and suffers disturbance.

Nesting birds are not a constraint for the proposed development and no further bird survey is required.

4.8 Reptiles

There are no WSBRC or NBN Atlas records of reptiles within 1km of the application site.

The application site, which comprises heavily grazed very species-poor grassland with a very short open sward and open or grazed-out non-native hedgerow boundaries, is considered to provide negligible value foraging habitat for reptiles and does not provide any diurnal or seasonal refugia. It is concluded that reptiles are highly unlikely to be present within the application site.

Reptiles are not a constraint for the proposed development and no further reptile survey is required.

4.9 Amphibians

The application site (development plot) is located just within an amber impact risk zone for great crested newt⁶, which are areas that '*contain main population centres for GCN and comprise important connecting habitat that aids natural dispersal*'. This zone is centred on ponds located to the north and south of the application zone.

There is no pond or other suitable waterbody for supporting breeding great crested newt within the application site or located under 400m from the site. There are no known great crested newt breeding ponds within 1km of the application site, with the two nearest ponds being surveyed for GCN and returning a negative result being 670m southwest and 830m northeast of the application site.

There are three ponds located within 500m of the application site, which are located 400m north, 470m southwest and 500m south of the application site. However, these ponds are on the edge of maximum great crested newt dispersal with English Nature research⁷ establishing that the maximum routine migratory range for great crested newt is approximately 250m from a breeding pond, while further research determining 'a terrestrial zone of 63m, within which 95% of summer refuges were located' and '64% of newts were found within 20m of the breeding pond edge'^{8,9}.

There are no WSBRC or NBN Atlas records of great crested newt or other amphibians within 1km of the application site, and no Natural England GCN Mitigation licences within 1km of the application site.

The application site, which comprises heavily grazed very species-poor grassland with a very low open sward and open or grazed-out non-native hedgerow boundaries is considered to provide negligible value foraging habitat for great crested newt and other amphibians, and does not provide any diurnal or seasonal refugia.

It is concluded that great crested newt and other amphibians are highly unlikely to be present within the application site. No further survey or EPS mitigation licence is required for this development. However, precautionary mitigation can be implemented during site clearance work to ensure complete protection of great crested newt and other common amphibians.

Great crested newt and other amphibians are not a significant constraint for the proposed development and no further amphibian survey is required.

Precautionary mitigation can be implemented during site clearance and construction work to ensure complete protection of great crested newt and other amphibians.

⁶ GCN Risk Zones (Swindon and Wiltshire). <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::gcn-risk-zones-swindon-and-wiltshire/explore>

⁷ Cresswell, W and Whitworth, R (2004). *An assessment of the efficiency of capture techniques and the value of different habitats for great crested newt*. English Nature Research Report 576.

⁸ Jehle, R (2000). The terrestrial summer habitat of radio-tracked great crested newt and marbled newts. *Herpetological Journal* 10: 137-142

⁹ Jehle, R and Arntzen, J.W (2000). Post-breeding migrations of newts with contrasting ecological requirements. *J. Zool Lond* 251: 297-306

5 Predicted Impacts

5.1 Introduction

In accordance with national and local biodiversity planning policy and CIEEM best practice ecological impact assessment guidelines, adverse ecological impacts have been completely avoided or significantly reduced by appropriately siting the proposed development within habitat of low ecological value.

The development plot (house, garden and drive) encompasses very poor semi-improved grassland, which is continually and heavily grazed by a range of domestic and agricultural livestock leading to a very short open sward. In addition, one small fruit tree and a short length of non-native cypress hedge will be removed to facilitate new vehicle access. These habitats are not scarce or sensitive. All plants recorded within the application site are common and widespread. No invasive plant species are present.

Predicted impacts on important ecological receptors are discussed below.

5.2 Trees and hedge

The proposed scheme retains and protects most of the recently planted trees within the paddock and road verge, which are a combination of native and non-native / ornamental varieties. Only two very small, newly planted trees will be removed (T4 in the paddock and T8 along the road verge). Furthermore, nearly all the existing non-native cypress and native hawthorn hedge will also be retained and protected, except for a very short length (4m) of the roadside cypress hedge H1, which is already disconnected. This loss of two very small trees and a very short length of cypress hedge is not ecologically significant.

The retained trees and hedges will be protected using appropriate best practice protection measures to prevent physical damage or compaction of tree/shrub root zones, for example appropriately sized stand-off zones. This is a neutral impact.

5.3 Foraging and commuting bats (Bat SAC)

The site is just within a core foraging area for lesser horseshoe bats associated with the Bath & Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC.

The potential effects of the proposed development will be fully contained within the application site, and will not alter the existing baseline conditions of the Bath & Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC in terms of habitat structure and function, or pressures on the site, and will have no impact on known [or potential] bat roosts associated with qualifying species at the European site or within in the wider local landscape (no buildings or potential bat roost trees are being removed or adversely affected to facilitate the proposed development).

The proposed development will result in the small loss or change of 0.28 ha of very species-poor grassland that is heavily grazed by a range of domestic and agricultural livestock leading to a very short, open sward of very restricted botanical diversity, which will be replaced with building/hard-standing and vegetated garden. This loss of grassland can be quantified at different landscape scales as follows:

- ❖ 24 % of the paddock grassland at 42 Yard Lane (total of 1.17 ha of paddock).
- ❖ 0.02 % of land within the 2km radius Bat Consultation Zone (1,256.8 ha).

This small loss of paddock grassland, which is not a primary foraging habitat for horseshoe bats (grassland predicted to support a very restricted insect biomass), is not considered to be significant for foraging horseshoe bats or other bats, especially given the location and connectivity (open or non-native cypress hedge boundaries) of the development site within the local landscape.

Furthermore, the proposed residential garden is likely to enhance the existing situation for foraging bats as gardens can support a variety of flowers, shrubs and trees, which provide a pollen and nectaring food source for a wider range and greater biomass of insects. The planting of flowers that help to attract night flying insects, for example evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*) or honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), is encouraged as this will further enhance the site for foraging bats.

The existing vegetated boundaries of the application site will remain ecologically unaffected (loss of 4m of cypress hedge H1 is not significant) and boundaries can be strengthened with planting of new mixed native hedgerow or trees, which will enhance the situation for foraging / commuting bats.

The proposed new dwelling is likely to require some external, artificial lighting, and without control this could illuminate existing or new habitats potentially used by bats, for example, existing or new boundary hedges or bat roosting features integrated into a new house. This potential adverse impact will be addressed by developing and implementing appropriate mitigation including a suitable lighting design (see Section 6.4).

A significant adverse effect on the integrity of the Bath & Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC must be a significant loss or damage of critical habitat that would lead to a risk of damaging the viability of the SAC core roosts (both breeding and hibernation) in such a way so as to impact upon the distribution of the qualifying bat species within their natural habitat range. It is therefore important to recognise that most of the paddock grassland, which is under the direct control of the applicant, will be retained and remain available for bats to use.

The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with the Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) – Planning Guidance for Wiltshire Issue 3.0 (Natural England and Wiltshire Council, September 2015). This proposed development incorporates the following mitigation, compensation and enhancement features:

- ❖ Not affecting primary horseshoe bat foraging habitat;
- ❖ Not removing / adversely affecting any known bat roosts or potential bat roosting habitat/features;
- ❖ Not significantly reducing the extent or connectivity of existing bat foraging and commuting habitat;
- ❖ Managing application site boundary habitats to extend / enhance bat foraging and commuting habitat;
- ❖ Integrating appropriately designed external lighting within the scheme to protect future potential bat foraging and commuting habitat; and
- ❖ Incorporating bat roosting features into the new building (albeit not targeted at horseshoe bats but instead crevice-dwelling species).

It is concluded that the replacement / removal of a small extent of heavily grazed paddock grassland, one small fruit tree and a very short length of cypress hedge, combined with appropriate habitat creation/enhancement, will not result in any significant loss or damage of the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC or qualifying bat species.

It is possible to conclude based on this habitat-based bat appraisal that the proposed new dwelling at 42 Yard Lane would not have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC taking into consideration the following issues:

- ❖ The proposed development will not destroy, damage or significantly disturb the population of the designated qualifying bat species (for example, breeding or hibernating lesser horseshoe bats and their roosts);
- ❖ The proposed scheme will not harm the SAC ecological connectivity within the wider landscape, for example, removing or significantly damaging/fragmenting a mature native hedgerow that could help to support the SAC qualifying bat species);
- ❖ The proposed scheme will not reduce the ability of the SAC to support the designated bat species; and
- ❖ The proposed scheme does not restrict access to primary foraging habitat resources outside the SAC that are important for supporting the SAC qualifying bat species.

The proposed scheme has a neutral impact on bats / Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC, with the potential to provide a minor positive effect in a local (site) context with the integration of new boundary habitats or trees. Therefore, no further bat baseline survey data is necessary to allow Wiltshire Council to complete an Appropriate Assessment (Habitat Regulations Assessment) for the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC for this application.

5.4 Other wildlife

Common mammals, potentially including hedgehog, could move through the development site but are unlikely to be inhabiting the site given the condition of the grassland and boundary hedges. The proposed scheme will allow animals to continue to forage / move through and around the house / garden and can improve the situation for small mammals with diversification of habitat associated with a vegetated garden and planting of new mixed native hedge and trees to provide a wider range of food source for insects. This impact is a minor positive in a local (site) context.

The proposed construction, which will include creation of small, temporary excavations or installation of pipes, has the potential to injure / cause mortality to animals if undertaken without appropriate safeguards. If this were to happen this is a negative impact in a local (site) context. This potential adverse impact will be removed by implementing mitigation as part of scheme implementation.

There is very low potential for small passerine birds to nest within the cypress hedge and there is a correspondingly low risk that nesting birds could be disturbed or injured if the proposed hedge removal is undertaken without appropriate safeguards. If this were to happen this is a negative impact in a local (site) context. This potential adverse impact will be removed by implementing mitigation as part of scheme implementation. The application site is unsuitable for supporting ground nesting birds and as such the proposed development has a neutral impact on this ecological receptor.

Great crested newt, other amphibians and reptiles are considered highly likely to be absent from the development site, and therefore the proposed scheme has a neutral impact. However, precautionary mitigation can be implemented during site clearance and construction work to ensure complete protection of herpetofauna.

6 Mitigation and Enhancement

6.1 Protecting common mammals

Hedgehog and other common mammals are possibly foraging or passing through the application site grassland. There will be the need for temporary excavations, trenches, pits and pipes to be created or installed as part of the proposed building construction. To ensure protection of any animals that may move through the site during the construction phase the following actions will be implemented:

- ❖ Any excavations that need to be left overnight will either be fully covered, appropriately profiled (i.e. 1 in 2) or fitted with a ramp at the end of each working day to ensure that any animals that enter the hole can safely escape.
- ❖ Any open pipework with an outside diameter of greater than 120 mm will be covered at the end of each working day to prevent animals entering/becoming trapped within the pipe.
- ❖ Any excavations or pipes left overnight will be inspected last thing at the end of the working day and first thing the next morning, and if an animal is found an ecologist should be contacted.

6.2 Protecting nesting birds

To ensure compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) the removal of the short length of cypress hedge should proceed carefully assessing for the presence of nesting birds, especially if undertaken inside the bird breeding and fledgling season, which is generally considered to be from 1st March to 31st August. The presence of nesting birds (including birds constructing a nest, nest with eggs or hatchlings) within or immediately adjacent to the length of hedge being removed would result in the hedge removal being delayed to allow birds to vacate the nest.

Regardless of previous survey findings or timing of work, if nesting birds are found within the hedge or any part of the development plot during construction work then work should cease and an ecologist consulted.

6.3 Protecting herpetofauna

The ecological appraisal has concluded that great crested newt, other amphibians and reptiles are highly likely to be absent from habitats within the application site. Therefore, it is not considered necessary to apply for a great crested newt development licence for this proposed development.

However, given the site is within a GCN amber zone an appropriate, precautionary working method statement (in the form of Reasonable Avoidance Measures [RAMs]) can be produced to ensure complete protection of herpetofauna – see Appendix C. The RAMs can be embedded within a site Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

6.4 Lighting design

The new dwelling will seek to limit the impact of light pollution by keeping external lighting to a minimum (in terms of coverage, use and type/luminosity) to ensure there is no significant increase in ambient night-time light levels – especially on existing or new boundary vegetation or installed bat roosting features.

The new dwelling should restrict the location of external lighting, for example to just over doorways, and all lighting should be designed in compliance with guidelines on Bats and Lighting in the UK¹⁰ to ensure adverse impacts on foraging/commuting bats are avoided or minimised to an acceptable level. This includes the following elements:

- ❖ Using low powered LED lighting to minimise/avoid ultraviolet and infrared emissions and which have a sharp cut-off;
- ❖ Minimising height of lighting, minimising outward light spill and avoiding upward light spill through the correct positioning of downward pointing luminaires and/or use of shields/hoods; and
- ❖ Limiting the timing of external lighting use, preferably with lights set on a motion detector, ensuring lights are only used as and when required, and ensuring a long period of complete darkness during each night.

6.5 New planting

New property / garden boundaries will be delineated with new mixed native hedgerow, which includes the northwest boundary (replacing / adjoining the existing fence and gate) and boundary to south (separating remaining paddock) as shown on the Site Plan in Appendix A. The hedgerow planting mix should include at least five species from a mix of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), wild privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*).

Hedgerows should preferably be planted as double-row (500mm apart) using whips at 300mm centres. Hedgerows should be managed at a minimum height of 1.5m with foliage maintained down to ground level.

Additional new trees could be included within the new garden of around the new dwelling curtilage, which could include native species for example field maple (*Acer campestre*), oak (*Quercus robur*) or small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*) or fruit trees.

The final planting mix of any new boundary hedges and the location / type of any new standard trees would be defined at the detailed design stage.

6.6 Bat roosting box

To provide an enhancement for crevice-dwelling roosting bats one integrated (fitting into the fabric of a wall) bat roosting brick can be installed on the new dwelling. The bat brick will be integrated into the westerly facing gable aspect of the new house and set as high above the ground as possible, for example at the gable apex, which provide sufficient height and warmth making it suitable for bat roosting.

¹⁰ Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals (2018). *Bats and artificial lighting in the UK (Guidance Note 08/18)*. Bats and the built environment series.

Alternative bat bricks can be viewed on-line (e.g. www.nhbs.com or www.wildcare.co.uk), with two examples shown below. One of these or an equivalent should be used.



Habibat bat brick



Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box C

Clear lines of flight to the entrance of the bat roost box should be maintained and no external lighting must be used adjacent to or shine directly at entrance slots.

The location and type of bat box would be defined at the detailed design stage.

6.7 Bird nesting boxes

To provide an enhancement for nesting birds, two or three swift nesting boxes can be incorporated into the new dwelling. The provision of swift boxes recognises that swifts have been recorded in Bromham and that swift numbers are declining. Therefore, the scheme aims to provide additional nesting sites for this species. Swift boxes are also readily used by a range of other small passerine birds and are therefore seen as a 'universal' bird box for new development.

Integrated (fitting into the fabric of a wall) nest-boxes should be installed as a group on the easterly facing gable elevation and as far above the ground as possible, for example at the gable apex, with no structure located beneath the nest boxes. This location provides sufficient height, a clear drop and shelter from direct sunlight / prevailing winds making it suitable for swift nesting.

A range of alternative bird boxes are available and can be viewed on-line (for example www.actionforswifts.com, www.nhbs.com or www.wildcare.co.uk), with an example Vivara Pro Cambridge swift box (chamber and entrance brick) shown here. This or equivalent should be used.



The location, number and type of swift nest box would be defined at the detailed design stage.

6.8 Wildlife habitat features

The use of close-boarded garden fencing within the development design is avoided with timber post & rail fences / hedges used instead allowing small mammals (such as hedgehog) to move uninterrupted into and out of the garden.

Note: if close-boarded garden fencing is used then it should be fitted with small gaps at the base, approximately 12cm by 12cm, to allow hedgehog and other small mammals to move into and out of the garden.

Within the garden or wider paddock a single wildlife habitat pile (hibernacula) should be constructed by stacking short (1-2m) lengths of cut logs. This habitat pile should be positioned at the base of a boundary hedge. The habitat pile should be inspected every 5 years and topped-up/repared as required. Decaying wood piles will provide ideal habitat for saproxylic invertebrates (feed on deadwood), fungi and mosses, while habitat piles also provide shelter for a variety of wildlife including small mammals.

7 Residual Effects

In accordance with biodiversity planning policies and CIEEM best practice guidelines adverse ecological impacts have been completely removed or significantly reduced by the correct positioning (and future detailed design) of the proposed new residential dwelling, which has a small impact on habitats of very low ecological value, while implementing safeguards to protect wildlife. Residual adverse impact includes the loss or change of a small area (0.28 ha) of very poor semi-improved and heavily grazed grassland, a small area of mown road verge, two very small newly planted trees and a very short (4m) length of cypress hedge, which is not considered to be a significant adverse ecological impact.

The vast majority of boundary hedge and scattered / road verge trees will be retained and protected, and the dwelling can have sensitively designed lighting to ensure there is no significant increase in ambient night-time light levels.

To enhance the study area for ecology, new boundary mixed native hedgerow, native or fruit trees, a bat roosting box, 2-3 swift / bird nesting boxes, hedgehog access and a habitat log pile can be planted or installed as part of scheme design / implementation.

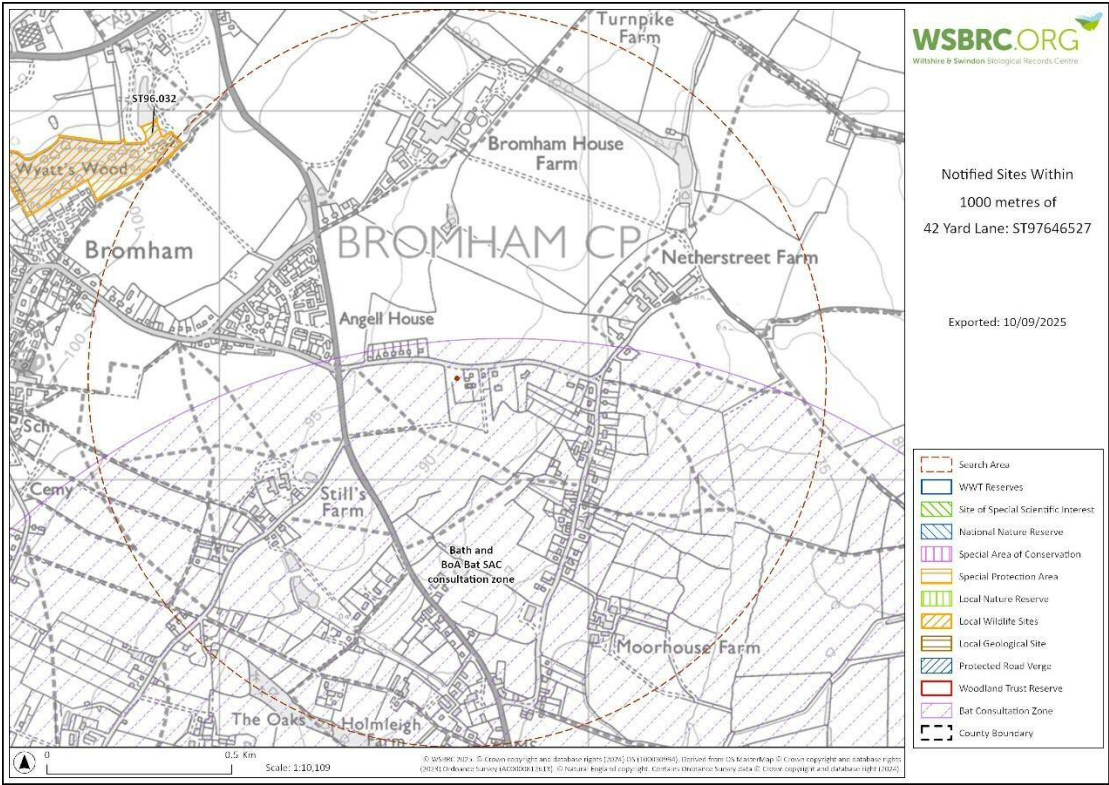
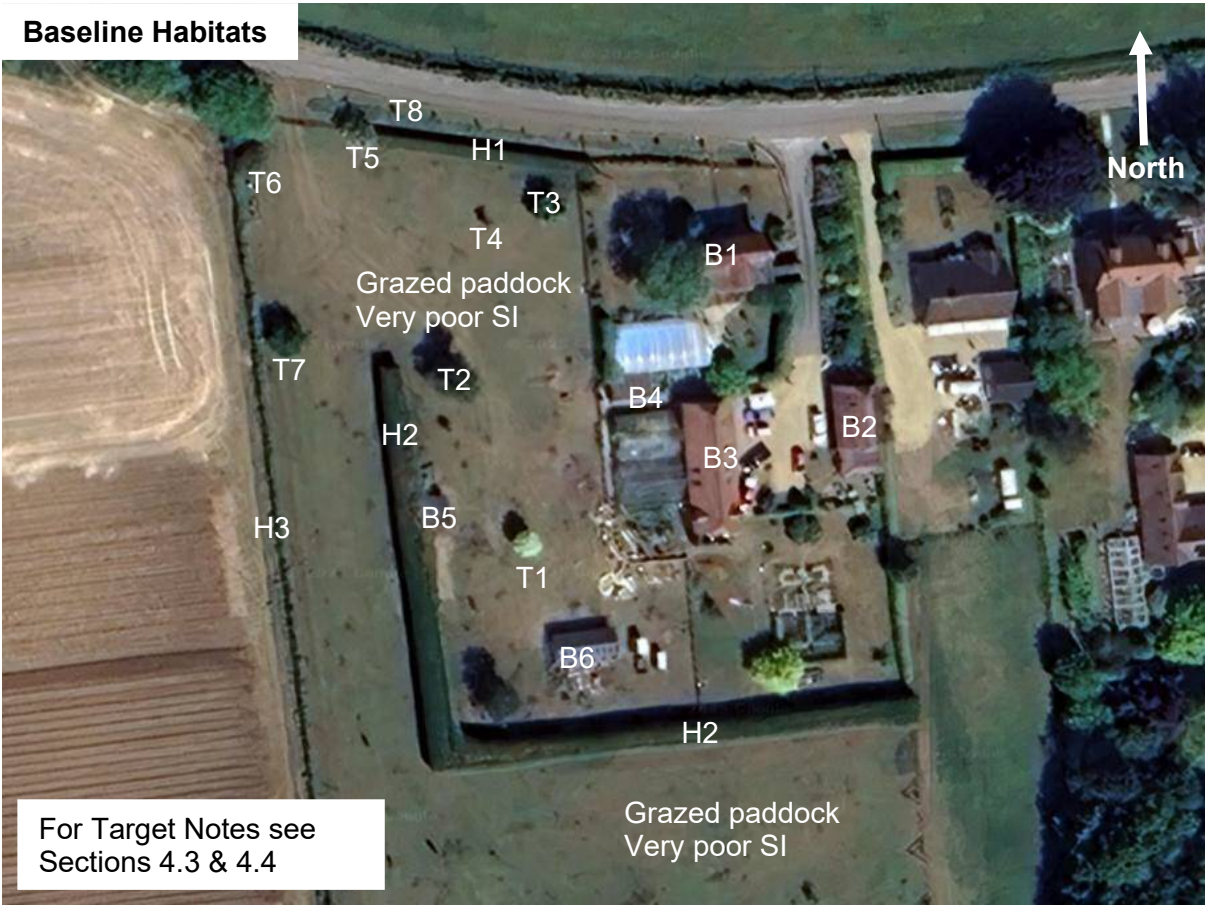
The nature, scale and location of the proposed residential dwelling development on the edge of a core foraging area of a lesser horseshoe bat colony roost is predicted to have no adverse impact on individual horseshoe bats or the integrity of the lesser horseshoe bat population associated with the Bath & Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC given there is negligible loss of foraging or commuting habitat, while the scheme design retains and enhances a permeable landscape for horseshoe and other bats to move through while also providing enhanced foraging habitat.

The proposed scheme has been designed in accordance with the Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Planning Guidance for Wiltshire, and it is therefore concluded that the replacement of a small amount of heavily grazed, very species-poor paddock grassland with a residential dwelling / garden combined with appropriate habitat protection and creation will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Bath & Bradford-on-Avon SAC or its qualifying bat species. The residual ecological effect of the proposed development, which can include new planting and wildlife habitat features, is considered to be minor positive in a local (site) context.

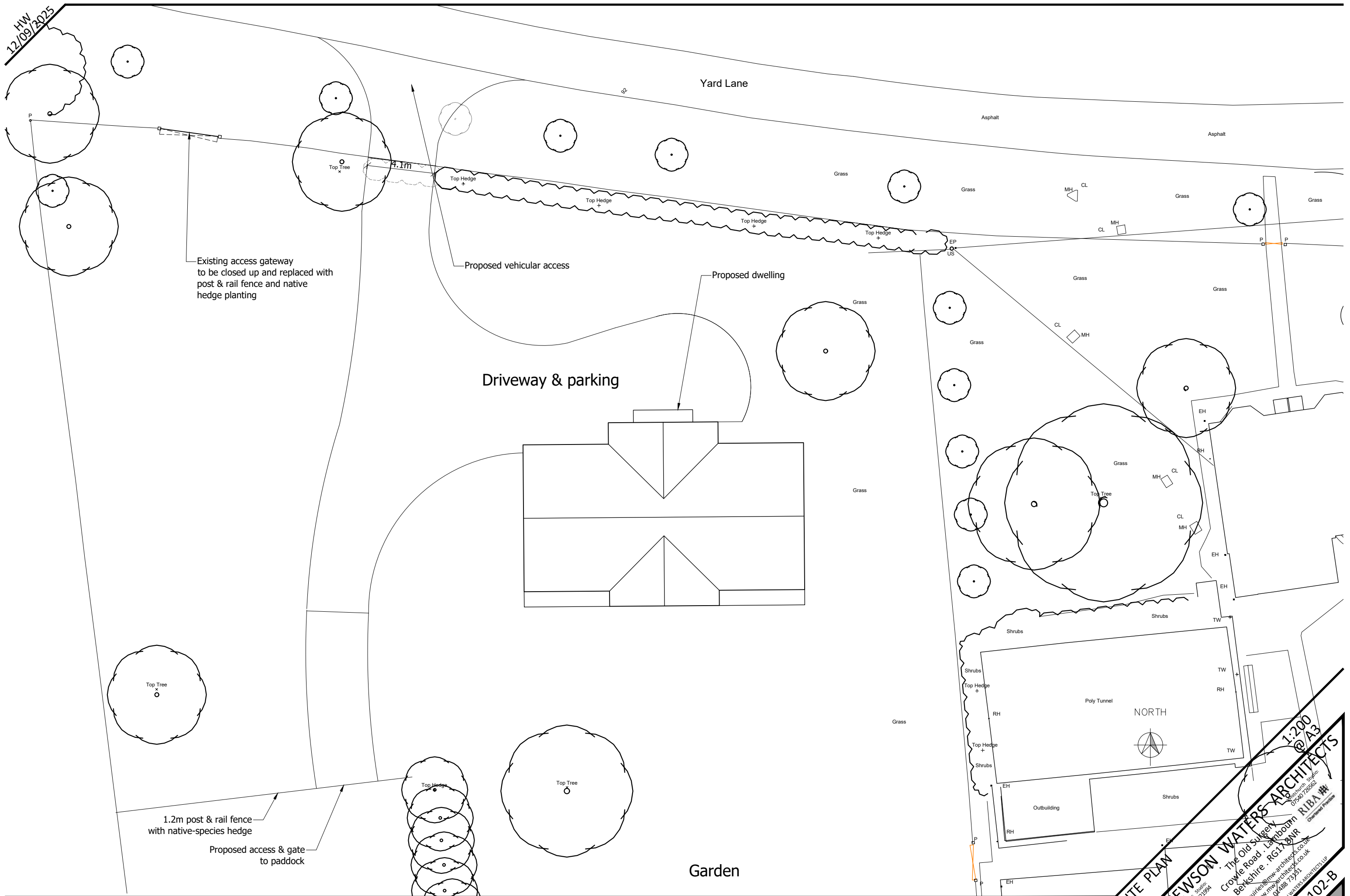
The proposed development complies with both national and local planning policies (NPPF and Wiltshire Council Core Policy 50) to maintain and enhance biodiversity particularly for species identified as priorities in the UK and Wiltshire.

It is concluded that this report provides the necessary information to enable Wiltshire Council to carry out a 'test of significance' under the Habitats Regulations, and the scheme demonstrates compliance with the Habitats Regulations.

Appendix A Site Plans

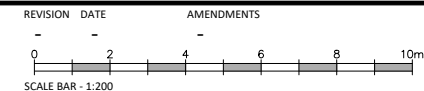


HW
12/09/2025



PROJECT

Land at 42 Yard Lane, Bromham, Chippenham. SN15 2DT



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NORTH

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Appendix B Site Photographs

Application Site



Paddock field of application looking south with tree T2 (left) and looking northwest towards access gate (right)



Paddock grazed by sheep & donkey (left) and looking east towards residential buildings (right)



Northern boundary cypress hedgerow H1 (left) and western boundary cypress hedgerow H2 (right) both are grazed-out at the base



Western end of cypress hedge H1 with 4m scheduled for removal (left) and small trees in northeast corner with the very small purple maple T4 scheduled for removal (right)

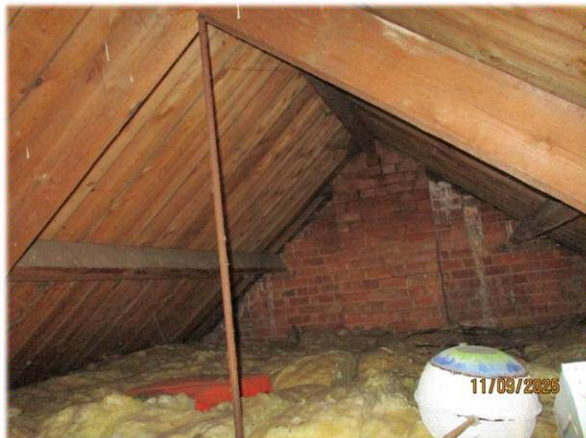


Paddock within the western and southern part of the application site (left) and paddock western boundary species-poor, gappy hedgerow H3 (right)



Mown grass verge along Yard Lane with newly planted cherry trees, one of which will be removed to facilitate the new vehicle access

42 Yard Lane Buildings



Building 1 (Farmhouse) exterior and attic sealed with timber sarking



Building 2 (Annex) exterior and sealed interior with vaulted ceiling and no attic space



Building 3 (Garages) exterior and modern sealed attic lined with Tyvac



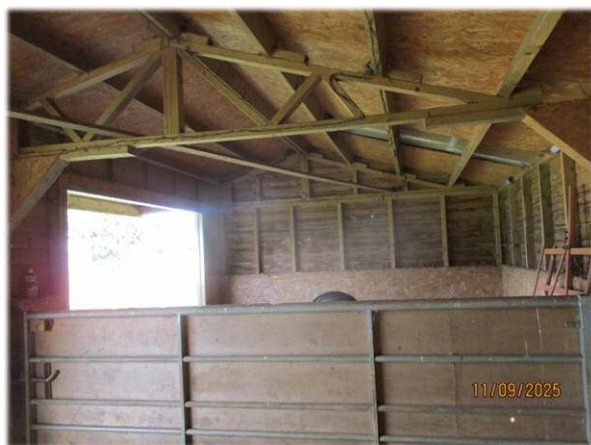
Open-fronted ground floor room of Building 3 (left) and exterior of Building 4 shed (right)



Interior rooms of Building 4 shed used for storage and chicken coop



Building 5 (small stable) exterior and interior



Building 6 (large stable) exterior and interior

Appendix C Herpetofauna Reasonable Avoidance Measures

A document should be produced that can be embedded within a site Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This will cover:

- ❖ Great crested newt (GCN) and reptile legal protection;
- ❖ Background and need for Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs);
- ❖ Identification of GCN, common amphibians and common reptiles;
- ❖ Approved working methods; and
- ❖ Timing and sequencing of working methods.

At the outset of the project the contractor / site manager will be made aware of the RAMs. A copy of the RAMs will be kept on site, as an integral part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), for the duration of the construction work.

Prior to the commencement of construction activities, including any site clearance work, the appointed contractor / site manager will be provided with a toolbox talk. This will cover the need for the RAMs, GCN and reptile legislation, GCN and reptile identification and details of the RAMs.

The RAMs are summarised as follows:

1. Prior to the commencement of the development, including all site clearance work, the grassland within the development plot will be maintained in its current condition as a very short open sward through continued grazing or with regular mowing.
2. Clearance of grassland / topsoil will be undertaken carefully in a phased manner moving outwards towards existing vegetated / garden bordering boundaries.
3. All excavations that cannot be backfilled at the end of the working day and need to be left overnight will be (1) covered or (2) installed with a ramp with maximum gradient of 1:2 to avoid entrapment of GCN, other amphibians or reptiles that could enter the voids.
4. Any open pipework must be covered at the end of each working day to prevent GCN, other amphibians or reptiles entering/becoming trapped.
5. Any excavations or pipes left overnight should always be inspected last thing at the end of the working day and first thing the next morning, and if a GCN, other amphibian or reptile (or other animal) is found an ecologist should be contacted.
6. Materials and machinery will be stored on hard-standing or bare ground to avoid creation of potential refugia for GCN, other amphibians or reptiles.
7. If materials are stored on grass then they should be raised off the ground (e.g. in skips or on pallets).
8. If GCN or reptiles are found or suspected to be present, then work will stop and an ecologist will be consulted for advice and to agree an appropriate course of action.
9. GCN must not be handled or moved without the prior approval of an ecologist.