

Velley Farm, Chapel Knapp

Beazer Property Management Ltd

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Survey Report



16th September 2025

Document Control

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The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to work

Executive Summary

Purpose of the report

To provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the proposed development site, involving,

- Evaluation of its conservation status based on a desktop review that summarises information collated on protected species and nature conservation designations in the area.
- Assessment of habitat composition on site, derived from a UKHabitat 2.0 survey.
- Assessment of the likelihood of protected, or otherwise notable, species occurring on site.

Context of the development

The proposed development:

- Residential conversion of building 1

Methods

The project requirement was to assess the existing ecological value of the site, identify potential ecological issues associated with the proposed development and make recommendations for general mitigation, compensation, enhancement and further surveys, as appropriate. A desk study and a UKHabitat 2.0 survey were carried out.

Key issues

The Site had LOW potential for commuting and foraging badger and birds due to the suitable grassland and hedgerow habitats adjacent to the Site.

There was NEGLIGIBLE bat roost potential in building 1, LOW bat roost potential in building 2 and MODERATE bat roost potential in building 3 due to the many potential roost features recorded in gaps in brickwork, under lifted tiles and under weatherboarding.

There was also LOW potential for foraging and commuting bats in the grassland and hedgerow habitats adjacent to the Site.

Further surveys required

None

Conclusions

No further survey work is required to support the proposed development of building 1.

Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this document is truthful and accurate at the time of completion.

Project manager: Daniel Ahern CEnv MCIEEM FLS

Signature:



Lead ecologist & Report writer: Ashleigh Cairns

Signature:



Date: 16th September 2025

1. Introduction

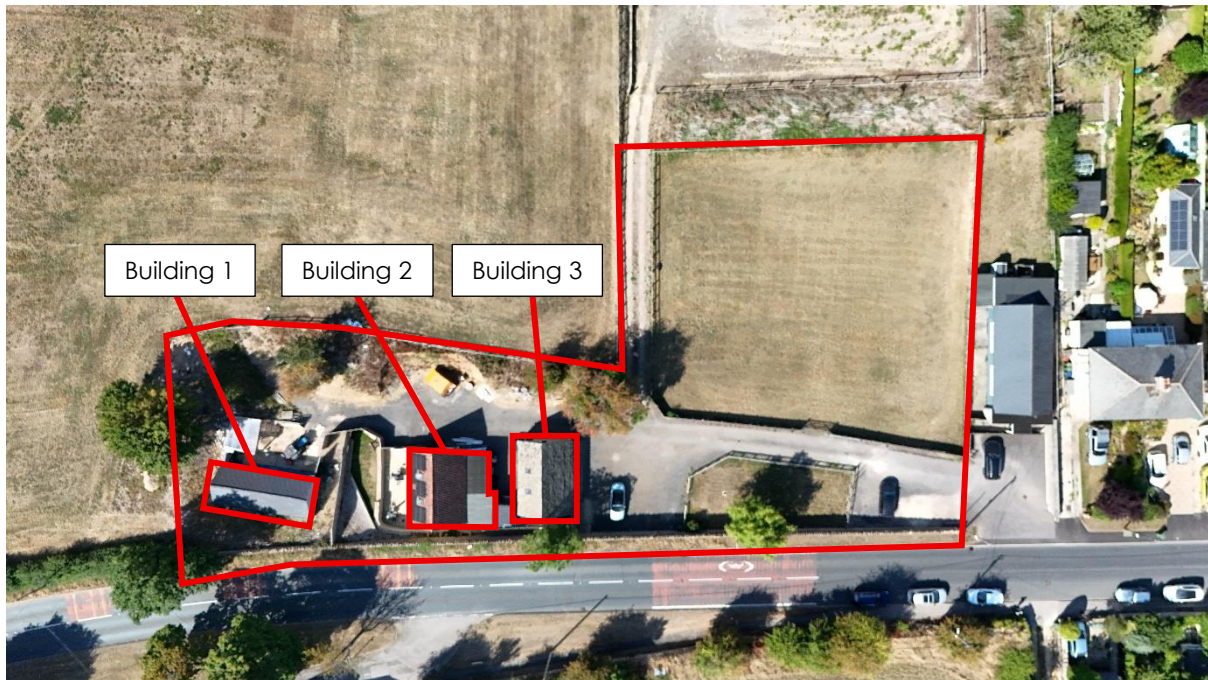
1.1. Background

- 1.1.1. In August 2025, Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Beazer Property Management Ltd to undertake an ecological appraisal of Velley Farm and its surrounding land to the north of Chapel Knapp in Wiltshire. The purpose of the survey was to provide an assessment of the current ecological conditions and to evaluate the ecological constraints in order to inform development proposals.
- 1.1.2. The purpose of this report is to identify key ecological constraints, in order to inform the project planning such that significant ecological impacts are avoided or minimised. It also aims to highlight any further ecological surveys that may be required to inform any future Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), so that they can be appropriately designed. Finally, the report aims to provide the information required in order to develop appropriate mitigation or compensation measures.

1.2. Site description

- 1.2.1. Velley Farm and its surrounding land, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', measures approximately 0.33ha and is situated on Velley Hill, which runs to the east of the Site (approximate OS grid reference: ST 88375 68214), see Fig. 1 below.
- 1.2.2. The site of proposed development consists of developed land, buildings, vegetated gardens, modified grassland and individual trees.
- 1.2.3. The proposed developments and alterations to the site are as follows:
- Residential conversion of building 1

Figure 1. Site location with the red line boundary and building identification.



2. Planning & Legislation

2.2. Legislation

The following legislation informed the survey approach and considerations.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- Environment Act 2021

2.3. Planning policies

2.3.3. This report is prepared with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

3. Methods

3.2. Desk study

3.2.3. The following publicly accessible websites were searched for relevant ecological information:

- <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>
- <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1376> (summary of nature conservation legislation)
- www.ukbap.org.uk (archived 2012)
- <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>

3.2.4. Data relating to statutory & non-statutory sites and all protected species records within 1km of the red line boundary was requested from the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC).

3.3. Field survey

1.2.3. A UKHab 2.0 habitat survey of the site was undertaken with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017).

3.3.3. The survey was conducted on the 25th August 2025 by Daniel Ahern.

3.3.4. The weather conditions were good with an average temperature of 23°C.

3.3.5. During the survey, dominant plant species were recorded, and habitats were classified according to their vegetation types, as identified in the UKHab 2.0 users handbook. Target notes (TN) were taken to denote species and habitats of conservation interest and to describe the vegetation in areas that were too small to map. Evidence or habitat suitable for any legally protected species was recorded, where appropriate.

3.3.6. The presence of any Category 9 invasive non-native plant species was recorded.

3.3.7. The results are presented in the standard format with habitat descriptions and a UK Hab 2.0 map (see Figure 3).

3.3.8. The site was inspected for direct evidence and habitat suitability for protected and notable species. Particular attention was given to those species listed under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). This included searching for signs of badger activity and habitats suitable for amphibians, dormice, bats and reptiles.

3.3.9. In the event that habitats suitable for protected species are identified, it may be necessary to undertake further seasonal surveys to confirm presence/absence. In the event that no suitable habitats or features are

identified, a UK Hab 2.0 survey is sufficient to determine the potential impacts associated with a proposed development.

3.4. Limitations

- 3.4.3. The data provided by the online resources were not exhaustive. It is possible that species and habitats not found in the data search occur within the vicinity of the proposed development site.
- 3.4.4. The details within this report will remain valid for a period of 12 months; beyond that date it is advised that a review of ecological conditions is undertaken.

4. Baseline Ecological conditions

4.2. Desk study

- 4.2.3. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were no statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site.
- 4.2.4. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were seven non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site, the details of which are in Table 1 and Figure 2 below.

Table 1. The details of the Non-Statutory Wildlife Sites Within 1km of the site.

Designation	Name	Area (ha)
LWS	Gastard Meadows	1.82
LGS	Monks Park Mine	0.146

The map displays the Gastard area, highlighting several key locations and land designations. A dashed orange circle indicates the search area centered on Velley Farm (ST8837768213). Other notable sites include Monk's Park, Monk's Mine, and the Bath and BoA Bat SAC consultation zone. The map also shows various farms such as Avills Farm, Pandown Farm, Willgarup Farm, and Attwood Farm. Land designations are color-coded according to the legend: WWI Reserves (blue), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (green hatched), National Nature Reserve (light green), Special Area of Conservation (pink), Special Protection Area (yellow), Local Nature Reserve (orange), Local Wildlife Sites (brown hatched), Local Geological Site (grey), Protected Road Verge (blue hatched), Woodland Trust Reserve (red outline), Bat Consultation Zone (purple outline), and County Boundary (dashed black line).

WSBRC.ORG
Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre

Notified Sites Within
1000 metres of
Velley Farm: ST8837768213

Exported: 12/09/2025

Search Area
WWI Reserves
Site of Special Scientific Interest
National Nature Reserve
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Local Nature Reserve
Local Wildlife Sites
Local Geological Site
Protected Road Verge
Woodland Trust Reserve
Bat Consultation Zone
County Boundary

Scale: 1:10,109

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- Table 2. Protected species records within 1km of the Site.

Species name	Number of records
Amphibians	
great crested newt	27
Birds	
barn owl	5
fieldfare	15
grey partridge	5
greenfinch	66
herring gull	7
hobby	1
house martin	142
house sparrow	60
kingfisher	3
lapwing	2
linnet	11
peregrine	1
skylark	7
starling	495

swift	91
winchat	1
yellowhammer	163
Mammals	
badger	15
brown hare	6
brown long-eared	3
common pipistrelle	9
Daubenton's	3
greater horseshoe	3
hedgehog	19
lesser horseshoe	17
long eared bat species	3
myotis species	2
Natterer's	2
noctule	11
pipistrelle species	2
serotine	8
soprano pipistrelle	4
whiskered	1
Reptiles	
common lizard	1
grass snake	2
slow worm	3

4.2. Site survey

4.2.1. Habitat type and areas recorded on and adjacent to the Site are set out in Table 3, below.

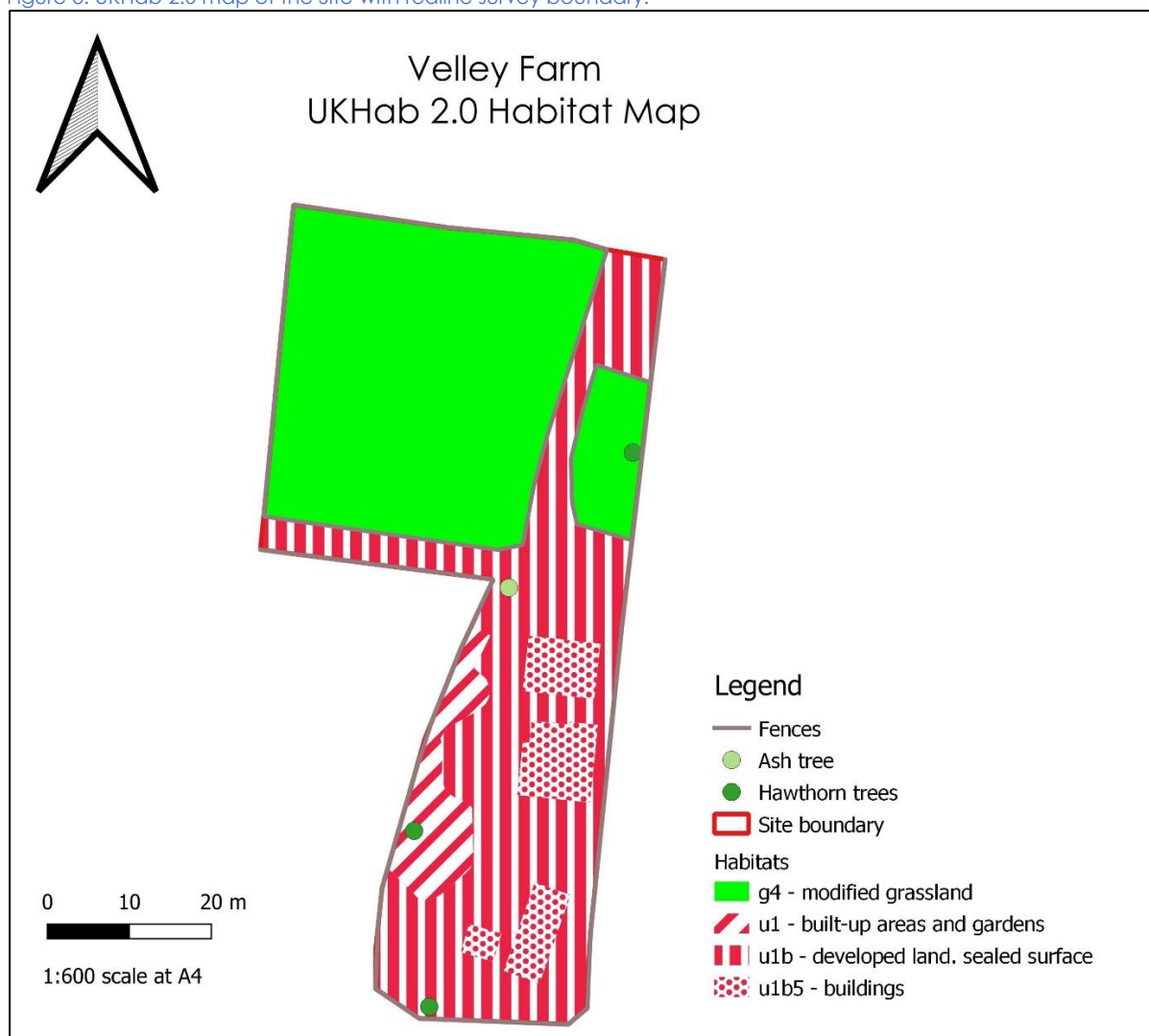
4.2.2. A UKHab 2.0 map of the site is set out in Figure 3 below.

Table 3. UKHab 2.0 types recorded on or adjacent to the Site.

UKHabitat type	Species recorded	Percentage present
g4 – modified grassland	Nettle – <i>Urtica dioica</i>	10%
	Perennial rye grass – <i>Lolium perenne</i>	30%
	Annual meadow grass – <i>Poa annua</i>	30%
	Red fescue – <i>Festuca rubra</i>	30%
u1 – built up areas and gardens	-	-
u1b – developed land, sealed surface	-	-
u1b5 - buildings	-	-

4.2.3. No category 9 invasive plants were recorded within the survey area.

Figure 3. UKHab 2.0 map of the Site with redline survey boundary.



4.2.4. Table 4 contains details of the potential for protected species and groups to be present.

Table 4. Protected species potential on Site.

Species (group)	Habitat availability	Records	Impact assessment
Amphibians	NEGLIGIBLE	great crested newt	no suitable habitat recorded on or adjacent to the Site. The closest waterbody was over 300m southeast, across a major linear barrier.
Badgers	LOW	yes	LOW potential for commuting and foraging badger through Site due to the suitable grassland and hedgerow habitats adjacent to the Site. no evidence recorded on or adjacent to the Site.
Bats	NEGLIGIBLE roost potential	brown long-eared, common pipistrelle,	Building 1 was assessed to have NEGLIGIBLE bat roost potential,

	in building 1, LOW roost potential in building 2, MODERATE roost potential in building 3. LOW foraging and commuting potential	Daubenton's, greater horseshoe, lesser horseshoe, long-eared bat species, myotis species, Natterer's, noctule, pipistrelle species, serotine, soprano pipistrelle and whiskered	building 2 was assessed to have LOW and building 3 was assessed to have MODERATE bat roost potential. Potential roost features were recorded in gaps in brickwork, under lifted tiles and under weather boarding. LOW foraging and commuting potential on Site due to the suitable hedgerow habitat adjacent to the Site.
Birds	LOW foraging and commuting	yes	Suitable grassland and hedgerow habitats adjacent to the Site.
Dormice	NEGLIGIBLE	no.	no suitable habitat recorded on Site.
Otter	NEGLIGIBLE	no.	no suitable habitat recorded on Site.
Reptiles	NEGLIGIBLE	common lizard, grass snake and slow-worm.	no suitable habitat recorded on Site.
Water vole	NEGLIGIBLE	no.	no suitable habitat recorded on Site.

5. Ecological constraints and opportunities

5.2. Designated nature conservation sites

- 5.2.3. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were two non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site. The nearest non-statutory wildlife site, Monks Park Mine, is located approximately 700m to the west of the Site boundary.
- 5.2.4. It is considered highly unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant negative impact to the conservation status of either of the non-statutory wildlife sites present within 1km of the Site.

5.3. Habitats

- 5.3.3. The proposed development of the Site will result in the modification of one building. There may be some modification to the modified grassland areas, however this habitat is widespread in the area and as such the impact is assessed to be restricted to Site level.

5.4. Fauna

- 5.4.3. The Site predominantly had NEGLIGIBLE potential for protected species (groups).

- 5.4.4. Building 1 was assessed to have NEGLIGIBLE bat roost potential. No further survey work is required to support the proposed development of building 1.
- 5.4.5. There should be no additional external lighting to ensure that there is no change to the ambient night time light levels as a result of the proposed development.

5.5. Requirements

Habitat enhancement measures:

- 5.5.3. One Harlech bat box - https://www.birdfood.co.uk/harlech-woodstone-bat-box-black?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIwlbT2pqD_gIVyZ7tCh1AoAVbEAAAYAiAAEgLxGfD_BwE. Installed at a height of at least 3m above the ground on a west facing tree or building elevation.
- 5.5.4. One Woodstone bird box - https://www.birdfood.co.uk/national-trust-woodstone-32mm-nest-box-green?utm_source=google_shopping&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI-ef86JqD_gIVjdPtCh21_QonEAQYASABEgLZcPD_BwE. Installed at a height of at least 3m above the ground on a west facing tree or building elevation.
- 5.5.5. One insect block - https://www.birdfood.co.uk/woodstone-insect-block-grey?utm_source=google_shopping&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIrZm8-ZqD_gIVEmHmCh2g5g_FEAQYAiABEgJu4fD_BwE. Installed at a height of 1.5m above the ground on a south facing tree or building elevation.

6. References

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- HMSO (2010) *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (as amended)*; London
- Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (ed.) (2004) *Bat Workers' Manual* (3rd edn). JNCC.
- Rose, F. (1981) *The Wild Flower Key*; Frederick Warne
- Rose, F. (1989) *Colour Identification Guide to the Grasses, Sedges, Rushes and Ferns of the British Isles and North Western Europe*; Viking
- UKHab Ltd (2023) *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (<https://www.ukhab.org/>)

7. Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Photo 1 – view of entrance to site facing south.



Photo 2 – external view of building 1 and surrounding land



Photo 3 – internal view of building 1, facing north



Photo 4 – external view of timber building next to building 1

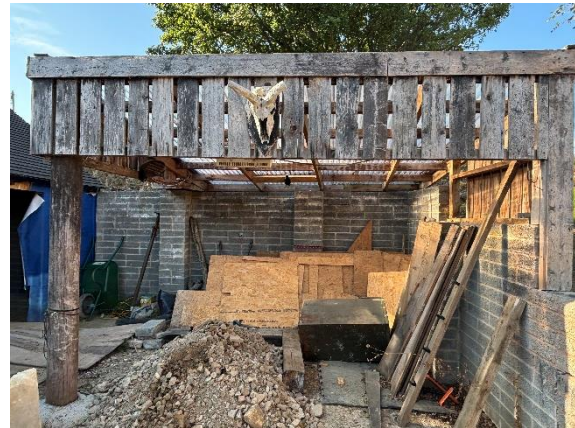


Photo 5 – external view of building 2



Photo 6 – external view of building 3



Photo 7 – external view of space between buildings 2 and 3



Photo 8 – external view of building 3, east elevation



Photo 9 – timber lean-to on north elevation of building 2



Photo 10 – external view of timber building next to building 1



Photo 11 – view of hawthorn tree and area to the south of building 1



Photo 12 – external view of modified grassland field facing northeast

