

# ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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## THE GOAT BARN BAYDON MANOR, MARRIDGE HILL, RAMSBURY, MARLBOROUGH, SN8 2HG

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Client: Robin Belither

Our reference: ECO3901A

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## 1.0 Introduction

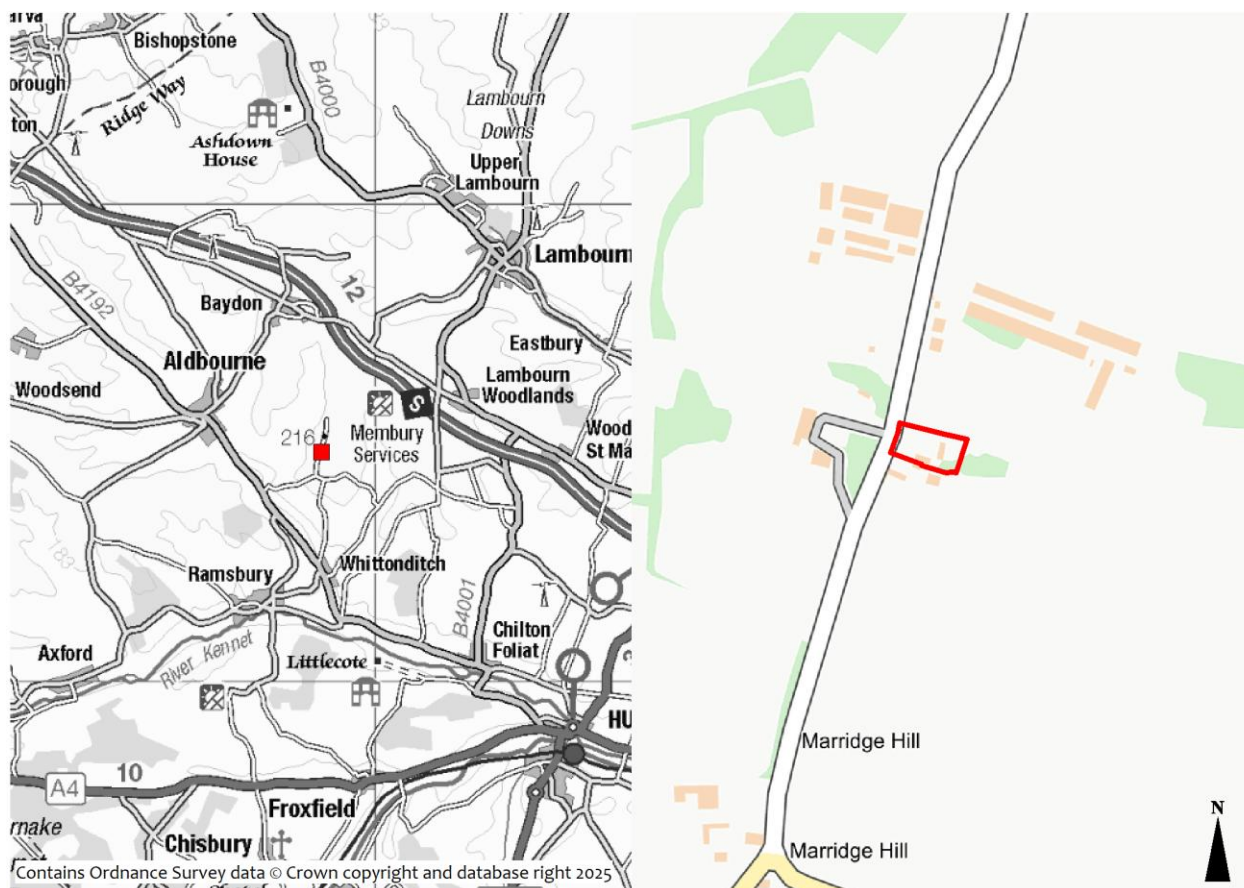
### Survey and reporting

- 1.1 This report details the results of an Ecological Assessment (comprising an Extended Phase 1 Habitat & Protected Species Scoping Survey, Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Barn Owl Survey) of The Goat Barn, Baydon Manor, Marridge Hill, Ramsbury, Marlborough, SN8 2HG.
- 1.2 The survey, carried on 09 October 2025, was undertaken to inform a planning application for the site.

### Application site

- 1.3 The application site is located midway along an unnamed, rural track north of Marridge Hill, south west of Lambourn (Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: SU2887674803, Figure 1).
- 1.4 It comprises an open-fronted agricultural barn, an associated garage & workshop building, and, part of the surrounding paddock.
- 1.5 The total area of the site is approximately 0.24ha.
- 1.6 The local planning authority is Wiltshire Council.

**Figure 1 – Site location plan**



### Details of proposed works

- 1.7 It is proposed to convert the barn into a residential dwelling (see Figures 2 and 3) As part of the conversion works the existing roof will be replaced.
- 1.8 It is understood that the garage & workshop building will be completely unaffected by the proposed works.
- 1.9 It is understood that no trees will be removed to facilitate the proposals.

Figure 2 – Proposed Elevations and Floor Plan

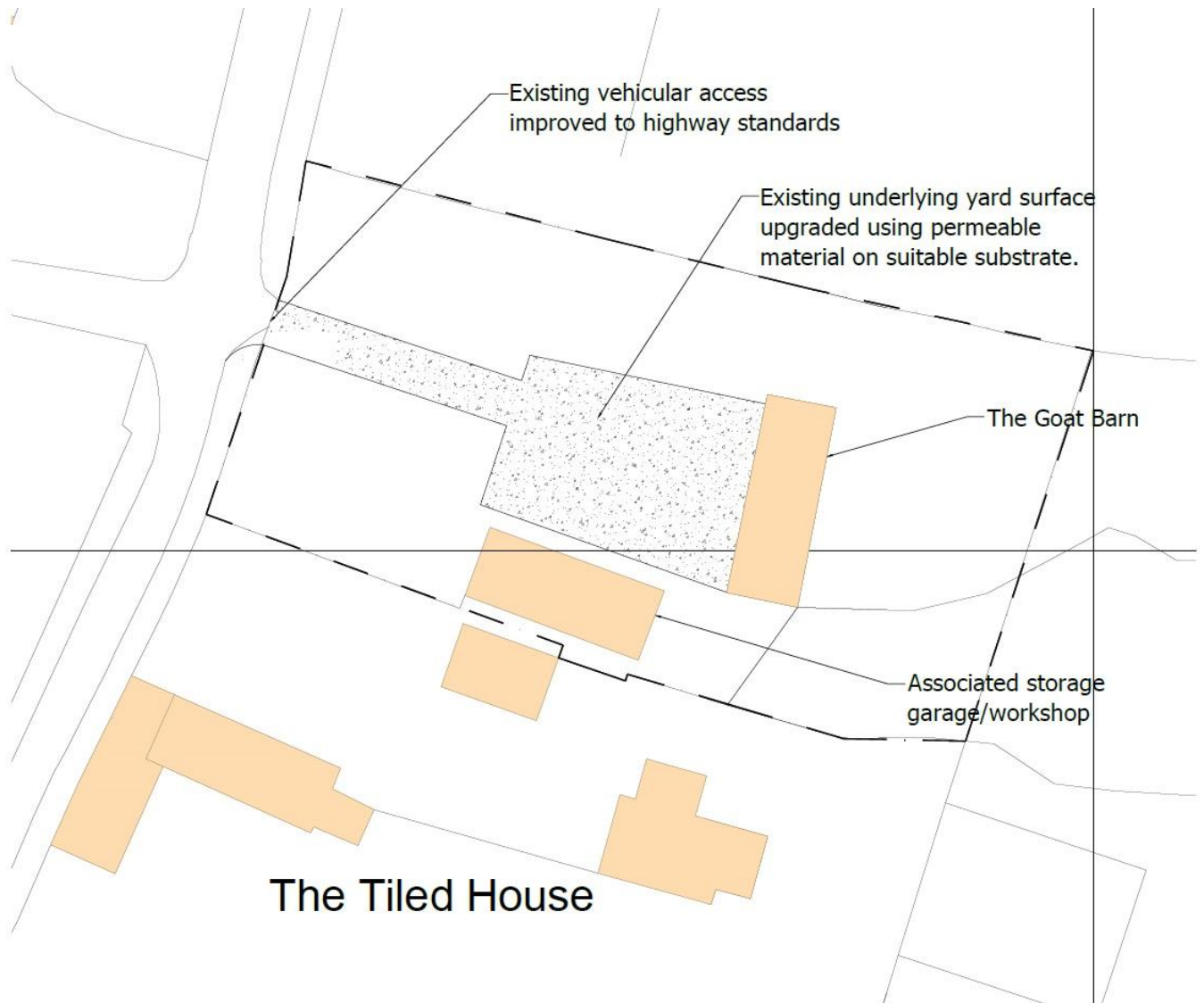


Plans & elevations  
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PROJECT: The Goat Barn, Baydon Manor, Marridge Hill

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**Figure 3 – Proposed Site Plan**



## 2.0 Methodology

### Desk study

- 2.1 A desk study data search was undertaken for ecological data within the zone of influence of the survey area (considered to be a maximum of 1km in this case). This involved:
- (1) Reviewing publicly available datasets and citations of statutory designated sites of importance for nature conservation, Natural England's Priority Habitat Inventory GIS dataset for England, and Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory for sites within the zone of influence of the survey area (considered to be a maximum of 1km in this case).
  - (2) Accessing species records on Natural England's MAGIC website<sup>1</sup>.
  - (3) Studying aerial photographs and Ordnance Survey maps for features of interest (such as nearby ponds).

### Extended Phase 1 Habitat and Protected Species Scoping Survey

- 2.2 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat and Protected Species Scoping Survey was undertaken. This comprised a walkover survey of the application site and the classification of habitats in accordance with descriptions provided within the Joint Nature Conservancy Council 'Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey' (NCC 1990, JNCC 1993). The survey was then 'extended' to include an assessment of the site in terms of its suitability for notable or protected species, and any features of note were described.

### Bat survey

- 2.3 A bat survey was undertaken. This comprised:

#### **Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW)**

- 2.4 A survey to assess the suitability of habitats for bats to roost, commute and forage within and adjacent to the site (where accessible). Habitat suitability was assessed as per Table 1 below.

#### **Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)**

- 2.5 This survey consisted of a detailed search of the interior and exterior of the buildings looking for bats and/or evidence of bats including droppings (on walls and windowsills and in roof and loft spaces), rub or scratch marks, staining at potential roosts and exit holes, live or dead bats and features, such as raised or missing tiles, potentially suitable for use by roosting bats. Binoculars, an endoscope, a ladder and a high-powered torch were used as required.
- 2.6 The buildings were classified in terms of their suitability for use by roosting bats (see Table 2) and in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Survey Guidelines<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.7 Classification was dependent on a number of factors including:
- Bats and/or signs of bats
  - External and internal features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats (e.g. raised or missing tiles, gaps behind fascia boards)
  - Setting
  - Night time light levels
  - Disturbance levels
  - Proximity of suitable foraging habitat and flight-paths (e.g. ponds, streams, woodland, large gardens, hedgerows)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn) Bat Conservation Trust

**Table 1 – Habitat suitability scale for potential flight-paths and foraging bats**

|                                                                              | <b>Potential Suitability</b>  | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Potential Suitability of potential flight-paths and foraging habitats</b> | <b>High</b>                   | Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge.<br>High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland.<br>Site is close to and connected to known roosts. |
|                                                                              | <b>Moderate</b>               | Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens.<br>Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                                              | <b>Low</b>                    | Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat.<br>Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.                                                                                                       |
|                                                                              | <b>Negligible<sup>3</sup></b> | No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                                              | <b>None [Not suitable]</b>    | No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

<sup>3</sup>Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant.' This category may be used where are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute)

**Table 2 – Description of the categories used to assess a building’s bat roost potential and the survey effort required to determine the likely presence or absence of bats**

|                                   | <b>Roost status</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Survey effort required to determine the likely presence or absence of bats</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bat Roost Potential Status</b> | <b>Confirmed</b>    | Bats or evidence of bats found.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Surveys would be required to establish the status of the roost. Generally, three dusk emergence surveys between May and September. Optimum period May – August (two surveys should be undertaken during the optimal period). Surveys should be carried out at least three weeks apart. |
|                                   | <b>High</b>         | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions (For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance) and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site. | Three dusk emergence surveys between May and September. Optimum period May – August. Two surveys should be undertaken during the optimal period. Surveys should be carried out at least three weeks apart.                                                                             |
|                                   | <b>Moderate</b>     | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).                                                                              | Two dusk emergence surveys, between May and September (one of the surveys needs to be carried out between May and the end of August). Surveys should be carried out at least three weeks apart.                                                                                        |
|                                   | <b>Low</b>          | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).                            | One dusk emergence survey between May and the end of August (but only if features will be affected by the proposals).                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                   | <b>Negligible</b>   | No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | No further surveys required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                   | <b>None</b>         | No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | No further surveys required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

### **Barn owl survey**

- 2.8 A barn owl survey was undertaken. The survey comprised a search of the building for barn owls, barn owl pellets, feathers, droppings and features potentially used for nesting or roosting barn owls, and an assessment of the surrounding habitat in terms of its suitability for barn owls.

### **Surveyor details**

- 2.9 The survey was undertaken by Ryan Davies BSc (Hons) ACIEEM (senior ecologist) and Zoe Maidment BSc (Hons) (assistant ecologist) of GS Ecology Ltd.
- 2.10 Ryan holds a Natural England WML A34 Level 2 bat survey licence, a Natural England great crested newt survey licence (WML-CL08), and is an associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management with more than 10 years' experience as professional ecologist.

### **Constraints**

- 2.11 There were no constraints to the survey.

### 3.0 Results

#### Weather conditions

- 3.1 Weather conditions during the initial survey were 10°C, 7/8ths cloud cover, wind at Beaufort Scale 1 and no rain.

#### Desk study

##### **Statutory sites of importance for nature conservation**

- 3.2 There are no statutory sites of importance for nature conservation within 1km of the application site.

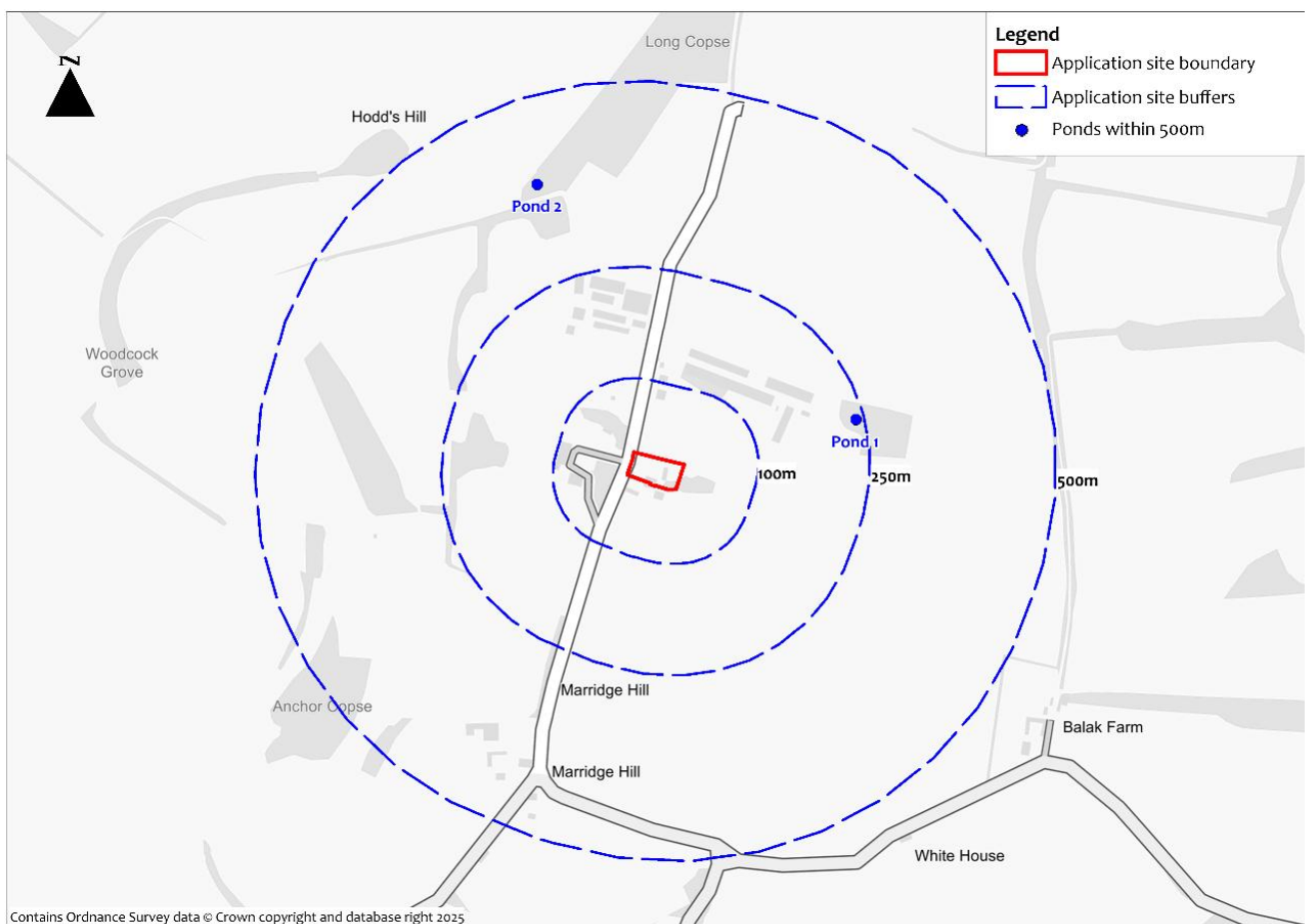
##### **Ancient woodland**

- 3.3 There are four areas of woodland listed on Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory within 1km of the application site. The nearest of these woodlands – “Long Copse” – is located 400m north west of the site, with the other woodland situated 690m south east (“Ballard’s Copse”), 700m south east (“Marridge Hill Wood”) and 920m south east (“Witcha Copse”)

##### **Nearby ponds**

- 3.4 There are two ponds shown on ordnance survey maps (1:25,000 scale) within 500m of the site, the nearest of which is located approximately 230m to the north east, with the other pond 370m north west (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4 – Ponds within 500m of the application site**



### Great crested newt District Licence Zone

- 3.5 The site is within a “Green” risk zone for District Licensing of Great Crested Newts in Swindon and Wiltshire<sup>4</sup>. Natural England states: “Green zones contain sparsely distributed GCN and are less likely to contain important pathways of connecting habitat for this species.”.

### Protected and notable species records

- 3.6 Within 2km of the application site there are two records of licences being issued by Natural England for works affecting protected species on The MAGIC website (see Table 3).

**Table 3 – Summary of Natural England licence records within 2km of the application site**

| Distance and direction from the application site | Species affected                                             | Breeding site | Year licence was issued |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| 2km South East                                   | Brown long-eared, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle | Yes           | 2012                    |
| 2km West                                         | Brown long-eared, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle | No            | 2009                    |

### Surrounding land use

- 3.7 The application site is located midway along an unnamed, rural track north of Marridge Hill, south west of Lambourn.
- 3.8 Directly to the north and north east of the site are grassland paddocks bound by hedges and scattered trees. At the time of the survey the paddock to the north east was grazed by horses. Further north east are a series of derelict greenhouses which have become overgrown by scrub and trees.
- 3.9 Directly to the south, west and further north are residential properties and their associated gardens with trees. The properties to the west (Baydon Manor and The Coachman’s Cottage) have large associated grounds with numerous trees and small sections of woodland, notably directly south west of the site.
- 3.10 Abutting the eastern boundary is the remainder of the paddock in which the site lies – which is a continuation of the habitats on site, mown grassland bound by hedges and trees. Beyond the paddock to the east, and, further in all directions, are agricultural fields (predominantly arable with some pasture), bound by hedges, trees and strips of woodland.
- 3.11 Approximately 300m west is a block of woodland, with other nearby woodlands located 380m north west and 410m south west.
- 3.12 The habitats surrounding the application site are therefore of predominantly ‘high’ suitability for commuting and foraging bats (see Table 1).

### Habitats within the application site

- 3.13 The application site comprises an open-fronted agricultural barn, an associated garage & workshop building, and, part of the surrounding paddock.
- 3.14 A Phase 1 habitat map and associated target notes are provided in Appendix 1, and photographs provided in Appendix 2.

<sup>4</sup> This dataset identifies areas where the distribution of Great Crested Newts (GCN) has been categorised into district zones relating to GCN occurrence and the level of impact development is likely to have on this species.

- 3.15 A description of the habitats as found during our survey is given below.
- 3.16 **Buildings** – see preliminary bat roost assessment section below.
- 3.17 **Amenity grassland** – The buildings are situated within an amenity grassland paddock which extends beyond the eastern site boundary. The paddock appears to be regularly mown and was short-cut at the time of the survey, with the grassland sward being uniformly short, with moss in places.
- 3.18 **Scrub and tall ruderals** – At the north western and south western corners of the paddock there are areas of bramble scrub, ivy and tall ruderals – predominantly nettle – which are encroaching the field and, in some instances, overgrowing small trees. Along the northern fenceline there is a strip of predominantly bramble scrub which becomes increasingly gappier to the east of the boundary.
- 3.19 **Scattered trees** – There are a number of scattered trees on site, comprising a semi-mature goat willow in the south western corner, a line of ash and scots pine along the south eastern border, a hawthorn in the north eastern corner and three dead elder trees in the north western corner.
- 3.20 It is understood that none of the trees on site will be affected by the proposals to convert the barn.
- 3.21 **Site boundaries** – The northern, southern and western sites boundaries predominantly consist of post and wire fencing, with some scattered vegetation in places. At the north western boundary is a section of laurel hedging and, as described above some continuous scrub. At the southern boundary there is a short section of concrete blockwork wall. Directly beyond the fenceline to the south west is an outgrown conifer hedge which now resembles a line of trees.

### **Bats - Preliminary Roost Assessment**

#### **The Goat Barn**

- 3.22 The Goat Barn is a detached, open-fronted, timber-framed barn. The roof is pitched, hipped and clad with corrugated fibreboard. The walls are clad with corrugated metal. In places there are holes in the roof and wall cladding.
- 3.23 Internally the roof and walls are unlined. The roof has wooden beams and ridge board.
- 3.24 No bats or signs of bats were observed inside or outside of the building.
- 3.25 The building is assessed as having “negligible” potential to host a bat roost (see Table 2).

#### **Garage & workshop**

- 3.26 Located directly south west of the barn is a detached garage & workshop building. The building appears to have single-skinned (i.e. non-cavity) walls made up of brick, flint and concrete blockwork.
- 3.27 The roof is pitched and clad with corrugated fibreboard, with UPVC skylights. There are no bargeboards at the gable ends and no soffits or fascias at the eaves. At the time of the survey the eastern wall was supported by scaffold.
- 3.28 The building has several features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats, including:
- Gaps in the brickwork.
  - Gaps between the roof and wall at the gable end.
  - Open eaves, with gaps between the wall top and roof overhang.
- 3.29 It was not possible to access the interior of the building at the time of the survey.

- 3.30 The garage & workshop is assessed as having 'low' potential to host a bat roost (see Table 2). It is understood that this building is unaffected by the proposed works.

### **Barn owls and other nesting birds**

#### **The Goat Barn**

- 3.31 An adult barn owl was roosting on the ridge board at the time of the survey.
- 3.32 Approximately 80 barn owl pellets of varying ages were observed in the middle of the barn, below a barn owl box located at the ridge line. In addition, barn owl dropping, and, a number of barn owl feathers were observed on the ground inside the barn, however, no eggshells or nestling fluff was observed inside the barn.
- 3.33 A disused bird's nest (possibly of jackdaw or pigeon) was also observed at the northern end of the ridge line.
- 3.34 The Goat Barn is therefore a barn owl roosting site.

#### **Garage & workshop**

- 3.35 It was not possible to access the interior of the workshop during the survey. However, it is considered very unlikely that barn owls will use the building as it has no points of ingress large enough for use by barn owls.
- 3.36 It is likely that smaller species of bird (e.g. robin or blue tit) will nest inside the building if the internal conditions are suitable. It is understood that this building is unaffected by the proposed works.

## 4.0 Assessment and recommendations (Barn owl)

### Conservation status

- 4.1 Barn owls in the United Kingdom experienced a significant decline during the 20th century. The British Trust for Ornithology estimates that there were about 4,000 breeding pairs of barn owls in the UK in 1997 however the population seems to have recovered somewhat and may now exceed 10,000 breeding pairs.

### Legal status

- 4.2 All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Barn owls are listed on Schedule 1 of the act which gives them special protection. It is an offence, with certain exceptions, to:
- Intentionally kill, injure or take (handle) any wild barn owl.
  - Intentionally take, damage or destroy any wild barn owl nest whilst in use.
  - Intentionally take or destroy a wild barn owl egg.
  - Have in one's possession or control a wild barn owl (dead or alive), or egg (unless one can show that it was obtained legally).
  - Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild barn owl whilst it is 'building' a nest or whilst it is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young.
  - Intentionally or recklessly disturb any dependent young of wild barn owls.
- 4.3 It is important to note that barn owls are only protected against disturbance whilst at or near a nest containing eggs or young. There is no legal definition of "near" but Natural England's advice<sup>5</sup> states that this normally approximates to within the same building or just outside or, in the case of a tree nest, within approximately 30 metres. There is also no legal definition of "disturbance", but the same advice states that:
- "... what disturbs barn owls is the unexpected. Thus, normal, frequent and regular human, animal or machinery activity within the same building as an occupied nest may not be disturbing to the birds. Conversely, any unexpected prolonged and/or noisy work within the building or close by may be extremely disturbing to the birds and pose a major threat to breeding success."*
- 4.4 Barn owls are also a Species of Principal Importance for the Conservation of Biodiversity in England and are listed on England's Biodiversity List, published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (i.e. they are a "priority species" as per the National Planning Policy Framework).
- ### Site status and effects of the proposals on barn owls
- 4.5 The Goat Barn is used as a barn owl roost. No eggshells or nestling fluff - which are a key indicators of nesting barn owls - were observed inside this building. As such, it is considered most likely that the building hosts a barn owl roost and is not used by nesting barn owls. It should be noted, however, that roosting sites can be as important as nesting sites for barn owls. This is because during the day male and female owls separate, with one of the pair using a roost and the other incubating the eggs.
- 4.6 This roost will be lost as a result of the proposals.
- 4.7 The Garage & Workshop building is not suitable for use by barn owls.

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<sup>5</sup> "Barn owls on site - A guide for developers and planners" – English Nature (now Natural England) – 2002.

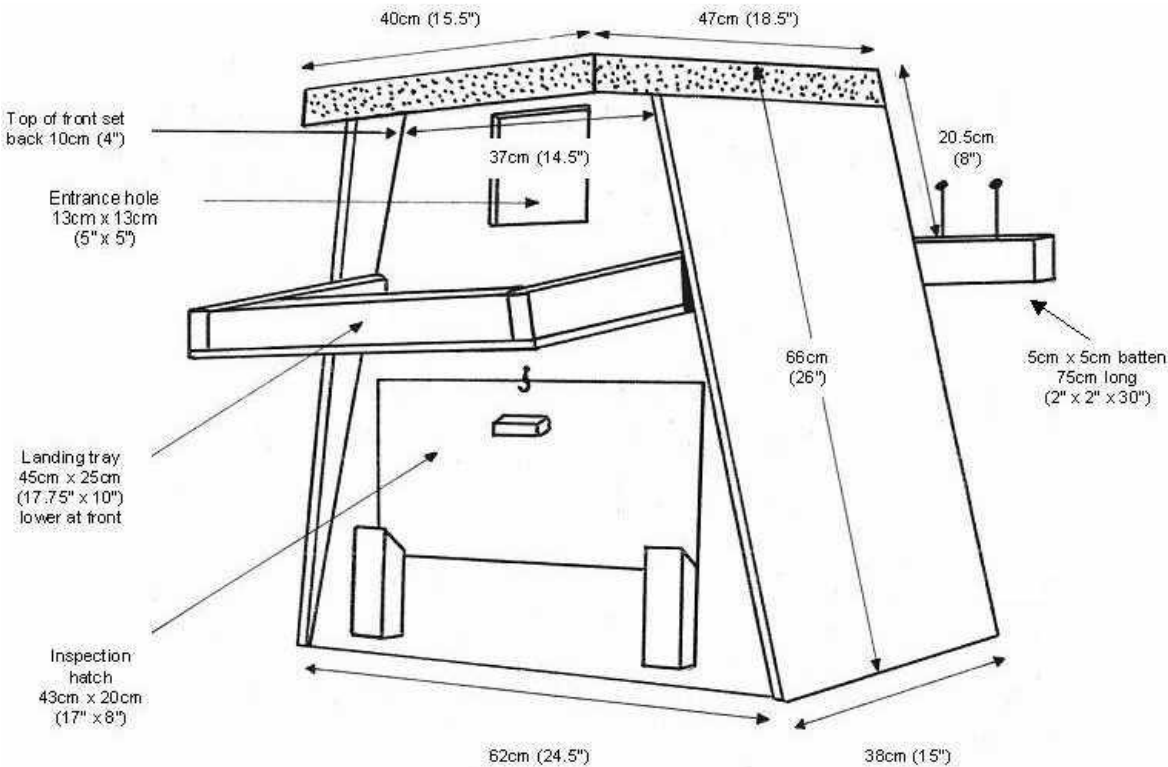
## Natural England Guidance

- 4.8 Natural England are the statutory consultee when a development affects protected species, however they no longer provide advice to planning authorities on a case-by-case basis. Instead, they refer planners to their standing advice and advice issued on their website and in the case of barn owls this is in the form of the following documents:
- (1) “Barn Owl and Rural Planning Applications What Needs to Happen - A Guide for Planners” – The Barn Owl Trust 2009
  - (2) “Barn owls on site - A guide for developers and planners” – English Nature (now Natural England) – 2002
- 4.9 There is also a more recent document published by the Barn Owl Trust:
- (1) “Barn Owls and Rural Planning Applications - a Guide” - The Barn Owl Trust 2015.
- 4.10 The advice in these documents sets out what local authorities should do when barn owls are affected by a planning application, and in cases such as this one, where a roosting site is affected by the works, the guidance states that the following planning conditions should be attached:
- (1) A condition requiring the provision of a temporary nesting box within 200m and in clear line of sight of the development at least 30 days before any works commence
  - (2) A condition requiring a full survey for evidence of Barn Owl occupation by a suitably qualified person, to be conducted no more than 3 days before development works start
  - (3) A condition requiring a permanent accessible roosting and nesting place for Barn Owls inside (i.e. within) the development. Access should replicate the existing owl access point.

## Mitigation

- 4.11 As barn owls are roosting on the site in accordance with national guidelines (see above), a mitigation plan will need to be implemented, and an outline mitigation strategy is given below:
- (1) Prior to commencement of works a survey by a licensed barn owl surveyor is to be carried out to confirm whether or not the buildings host an active barn owl nest (there is a small chance that barn owls may try and nest in the barn owl box in the barn). If there is an active nest works must not commence until any young have fledged and the nest is no longer in use.
  - (2) A barn owl nest box is to be installed, under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist on a suitable tree nearby at least 30 days (but preferably longer) before works commence. This will ensure that barn owls have a temporary roosting and nesting site for the duration of the works (the box will remain in place as permanent provision for roosting and nesting site). Figure 5 gives specifications for a barn owl box (pre-made boxes can be bought). and Figure 6 shows the location of the barn owl roost and recommended locations for the barn owl nest box.

**Figure 5 – Specifications for a temporary, tree-mounted barn owl box (from “Barn Owl and Rural Planning Applications: What Needs to Happen - A Guide for Planners” – The Barn Owl Trust 2009)**



**Figure 6 – Location of existing roost sites and recommended location of temporary barn owl boxes**



## **5.0 Assessment and recommendations (excluding barn owls)**

### **Ancient woodland**

- 5.1 There are four areas of woodland listed on Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory within 1km of the application site, the nearest of which is located approximately 400m away.
- 5.2 None of these woodlands will be encroached upon, overshadowed, or illuminated (by artificial lighting) as a result of the works and therefore will be unaffected by the proposals. As such, ancient woodland will not be a constraint to the proposed barn conversion.

### **Priority Habitats**

- 5.3 The Secretary of State periodically publishes a list of habitats that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 (S41) of the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act. The list currently comprises 56 habitats, referred to as "priority habitats" in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 5.4 Paragraph 192 of the NPPF reads:

"To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should [...] promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity"
- 5.5 As such where priority habitats are found they should be protected from the adverse impacts of development.
- 5.6 None of the habitats on site (buildings, amenity grassland, bramble scrub, and scattered trees) are 'Priority Habitats' and there should be no Priority Habitat-related constraints to the current proposals.

### **Bats**

- 5.7 All species of bats receive special protection under UK law and it is a criminal offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (The Habitat Regulations), deliberately or recklessly to destroy or damage their roosts, or to disturb, kill or injure them without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (the SNCO - Natural England in England).

### **Site status**

- 5.8 The Goat Barn is assessed as having "negligible" potential to host a bat roost as no bats or signs of bats were found during the survey and it has no features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats.
- 5.9 It is therefore very unlikely that bats will be affected by works to convert the barn, there is no need to undertake further surveys, and there should be no bat related constraints to the proposals.
- 5.10 The garage & workshop is assessed as having 'low' potential to host a bat roost. This is because it is located in habitat of 'high' suitability for commuting and foraging bats and has several features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats. This building will however be retained and completely unaffected by the proposals to convert the barn.
- 5.11 Appendix 5 provides further information on bat ecology and legislation.

### **Great crested newts**

- 5.12 GCN receive special protection under UK law and it is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (The Habitat Regulations) to deliberately or recklessly destroy or damage their habitat, or to disturb, kill or harm them without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (the SNCO - Natural England in England).
- 5.13 GCN spend most of their lives on land, within up to 500m of a breeding pond. The most important terrestrial habitat is within 100m, where most of the population are likely to be located foraging, resting, sheltering and hibernating relatively close to their breeding site. However, a proportion of the population is also likely to forage for food and shelter in suitable habitats up to 250m from a breeding pond and juvenile animals have been known to disperse up to 500m from it in a single season.
- 5.14 GCN are likely to be disturbed by any work that involves altering their breeding pond (e.g. by introducing fish or deepening or altering its size) or works that involve clearing land up to 500m around ponds, where such land has been managed and maintained in such a way that it is likely to support GCN. In such cases a licence for derogation from the provisions of the habitat regulations may need to be obtained.
- 5.15 In addition, GCN are a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England under Section 41 (S41) of the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (these are the “priority species” as per the NPPF).

### **Site status**

- 5.16 There are two ponds shown on ordnance survey maps (1:25,000 scale) within 500m of the site, located approximately 230m north east and 370m north west. These ponds were not visited or assessed for their suitability for great crested newts.
- 5.17 In addition, the site is within a “Green” risk zone for District Licensing of Great Crested Newts in Swindon and Wiltshire.
- 5.18 If either of these nearby ponds were to host GCN, then these populations are unlikely to be affected by the works on site. This is confirmed by using Natural England’s risk assessment, as detailed in their GCN licence method statement template. Application of the risk assessment shows that an offence under the 2017 Habitat Regulations as a result of the development is “highly unlikely”, if the species were to be breeding in these ponds (see Table 4).
- 5.19 It is therefore unlikely that GCN will be affected by the proposals.

**Table 4 – Risk assessment for great crested newts as per Natural England’s Great Crested Newt method statement in the event either of the two ponds within 500m were to host GCN**

| Component                                | Likely effect                                     | Notional offence probability score |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Great crested newt breeding pond(s)      | No effect                                         | 0                                  |
| Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s) | No effect                                         | 0                                  |
| Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)  | 0.1 - 0.5 ha lost or damaged                      | 0.1                                |
| Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)     | 0.1 - 0.5 ha lost or damaged                      | 0.005                              |
| Individual great crested newts           | No effect                                         | 0                                  |
| Maximum:                                 |                                                   | 0.1                                |
| Rapid risk assessment result:            | <b>GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY<sup>6</sup></b> |                                    |

### **Other nesting birds**

- 5.20 All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Section 1 of this Act makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any wild bird, or intentionally to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built.
- 5.21 A disused bird’s nest - possibly a jackdaw or pigeon nest - was seen at the ridgeline at the northern end of the roof. Other common bird species may also nest in the barn. As such, works to convert the barn should be timed to start outside of the bird nesting season (March - August inclusive depending on weather conditions).
- 5.22 If this is not practicable then areas to be cleared will first need to be checked for nesting birds and, if any nests are found, works that would disturb the nest could not continue all young have fledged the nest and it is no longer in use.

### **Other protected species**

- 5.23 It is considered highly unlikely that the proposals will have any adverse effects on other protected species, such as badgers, dormouse or reptiles. This is because;
- The habitats to be affected by the proposals are unsuitable or sub-optimal for use by these species.
  - In the case of badgers, no signs of badgers were observed on or adjacent to the site during the survey.
- 5.24 However, it is recommended that, to prevent the site from becoming suitable for common herpetofauna (such as slow worm and common frog), the grassland is maintained as short cut.

### **Landscaping and ecological enhancements**

- 5.25 Paragraph 193 of the NPPF reads:
- “[...] opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design [...]”
- 5.26 It is therefore recommended that any new planting comprises predominantly native and wildlife-friendly species. It is also recommended that ecological enhancements such as bird and bat boxes, bricks or tiles are built into the new house.

<sup>6</sup> In their method statement guidance Natural England state that: “‘Green: offence highly unlikely’ indicates that the development activities are of such a type, scale and location that it is highly unlikely any offence would be committed should the development proceed.”

## **6.0 Summary**

### **Habitats**

- 6.1 The application site comprises an open-fronted agricultural barn, an associated garage & workshop building, and, part of the surrounding paddock.
- 6.2 None of the habitats on site are 'Priority Habitats' and there should be no Priority Habitat-related constraints to the current proposals.

### **Barn owls**

- 6.3 The site hosts a barn owl roost, which is located in the Goat Barn. This roost will be lost as a result of the proposed works.
- 6.4 Section 4.11 of this report details a mitigation strategy – including a pre-commencement site check and the provision of a barn owl nest box.

### **Bats**

- 6.5 The Goat Barn is assessed as having “negligible” potential to host a bat roost as no bats or signs of bats were found during the survey and it has no features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats. It is therefore very unlikely that bats will be affected by works to convert the barn, there is no need to undertake further surveys, and there should be no bat related constraints to the proposals.
- 6.6 The garage & workshop is assessed as having 'low' potential to host a bat roost. This is because it is located in habitat of 'high' suitability for commuting and foraging bats and has several features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats. This building will however be retained and completely unaffected by the proposals to convert the barn.

### **Other protected species**

- 6.7 It is unlikely that the other protected species such as badgers, dormouse, great crested newts or reptiles will be affected by the proposals.
- 6.8 If the recommendations given in this report - regarding precautionary measures to protect nesting birds and common species of herpetofauna - are adhered to there should be no other ecological constraints to the proposals.

### **Ecological enhancements**

- 6.9 In accordance with paragraph 193 of the NPPF it is recommended that any new planting comprises predominantly native and wildlife-friendly species. It is also recommended that ecological enhancements such as bird and bat boxes, bricks or tiles are built into the new house.

## Appendix 1 - Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map and Target Notes

### Target Notes

- (1) The Goat Barn. A detached, open-fronted, timber-framed barn. The roof is pitched, hipped and clad with corrugated fibreboard. The walls are clad with corrugated metal.
- (2) Garage & workshop building. The building appears to have single-skinned walls made up of brick, flint and concrete blockwork. The roof is pitched and clad with corrugated fibreboard, with UPVC skylights. There are no bargeboards at the gable ends and no soffits or fascias at the eaves. At the time of the survey the eastern wall was supported by scaffold.
- (3) Amenity grassland paddock. Appears regularly mown and short cut. The grassland has a short, uniform sward with moss in places. Species present include: Perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum agg.*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*).
- (4) North western corner of site. Three dead elder trees (*Sambucus nigra*) above area of nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*). Fenceline is overgrown by bramble and ivy (*Hedera helix*).
- (5) Species-poor hedge dominated by laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*).
- (6) Strip of bramble scrub and ivy overgrown holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and elder at the boundary. Further along the boundary is a post and wire fence with some scattered vegetation along in, including: Bramble, broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), white dead nettle (*Lamium album*) and a hawthorn tree (*Crataegus monogyna*).
- (7) Southern boundary. Comprises a line of trees running alongside a post and wire fence. A number of the trees are becoming overgrown by bramble. Tree species include: Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and holly.
- (8) South western boundary. Post and wire fence with outgrown conifer hedge beyond.
- (9) South western corner of site. Semi-mature goat willow tree (*Salix caprea*) with mosaic of low-lying scrub and tall ruderals below. Species include: Bramble, ivy, nettle, white dead nettle, ground elder (*Aegopodium Podagraria*) and sycamore saplings (*Acer Pseudoplatanus*).



## Appendix 2 – Photographs

Photos 1 and 2 – The Goat Barn viewed from the west and east.



Photos 3 and 4 – Inside The Goat Barn.



Photo 7 – The barn owl box at apex in centre of barn, and Photo 8 – Barn owl roosting at ridge



Photos 7 and 8 – Barn owl pellets and feathers found on the barn floor.



Photos 9 and 10 – The garage & workshop viewed from the north west and east.



Photo 11 – Gaps between in the brickwork and gaps between the roof and wall at the gable end, and, Photo 12 - Open eaves, with gaps between the wall top and roof overhang



Photos 13 and 14 – The site viewed from the east and west



Photos 15 and 16 – The north western corner of the site and northern boundary respectively



Photo 17 – Line of trees along the southern boundary (continuing beyond the application site boundary), and, Photo 18 – Goat willow in south western corner of site



## Appendix 3 – Legislation and planning policy

Planning Authorities have a legal duty to consider biodiversity when assessing planning applications. Where there is a reasonable likelihood that a planning application might affect important protected sites, species or habitats, information on the species, habitat or site likely to be affected, together with an assessment of the impacts of the proposals, will almost certainly be required.

The legal duty for Planning Authorities to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity was introduced in the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (The NERC Act). This act clarified existing commitments with regard to biodiversity, raised the profile of biodiversity and aimed to make the consideration of biodiversity a natural and integral part of policy and decision making.

In addition to the NERC Act there is also national and international biodiversity legislation. This includes legislation in relation to protected species and sites which operates outside of the planning system. Local Authorities and developers have a duty to comply with this legislation.

### National planning policy

Paragraph 99 of the government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System (referred to in the National Planning Policy Framework) states that:

*'It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.'*

As such, in line with national planning policy, most planning authorities will ask for this information to be provided before a planning decision is made and in many cases before it is registered.

### Local planning policy

In addition to national planning policy, most councils have planning policies to protect biodiversity, and to enhance it where practicable within and adjacent to development sites.

### European protected species

The United Kingdom hosts a number of European Protected Species (EPS) of animals (table 1) and plants (table 2). These species receive special protection under UK law and it is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the European Habitats and Species Directive (92/43/EC), enacted in the UK through The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, to deliberately or recklessly destroy or damage their habitat, or to disturb, kill or injure the species without first having obtained the relevant licence from Natural England.

Planning Authorities have a statutory duty under these regulations to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive and need to be satisfied that the development is likely to receive a licence from Natural England, and therefore comply with the Habitats Directive, before granting planning permission.

**Table 1 – European Protected Species of Animal found in the UK**

| Common name                                  | Scientific name                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bats, Horseshoe (all species)                | <i>Rhinolophidae</i>                                                                                                                          |
| Bats, Typical (all species)                  | <i>Vespertilionidae</i>                                                                                                                       |
| Butterfly, Large Blue                        | <i>Maculinea arion</i>                                                                                                                        |
| Cat, Wild                                    | <i>Felis silvestris</i>                                                                                                                       |
| Dolphins, porpoises and whales (all species) | <i>Cetacea</i>                                                                                                                                |
| Dormouse                                     | <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>                                                                                                               |
| Frog, Pool                                   | <i>Rana lessonae</i>                                                                                                                          |
| Lizard, Sand                                 | <i>Lacerta agilis</i>                                                                                                                         |
| Moth, Fisher's Estuarine                     | <i>Gortyna borelii lunata</i>                                                                                                                 |
| Newt, Great Crested (or Warty)               | <i>Triturus cristatus</i>                                                                                                                     |
| Otter, Common                                | <i>Lutra lutra</i>                                                                                                                            |
| Snail, Lesser Whirlpool Ram's-horn           | <i>Anisus vorticulus</i>                                                                                                                      |
| Snake, Smooth                                | <i>Coronella austriaca</i>                                                                                                                    |
| Sturgeon                                     | <i>Acipenser sturio</i>                                                                                                                       |
| Toad, Natterjack                             | <i>Bufo calamita</i>                                                                                                                          |
| Turtles, Marine                              | <i>Caretta caretta</i><br><i>Chelonia mydas</i><br><i>Lepidochelys kempii</i><br><i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i><br><i>Dermochelys coriacea</i> |

**Table 2 – European Protected Species of Plant found in the UK**

| Common name                     | Scientific name              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Dock, Shore                     | <i>Rumex rupestris</i>       |
| Fern, Killarney                 | <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> |
| Gentian, Early                  | <i>Gentianella anglica</i>   |
| Lady's-slipper                  | <i>Cypripedium calceolus</i> |
| Marshwort, Creeping             | <i>Apium repens</i>          |
| Naiad, Slender                  | <i>Najas flexilis</i>        |
| Orchid, Fen                     | <i>Liparis loeselii</i>      |
| Plantain, Floating-leaved water | <i>Luronium natans</i>       |
| Saxifrage, Yellow Marsh         | <i>Saxifraga hirculus</i>    |

**Nationally protected species**

Many species of animal are protected under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended). 'Full protection' applies to EPS and some non EPS species such as the water vole. This prohibits the intentional killing, injuring or taking (capture. etc); possession; intentional disturbance whilst occupying a 'place used for shelter or protection' and destruction of these places; sale, barter, exchange, transporting for sale and advertising to sell or to buy. Many species, such as common species of reptile and amphibian, are protected from intentional killing and injuring and trading.

**Badgers**

Badgers and their setts are protected under the 1992 Protection of Badgers Act and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is illegal to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take badgers or to interfere with a badger sett. Interference with a sett includes blocking tunnels, or damaging the sett in any way, and could include blocking a badger pathway if it were to stop badgers entering or leaving a

sett. Penalties for offences can be severe, with fines of up to £5,000 plus up to six months' imprisonment, for each illegal sett interference, badger death or injury.

Work that disturbs badgers occupying a sett is illegal without the appropriate licence from the relevant statutory authority being held. Natural England issue licences for reasons including science, education or conservation, for development such as the building of houses and for investigation of offences against badgers. They also issue licences for the prevention of serious damage to land, crops or other form of property, as well as for agriculture, forestry, drainage operations and prevention of the spread of disease.

## **Birds**

All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), whilst they are actively nesting or roosting. Section 1 of this Act makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any wild bird, and to intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. It is also an offence to take or destroy any wild bird eggs.

In addition, bird species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act receive extra protection. The Act states that 'it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed in Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at (or near) a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird'.

In practice this means that in areas where birds are likely to be nesting works should not be undertaken during the nesting season, which is generally considered to be March to September, although this very much depends on weather conditions, habitats and the species involved. If works cannot be avoided then areas should first be checked for nesting birds. Habitats likely to host nesting birds include trees, hedgerows and dense scrub, buildings, reedbeds and riverine habitats and open areas with tussocky vegetation.



## Appendix 4 - Great crested newts: ecology and legislation

The great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) can grow up to 18cm in size. It is Britain's largest newt. The body can have a warty appearance and the skin is normally dark brown or black, the belly is predominantly bright orange with black markings. During the breeding season the males develop a crest on their back and tail which they use to attract a mate.

The species is widely distributed in Britain but is absent from Cornwall, Devon, and parts of Wales. It is uncommon but locally abundant. The population has undergone a severe decline in the last 50 years due to the loss of breeding ponds and a decline in the quality of foraging habitat.

The species can be found in northern Europe part of West Siberia. The edge of the northern range extends from northern France, Great Britain, southern Scandinavia to the north of Russia, and the southern edge from central France to south-western Romania into central European Russia. Britain is one of the last strongholds for the species.

Great crested newts spend the majority of their lives on land, returning within up to 500m, but more usually 250m, of their breeding ponds. The mainstay of their diet is invertebrates.

They return to waterbodies, usually ponds, in the spring to breed. Adults enter the ponds from February onwards with the courtship and egg-laying period being from mid-March to mid-June. Eggs are laid in the folds of debris or the leaves of submerged aquatic plants. A female lays up to 200 eggs per season.

Eggs take 3 weeks to hatch and the larvae take 2 to 3 months to develop. Adults begin to leave breeding ponds gradually from late May. However they can over-winter in ponds and also sometimes return to feed. Young start to emerge from the pond in August and will not normally return until they have reached sexual maturity 2 – 4 years later.

Great crested newts receive special protection under UK law and it is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the European Habitats and Species Directive (92/43/EC), enacted in the UK through The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (The Habitat Regulations) to deliberately or recklessly, to destroy or damage their habitat, or to disturb, kill or them without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (the SNCO - Natural England in England).

In order to obtain such a licence the SNCO must apply the requirements of Regulation 535 of the Regulations and, in particular, the three tests set out in sub-paragraphs (2)(e), (9)(a) and (9)(b)6. These are as follows:

- (1) Regulation 53(2)(e) states: a licence can be granted for the purposes of “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”.
- (2) Regulation 53(9)(a) states: the appropriate authority (the SNCO) shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that there is no satisfactory alternative”.
- (3) Regulation 53(9)(b) states: the appropriate authority (the SNCO) shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.”

Newts are likely to be disturbed by any work that involves altering their breeding ponds (e.g. by introducing fish, deepening or altering its size) or works that involve clearing land up to 500m around

ponds, and in such cases a licence for derogation from the provisions of the habitat regulations may need to be obtained.

## Appendix 5 – Bat ecology and conservation status

### Background

Bats are the only true flying mammals and belong to their own taxonomic group, the *Chiroptera*. Worldwide there are almost 1,000 species, with 16 in the UK. All species in the UK are insectivorous. They have a highly sophisticated echolocation system that allows them to avoid obstacles and catch invertebrates, either in flight or by picking them off water, the ground or foliage.

### Bat species in the UK

There are 16 species of bat that are known to exist in the UK mainland, with a further two - the greater mouse eared bat *Myotis myotis*, and the parti-coloured bat *Vespertilio murinus* - that are thought to occur as rare migrants or to have small populations in the UK. Bats in the UK belong to one of two taxonomic families, the Rhinolophidae (horseshoe bats) and the Vespertilionidae (all other UK bats).

### Bat Conservation Status

Bat populations have undergone a significant decline in the past sixty years. For example, estimates from the National Bat Colony Survey suggest that the UK pipistrelle population (one of our commonest bat species), declined by approximately 70% between 1978 and 1993. Factors contributing to this decline include:

- Loss of, and damage to, roosting sites, including buildings, trees, and underground structures (mines, tunnels, ice-houses, cellars, etc).
- Loss and fragmentation of suitable insect-rich feeding habitats such as wetlands and deciduous woodland.
- Reduction in the abundance and diversity of insect prey due to intensive agriculture, particularly over-grazing and the use of pesticides.
- Loss of linear features such as tree-lines and hedgerows, depriving bats of commuting routes between roosts and feeding areas.
- Loss of winter roosting sites in buildings and old trees.
- Disturbance and destruction of roosts, including the loss of maternity roosts due to the use of toxic timber treatment chemicals.

### Roosts

Bats use a variety of roosts of different types including trees, buildings, caves, mines and other structures. Most species are colonial and roost in groups. This can make populations particularly vulnerable to loss of roosts as the loss of a single roost may affect the whole population. Some species hang in obvious locations, such as the timbers near to the apex of a roof, others roost in cracks and crevices, such as the gaps under tiles, and as such can be very difficult to locate.

During the winter (November to February), when there is a reduction in insect numbers, bats hibernate to conserve energy. They prefer sites with a constant low temperature and a high relative humidity. On mild winter's nights, bats may wake up and feed. However, bats are particularly vulnerable to disturbance at this time of year, as flying in winter uses up large quantities of energy that cannot easily be replaced.

In the spring, after emerging from hibernation, bats often move from site to site and may congregate in small groups. Female bats gather together in the summer (approximately May to August dependant on

species) in maternity roosts. Once the young have stopped suckling, and the baby is independent, bats tend to disperse and use other roosts. Maternity roosts are particularly vulnerable to disturbance, as bats may have come from a wide geographical area, and have a strong tradition of returning to the same roost year after year.

During the late summer and early autumn males occupy mating roosts which are visited by several females. After mating some species gather together at swarming sites to fatten up prior to hibernation.

### **Habitat associations**

In addition to roosts, bats also need foraging habitats to find suitable food resources, and commuting routes to get to these areas. As would be expected, the highest numbers of bats are found in areas with abundant invertebrates. Some species specialise in catching small invertebrates in flight, whilst others specialise in catching larger invertebrates such as moths and beetles. The distances that bats travel to foraging areas varies between species; records have shown some greater horseshoe bats travel up to 22km to forage, although many species will typically feed within 1km of a roost.

Bats, especially the smaller species, tend to follow linear features (such as hedgerows and tree lines) to their foraging habitats and will often not cross open spaces. A gap of 10m in a linear feature will often not be crossed by bats, and it is important that developments do not create such gaps if linear features are used by bats.

## Appendix 6 – About GS Ecology

Established in 2009, GS Ecology is an independent ecological consultancy in Berkshire. We carry-out surveys and ecological consultancy services for public and private sector clients including in Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Hampshire, London and the south of England. We can advise you on cost effective sustainable solutions for your project, whether it be a bat survey to inform a planning application, the ecology chapter of an Environmental Statement or a Woodland Management Plan.

Our work is undertaken by experienced and qualified ecologists, who are members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Managers. Our services include:

- Ecology surveying and reporting to inform planning applications, e.g.
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
  - Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey
  - Protected species surveys, e.g. badgers, dormouse, great crested newts
  - Bat surveys in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, London and Southern England
- BREEAM ecology assessments – to demonstrate the sustainability of a new building
- Protected species licensing such as bat and great crested newt licences for development sites after planning permission has been obtained
- Providing advice to land managers and writing ecological management plans, such as woodland management plans and farm environmental plans for England woodland Grant Scheme and Environmental Stewardship applications
- Providing ecology advice to Local Authorities and Local Planning Authorities