

APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/09058
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	St John The Baptist Church, Foxham, SN15 4NH
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	New WC extension and canopy to north elevation of Nave, including new path and external bollard lighting.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site comprises the Church of St John the Baptist, a Grade II* listed Anglican parish church located within the village of Foxham, approximately 5km northeast of Chippenham. The church occupies a modestly sized plot within a settled village context and sits within an established churchyard containing areas of grass, landscaping and pedestrian routes. The surrounding area is characterised predominantly by residential development, none of which is listed, and open village spaces typical of a rural Wiltshire settlement.

The church was constructed between 1878–1881 and is built of local rubble stone with ashlar dressings beneath stone slate roofs. The building is arranged on an eastwest axis and comprises a nave, chancel, west tower, south porch, and a series of ancillary historic additions to the north side, including a lean-to store (formerly the Sexton's Room), vestry and organ chamber. The north elevation, where the proposed works are located, is less publicly prominent than the principal south elevation, which faces the main approach and entrance.

The site is not located within a conservation area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or other landscape designation. The topography of the site is generally level, with minor changes in ground level across the churchyard. Vehicular access lies to the south of the site, with pedestrian access provided via the south porch. Existing footpaths within the churchyard are informal in character and reflect the rural setting.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for the construction of a small single storey WC extension with canopy to the north elevation of the nave. The works will utilise the existing redundant lean-to store (formerly the Sexton's Room), extending the western wall to allow for a fully compliant accessible WC. A modest canopy formed by an extension of the existing lean-to roof is proposed to provide weather protection to the entrance.

Materials will match the existing building, including stone slate roofing, natural stone, cast-iron rainwater goods, and lightweight oak framing and boarding.

Associated external works include the formation of a level compacted hoggin path linking the south porch to the new WC entrance, incorporating a small area of paving at the threshold to ensure accessibility. Low-level bollard lighting is proposed along the route to provide safe

access during hours of darkness, together with minor landscaping works and new planting beds.

No alterations are proposed to the significant historic interior of the church as part of this application.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
No relevant history.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Statutory Legislation:

National Planning Policy:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide

Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* (adopted January 2015) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

The adopted *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)*, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy;
- Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy;
- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment;
- Core Policy 60 Sustainable Transport;
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development;

Draft Wiltshire Local Plan Policies

The examination of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan has been paused and the weight to be afforded to any part of the emerging plan can be no more than very limited. A decision on how to proceed will be made by the Council in May 2026.

Neighbourhood Plan:

Bremhill Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2018

Supplementary Planning Documents and other Guidance:

- Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)
- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026, adopted 2015 - including the Car Parking Strategy and Cycling Strategy, adopted 2015

ISSUES

The main issues that need to be addressed in this case include:

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle (CP 1 and 2)
- Whether the scheme constitutes high quality design (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable impact upon the reasonable living conditions of the adjoining occupants (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the historic environment (CP 58)
- Whether the proposal would have a negative effect upon highway safety, including if there is sufficient parking for the proposed development (CP 61 and 64)
- Whether there would be any harmful impacts upon protected species or priority habitats (CP 50)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WC Archaeology: No objection subject to conditions.

WC Conservation: No objection.

Historic England: Not offering advice.

Bremhill Parish Council: Support proposal.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties;
- A site notice displayed near the site.

These methods were used to inform interested parties and provide a period of 21 days for comments to be submitted.

Below is a summary of the representations received during the consultation period. Only material planning considerations have been taken into account in the assessment of this application. Non-material issues, such as property values or private legal disputes, cannot be considered in the determination process.

One neighbour comment received: The resident supports the proposal, noting that careful consideration should be given to the design, direction, control, and wildlife impact of the proposed bollard lighting to avoid effects on the neighbouring property at Elvaston House.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a material consideration in the assessment.

Principle of Development

Policy Context

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy of the WCS establishes a hierarchy of settlements to guide where development should be focused. The policy prioritises growth in:

- Principal Settlements (e.g., Salisbury, Chippenham, Trowbridge) – main focus for strategic growth.
- Market Towns – support local services and employment; suitable for sustainable development.
- Local Service Centres – smaller towns and villages with a range of services; limited development supported.
- Large and Small Villages – development should be limited and respond to local needs.
- Outside the defined settlements – development is strictly controlled and generally not supported unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy of the WCS sets out how development will be distributed and delivered across Wiltshire. The policy emphasises:

- Sustainable patterns of growth, reducing the need to travel and supporting local services.
- Development should be plan-led, aligning with the settlement strategy and supported by infrastructure.
- Windfall development (not allocated in plans) must still comply with the principles of sustainable development.
- Development outside settlement boundaries is generally not permitted, unless it meets specific policy exceptions (as set out in paragraph 4.25 of the WCS).

Together, CP1 and CP2 ensure that new development is strategically located, sustainable, and supports the character and function of Wiltshire's communities.

Assessment

The application relates to a Grade II* listed church located within the village of Foxham, which functions as one of the principal community facilities available to local residents. The proposal does not constitute new residential or commercial development, nor does it introduce a new or intensified use of land. Instead, it seeks to provide modest and necessary ancillary facilities (WC provision and associated access works) to support the continued and enhanced use of an existing community building.

Although the church is located outside a defined settlement boundary, the nature of the proposal is intrinsically linked to the existing lawful use of the site and is required to ensure the church remains functional, accessible and viable as a place of worship and community gathering. The scale and purpose of the development are clearly local in nature and cannot reasonably be located elsewhere.

The proposal therefore accords with the objectives of Core Policies 1 and 2 by supporting an established community asset, responding directly to identified local need, and contributing to the sustainable use of an existing building, rather than introducing new standalone development in the countryside.

Conclusion

The principle of development is considered acceptable. The proposal represents a modest, functional addition to an existing community facility, justified by local need and aligned with the strategic aims of Core Policies 1 and 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Subject to compliance with other relevant planning and heritage policies, the proposal is supported in principle.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 of the WCS requires high-quality design that:

- Enhances local character.
- Responds to the natural, historic, and built environment.
- Retains important features (e.g., trees, hedges).
- Supports sustainable construction and compatibility with surrounding uses.
- Creates safe, legible, and accessible spaces.

Section 12 of the NPPF emphasises design that is:

- Visually attractive.
- Functionally effective.
- Contributes to the quality of the built environment.

The Wiltshire Design Guide encourages sensitivity to local character, materials, and architectural styles and supports modern living standards while maintaining aesthetic and functional quality.

At the neighbourhood level, Bremhill Neighbourhood Plan Policy NP1 – General Development requires that proposals respect and conserve the parish's historic environment and valued heritage assets. The policy supports development that sustains historic buildings in active use, responds positively to local character, and uses materials and design that are sympathetic to their surroundings.

Building for a Healthy Life Framework promotes healthy, inclusive, and sustainable places. The document encourages:

- Walkability.
- Access to green space.

- Active design principles for well-being.

Assessment

The proposed development is modest in scale and carefully designed to respond to the sensitive historic and rural context of the Grade II* listed Church of St John the Baptist and its setting within the village of Foxham. The WC extension is formed by the adaptation and modest extension of an existing lean-to structure on the north elevation of the nave, ensuring that the development reads as a subsidiary and functional addition rather than a dominant architectural feature.

The design approach reflects the character of the host building and surrounding churchyard through the use of traditional and high quality materials, including natural stone, stone slate roofing, oak framing and timber cladding. These materials closely match those used elsewhere on the church and are characteristic of local vernacular construction, thereby ensuring visual coherence and minimising contrast with the historic fabric.

The north elevation is a less publicly prominent aspect of the church, and the siting of the extension in this location helps to limit wider visual impact when viewed from public vantage points. The canopy element is small in appearance and well proportioned, providing functional shelter while remaining visually discreet.

Associated works, including the formation of a compacted hoggin path, small areas of planting, and low-level bollard lighting, are similarly restrained in design. The path integrates well with the informal character of the churchyard, while the lighting is intended to improve safety and accessibility during hours of darkness without resulting in undue visual intrusion or harm to rural character, subject to appropriate specification and control.

Overall, the proposal enhances the functional usability of the site while preserving the quiet, rural and historic character of the church and its surroundings.

Conclusion

The proposal demonstrates a high standard of design and responds positively to the historic and rural character of the area. It complies with Core Policy 57 of the WCS, Section 12 of the NPPF, the Wiltshire Design Guide, and Bremhill Neighbourhood Plan Policy NP1, resulting in no unacceptable harm to local character or appearance. The development is therefore acceptable in design terms.

Impact on Heritage Assets

Policy Context

From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Section 16 (Listed Building Consent)/Section 66 (Planning Permission) requires that special regard be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Paragraph 58B of the Planning Act 1990 requires that in considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for the development of land in England which affects a

registered park and garden, the LPA must have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the asset or its setting.

Section 72(1) of the Act requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas. The NPPF outlines government policy for planning. Chapter 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. In particular:

Paragraph 208 requires LPAs should “avoid or minimise any conflict” between the heritage asset’s conservation (which includes achieving its optimum viable use) and any aspect of a proposal.

Paragraph 210 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable new uses and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraphs 212 requires “great weight” to be given to an asset’s conservation “irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

Paragraph 213 advises that harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require “clear and convincing justification”.

Paragraphs 213-215(214-216) require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved.

Paragraph 220 advises that not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm or less than substantial harm as appropriate.

The Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

The Council’s Core Strategy Policy CP58 ‘Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment’ requires that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance and encourages proposals which improve the condition of heritage assets at risk.

The Council’s Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. The policy requires applicants to “demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through (amongst other things) responding to the value of the natural and historic environment and being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and landscapes. Development is required to respond positively to the existing in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

Assessment

The application site is the Church of St John the Baptist, Foxham, a Grade II* listed building of high architectural and historic significance designed by William Butterfield and largely unaltered since its construction in the late nineteenth century. The significance of the asset derives from its architectural quality, historic fabric, completeness of the interior, and its rural village setting.

The development makes effective use of an existing structure, limiting the extent of new built form and avoiding encroachment into more sensitive elevations or important views of the church. The extension required to achieve accessibility is modest in height and depth and remains clearly subordinate to the host building. The canopy is lightweight and functional, providing weather protection without visual dominance.

Materials and detailing reflect the existing church fabric, including stone slate roofing, natural stone and oak framing, ensuring visual continuity and avoiding incongruous additions. The proposal does not result in the loss of historic fabric of high significance and does not affect the highly significant and intact interior of the church.

Associated access works, including the hoggin pathway, are sympathetic to the character of the churchyard and preserve the setting of the listed building. The proposed low-level bollard lighting is modest and intended to improve accessibility and safety while minimising visual intrusion and impacts on rural character and wildlife.

Overall, the proposal results in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II* listed building, at the lowest end of the spectrum, arising from the modest extension of the existing lean-to structure and associated external works. This harm is clearly justified by the need to provide essential modern facilities that secure the church's continued use as a place of worship and community asset, improving accessibility and long-term sustainability.

In addition to the impact on the listed building itself, the site is recognised as having archaeological potential. The Council's Archaeologist has confirmed that there is a reasonable likelihood of previously unrecorded archaeological remains within the footprint of the proposed works. No objection has been raised, subject to the implementation of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording secured by condition. This approach is considered appropriate and proportionate, ensuring that any archaeological interest is identified and recorded without preventing the delivery of the development.

The Council's Conservation Officer raises no objection, confirming that the works are discrete, complementary to the special interest of the listed building, and necessary to retain it in active use.

Conclusion

The proposal has been carefully designed to minimise impact on the significance of the Grade II* listed Church of St John the Baptist and its setting. While the works result in a low level of less than substantial harm, this is outweighed by the clear public benefits arising from improved accessibility, enhanced community use, and the securing of the building's ongoing viable use and care.

The development therefore accords with the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the heritage policies of the NPPF, and Core Strategy Policies CP58 and CP57, and is acceptable in heritage terms.

Amenity

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 (Point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to respect the amenity of existing occupants and ensure appropriate amenity levels for future residents.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135, reinforces the need for development to provide a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users.

These policies guide the assessment of amenity impacts, which will be considered in detail under the below headings.

Overlooking / loss of privacy

The proposed WC extension and associated works are located on the north elevation of the church, within the existing churchyard, and do not introduce new windows or openings that would result in overlooking of neighbouring residential properties. The extension serves a non-residential use and is separated from nearby dwellings by distance, intervening land, and boundary treatments typical of a churchyard setting. As such, the proposal would not result in any loss of privacy to neighbouring occupiers.

Loss of light / overshadowing

Given the modest scale, single-storey nature, and subordinate design of the proposed extension, there would be no material loss of daylight or increased overshadowing to nearby properties. The extension projects only a limited distance beyond the footprint of the existing lean-to structure and is positioned such that it does not obstruct light to any neighbouring buildings. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of light and overshadowing impacts.

Overbearing Impact / Overall sense of enclosure

The development would not appear overbearing or create an increased sense of enclosure. Its limited height, modest footprint, and positioning adjacent to the church, rather than close to neighbouring dwellings, ensure that the proposal remains visually unobtrusive. The scale and form are appropriate to both the host building and the surrounding churchyard environment.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Policy Context

The ecological impact of development is a key planning consideration, especially for larger schemes. Proposals must assess and address potential effects on:

- Protected species
- Priority habitats
- Ecological networks
- Green and blue infrastructure

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to:

- Avoid harm to ecological assets.
- Deliver measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), in line with the Environment Act 2021.
- Support habitat restoration and connectivity.
- Integrate biodiversity into site design.

The Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022–2030) promotes nature recovery, ecosystem services, and habitat connectivity through development.

Unless exempt, National policy requires a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for major developments, demonstrated via:

- Biodiversity Metric calculations
- Ecological assessments (e.g. PEAs, Phase 1 surveys, protected species surveys)

Assessment

The proposed development comprises a very small scale extension and associated access works within the footprint of an existing churchyard and previously developed areas adjacent to the church. The total area of new development is below 25 square metres, and the proposal does not involve the creation of new residential units or major land take.

As such, the development qualifies for the de minimis exemption under the Biodiversity Net Gain provisions of the Environment Act 2021 and associated regulations. The proposal is therefore not required to deliver mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, nor to submit a Biodiversity Metric calculation as part of the application.

Notwithstanding the exemption, the works are limited in extent and largely confined to altered or managed ground associated with the existing lean-to structure and footpath areas. No designated habitats, priority habitats, or protected ecological sites are affected by the proposal. The low-level bollard lighting is intended to be modest in scale and designed to minimise spill, thereby reducing potential disturbance to local wildlife within the churchyard. Given the nature, scale, and location of the development, there is no reasonable likelihood of significant adverse impacts on protected species or wider ecological networks. The proposal appropriately aligns with the proportionate approach encouraged by policy.

Conclusion

The proposal is exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements as it constitutes de minimis development below 25 square metres. It is unlikely to give rise to any adverse ecological impacts and does not affect designated sites, priority habitats, or ecological networks. The development therefore complies with Core Policy 50, national biodiversity policy, and the objectives of the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy, and is acceptable from an ecology and biodiversity perspective.

Other Matters

One neighbouring representation was received in support of the proposal, noting comments regarding the proposed low-level bollard lighting, including potential light spill and impacts on wildlife within the churchyard.

These comments are noted. The proposed lighting is limited in scale and is intended solely to provide gentle illumination to the pedestrian route and WC entrance to ensure safe access during periods of low light. Given the low height and discreet nature of the bollard lights, it is not considered that the lighting would give rise to unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity or the character of the area.

Any concerns regarding lighting control and operation can be appropriately addressed through the proposed condition, which requires that only lighting shown on the approved plans is installed unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. This will ensure that the lighting remains proportionate, well-controlled and appropriate to its setting.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development represents a modest proposal that will support the continued use and long-term sustainability of the Church of St John the Baptist. The works are limited in scale, sensitively designed, and appropriately located, ensuring that the significance of the Grade II* listed building and its setting is preserved. Any minor impacts identified are clearly outweighed by the public benefits of improved accessibility, functionality and community use. Having regard to the relevant development plan policies, national planning guidance, and the responses of technical consultees, the proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms and permission is therefore supported, subject to appropriate conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions:

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Location Plan; Received 14 November 2025
- Existing Site Plan: DWG No. 2208/01; Received 14 November 2025
- Existing Ground Floor Plan: DWG No. 2208/002a; Received 14 November 2025
- Existing North Elevation: DWG No. 2208/003a; Received 14 November 2025
- Existing South Elevation: DWG No. 2208/004a; Received 14 November 2025
- Existing West & East Elevation: DWG No. 2208/005a; Received 14 November 2025
- Proposed Site Plan: DWG No. 2208/024; Received 26 November 2025
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan: DWG No. 2208/20a; Received 14 November 2025
- Proposed North Elevation: DWG No. 2208/21a; Received 14 November 2025
- Proposed South Elevation: DWG No. 2208/22a; Received 14 November 2025
- Proposed West & East Elevation: DWG No. 2208/23a; Received 14 November 2025
- Heritage, Design & Access Statement November 2025: Received 14 November 2025
- Flood Map Plan: Received 26 November 2025

- Application Form; Received 14 November 2025

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be as stated on the application form and in accordance with the details as shown on the plans hereby approved.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

The development hereby approved shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the recommendations of the submitted Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (Done by Prospect Archaeology, final amendment made February 2026). The written report detailing the results of the investigations shall be submitted to the local planning authority prior to the development being occupied or brought into use.

REASON: To ensure that any archaeology is sufficiently investigated, recorded and/or protected as necessary in accordance with the aims of Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the planning policy advice of Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

No external lighting, other than that detailed within the approved plans and documents, shall be installed unless details of the locations and technical specifications have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be maintained in that state thereafter.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the site and the setting of the listed building, protect neighbouring amenity and local wildlife, and to ensure that any external lighting is appropriate in scale, design and intensity.

INFORMATIVE NOTES

Building Regulations

Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition)” that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Wiltshire Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. For further information on exempt developments please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>

Based on the information available, it is considered a biodiversity gain plan is NOT required to be submitted before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

Wildlife and Countryside Act

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Habitats Regulations (2010) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species, or to damage or disturb their habitat or resting place. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.