Stables at Sprigg Farm, Clevedon Road, Weston-in-Gordano BS20 8PR

Ms. Emma Nicholas

Bat Survey - Preliminary Roost Assessment

15th September 2021

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Final	1	Ella Colenso, BSc (Hons) – Graduate Ecologist	15/09/2021

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Executive Summary

Quantock Ecology Ltd undertook a Preliminary Roost Assessment at Stables at Sprigg Farm, Clevedon Road, Weston-in-Gordano BS20 8PR on the 19th July 2021. The aim of the assessment was to consider the value and suitability of the structures for roosting bats. The development proposals briefly comprise the conversion of the existing stable block into a holiday lodge.

Table 1: Summary of results

Building reference	Value of building for roosting bats	Recommendations for further survey and assessment
B1 – Stable Block	Low habitat value	One dusk emergence survey should be undertaken to suggest the presence or likely absence of roosting bats. The survey should be undertaken during the optimal bat survey season (May to August). Two surveyors should be utilised to provide sufficient coverage of all elevations of the building.

The survey concluded that building B1 provides a low habitat value for roosting bats. As such one dusk emergence survey should be undertaken using two surveyors.

1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Quantock Ecology were commissioned by Ms. Emma Nicholas to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at the Stables at Sprigg Farm. The assessment is informed by the Bat Conservation Trust publication: *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins, J. 2016).

No previous ecological assessments are understood to have been undertaken at the site.

1.2 Scope of the Report

This report provides a description of all structural features suitable for roosting bats and evaluates those features in the context of the site and wider environment. It further documents any physical evidence collected or recorded during the site survey that establishes the presence of roosting bats. It provides information on constraints to the proposals as a result of roosting bats, and summarises the requirements for any further surveys, to inform subsequent mitigation proposals, achieve planning or other statutory consent, and to comply with wildlife legislation.

The aim of the assessment was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how they could use the building or structure. To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:

- A desk study has been carried out, including the use of freely available resources such as Google Earth and the MAGIC online database.
- A field survey has been undertaken, including an external and internal inspection of the building.
- An outline of likely impacts on any known roosts has been provided, based on current development proposals.
- Recommendations for further survey and assessment have been made, along with advice on European Protected Species Mitigation Licensing if appropriate.

A survey plan is presented in Appendix 1 and the proposed project plan is included in Appendix 2. Photographs taken during the site survey are included in Appendix 3, and a summary of relevant legislation can be found in Appendix 4. Desk study records can be provided on request (if applicable), with a summary presented in Appendix 5.

1.3 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference ST 448 744 and comprises an area of approximately 0.01ha. There is one building within the survey boundaries.

The site is situated on the northern boundary of the village of Weston-in-Gordano, Somerset. The local landscape is dominated by both arable and pastural farmland bordered by a mixture of mature hedgerows and Rhynes. The Walton Brook lies ~460m south of the site. The busy M5 motorway runs across the search area ~1.5km south of the site reducing the connectivity to the woodland habitat situated south of the road. High density housing within the town of Portishead covers the northern portion of the search area, located ~640m to the north, while the Bristol Channel lies beyond the town, ~1.8km northwest of the site at its closest. A large swathe of woodland crosses the search area passing ~90m north of the site at its closest. Connectivity to and from the site into the wider landscape is present; mostly in the form of the mature hedgerows, Rhynes and woodland features.

1.4 Project Description

This report is prepared to accompany a planning application to be submitted to North Somerset Council. It is proposed that the existing stable block will be converted into a holiday lodge. The plan showing the proposed works, is included in Appendix 2. The programme for the scheme is yet to be confirmed.

All works areas, storage and haul routes will be included within the site boundaries; access will be provided by existing roads and as such, no additional working footprints are anticipated.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

Existing bat records relating to the site and a surrounding 2km radius (the study area) were not requested from Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre. This is primarily due to the relatively small scale of the proposed development.

A review of the following information sources has also been undertaken to inform the assessment:

- Landscape structure using aerial images from Google Earth
- Designated sites, habitat and species data held on Magic.gov.uk
- Information on the surrounding area using OS Opendata 2021

2.2 Site Survey

The survey was undertaken by Ella Colenso, BSc (Hons) on 19th July 2021. Ella is accredited under the licence of Simon Pidgeon, BSc (Hons) MRSB. Simon is an ecologist with over 24 years' experience as a licenced bat worker, licence number: 2016-24382-CLS-CLS.

All buildings that will be impacted by the project proposals (the survey area) were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. The surveyor systematically searched for features suitable for roosting bats and signs of bat activity, by conducting a non-intrusive visual appraisal from the ground using binoculars, inspecting the external features of the buildings for potential access/egress points, and for signs of bat use. An internal inspection of the building was also made using an endoscope, torch and ladders. The surveyor paid particular attention to the floor and flat surfaces, window shutters and frames, lintels above doors and windows, and carried out a detailed search of numerous features within the roof space.

2.2.1 Breeding birds and other incidental observations

The surveyor also made note of any other ecological constraints observed during the survey, notably the likelihood of presence or signs of breeding birds, and the suitability of the site for breeding barn owls *Tyto alba*.

2.3 Suitability Assessment

The building was categorised according to the likelihood of bats being present, in line with best practice guidelines (Collins, J. 2016); the features of the building that dictate the likelihood of roosting bats are

summarised in Table 1. Roost suitability is classified as high, moderate, low and negligible and dictates any further surveys required before works can proceed.

Table 2: Features of a building that are correlated with use by bats during the summer

Likelihood of bats being present	Feature of building and its context
Higher	Buildings/structures with features of particular significance for roosting bats e.g. mines, caves, tunnels, icehouses and cellars. Habitat on site and surrounding landscape of high quality for foraging bats e.g. broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is connected with the wider landscape by strong linear features that would be used by commuting bats e.g. river and or stream valleys and hedgerows. Site is proximate to known or likely roosts (based on historical data).
Lower	A small number of possible roost sites/features, used sporadically by more widespread species. Habitat suitable for foraging in close proximity, but isolated in the landscape. Or an isolated site not connected by prominent linear features. Few features suitable for roosting, minor foraging or commuting.

2.4 Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the features on site in the context of their suitability for roosting bats, this does not provide a complete characterisation of the site.

This survey provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of bats being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the local area, the ecology and biology of bats as currently understood, and the known distribution of bats as recovered during the desk study.

No site specific limitations were recorded during the survey, with full access to all areas of the site.

3.0 Results and Evaluation

3.1 Desk Study Results

A summary of desk study results is provided below; further details are included in Appendix 5.

3.1.1 Designated sites

The MAGIC database suggests there are 12 statutory designated sites and two non-statutory sites within 2km of the site (the study area). The site also lies within Consultation band B of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The location and extent of the designated sites are illustrated in Appendix 5. Table 3 provides details of the designated sites including their reasons for notification.

Table 3: Designated sites within 2 km of the site

Designated Site Name	Distance and direction from Site (approx.)	Reasons for Notification and integral value
Statutory Sites		
Weston-in-Gordano Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	120m east	*"In summary the site forms an important piece of evidence in reconstructing the magnitude and pattern of sea level change during the middle to late Pleistocene"* – Taken from the Natural England citation.
Middle Hill Common Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	180m northwest	*"The LNR comprises 4 acres of limestone grassland rich in wild flowers. The area has a mosaic of habitats from broad-leaved woodland to scrub, unimproved limestone grassland and wildflower meadow over Carboniferous limestone. The site is designated as a Wildlife Site (Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI)). The vegetation varies in height supporting a range of flowering plants and invertebrates. The short turf supports rockrose (Helianthemum nummularium), kidney vetch (Anthyllis vulneraria) and horseshoe vetch (Hippocrepis comosa). These plants attract butterflies including the brown argus (Arica agestis). The medium and longer turf supports plants typical of unimproved grassland including ox-eye daisy (Leucanthemum vulgare), knapweed (Centaurea nigra) and field scabious (Knautia arvensis). These support the marbled white butterfly. Over 180 species recorded on site, including several County Notable Species. For example, pale flax (Linum bienne)"* – Taken from the Natural England citation.

Designated Site Name	Distance and direction from Site (approx.)	Reasons for Notification and integral value
Gordano Valley National Nature Reserve (NNR) (SSSI)	380m south	*"The Gordano Valley is an extensive low-lying and poorly drained peat moor situated between Carboniferous Limestone ridges. It supports a wide variety of the wet-meadow, reedbed and carr communities which were widespread on the levels and moors of Somerset. The valley is of botanical, ornithological, entomological and stratigraphic interest*" – Taken from the Natural England citation.
Nightingale Valley (SSSI)	510m north	*"Pleistocene 'plateau-deposits' here cap the high ground at the edge of the Vale of Gordano. The deposits are very variable and include 'cannon-shot' gravels, fine sandy gravels and silty gravels. A wide range of erratic lithologies have been found. Plio-Pleistocene fluvial and marine, and Pleistocene glacial environments have in the past been postulated for the origin of these sediments. The site has never been fully described, but has considerable potential importance for the understanding of the Pleistocene sequence in Avon and Somerset*" – Taken from the Natural England citation.
Weston Big Wood (SSSI)	530m northeast	*"Weston Big Wood is a fine example of mixed deciduous woodland, with a rich variety of plant species. It occupies largely uncultivatable land in 2 parishes, and its shape, name, the heterogeneous structure of the oaks, the presence of ancient-woodland indicator species, together with historical records of the site, all suggest that it is the remnant of an ancient forest*" – Taken from the Natural England citation.
Portishead Peir to Black Nore (SSSI)	1.7km northwest	*"This section of alluvial sandstones is the best exposure of Upper Carboniferous rocks in the Avonmouth Coalfield. It represents a southwards extension of the Forest of Dean Coalfield, which together formed a peninsula projecting southwards from St George's Land during most of the Westphalian. Only at the very end of the Westphalian did it become an area of deposition. This section is thus of great interest for helping understand the palaeogeography of the time*" – Taken from the Natural England citation.

Designated Site Name	Distance and direction from Site (approx.)	Reasons for Notification and integral value
Severn Estuary Ramsar Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Special Protection Areas (SPA) (SSSI)	1.7km northwest	*"The Severn Estuary lies on the south west coast of Britain at the mouth of four major rivers (the Severn, Wye, Usk and Avon) and many lesser rivers. The immense tidal range (the second highest in the world) and classic funnel shape make the Severn Estuary unique in Britain and very rare worldwide. The intertidal zone of mudflats, sand banks, rocky platforms and saltmarsh is one of the largest and most important in Britain. The estuarine fauna includes: internationally important populations of waterfowl; invertebrate populations of considerable interest; and large populations of migratory fish, including the nationally rare and endangered Allis Shad Alosa alosa. The SSSI forms the major part of a larger area of estuarine habitat, which includes the Upper Severn Estuary, the Taf/Ely Estuary and Bridgwater Bay*" – taken from the Natural England citation.
Walton Common (SSSI)	1.7km west	*"Walton Common lies between 80 m and 90 m above sea level on a Carboniferous Limestone ridge, about 500 m south of the Severn Estuary near Clevedon. The site supports a complex mosaic of grassland, scrub and woodland, and is of high botanical and entomological interest. The site is one of only two known locations in Britain for the nationally rare moss Cheilothela chloropus*" – Taken from the Natural England citation.
Non-statutory Sites		
Forest of Avon Community Forest	Covering most of the search area including the site itself	*"Forests were established in 1989. Pioneering work was undertaken to bring together a wide-range of interests in partnerships to agree comprehensive land-use plans, guiding strategic tree planting, whilst conserving & enhancing the wider natural environment (all with a strong community dimension and focused on delivering public benefit). Whilst titles for strategic land use planning to deliver public benefits have and will continue to change, they are essentially reworking Community Forest principles"* – Taken from Forest of Avon Community Forest
Bristol and Bath Greenbelt	Covering most of the search area including the site itself	*"The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open*" – Taken form the House of Commons Library.

3.1.2 Landscape

The MAGIC database shows the coastline, ~1.8km northwest of the site, comprises areas of mudflats and maritime cliffs and slopes. A large area of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh is located ~490m south of the site. Patches of good quality semi-improved grassland are situated around this at ~470m south, ~830m southwest, ~1.5km southeast and ~1.8km southeast of the site. Lowland meadows are found ~1.2km

south and ~1.4km southeast of the site. Lowland calcareous grassland is situated ~225m northwest, ~1.7km west and ~1.9km to the south. A large swathe of purple moor grass and rush pasture is found ~480m to the southwest. Lowland fens are situated around 380m southwest of the site. Traditional orchards lie in a cluster around ~540m to the southwest of Weston-in-Gordano. The large area of deciduous woodland that crosses the search area ~90m north of the site contains several large patches of ancient and semi-natural woodland as well as a singular patch of ancient, replanted woodland found ~1.6km west of the site. The woodland that runs along the path of the M5 also contains patches of ancient replanted and ancient and semi-natural woodland. These habitats are likely to be classified as Priority habitats of principle importance, and of particular value to bats.

A review of aerial photographs (Figure 1) and OS maps shows how the site is situated in relation to the wider landscape.

Figure 1: Aerial photo of site, showing landscape structure

3.1.3 European Protected Species Licencing

The MAGIC database shows two granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (referring to bats) within 2km of the site. The details of these are shown below:

Table 4: Granted EPSML's within 2 km of the site

Case reference of granted application	Approx. distance from site	Bat Species Effected	Licence Start Date:	Licence End Date:	Impacts allowed by licence
2014-1274-EPS-MIT	1.6km south	BLE, L-HORSE	06/06/2014	30/06/2015	N/A.
EPSM2013-5518	1.6km south	L-HORSE, BLE	11/10/2013	31/05/2014	Destruction of a breeding site. Destruction of a resting place.
2015-12449-EPS-MIT	1.8km north	BLE	01/08/2015	31/07/2020	Destruction of a resting place.

3.1.4 Historical records

The Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre were not contacted to provided bat records for within 2km of the site. This was primarily due to the small scale of the proposed development.

3.2 Survey Results

3.2.1 Weather parameters

The weather conditions during the survey are detailed in the table below.

Table 6: Environmental variables during survey

	19/07/2021
Temperature	30°C
Relative Humidity	53%
Cloud Cover	0%
Wind	1/8
Precipitation	No Rain

3.2.2 Building description

The building within the survey area comprised an agricultural barn used for storage and as an active stable. Each building or structure is referenced, as illustrated in the map in Appendix 1.

B1 – Stable Block

Building description

Building B1 is a large agricultural barn with a conventionally pitched, corrugated fibre cement roof (see Appendix 3, photo 1). The northern elevation is made up of a mixture of corrugated metal sheets and plywood boards that are attached to wooden beams (see Appendix 3, photo 2). In general, these boards are tightly fitted to the beams however, a few small gaps are present in places. These gaps are mostly full of cobwebs or lead directly into the barn. The gaps around the corrugated metal were full of old cobwebs. The southern elevation does not have an external wall. The eastern gable end comprises sheets of corrugated metal and fibre cement with a fibre cement fascia (see Appendix 3, photo 3). Gaps are present along the corrugated walls and under the fascia due to their design. However, these are full of cobwebs and are unsuitable for roosting bats as they are shallow and lead into the internal space. The western gable end is of a similar construction as the eastern gable however a large, corrugated metal door is present taking up the northern half of the wall (see Appendix 3, photo 4). This is not well fitted to the frame, leaving large gaps around it leading inside the barn. A small mono-pitched extension extends off the southern end of the western gable of the barn (see Appendix 3, photo 4). This is block built with a corrugated roof.

Internally the metal and wooden frame and corrugated roof are exposed (see Appendix 3, photo 5). No crevices suitable for bats are created by the barns frame. The southern portion of the barn comprises four active stables and two tack rooms, while the northern side is used for storage. The stables and tack rooms comprise block built internal walls that don't reach the full height of the ceiling (see Appendix 3, photos 5 and 6). Thick cobwebs are found throughout the northern portion of the barn. The roof lights and open southern elevation provide a light and exposed internal environment.

Evidence of bats

Two very old bat droppings were found within the northern portion of the barn (see Appendix 3, photo 7). Species identification could not be made from these. No further evidence of bats, such as urine staining, or discarded insect wings/casings was noted during the survey.

3.2.3 Breeding birds and other incidental observations

A large, disused birds' nest (species unknown) was found at the northwest corner of the building (see Appendix 3, photo 8).

3.3 Evaluation – Likelihood of bats being present

Taking the desk based assessment and site survey results into account, the following value for roosting bats has been placed on each building.

Table 7: Evaluation of buildings/structures on site

Reference	Value for / Likelihood of bats using the building for roosting	Brief summary of justification
B1 – Stable Block	Low	The barn provides very minimal roosting potential for crevice dwelling bat species. However, two old droppings were found within the northern part of the barn. It is assessed likely these have derived from an exploratory visit by a bat, with no evidence such as urine staining or feeding remains, to suggest the site is used as a night roost.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions and Impact Assessment

The PRA concludes that building B1 has a low likelihood of supporting roosting bats. It is considered possible that the barn could have been used during a historic exploratory visit. The building is unlikely to be used as a roost for much of the year.

As the proposals include the conversion of this building, any possible roosts would be destroyed. Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and Conservation Regulations; see Appendix 4 for a summary of legislation protecting bats in the UK.

4.1.1 Breeding birds and other incidental observations

A large bird nest was observed in the northwest corner of the barn. Although this was not in use at the time of the survey, it is likely this could be utilised during the breeding season. As the building will be converted outside the breeding season, impacts on birds whilst they are breeding is not anticipated. However, care should be given if nesting activity is observed during the development, then advice should be sought from a suitable experienced ecologist.

Legislation protects all wild birds whilst they are breeding, and prohibits the killing, injuring or taking of any wild bird or their nests and eggs. Certain species of bird, including the barn owl, are subject to special provisions; it is an offence to disturb any bird or their young during the breeding season.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Survey and assessment

Best practice survey guidelines (Collins, J. 2016) recommend additional surveys for all buildings assessed as having low to high suitability for roosting bats. The survey effort recommended at this stage is iterative and if bats are recorded emerging from the buildings, the survey effort should be adjusted to provide sufficient information to inform European Protected Species Mitigation licensing (EPSML). Buildings assessed as comprising negligible suitability for roosting bats do not normally require further surveys. Appropriate justification for this assessment is provided in Section 3.0 and Table 6 of this report. Those known to support roosting bats may require further survey to inform a EPSML application, depending on the proposed works and assessment of impacts, and the species present/likely to be present. However, if

bats are found during any stage of the development, work should stop immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted to seek further advice.

Careful consideration should be given to any future lighting across the site. Although not confirmed, it is likely that bats could be commuting across the site from the woodland to the north. As such any future lighting should be kept to a minimum, and in like with guidance produced by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals: https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/. This can be confirmed during the further recommended survey.

Recommendations for further survey or assessment associated with each building are provided in Table 8.

Table 8: Survey recommendations

Building Ref	Value for / Likelihood of supporting roosting bats	Recommendations
B1 – Stable Block	Low habitat value	One dusk emergence survey should be undertaken to suggest the presence or likely absence of roosting bats. The survey should be undertaken during the optimal bat survey season (May to August). Two surveyors should be utilised, to provide sufficient coverage of all elevations of the building.

4.2.2 Breeding birds

It is recommended that the works to the building are undertaken outside the breeding bird season (March to September). However, if this is not possible, the building should be surveyed for breeding birds immediately prior to clearance. If active nests are found, they will need to be retained in situ until the young have fledged.

4.2.3 Enhancements

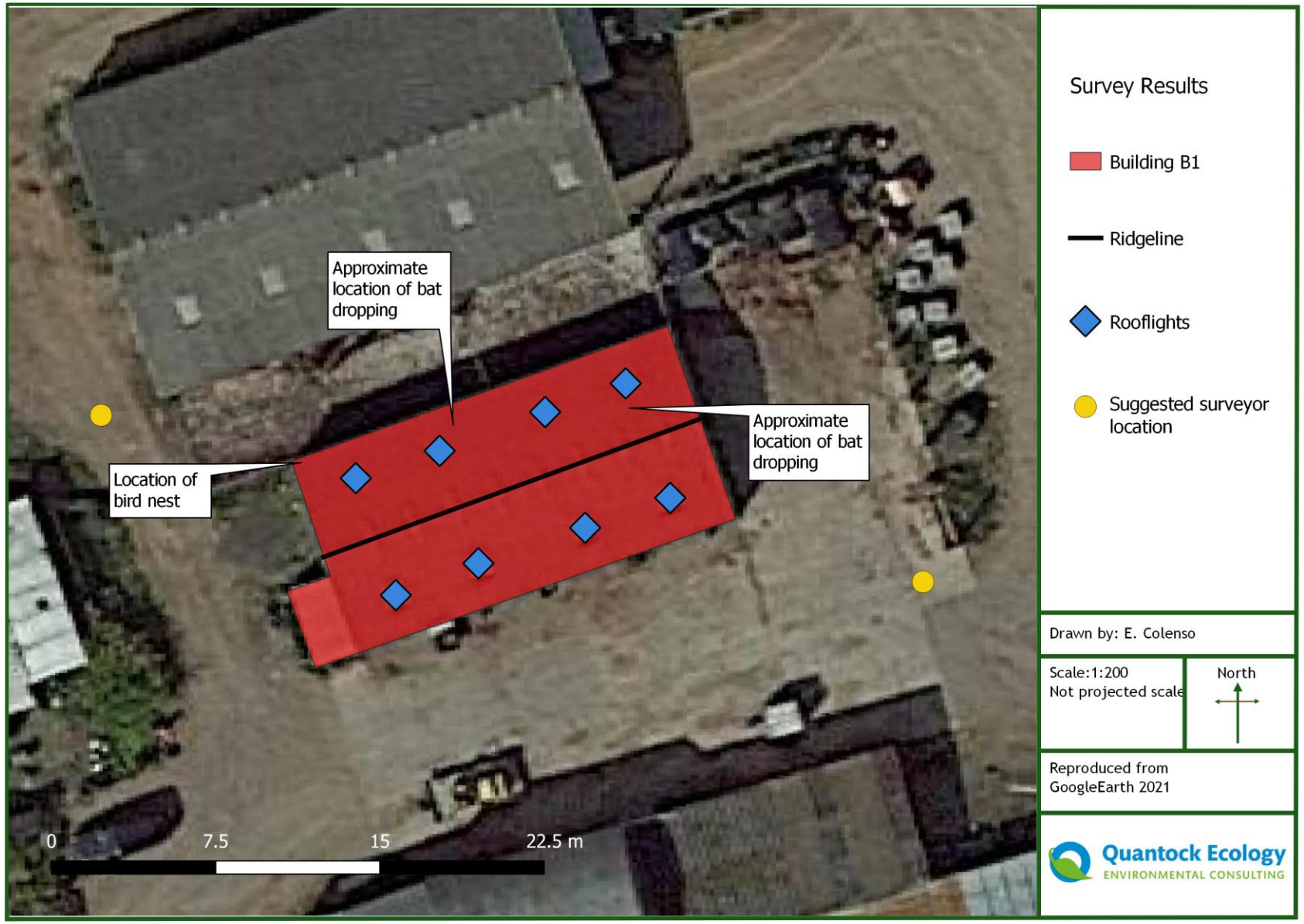
Accurate recommendations for enhancements can be made following the completion of the recommended further survey.

5.0 Bibliography

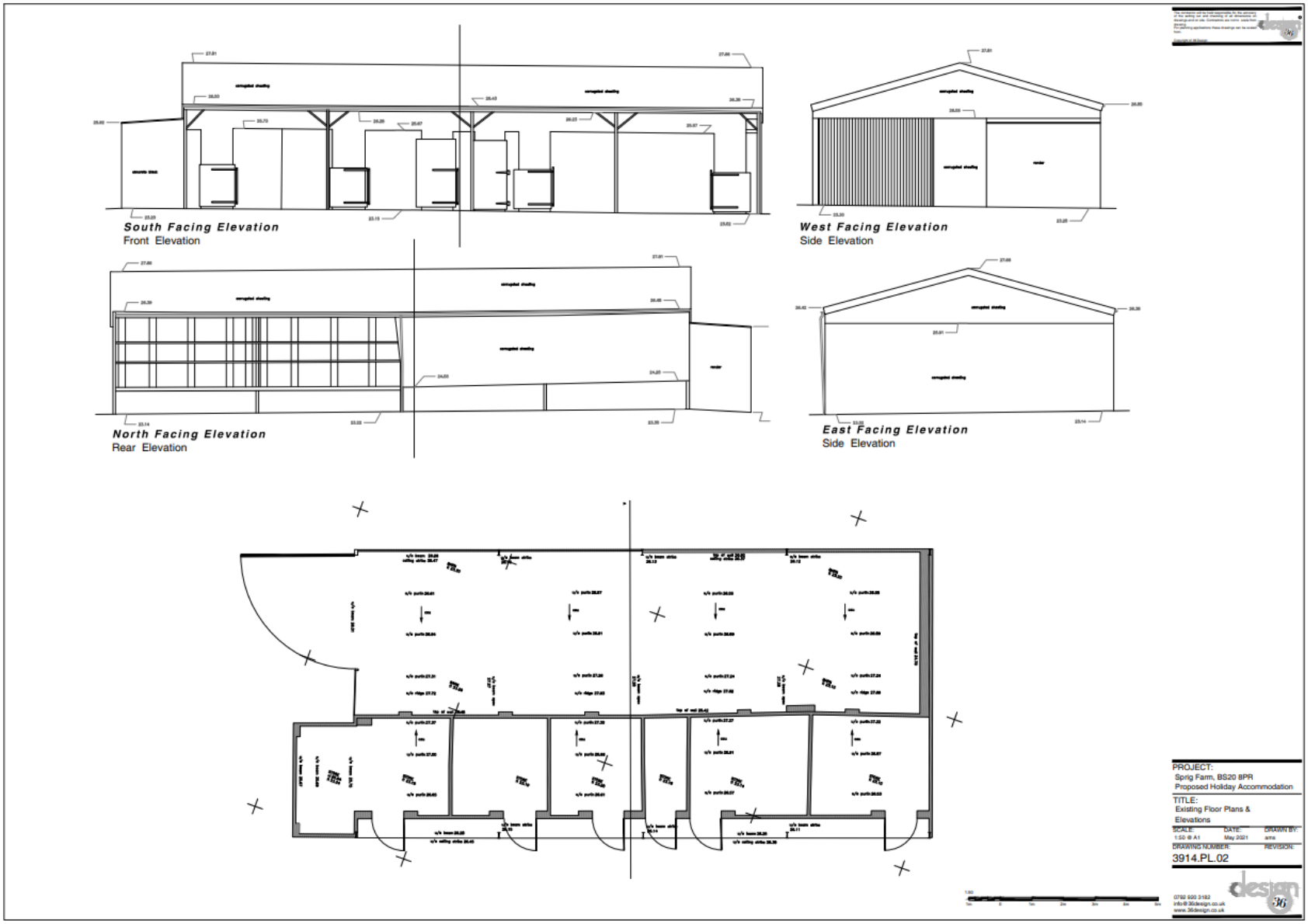
- British Trust for Ornithology (2021) https://www.bto.org/how-you-can-help/providing-birds/putting-nest-boxes-birds
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Garland & Markham (2008) Is important bat foraging and commuting habitat legally protected?
- Google Earth (2021) accessed on 16/08/2021.
- Magic database (2021) http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx accessed on 16/08/2021.
- Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.
- National Planning Policy Framework (2019) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf

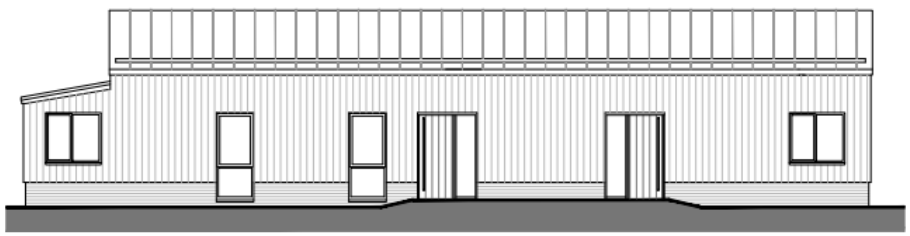
Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey Plan

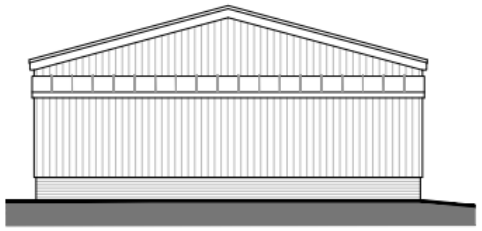


Appendix 2: Existing and Proposed Site Plans



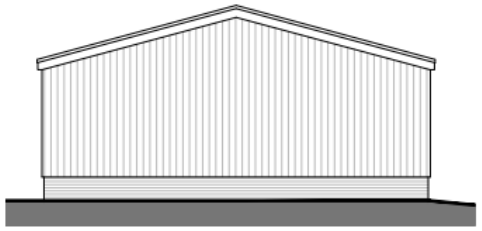


South Facing Elevation
Front Elevation

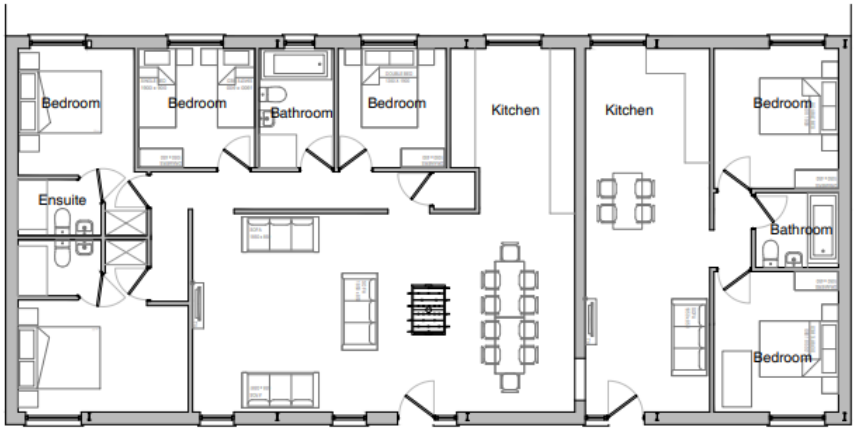


West Facing Elevation
Side Elevation

North Facing Elevation
Rear Elevation



East Facing Elevation
Side Elevation



Floor Plan

NOTES:
01 Roof: Standing seam. Colour lead grey
02 Wall: Vertical timber cladding
03 Plinth: Engineering Brick
04 Aluminium Windows Colour: Dark colour

PROJECT:
Sprig Farm, BS20 8PR
Proposed Holiday Accommodation

TITLE:
Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations

SCALE: 1:50 @ A1
DATE: May 2021
DRAWN BY: ams

DRAWING NUMBER: 3914.PL.03
REVISION:

Appendix 3: Photographs

Photo 1: Showing the southern elevation of B1 and the corrugated roof.	
Photo 2: Showing the northern elevation of B1.	

Photo 3: Showing the eastern gable and part of the southern elevation of B1.	
Photo 4: Showing the western gable end of B1 with large metal door and small mono-pitched extension.	

Photo 5: Showing the light and open internal environment of B1 with the stables in the southern portion of the barn and the storage area to the north.	
Photo 6: An example of the structure of the stables and tacks rooms within the southern portion of the barn.	

Photo 7: Showing the two bat droppings (marked by the red arrows) found within the northern portion of the barn.	
Photo 8: Showing the bird nest in the northwest corner of the barn.	

Appendix 4: Legislation and Planning Policy related to bats

LEGAL PROTECTION

All species of bat are fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 through their inclusion on Schedule 2.

Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species (e.g. all bats)
- Deliberate disturbance of bat species as:

  a) to impair their ability:

  (i) to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young

  (ii) to hibernate or migrate

  b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place

Bats are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 5. Under this Act, they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection
- Selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale

Effect on development works:

A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence issued by the relevant statutory authority (e.g. Natural England) will be required for works likely to affect a bat roost or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above (e.g. survive, breed, rear young and hibernate). The licence is to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficiency/success to be monitored.

The legislation may also be interpreted such that, in certain circumstances, important foraging areas and/or commuting routes can be regarded as being afforded *de facto* protection, for example, where it can be proven that the continued usage of such areas is crucial to maintaining the integrity and long-term viability of a bat roost (Garland & Markham, 2008)

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY (ENGLAND)

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development. The Framework specifies the need for protection of designated sites and priority habitats and species. An emphasis is also made on the need for ecological infrastructure through protection, restoration and re-creation. The protection and recovery of priority species (considered likely to be those listed as UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species) is also listed as a requirement of planning policy.

In determining a planning application, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by ensuring that: designated sites are protected from harm; there is appropriate mitigation or compensation where significant harm cannot be avoided; opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments are encouraged; and planning permission is refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including aged or veteran trees and also ancient woodland.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and The Biodiversity Duty

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006, requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'.

Section 41 of the Act (Section 42 in Wales) requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of 'principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.' This list is intended to assist decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications. A developer must show that their protection has been adequately addressed within a development proposal.

Appendix 5: Desk Study Information

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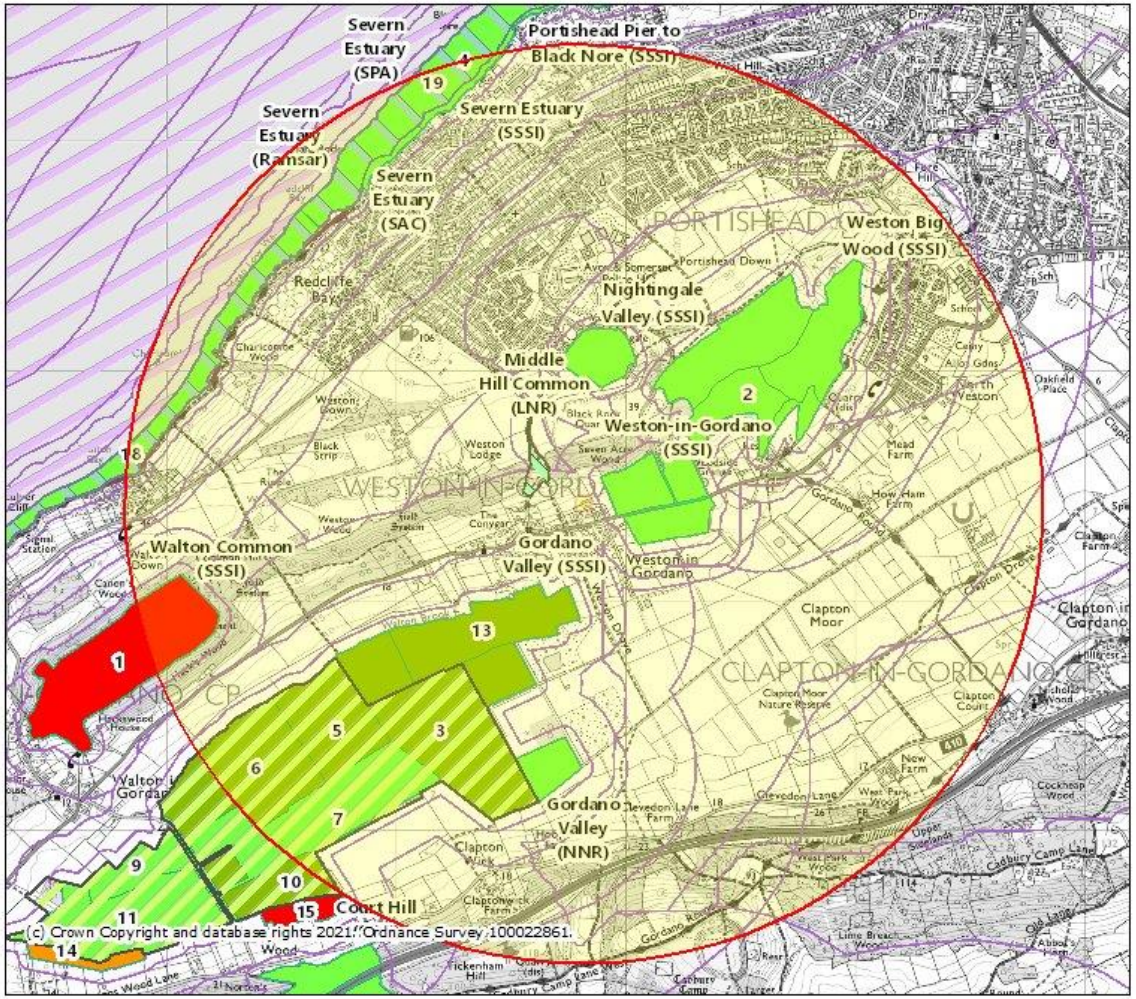
Designated Sites



Legend

- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (England)
- Limestone Pavement Orders (England)
- Local Nature Reserves (England)
- Moorland Line (England)
- National Nature Reserves (England)
- National Parks (England)
- Ramsar Sites (England)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest Units (England)

- Favourable Condition
- Unfavourable Recovering
- Unfavourable no change
- Unfavourable Declining
- Part Destroyed
- Destroyed
- Not Assessed
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England)
- SSSI Impact Risk Zones - to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites (England)
- Special Areas of Conservation (England)
- Special Protection Areas (England)

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 338500
ymin = 171400
xmax = 351000
ymax = 177500

0 0.45 0.9
km

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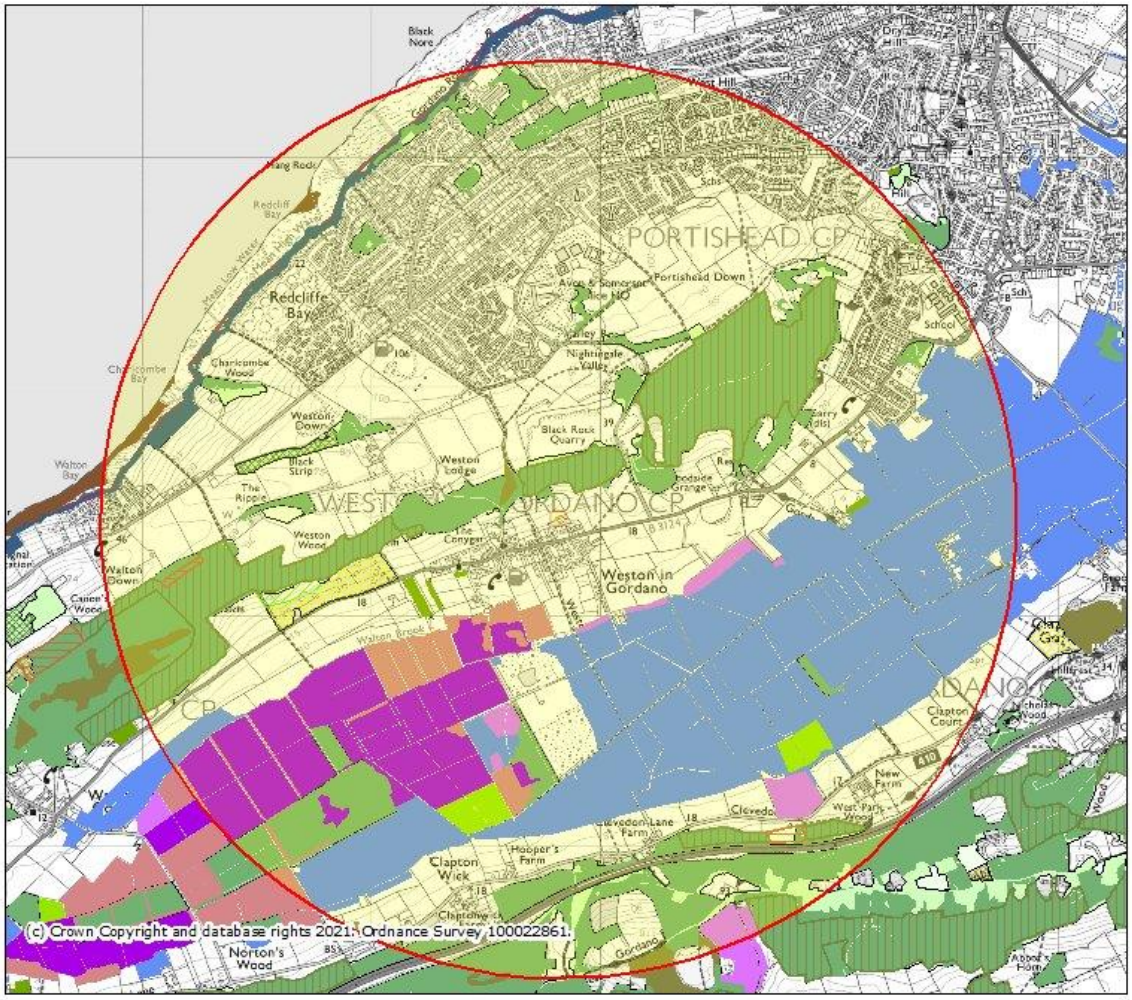
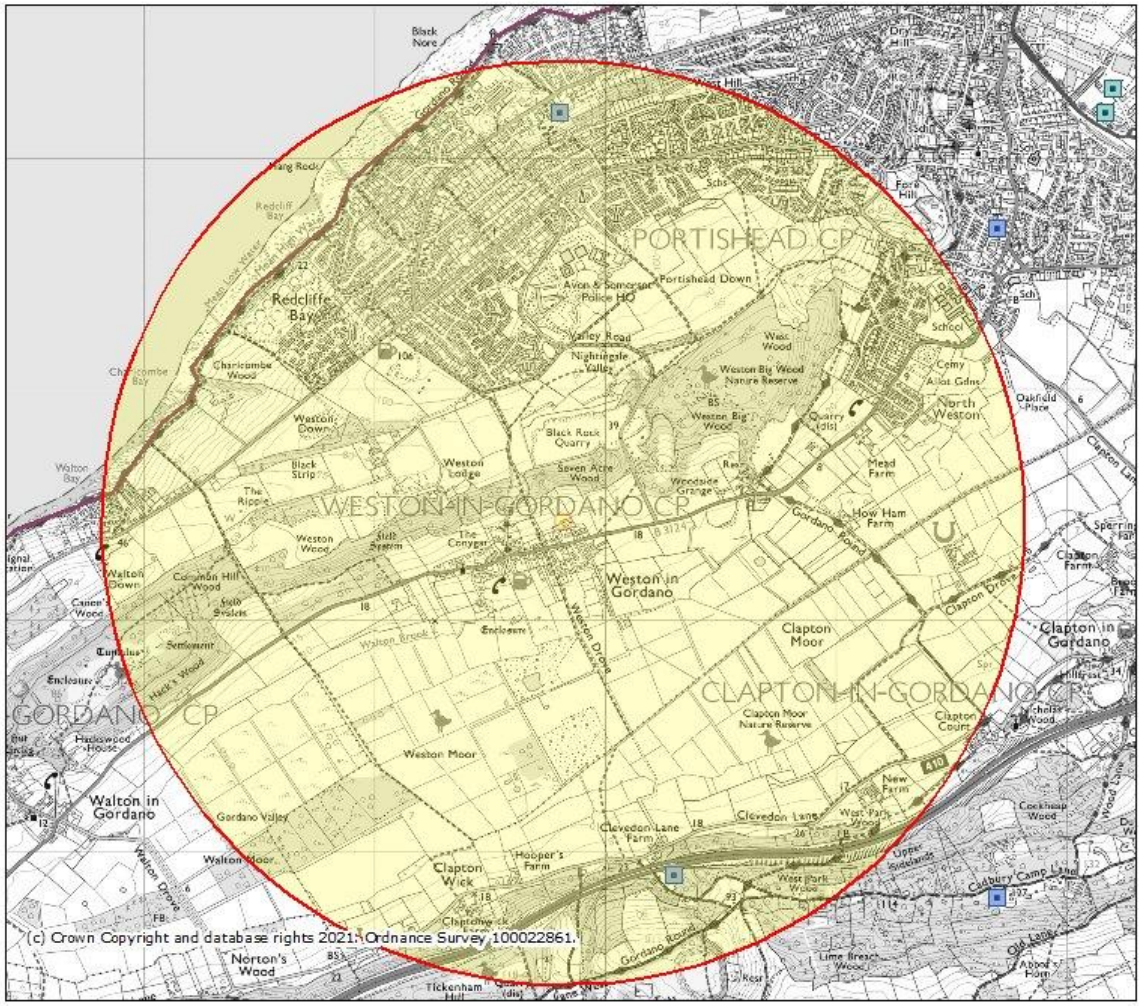
Priority Habitats



MAGIC

EPSML



Legend

Granted European Protected Species Applications (England)

- Amphibian
- Bat
- Cetacean
- Invertebrate
- Other Mammal
- Plant
- Reptile

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 338600
ymin = 171600
xmax = 351100
ymax = 177400

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km

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