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**79 Chain Lane, Staining, Blackpool, FY3 0DB**

**Bat Building Inspection**

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**Simply Ecology Limited**

**Ref: SE/KDQG060/01**

**October 2021**

**For:**

**Keystone Design Associates Ltd,  
Development House,  
261 Church Street,  
Blackpool,  
FY1 3PB**

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## Control Sheet

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## Version History

Version	Date	Modified by	Approved by	Comment/Reason(s)
1	06/10/2021	N/A	JR	First Issue

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Background Information

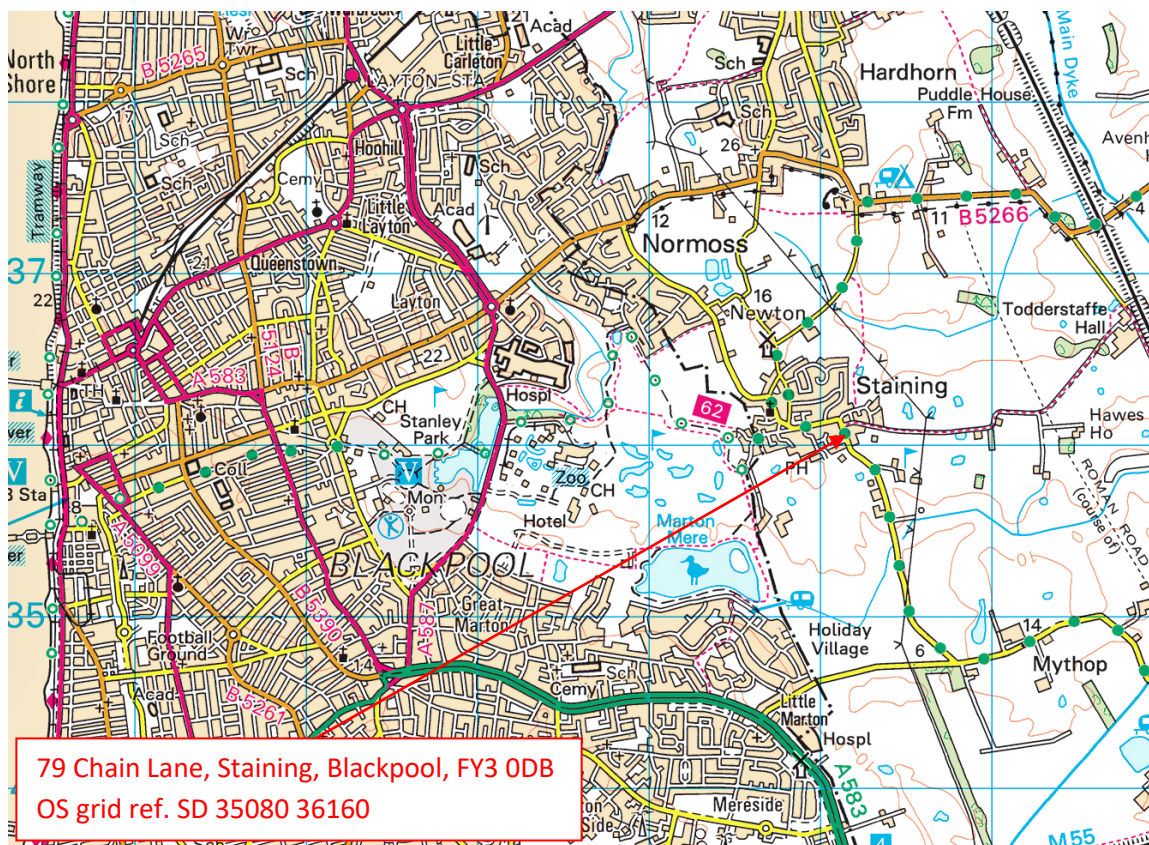
- 1.1.1 In September 2021, Simply Ecology Limited was commissioned by Keystone Design Associates to undertake an inspection to search for signs of bats at 79 Chain Lane, Staining, Blackpool, FY3 0DB (OS grid reference SD 35080 36160). See Plan 1 for site location and see Plan 2 to Plan 5 for site plans and extensions.

### 1.2 Aims

- 1.2.1 The aims of this survey were to gather up-to-date information on the presence of bats at the site. This involved:
- Identifying potential structures of the buildings that could be used by bats.
  - Identifying if there was any evidence of bats around the buildings.
  - Providing an assessment of the likely importance of the site for bats and their conservation.
  - Advising the client in relation to the proposed development and any impacts upon bats in order to ensure legislative compliance.
- 1.2.2 To achieve this, a bat building inspection of the site was undertaken on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021. submission presents the results of the surveys at the site.

### 1.3 Site Description and Proposed Works

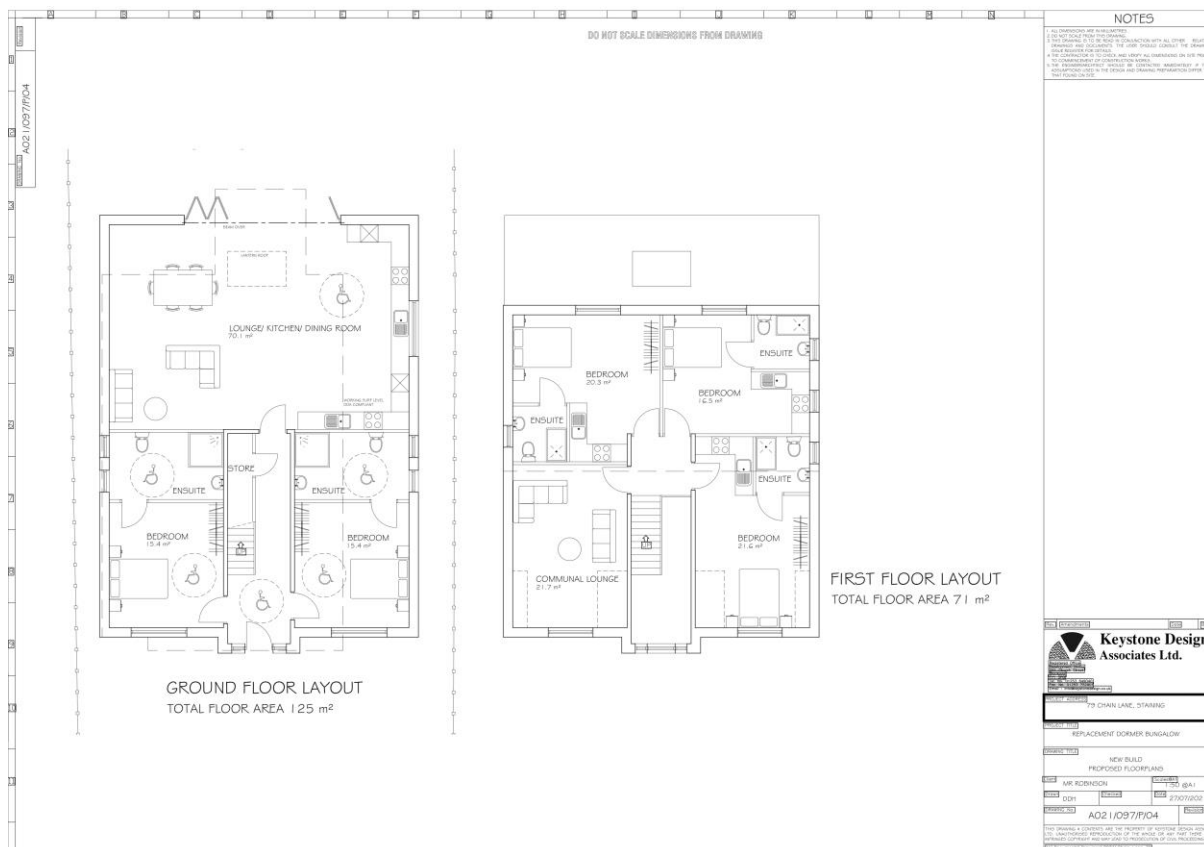
- 1.3.1 The Site is located within the village of Staining, approximately 3km east of the town of Blackpool. The site is a residential dwelling, with an accompanying outbuilding. The landscape surrounding the property is largely agricultural.
- 1.3.2 The surveys described in this report were commissioned to inform a planning application for the demolition of the existing building and outhouses and building of a new dwelling.



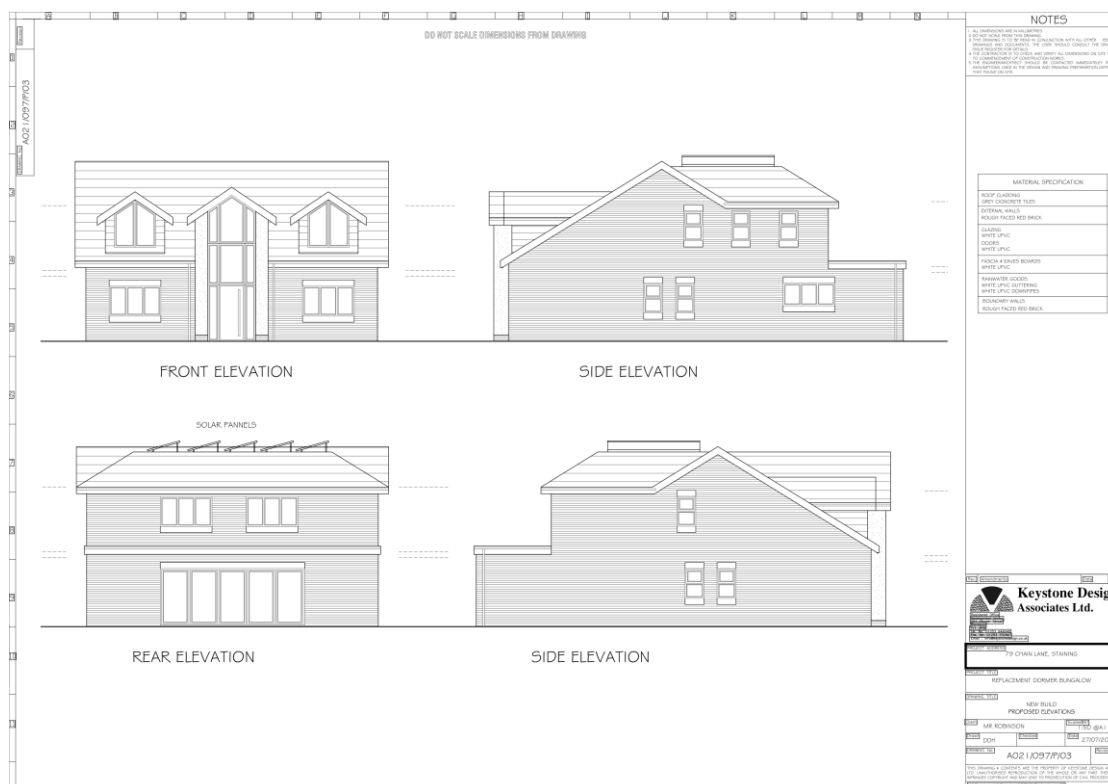
Plan 1: Site location.



Plan 2: Existing site plans and elevations.



Plan 3: Proposed site floor plans.



Plan 4: Proposed site elevations.

*Plan 5: Proposed annex plan and elevations.*

## 2.0 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 Bat Building Inspection

2.1.1 An inspection of the building on the site was specifically carried out to search for bats. The building survey was undertaken in accordance with the standard methods described in the 'Bat Worker's Manual' (JNCC 2004) and 'Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines' (BCT 2016). In accordance with best practice, the survey comprised the following elements:

- An inspection of the exterior of the building to look for obvious signs of bat activity (such as droppings) and assessing the potential for entry/exit into the property.
- An internal inspection of all spaces to determine whether bats were present, to look for signs of activity (such as discarded prey items and droppings) and to assess potential suitability for bat species. Lighting was provided by a Led Lenser XEO 19R (2,000lm). Any cracks or inaccessible areas were inspected using a ProVision PV-636 endoscope and a PK Pro pole camera.

2.1.2 Subsequent advice/action would depend on the findings of the building surveys. If potential was found then subsequent bat activity surveys would be required in accordance with standard methods described in the 'Bat Worker's Manual' (JNCC 2004) and 'Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines' (Bat Conservation Trust 2016).

### 2.2 Personnel

2.2.1 All surveys were undertaken by Kevin Heywood BSc (Hons) ACIEEM. Kevin is an Ecologist with Simply Ecology Limited. Kevin graduated with a first-class honours degree in Ecology from Lancaster University in 2015. In addition to this, he has acquired experience since 2012 working as an ecologist in a freelance capacity and since 2015 as a full-time employee for Simply Ecology Limited. During this time, he has developed numerous field skills and carried out a wide range of botanical and protected species surveys. His expertise predominantly lies with habitat mapping and undertaking protected species surveys including bats, great crested newts, badgers, otters and reptiles. Kevin holds a protected species licence for all British bats and for great crested newts.

### 2.3 Timing and Constraints

2.3.1 The building survey was undertaken on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The timing of the building inspection to search for signs of bats posed no constraints as building inspections can be undertaken at any time of year. An assessment of the building's potential to support bats can therefore be made according to evidence found, building condition, location, and the experience of the surveyor.

## 3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

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### 3.1 Bat Building Inspection

- 3.1.1 The detached residential property had a pitched roof made of grey concrete tiles, with rough faced red brickwork. The site also contained a concrete shed outbuilding with a pitched corrugated metal roof. All buildings were subject to an external and internal survey for evidence of the presences of bats.

Main residential property

#### External

- 3.1.2 The pitched roof of the residential property was in very good condition, with very tight tiles and no cracked or missing tiles (See Plate 1).
- 3.1.3 A small number of gaps existed under slipped tiles across the pitched roof, or in roof verges (See Plate 2) however, when these were examined they were deemed too small for bats to utilise and were therefore deemed to offer no Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) and also showed no evidence of bat activity.
- 3.1.4 The brickwork of the chimney appeared in good condition and offered no PRFs (See Plate 3).
- 3.1.5 The redbrick walls of the building were in good condition, with no gaps in the mortar or cracks in the walls offering no PRFs (See Plate 4).
- 3.1.6 The gable wall brickwork and bargeboards appeared in good condition with no gaps or cracks offering no PRFs (See Plate 5).
- 3.1.7 The building eaves were well sealed and offered no PRFs (See Plate 6).
- 3.1.8 The doors and the windows of the residential property all appeared well sealed, with no gaps or PRFs identified (See



Plate 7).

- 3.1.9 The dormer roof and windows were in good condition with no gaps in tiles or cracks, with the flashing appearing well sealed offering no PRFs (See Plate 8).

- 3.1.10 The flat roof of the conservatory was in good condition and offered no PRFs (See Plate 8).
- 3.1.11 A thorough search of external walls, roof surfaces and flat surfaces was carried out to determine any evidence of bat activity at the site (such as droppings, feeding remains or staining). However, no evidence of bat activity was found at the site.



*Plate 1: The roof of the building was in very good condition, with no cracked or missing tiles offering no roosting potential or access to internal spaces.*



*Plate 2: Any gaps that existed in the roof tiles or in roof verges were deemed too small to be accessible for bats, offering no roosting potential.*



*Plate 3: The brickwork of the chimney was in good condition and offered no roosting opportunities.*



*Plate 4: The walls of the building were in good condition and offered no roosting potential and showed no signs of bat activity.*



*Plate 5: The walls of the roof gable was in good condition and the roof barge boards were in good condition.*



*Plate 6: The building eaves were in good condition and offered no bat roosting potentials.*



*Plate 7: The doors and windows of the building were well sealed offering no roosting opportunities.*



*Plate 8: The dormer roof, windows and flashings were in good condition as well as the flat roof of the conservatory being in good condition.*

### Internal

- 3.1.12 A thorough search of internal spaces was carried out to identify PRFs and evidence of bat activity, however most of the upper floor was living space with only a few roof voids around the edge of the building.

- 3.1.13 The internal loft was generally well-sealed, with roof underfelt membrane and wooden beams appearing to be in good condition and offering no PRFs (See Plate 9). No staining or other evidence of bats was found in these areas.
- 3.1.14 In one place the membrane was ripped and the roof tiles were exposed, however due to the good condition of the roof tiles, no PRFs or bat access to internal space was identified (See Plate 10).
- 3.1.15 All of the flat surfaces in the internal loft voids were thoroughly searched for evidence of bat activity, however none was found (See Plate 11).



*Plate 9: The roof was felted, and no signs of bats were present around purlins or on rafters or trusses.*



*Plate 10: Tears in the underfelt were inspected and no signs of bats were present.*



*Plate 11: All flat surfaces were checked, but no evidence of bat activity was present.*

### External

- 3.1.16 The pitched roof of the outbuilding was generally in good condition, however, there was a large moss covering (See Plate 12).
- 3.1.17 The concrete shed was in relatively good condition, however the internal space was easily accessible to bats due to the gaps at the top of the walls (See Plate 13).
- 3.1.18 The doors and windows of the outbuilding were generally in good condition and reasonably well sealed, however some gaps did exist above the door frame.
- 3.1.19 The doors and walls of the outbuilding were in relatively good condition, and were thoroughly searched for evidence of bat activity, however no evidence was found.



*Plate 12: The roof of the outbuilding was generally in good condition, despite the large moss covering.*

### Internal

- 3.1.20 The internal space of the outbuilding was a simple structure comprised of a single void with no hidden places or PRFs identified internally (See Plate 13).
- 3.1.21 A thorough search of flat surfaces internally and nearby the building cleared showed no evidence of bat activity (See Plate 14).



*Plate 13: A gap can be seen above the walls of the outbuilding, offering access to internal spaces. Although, this internal space was a very simple structure offering no roosting opportunities.*



*Plate 14: The flat surfaces of the internal space showed no evidence of bat activity.*

3.1.22 **In summary**, the site contained two buildings that were assessed for signs of bat activity and potential roost features. No PRFs were identified in the various structures. No access to internal spaces was possible in the main residential building and although access was easily possible in the outbuilding, the simple structure and lack of PRFs meant the building had low suitability for bats. The survey of the site also showed no evidence of bat activity, clearly showing that bats had not been using the site.

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## 4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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- 4.1.1 In September 2021, Simply Ecology Limited was commissioned by Keystone Design Associates to undertake an inspection for signs of bats at 79 Chain Lane, Staining, Blackpool, FY3 0DB.. It is understood that the development will involve demolition of the main house and outbuilding to build a replacement residential building and annex (See Plans 2 - 4).

### 4.2 Bats

- 4.2.1 A bat scoping survey of the site was undertaken. It is understood that the work will involve the demolition of the property. The roof of the main residential building was well sealed and there were no cracked, slipped, or missing tiles and no gaps of size suitable for bat access to internal spaces around all key areas. The outbuilding did contain gaps that allowed access to internal space, however the simple structure offered no potential roosting features and all evidence clearly showed no evidence of bat activity. Despite completing a thorough search of the building to identify Potential Roost Features and to search for signs of bat activity, no potential and no signs of bats were found. It was therefore concluded that there is no reasonably foreseeable likelihood that roosting bats are present.

- **It is advised that all works can continue with no need for any supervision by the Appointed Ecologist.** No Natural England licence is necessary in this instance as no impact upon any bat roost is predicted. This is due to the lack of any signs of current or historical use of the building by bats. **Reason:** This will deliver compliance with: Section 9 (1 & 4) of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Part 3 (43; 1 & 2) of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Section 15 of The National Planning Policy Framework (2018).

### 4.3 Breeding Birds

- 4.3.1 Although the site is highly unlikely to support a notable assemblage of birds in a local context due to its limited extent and nature of the habitats present, it is possible that the site is used by small numbers of breeding birds. In view of the protection afforded to all breeding birds, their nests and eggs, development works should proceed as follows:

- **It is recommended that all demolition and site clearance work should be carried out outside of the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive).** Where this is not possible, a suitably qualified ecologist should carry out a check to confirm the absence of nesting birds immediately prior to clearance works commencing. If a bird nest in current use is discovered, then an appropriate buffer zone around the nest should be created where clearance works can only continue after the nest is vacated. **Reason:** This will ensure that no offences are committed under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The bird-nesting season is generally regarded to extend between March and August inclusive.

## 5.0 REFERENCES

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Bat Conservation Trust (2016). *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals (2018). *Bats and artificial lighting in the UK*. Bats and the Built Environment series Guidance Note 08/18. Institute of Lighting Professionals, Rugby.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2019). *National Planning Policy Framework*. HMSO. London

Joint Nature Conservation Committee Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. [Eds.] (2004). *The Bat Workers Manual (3rd edition)*. Joint Nature Conservancy Council, Peterborough.

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006:

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2006/ukpga\\_20060016\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2006/ukpga_20060016_en_1)

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended):

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made>

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents>

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/3/contents>

Protection of Badger Act 1992

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51/contents>

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/1160/contents/made>

## ANNEX A: STATUTORY AND PLANNING CONTEXT

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A.0.1 The client is advised that many species of British wildlife are legally protected. The following section provides a brief overview of the protection afforded to species commonly encountered during development. The Recommendations at the end of this report will advise as necessary, but it is also useful for the client to have an understanding of the legal protection as this helps to ensure that the law is complied with.

### A.1 Badgers

A.1.1 Badgers are protected under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA), and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is illegal to:

- Kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger or to attempt to do so;
- Interfere with a badger sett by damaging or destroying it;
- Obstruct access to or any entrance of a badger sett;
- Disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett

A.1.2 A badger sett is “any structure or place that displays signs indicating current use by a badger”. Natural England, the Government’s statutory nature conservation body, classifies a sett as active if it has been occupied within the last 12 months.

A.1.3 Operations that might cause disturbance of an active sett entrance can be carried out under licence from Natural England. If any badgers are found during the course of the survey, this will be highlighted in this report.

### A.2 Birds

A.2.1 All wild birds are protected against killing or injury under The WCA 1981 (as amended). This protection extends to bird’s nests during the breeding season, which makes it an offence to damage or destroy nests or eggs. Birds that are listed on Schedule 1 of the Act receive additional protection against intentional or reckless disturbance during the breeding season. This makes it an offence to disturb these species at or near to their nesting site.

### A.3 Protected Species (includes bats, otter, hazel dormouse, great crested newts, and others)

A.3.1 The client is advised that all bats and great crested newts are European Protected Species (EPS). These EPS are protected under legislation in England and Wales via the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Regulation 43). A full list of PS is provided in Schedule 2 of the Regulations. In addition, these PS also receive the protection of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) in respect of Section 9 (4)(b & c) and (5).

A.3.2 If both national and international legislation are taken together, the legislative protection afforded to these species makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally/ deliberately kill, disturb, injure or capture them.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any breeding site or resting place.
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a European Protected Species.

- A.3.3 If an activity is likely to result in any of the above offences, derogation from the legal protection can be issued in the form of a European Protected Species licence issued by Natural England. Licences for development purposes are issued under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) and only allow what is permitted within the terms and conditions of the licence. If any EPS are found during the course of the survey, this will be highlighted in this report.

#### **A.4 Protected Mammals and Reptiles (includes water vole, red squirrel, reptiles and others)**

- A.4.1 All native reptiles and a variety of British mammals also receive protection under The WCA 1981 (as amended). Schedule 5 of The WCA lists animals that are protected. The degree of protection varies. Water voles and red squirrel are examples of species with full protection. The Act makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure, take, possess, or trade in any wild animal listed in Schedule 5, and prohibits interference with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places.
- A.4.2 All native reptiles in the UK are protected. The commoner species such as grass snake, common lizard, slow worm and adder are protected only from unlawful killing and injuring. In practice this may require a reptile protection scheme before implementing a planning permission but no specific licence is required. Sand lizard and smooth snake listed as EPS (see A3.3 above).
- A.4.4 If any protected species are found during the course of the survey, this will be highlighted in this report.

#### **A.5 Non-native invasive species**

- A.5.1 A number of non-native plant species growing wild in the UK are listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA due to their invasive nature and the detrimental impact they can have on native habitats and wildlife. This legislation makes it an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant species which is included in Part II of Schedule 9.
- A.5.2 This legislation should be considered during site clearance works which could lead to the spread of Schedule 9 listed plant species from the site if plant material is not properly handled and disposed of. Development proposals should also consider the removal of invasive species from areas of site that would otherwise remain unaffected by works in order to avoid the risk of these invasive plants spreading from the site in the future and enhance habitats within the site. This would in turn free up space for wildlife friendly planting, prioritising use of native species within planting schemes where appropriate.

#### **A.6 Planning Considerations**

- A.6.1 When considering each planning application, the presence of protected species, such as those listed above, is a material consideration which must be fully considered by the Local Authority when granting planning permission. If a licence from Natural England is required, then prior to issuing any planning consent, the local planning authority will need to be satisfied that there is no reason why such a licence would not be issued. Therefore, in reaching the planning decision the local planning authority will need to have regard to the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The three licensing tests given in the Regulations must be considered. In summary, these are that:
1. The development is required for the purpose of:
    - Preserving public health or public safety;

- For other imperative reasons of over-riding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;
  - For preventing serious damage to property.
2. There is no satisfactory alternative.
  3. The proposal will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status.
- A.6.2 All necessary information would need to be provided to the planning authority as part of the planning application in order to address the above tests.
- A.6.3 The Natural Environment and Communities Act (NERC Act) 2006 extended the biodiversity duty set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act to public bodies and statutory undertakers to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. The Duty is set out in Section 40 of the Act, and states that:
- "Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity"
- A.6.4 The Duty applies to all local authorities, community, parish and town councils, police, fire and health authorities and utility companies. Section 41 (S41) of this Act (the 'England Biodiversity List') also requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. This list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40(1) of the Act.
- A.6.5 Also, Local Authorities must follow the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which provides guidance on the interpretation of the law in relation to wildlife issues and development. For each development proposal considered by the Local Planning Authority the NPPF states that the authority must aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

#### **UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)**

- A.6.6 The UK BAP, which was first published in 1994, was the UK government response to the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity. It sets priorities for nationally important 'priority species' and 'priority habitats'. Each species and habitat action plan has costed actions and targets, and is used to inform the compilation of national lists such as the Section 41 List described above.