



# **ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EcIA)**

Coles Yard, Stuckton Road, Stuckton, Hyde, Hampshire SP6 2HE

Prepared for: Mr B. I'anson, % Ibsley Service Station, Mockbeggar nr. Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 3NL

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## Summary

There were no protected species, evidence of protected species or habitats for protected species on the site, with the exception of House martins nesting on the N elevation of the buildings at the apex of the gable end.

Mitigation and enhancements are proposed for the site development to ensure Biodiversity Net Gain in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021.

## 1.0. Introduction

1.1. Survey - The aim of the ecology survey was to confirm the presence/absence of; any protected/notable plant or animal species, any suitable habitats for protected species, such as bats, barn owls and other nesting birds on the site, badgers, reptiles and amphibians.

Local Planning Authorities are required to take into account nature conservation issues, including species and habitats protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) when making planning decisions. Local Planning Authorities also aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity (National Policy Planning Framework 2021 (NPPF)) and to have regard to conserving biodiversity, which includes restoring and enhancing a population or habitat under the Natural Environment & Communities Act 2006 (NERC 2006)).

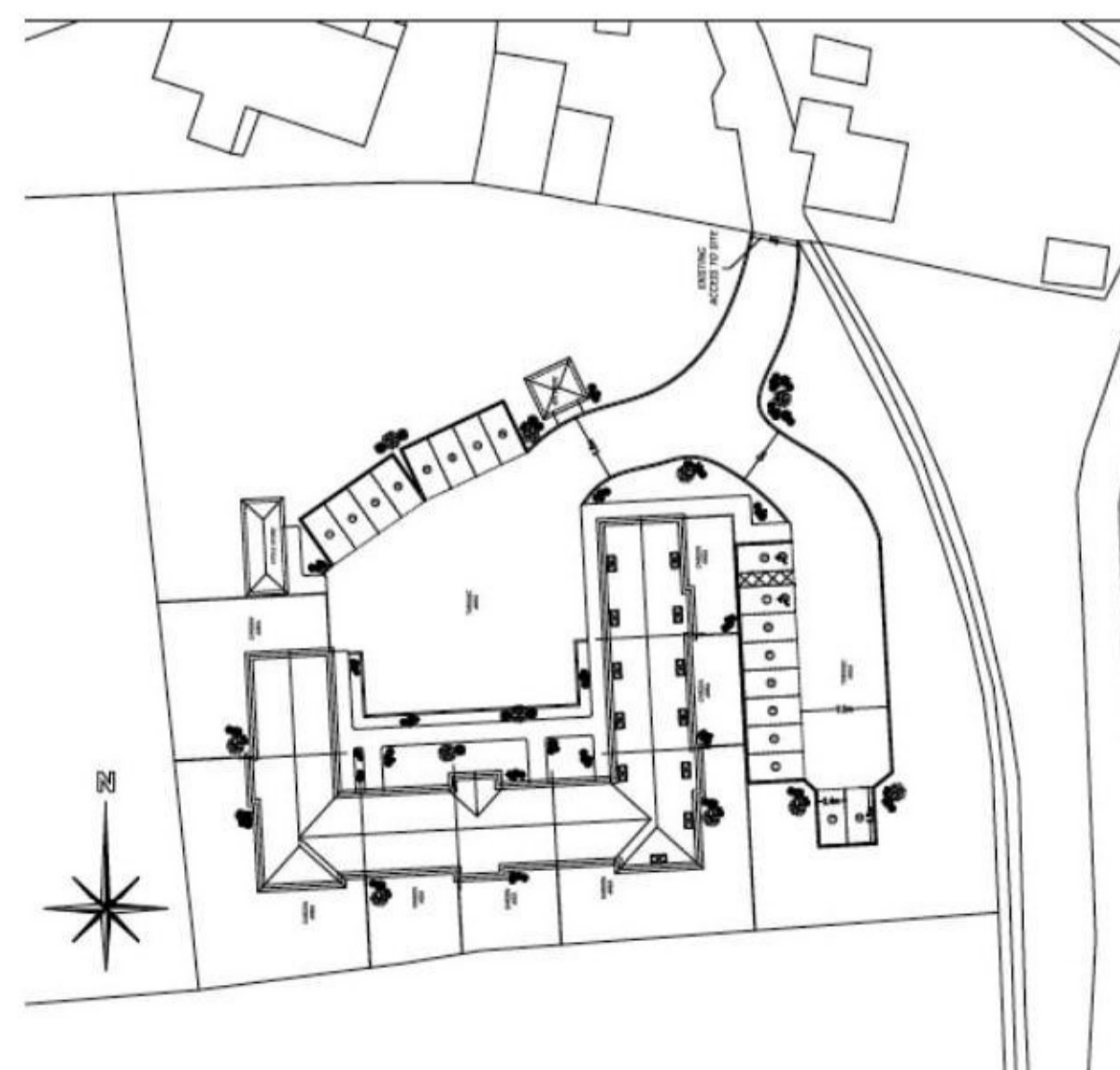
1.2. Report - The aim of the report is to clearly set out the results of the survey, highlighting any effects of the proposed development on any protected species or habitats suitable for protected species on or adjacent to the site and provide mitigation and/or enhancement as appropriate.

1.3. Location of site - The site is Coles Yard, Stuckton Road, Stuckton, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 2HE (Figs. 1 & 2), grid reference SU 16000 13095.

Figure 1. Location Plan



Figure 2. Block Plan



1.4. Description of Site - The site lies to the SE of Fordingbridge, in the village of Stuckton. To the W lies agricultural fields and hedges and the E, villages and The New Forest. The site has been partially built out, to implement planning permission ref. 11/97198, which took place in early 2012, for the erection of a building in mixed Class B1/B8 use, which was built out to shell and core, but was never completed.

1.5. Description of Proposals - The proposed development is for change of use of the existing building and alterations to form nine dwellings with associated parking and landscaping. The type and scope of the survey is appropriate to the nature and extent of development and scale of impact. The site is 0.41ha.

## **2.0. Method**

### **Phase 1 - Day Survey**

2.1. Desk Study - The Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) was used to search for data on protected habitats.

2.2. Field Survey - The ecology survey was carried out on 19th July 2021, assessing the site for species and/or habitats protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The main species of plants on site were identified. Surveys were carried out following all relevant guidelines (see Reference section). The weather was fine, still and clear.

2.2.1. Bats & Buildings - All the external walls, roof coverings, soffits, fascias, internal spaces, beams, ledges, windowsills, floors, holes and cavities, etc., were checked for evidence of use by bats. Regular use is indicated by staining, droppings and worn surfaces.

Bat roost features were noted, ie, gappy tiles, lifted lead flashing, gaps/holes in soffits/fascias, missing mortar around roof, etc.

2.2.2. Bats & Trees - There are no trees on site that will be affected by the proposed development.

2.2.3. Bat Habitat Suitability Assessment - An assessment of the suitability of the habitats on site and immediately adjacent to the site for supporting foraging and commuting bats was made.

2.2.4. Other Protected Species - The survey assessed the site for signs of use by protected species that could be affected by the proposed development, eg, for nesting birds – nests, nesting material, etc., for badgers – badger holes, latrines, hair on wire fencing, snuffle holes, etc., for reptiles/amphibians – suitable habitat, presence in/under various materials, eg, in wood piles, etc., for dormice - nests, hedge type and connectivity, signs of feeding, etc., for water voles - droppings, burrows, feeding stations, signs of feeding and otter - holt, spraint, footprints, etc.

2.3. Field Equipment - Equipment used to carry out the survey incl. torch, ladder, endoscope, binoculars, compass, notebook and pen.

2.4. Details of Surveyor - Katie Pollard BSc, MSc, PhD, MCIEEM. Director and Principal Ecologist at KP Ecology. Ecologist for over 20 years. Natural England Licences held; Bat Class Licence 2015-11253-CLS-CLS, Barn Owl Class Licence CL29/00032.

**3.0. Constraints to Survey**

None.

**4.0. Results**

4.1. Building - The building is brick and breeze block, with a concrete tile roof and uPVC doors, windows, soffits and fascias. There are roof lights in each unit, and there are no loft spaces. The tiles are all lined with breathable membrane (Figs. 3 - 6).

Figure 3. View of building N & E elevations



Figure 4. Rear of buildings (S)



Figure 5. S & W elevations of building



Figure 6. Example of first floor of building



No bats, or evidence of bats were found inside the building, or on any part of the outside, ie, no droppings, or staining on the walls, windows, soffits & fascias. The roof tiles are all tight, as are the soffits and fascias and there are no potential roost features on the building (PRFs). The building is considered to have NEGLIGIBLE bat potential.

There were however House martin *Delichon urbicum* nest on the eaves of the N facing parts of the building (Figs. 7 & 8). There is no work planned to the eaves of the buildings, but mitigation will be required to ensure that no nesting birds are harmed or disturbed during bird nesting season 1st March - 31st August, as all nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Figure 7. House martin nest on eaves of building



Figure 8. Close up of House martin nest



#### 4.2. Surrounding Area of Site

The majority of the site is hard standing and therefore offers very little ecological interest. There are some species, indicative of disturbed ground around the site that have established since the site has become disused, mostly around the edges of the site, with some around the outside of the building. These species include: Curled leaved dock *Rumex crispus*, Common nettle *Urtica dioica*, Cleaver *Galium aparine*, Common dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, Perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, Buddleia *Buddleja sp.*, Pineapple weed *Matricaria discoidea*, Creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* and Common chickweed *Stellaria media*. At the time of the survey some of this vegetation has been allowed to grow up, but it has not been strimmed and is now short and will be maintained as so.

#### 4.3. Trees

There are a trees on the adjacent to the site, but not on the site itself. There are no proposals to carry out any work to these trees and they will not be affected by the proposed development. They will all be retained. None of these trees had potential roost features (PRFs) for bats.

#### 4.4. Bat Habitat Suitability

There are no suitable habitats for bats on the site. There are in the adjacent fields and associated habitats, but none of these are within the development site boundary and therefore none will be affected by the proposed work to this site. The building has already been built.

#### 4.5. Other Protected Species

There are no protected or notable species, protected habitats, or habitats to support protected species on the site.

##### 4.5.1. Bats

No bats, or evidence of bats, ie, droppings, feeding remains, or staining, was found in or on the building on site. The building has negligible bat potential. No further surveys are required.

##### 4.5.2. Badgers

No evidence of badgers, eg, sett holes, snuffle holes, hair on fences, latrines. The site provides very limited foraging opportunities for badgers. Badgers are not considered to be present on the site, therefore there will be no adverse impacts from the proposed development on badgers. No further action is required.

##### 4.5.3. Nesting Birds

House martins are using the apex of the gable ends to nest. Mitigation will be required as all nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

##### 4.5.4. Great Crested Newts & Other Amphibians

The site does not provide suitable habitats for great crested newts and other amphibians. Great crested newts (GCNs) are therefore considered absent from the site therefore there will be no adverse impacts on GCNs. No further action is required.

##### 4.5.5. Reptiles

As with amphibians, the site does not provide suitable habitats for reptiles. Reptiles are therefore considered absent from the site therefore there will be no adverse impacts on any reptiles. DERC holds records for two reptile species within 1km of the site. No further action is required.

##### 4.5.6. Dormice

Dormice are considered absent from the site therefore there will be no adverse impacts on dormice. DERC hold no records of dormice within 1km of the site. No further action is required.

#### 4.6. MAGIC Search

The site is within 400m of the New Forest National Park and The New Forest Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is also within 1km of the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

There are also bat roosts with 400m of the site, but there are no bats roosting on site.

### 5.0. Conclusion

No protected species or habitats for protected species are present on site, with the exception of House martins. The proposed mitigation will ensure that the House martins are protected during works and enhancements for the site will ensure a positive long-term net biodiversity gain for the development.

### 6.0. Biodiversity Net Gain (Appendix 1 - Fig. 11)

6.1. There will be four integral bat boxes built into the W elevation of all dormer windows on the S elevation of the building and one bat box into the S elevation of the dormer window on the W elevation of the building. There will be a total of five bat boxes on the building (Figs. 9 & 10).

The areas around the dormer windows will be wood cladding. Therefore the bat boxes will be erected behind the wood cladding, with a suitable gap in the wood cladding for bats to gain entry to the bat box. Exact position to be agreed with the ecologist.

Figure 9. S elevation of building - position of bat box

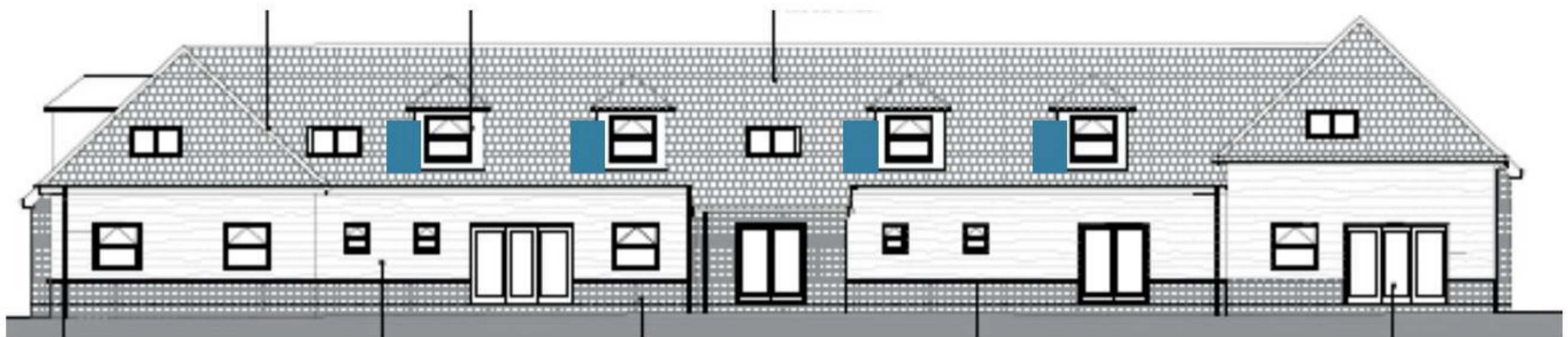
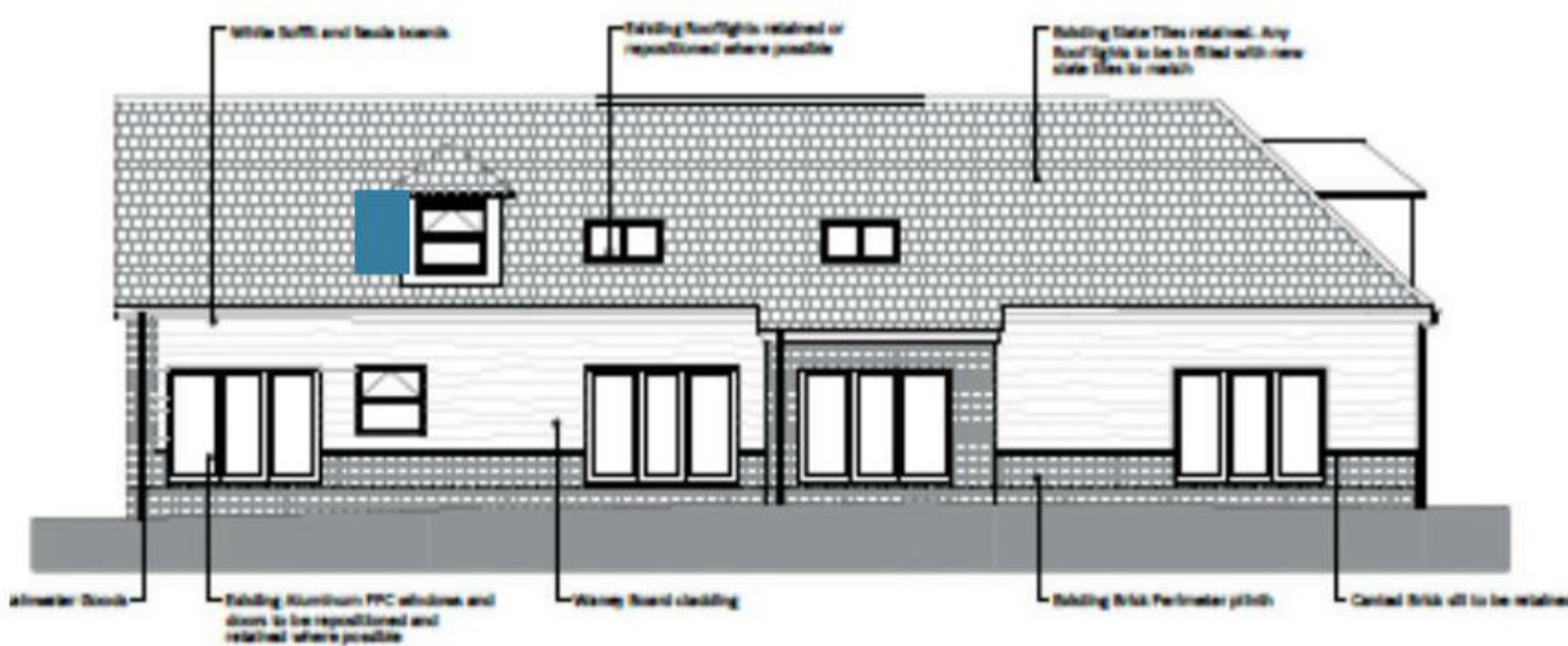


Figure 10. W elevation of building nearest to W boundary - position of bat box



An example can be found at [www.facit-homes.com/bat-boxes-homes-for-our-flying-friends](http://www.facit-homes.com/bat-boxes-homes-for-our-flying-friends)

6.2. A landscape plan will be prepared for the site. A native hedge will be planted around the boundaries of the dwellings. It will be a minimum of 100m and will include the following native species; 10% Guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*, 20% Field maple *Acer campestre*, 20% Elder *Sambucus nigra*, 20% Hazel *Corylus avellana*, 10% Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and 20% Wild crab apple *Malus sylvestris*. Hedge planting will be undertaken between November and March. Five hedge plants will be planted per metre in two rows. Any other plants in the front garden around the car park in the communal area will be native and good for pollinators.

Hedgerow management will aim to maintain a varied age and structure by cutting on a two year rotation whereby different sections will be cut in any one year. Hedgerow management will take place between mid December and early March. This will avoid the bird nesting season and allow to be present for foraging wildlife. Hedgerows should be cut in an "A" shape or a "topped A" shape to create tall bushy hedges with maximum wildlife potential.

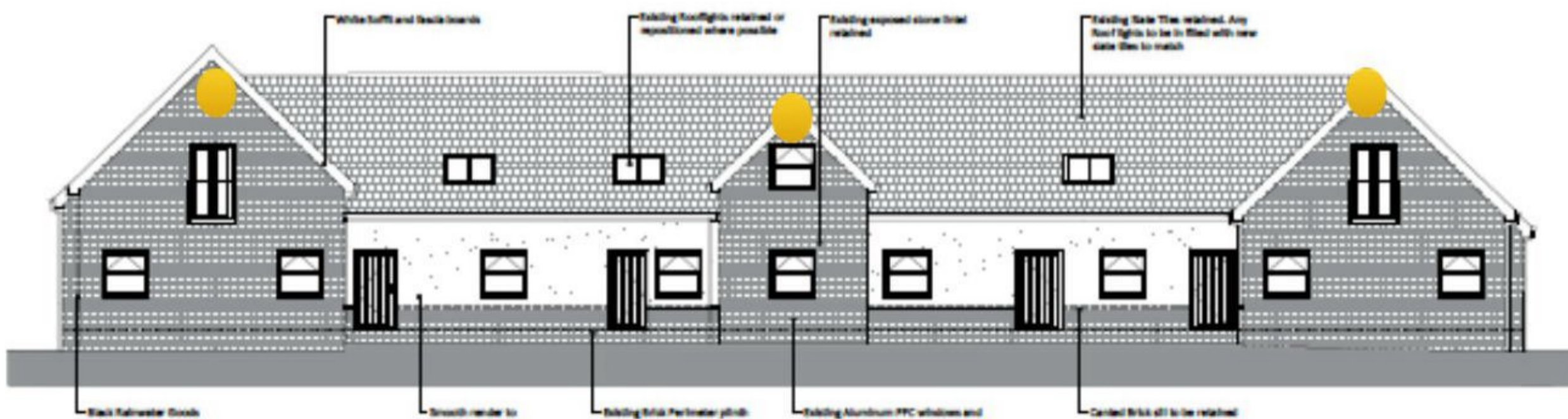
6.3. All tree planting on site will be native species, incl. at least three native fruit trees.

6.4. The Landscape Plan will be agreed and conditioned by the LPA.

**7.0. Mitigation**

7.1. There will be no scaffold and no works to the N elevation of the building at the gable ends (Fig. 11) during bird nesting season, ie, 1st March - 31st August. House martins were observed nesting in the apex of the gables during the survey in July 2021. All nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Figure 11. N elevation of buildings and position of House martin nests



7.2. The vegetation on site must be kept short at all times, to prevent any reptiles from moving on to the site.

7.3. Any vegetation on site that provides suitable habitat for nesting birds must be removed prior to bird nesting season, e, 1st March - 31st August.



## 8.0. References

- BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity. Code of practice for planning and development (2013).
- CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2nd Ed.). <https://www.cieem.net/PEA>
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- National Planning Policy Framework (2021) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/NPPF>
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- Oldham, R.S., Keeble, J., Swan, M.J.S. & Jeffcote, M. (2000). Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*. Herpetological Journal 10 (4), 143-155.
- Wray S; Wells D, Long E and Mitchell-Jones T (2010). In Practice December 2010, 23-25; Valuing Bats in Ecological Impact Assessment.

## Ecologist Signature



Dr K. A. Pollard MCIEEM

**Appendix 1.** Biodiversity Net Gain and Mitigation

Figure 12. Proposed Site Plan

