

Ecological Impact Assessment - Bats and Birds

The Blink Bonny Pub, Christon Bank, Northumberland, NE66 3ES



Client: Jonathan Barber

Date: 17th May 2022

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Desk Study Field Survey Dates	Jan 2022 06/01/2021 16/05/2022

VERSIONING AND QUALITY CONTROL

Status	Version	Author	Reviewed by	Date
Final	1.0	Tim Sexton, BSc Hons, Ecologist	Tim Sexton	17th May 2022

DISCLAIMER

This report has been prepared by Tyne Ecology for Jonathan Barber solely as an Ecological Impact Assessment for Bats and Birds. Tyne Ecology accepts no responsibility or liability for any use that is made of this document other than by the client for the purposes for which it was originally commissioned and prepared.

The evidence which we have prepared and provided is true, and in accordance with the guidance of The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

LONGEVITY

Survey data should ideally be from the last survey season before a planning or licence application is submitted, although the length that survey data remains valid should be decided on a case-by-case basis and is dependent upon several factor (Collins, 2016).

If development works do not begin within eighteen months to two years of the date of the last survey (16/05/2022), an update survey may be required in accordance with guidance in BS 42020:2013¹ and CIEEM (2019), to determine if conditions and evidence of bat use has changed since described in the current report.

¹ As set out in Section 6.2.1, Point 7 which states that ecological information should not normally be more than two/three years old, or as stipulated in good practice guidance.

SUMMARY

Brief and Site Location	This report presents the findings of an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) for bats and birds at The Blink Bonny Pub, Christon Bank, Northumberland, NE66 3ES (Ordnance Survey Grid Reference centred at: NZ 0780 7172).
Proposed Works	Plans are to retain the original stone building and to demolish the outhouse structures south of the main building, with a view to re-build/convert to a 10-bedroom hotel/pub.
Work undertaken	<p>A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) for bats and birds was undertaken by Tyne Ecology in January 2022. The PRA involved surveying a detached building, referred to as B1. The PRA determined that the building B1 had low suitability to support roosting bats and required a one bat emergence/re-entry survey.</p> <p>One emergence survey was undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dusk emergence survey was undertaken on 16/05/2022.
Survey Results	No bats were observed roosting in the building B1.
Requirements for Additional Surveys	No further surveys required.
Recommendations	<p>Should bats be found during the development, work must cease immediately and a suitably licenced and experienced ecologist must be contacted for advice. Reason: Bats and their roosts are protected by law.</p> <p>Works should be undertaken outside the bird nesting period 1st March to 31st August. If this period cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building must be undertaken immediately prior to the commencement of works by a suitably experienced ecologist. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged. Reason: All wild bird species, their eggs and nests are protected by law.</p> <p>As biodiversity enhancements, install 2 x nest boxes for starlings such as the Vivara starling nest box, or equivalent https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-starling-nest-box</p> <p>Starlings are a red listed species of conservation concern.</p> <p>Reason: The Local Planning Authority has a duty ‘minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity’ under the NPPF (July 2021).</p>
Impacts on other protected/priority species and habitats	The development is restricted to the existing footprint of the existing property and no other ecological constraints regarding other protected/priority species and habitats were noted
Conclusions	Providing the recommendations given within this report are successfully implemented, the proposed development can proceed without detriment to the maintenance of the population of bats at a favourable conservation status and without impacts on other protected/priority species and habitats.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tyne Ecology was commissioned by Jonathan Barber (the client) to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) for bats and birds of The Blink Bonny Pub, Christon Bank, Northumberland, NE66 3ES (Ordnance Survey Grid Reference centred at: NU 2137 2312). The main building that is being retained is referred to in this report as B1, in addition, there are outbuildings and a conservatory connected to B1.
- 1.2 The plans are to demolish most of the add-on outbuildings whilst retaining the original stone building with a view to re-building/converting to a 10-bedroom hotel/pub.
- 1.3 The principal author of this report is Tim Sexton who holds a Natural England Bat Licence Level 2 no: 2020-44753-CLS-CLS. He has 18 years' experience of surveying for bats and has qualifying membership of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), membership no: 17054.
- 1.4 Site description
- 1.5 The site is within the small village of Christon Bank, 1 mile west of Embleton on the Northumberland coast. The area has gardens in close proximity with linear features including hedgerows and trees running along the trainline adjacent to the west of the site. The wider area has open farmland and pockets of woodland.



Figure 1: Aerial image of the site (red dot denotes the site). Image used under licence (Google 2022). Imagery date 07/01/2022.

Purpose of this report

- 1.6 This report aims where possible to provide sufficient information for the local planning authority to fully assess the potential ecological impacts of the proposed development on bats and birds, or alternatively, to identify what further information is required to fully inform the scheme.
- 1.7 Surveys have been used to establish the need for, and extent of, any mitigation or compensation measures required as part of the proposed development.

2 METHODOLOGY

Desk study

2.1 A biodiversity desk study was undertaken in relation to the site in Jan 2022. The sources consulted and the type of information obtained are summarised in table 1 below.

Table 1: Sources of biodiversity and ecological records.

Source	Information requested (search buffer from site centre/boundary)
Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory Designated Sites (1km)• Priority Habitats (1km)• EPSLs (2km)
Environmental Records Information Centre North East	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bat records (2km)• Non-statutory Designated Sites (1km)

2.2 The search buffers are considered to be sufficient to cover the potential zone of influence (Zoi)³ of the proposed development.

2.3 The impacts of the proposed development on the biological integrity of any nearby designated protected sites have been fully considered.

2.4 A search was undertaken for previous ecological survey information for the site via the local authority planning portal⁴.

Preliminary roost assessment

2.5 A field survey was undertaken on the 06/01/2022

2.6 An assessment of the structures/trees to be impacted by the development was undertaken in accordance with the latest published best practice guidance (Collins, 2016).

2.7 Structures/trees were externally and internally inspected for bats and their signs with the aid of a Ledlenser P7 torch, Leica 8x32 BN close focussing binoculars, and a Ridgid CA-350 endoscope.

2.8 The suitability of structures/trees on-site for bats to roost in was assessed, along with a systematic search for signs of bats (e.g. droppings, moth/butterfly wings, scratch marks, staining) or actual bats that were present. Particular attention was paid to the roof areas, with searches for gaps in walls, gaps between beams and joists, droppings stuck to the walls, floors or other surfaces, or feeding remains below beams.

2.9 Bat droppings, if found, were collected for DNA analysis.

2.10 In addition, structures/trees were classified according to suitability for bats, based on the presence of features within them and / or landscape, see table 2 below.

2.11 The site habitats were assessed for suitability for bats, see table 3 below.

2.12 Evidence for barn owls and other breeding birds was recorded along with any other ecological constraints.

² <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

³ <https://www.biodiversityinplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/BDS-Guidance-final.pdf>

⁴ <https://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Table 2: Summary of guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats (from Collins 2016).

Suitability	Description of roosting habitats	Number of activity survey visits required
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	None
Low	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, potential roost sites not suitable for larger numbers or regular use (i.e. maternity or hibernation).	One
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status	Two
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time.	Three
Confirmed roost	Evidence of bats or use by bats found	Minimum of two surveys to characterise the roost

Table 3: Summary of guidelines for assessing bat habitat suitability (from Collins 2016).

Suitability	Description of commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on-site likely to be used by commuting and foraging bats.
Low	<u>Commuting Habitat</u> Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or un-vegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. <u>Foraging Habitat</u> Suitable but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	<u>Commuting Habitat</u> Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. <u>Foraging Habitat</u> Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	<u>Commuting Habitat</u> Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. <u>Foraging Habitat</u> High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. <u>Proximity to Known Bat Roosts</u> Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

Surveyor information

2.13 The PRA was undertaken on the 06/01/2022 by Rachel Galler BSc Hons, who is an Accredited Agent against bat survey licence Level 2 (Class Licence) 2020-44753-CLS-CLS. She has four years of experience surveying for bats.

Limitations and constraints

- 2.14 There were four loft access points available, however, access was limited with none boarded out or suitable for entering, and could only be inspected using a torch and binoculars. However, there were no obstructions and all areas could be inspected for evidence of bats.
- 2.15 No other limitations or constraints were encountered, during either the desk study or the field survey. It is considered that with the access gained and recording undertaken that an accurate assessment of the sites ecological value has been made.

Bat emergence/re-entry surveys

- 2.16 A bat emergence survey was undertaken of B1 by four surveyors to observe all potential roost features.
- 2.17 Position of each surveyor (see Appendix I: PRA/Filed Survey Plan) and detector used (numbered) was recorded.
- 2.18 Surveyors were equipped with full spectrum bat detectors (Anabat Scout), survey recording sheet and pen.
- 2.19 A note was made of all bat activity recorded including (where appropriate) roost access points, species, time of emergence/re-entry, direction of flight, behaviour (foraging or commuting) and use of landscape features.
- 2.20 Analysis of bat recordings was made using Anabat insight Version 2.0.2-8-g50df387

Surveyor information

- 2.21 See table 4 below shows details of surveyors undertaking each survey, their position and bat detector used.

Table 4: Surveyor information.

Surveyor	Licences & Experience	Survey(s)	Location/Detector
Josh Pace	1 years' experience surveying for bats.	Dusk 16/05/2022	2/7
Abi Hutton	4 years' experience surveying for bats.	Dusk 16/05/2022	4/6
Marcus Cram	2 years' experience surveying for bats.	Dusk 16/05/2022	3/8
Rachel Galler	4 years' experience surveying for bats.	Dusk 16/05/2022	1/9

Limitations and constraints

- 2.22 No imitations or constraints were encountered, during the bat emergence survey.

3 RESULTS

Desk study

Designated sites - Statutory

3.1 There are no statutory site within 1km (see table 5).

Designated sites - Non-statutory

3.2 There are no non-statutory sites within 1km of the site (see table 5).

Table 5: Summary of designated sites within 1km of the site

Site name	Designation	Description/ reason for designation	Distance & direction (approx.)
-	-	-	-

3.3 There were no protected areas (SSSIs or SACs) designated for their bat populations within 1km of the site.

Protected species

3.4 A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSMLs) for bats, within a 2km radius of the site, found one roost has been destroyed under licence (see table 6 below).

Table 6: Granted EPSMLs (bats) within 1km of the site

Case reference of granted application	Approx. distance from site (m)	Bat Species Effected	Licence Start Date:	Licence End Date:	Impacts allowed by licence
EPSM2011-3272	1720m NW	C-PIP; S-PIP;NATT	01/09/2011	01/09/2014	Destruction of breeding site and resting place.

Priority habitats

3.5 A search of the magic.gov.uk database found priority habitats within 1km of the site, see table 7 below.

Table 7: Priority habitats within 1km of the site.

Habitat	Distance & direction (approx.)
Deciduous woodland	500m W
Wood pasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat	740m NW

Historical bat records

3.6 The following bat records are held by the Local Environmental Records Centre (LERC) within 2km of the site, see table 8 below.

Table 8: Historical bat records within 2km of the site (last 10 years).

Common name	Scientific binomial	Records
	<i>Pipistrelle sp.</i>	Roost approx. 400m from the site with max. count 30.
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrelle pipistrellus</i>	2 records over 1.5km from the site.
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrelle pygmaeus</i>	7 records including 2 roosts over 1.5km from the site.
Brown long-eared	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	1 record of a roost 1.7km from the site.
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	4 records.
	<i>Myotis sp.</i>	4 records 1.7km from the site.

Previous Surveys

3.7 A search of the local authority planning portal found no previous ecology surveys for this site.

Preliminary roost assessment

3.8 Prevailing weather conditions during the field survey are summarised within table 9 below.

Table 9: Summary of weather conditions during the field survey

Date	Weather conditions			
	Temp [°C]	Cloud cover [Oktas]	Wind speed [Beaufort scale]	Precipitation
06/01/2022	1	8	4	Snowing

3.9 A description of the structures/trees inspected during the PRA can be seen in table 10 below.

Table 10: Description of building/trees

Building/Tree Reference	Building/Tree type/section	Description	Development plans
B1	Semi-detached 2-storey stone building.	A semi-detached two-storey stone-built house with a double pitched roof. The roof is pitched with natural slate and has metal guttering. Windows and doors are of faux wood UPVC. The loft area is timber framed with mortar welded slate direct to timber battens. There is no roof lining/membrane. Mineral wool insulated.	Retained.
Outbuildings	Single storey extensions.	Single storey add-ons extending from the main building. A combination of double pitched slate roofs, corrugated asbestos roofs, brick/stone walls and concrete rendered walls, plastic guttering and timber soffit at the eaves. The outbuildings within the courtyard area central to the site were flat roofed with felt. Two loft areas were inspected. One has a corrugated asbestos roof with exposed timber frames, no liner, and mineral wool insulation. The other loft access has a bitumen backed felt liner, timber frames and no insulation.	Demolition

Conservatory	Attached to B1	Single storey, pitched slate roof with UPVC window and doors frames. Internally, the ceiling was vaulted with timber sarking and exposed timber beams.	Demolition
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3.10 The results of the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) can be seen in table 11 below.

Table 11: PRA Results

Building/Tree Reference	Evidence of use by bats	Bat signs and internal and external Potential Roost features (PRFs) & access points	Evidence of birds
B1	None	A small number of gaps were found that could allow access for bats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gap under water table of E gable end. gap under ridge tile. gap under water table on the W corner of north gable end. gap under end ridge tile on the N gable end. gap in stone work at eaves on N elevation. 	Two nests in cavities under archway (not impacted by development plans).
Outbuildings	None	A small number of gaps were found that could allow access for bats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gaps at the eaves gaps within in the wall of the NW elevation. 	Jackdaw and (probable) stock dove nest in loft area. Two nests other nests. Probably starling.
Conservatory	None	A hole is present under the eaves, just below the soffit on the NW elevation.	None

3.11 The site is of **low to moderate suitability** for commuting and foraging bats with immediate surrounding areas having sparse vegetation, with nearest linear habitat being trees running along trainline to the west.

Protected/Priority Species/Habitats

3.12 There were no other ecological constraints found regarding protected/priority species and habitats.

Bat Emergence/Re-entry Surveys

Timing and conditions

3.13 The survey timings and weather conditions during the surveys are shown in table 12 below.

Table 12: Survey timings and weather conditions.

Date	Type	Survey Timing			Conditions [Start/Finish]			
		Start	End	Sunset	Temp [°C]	Cloud Cover [Oktas]	Wind Speed [Beaufort]	Rain
16/05/2022	Dusk emergence	20:55	22:40	21:10	10/19	8/8	1/1	Nil

3.14 The results of the bat emergence survey are summarised in table 13 below.

Table 13: Bat activity survey results. SS±xx refers to the time in minutes before/after sunset and SR±xx refers to the time in minutes before/after sunrise.

Survey type and date	Roosts / points of interest	General observations
Dusk emergence 16/05/2022	No bats observed emerging from B1.	A single common pipistrelle was first recorded, but not seen, at 21:46 (SS+36). Soprano pipistrelle was first recorded at 21:44 (SS+34). Myotis was first recorded at 22:32 (SS+82). During the survey 5 recordings were made of common pipistrelle, 5 recordings of soprano pipistrelle and 3 of Myotis.

3.15 Bat flight lines in and around the site can be seen in Appendix II: Bat Survey Plan.

4 INTERPRETATION AND ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Plans to demolish most of the poorly considered add-ons while retaining the original stone building with a view to re-building/convert to a 10-bedroom hotel/pub.
- 4.2 The following interpretation and assessment are provided to ensure full compliance with both UK and European legislation and both local and national planning policy (see Appendix VII).

Designated sites

- 4.3 There are no designated sites within 1km of the site (see Table 4).
- 4.4 There were no protected areas (SSSIs or SACs) designated for their bat populations within 1km of the site.
- 4.5 Given the scale of the proposed development, there will be no impacts on designated sites as a result of the development.

Preliminary roost assessment (PRA) for bats (and nesting birds)

- 1.1 Based on the results of the PRA, an assessment of the potential suitability of the on-site buildings for bats and nesting birds could be made (see table 14).

Table 14: Suitability of surveyed structures/trees for bats and nesting birds.

Structure/Tree Reference	Suitability / confirmed use	
	Bats	Nesting birds
B1	Low	Confirmed
Outbuildings	Low	Confirmed

Bats

- 4.6 The building B1 and outbuildings had a small number of gaps that could provide access for roosting bats and the property.
- 4.7 The gaps provided small crevices that could be used as a day roost by a small number of bats.
- 4.8 The absence of roof membranes/linings on the majority of the roof areas means limited suitability for maternity roosts.
- 4.9 The absence of any bat droppings in undisturbed roof areas would suggest bats are not present in any significant number, if present.
- 4.10 As the proposals include the demolition of outbuildings, any bat roosts present could be destroyed. This could result in death/injury or disturbance of bats.

Nesting Birds

- 4.11 There was evidence of nesting birds in the outbuildings, as well as in one of the loft spaces.
- 4.12 Active nests could be destroyed during demolition.

Bat Emergence Survey

- 4.13 No bats were seen to emerge/enter buildings to roost.
- 4.14 Small numbers of common and soprano pipistrelle were seen commuting past the site.

4.15 No impacts are anticipated to bats or their roosts by the proposed development.

Nesting Birds

4.16 Nesting birds were not observed during the survey but any works during the nesting season March-August could result in the destruction of bird nests.

Other Protected/Priority Species/Habitats

4.17 There will be no impacts to other protected/priority species/habitats.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Tyne Ecology was commissioned by Jonathan Barber (the client) to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) for bats and birds at The Blink Bonny Pub, Christon Bank, Northumberland, NE66 3ES.
- 5.2 Plans are to retain the original stone building and to demolish the outhouse structures south of the main building, with a view to re-build/convert to a 10-bedroom hotel/pub..
- 5.3 The scale of the development and distance from designated sites (see Table 5) should ensure that no impacts on their designated features should result from the proposed development.

Bats

- 5.4 No bat roosts were found in B1.
- 5.5 No further surveys are required
- 5.6 Should bats be found during the development, work must cease immediately, and a suitably licenced and experienced ecologist must be contacted for advice.
Reason: Bats and their roosts are protected by law.

Birds

- 5.7 Works should be undertaken outside the bird nesting period March to August inclusive. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building must be undertaken immediately prior to the commencement of works by a suitably experienced ecologist. All active nests must be retained until the young have fledged.
Reason: All wild bird species, their eggs and nests are protected by law.
- 5.8 As biodiversity enhancements, Install 2 x nest boxes for starlings such as the Vivara starling nest box, or equivalent (e.g. <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-starling-nest-box>). Note: Starlings are a red listed species of conservation concern. See Appendix III: Proposed development/enhancement plan.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority has a duty 'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity' under the NPPF (July 2021).

Overall conclusion

- 5.9 Providing the recommendations given within this report are successfully implemented, the proposed development can proceed without detriment to the maintenance of the population of bats at a favourable conservation status and without impacts on other protected species and habitats.

6 REFERENCES

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

BSI (2013) BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development. British Standards Institution, London.

CIEEM (2019) Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>

CIEEM (2020) Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity data in the UK. <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Guidelines-for-Accessing-and-Using-Biodiversity-Data-March-2020.pdf>

Mitchell-Jones, A.J, & McLeish, A.P. Ed., (2004) *Bat Workers' Manual* (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. Natural England, Peterborough.

APPENDIX I: PRA/FIELD SURVEY PLAN

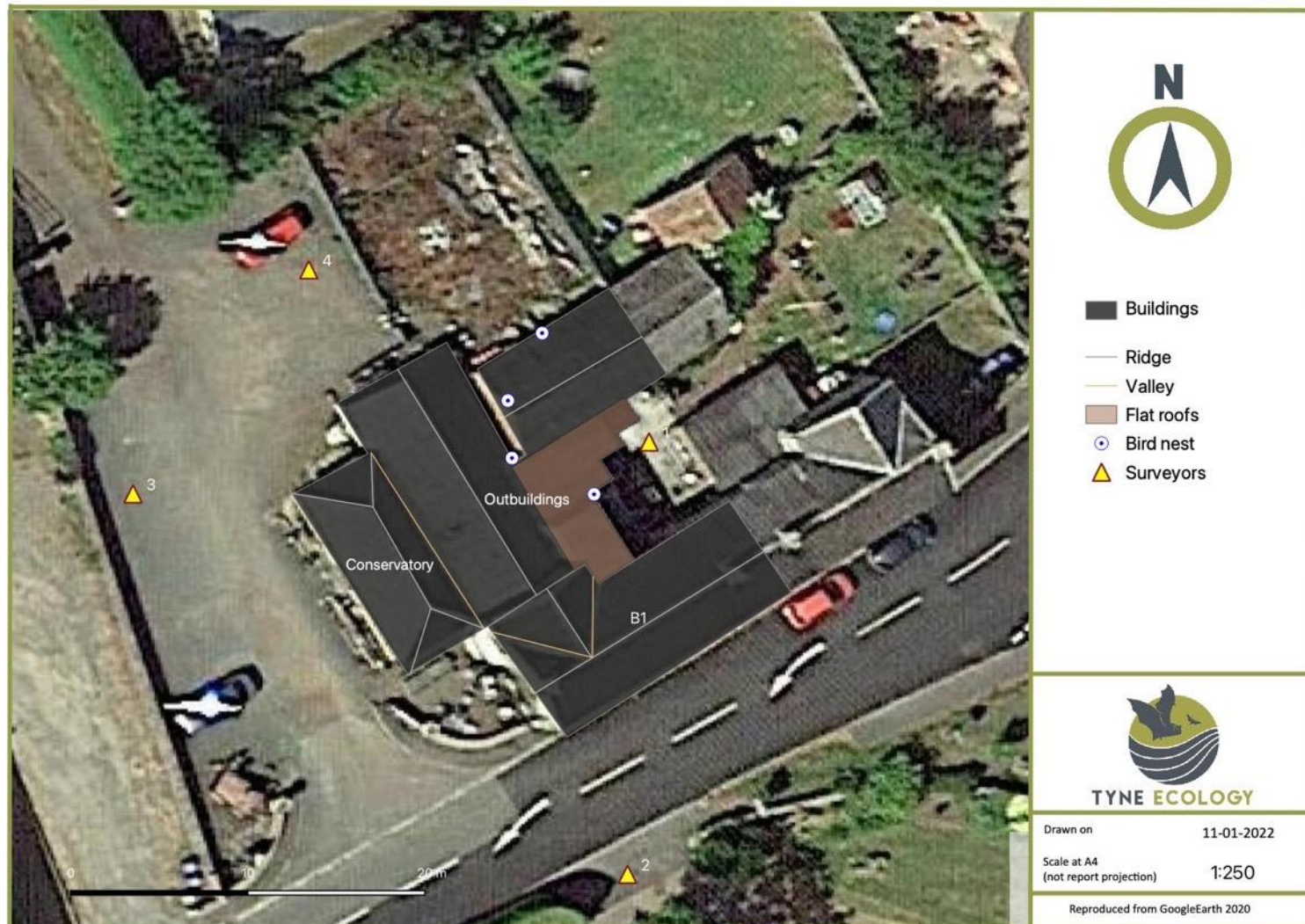


Figure 2: Survey map showing building and position of surveyors.

APPENDIX II: BAT SURVEY PLAN - ROOSTS AND FLIGHT LINES



Figure 3: Bat survey plan - roosts and flight lines

APPENDIX III: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT/ENHANCEMENTS PLAN

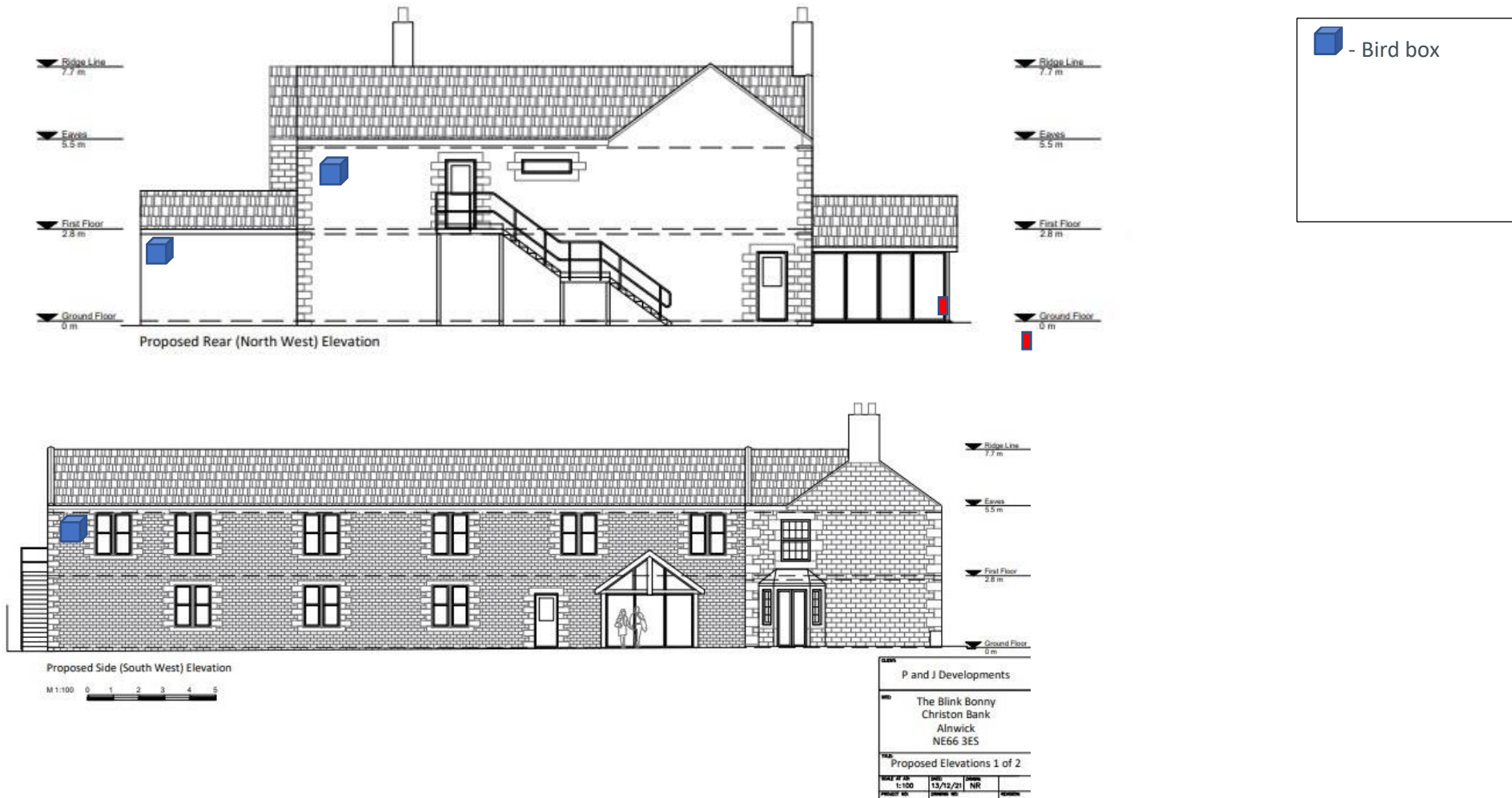


Figure 4: Proposed development/enhancement plan.

APPENDIX IV: DESKTOP SURVEY

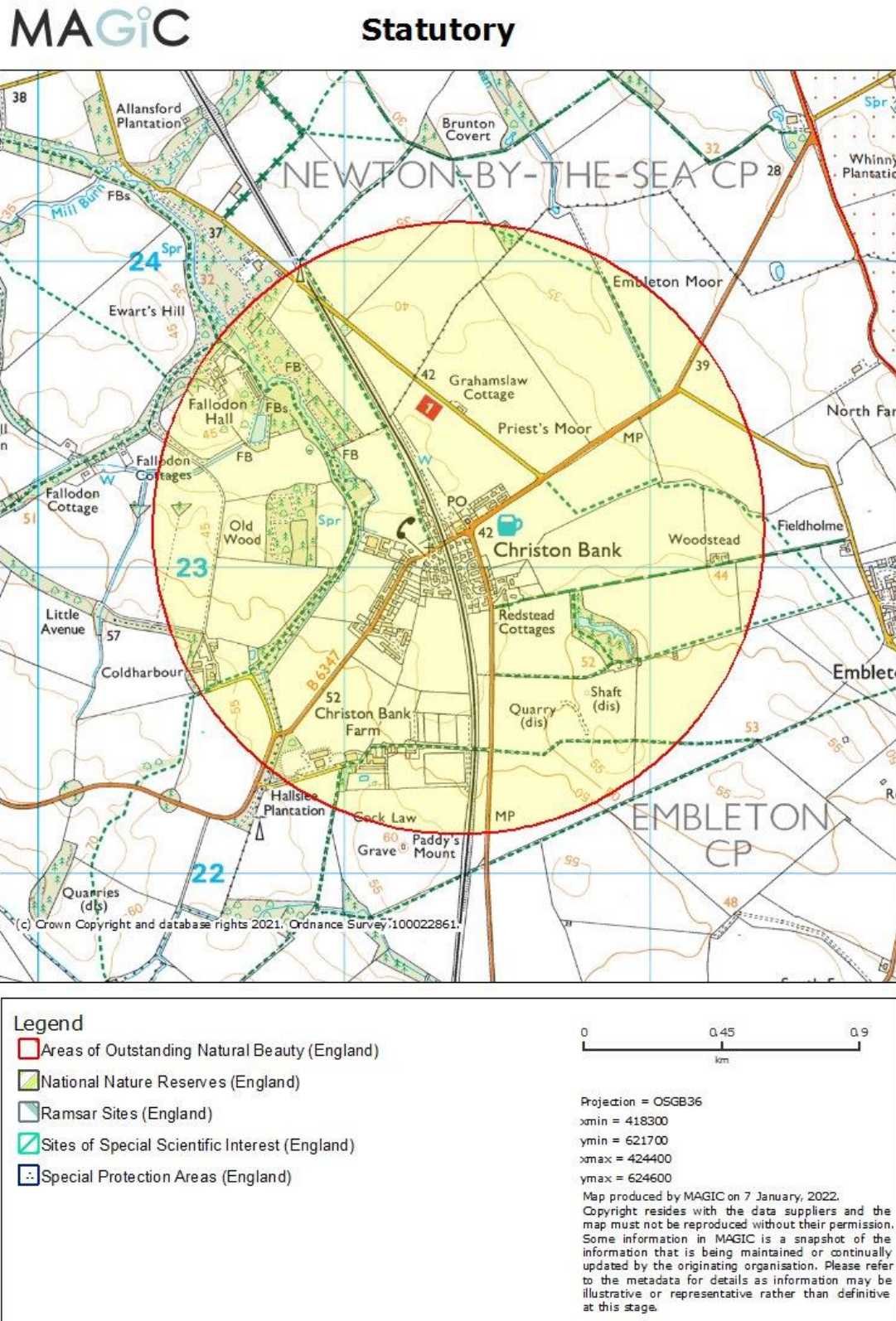
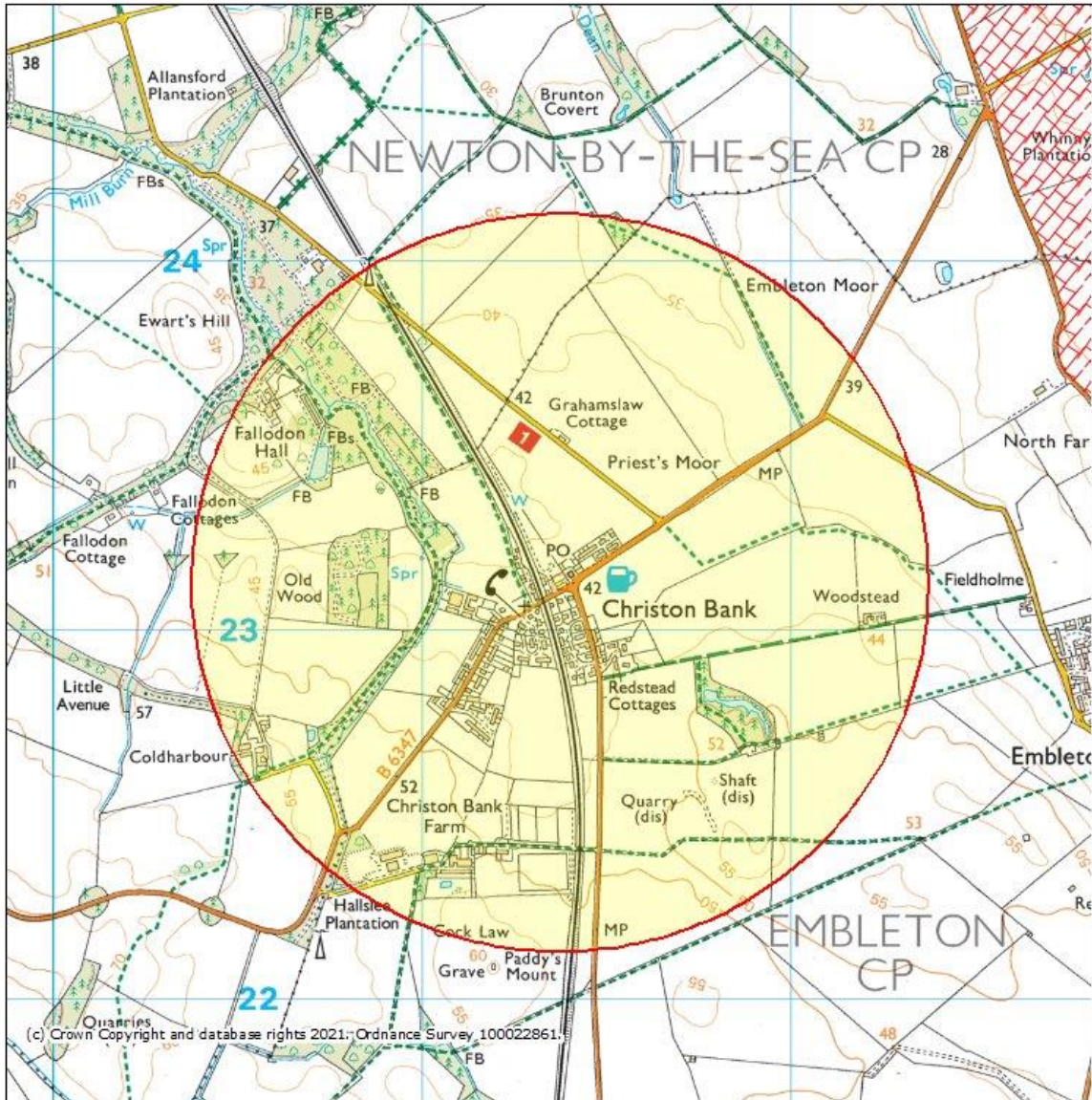


Figure 5: Designated statutory sites.

MAGiC

Non-statutory



Legend

- Heritage Coasts (England)
- RSPB Reserves (GB)

0 0.45 0.9
km

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 418300
ymin = 621900
xmax = 424400
ymax = 624500

Map produced by MAGiC on 7 January, 2022.
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Figure 6: Designated non-statutory sites.

MAGiC

Priority habitats

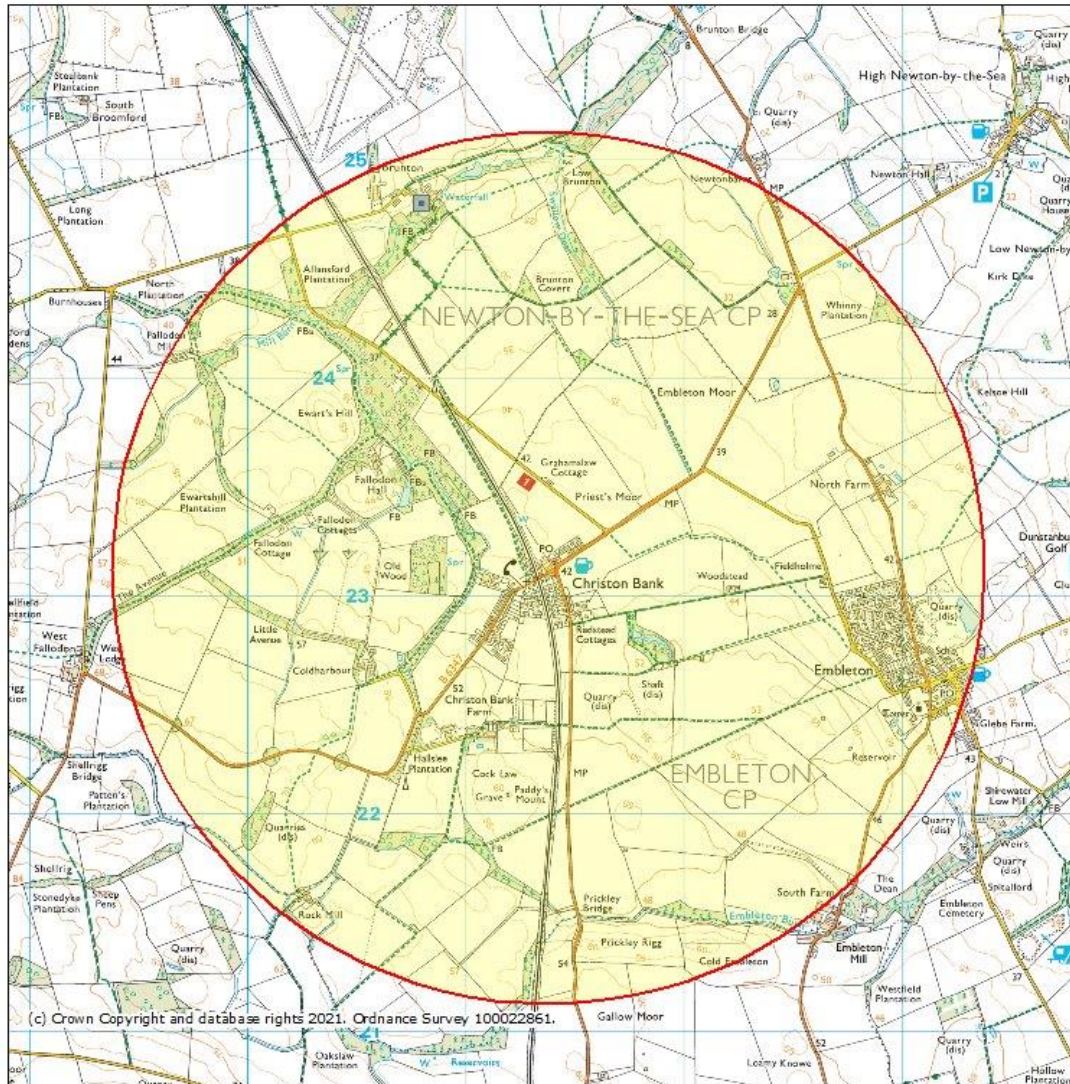


Legend	
Priority Habitat Inventory - Deciduous Woodland (England)	Projection = OSGB36 xmin = 418600 ymin = 621900 xmax = 424100 ymax = 624300
Woodpasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat (England)	Map produced by MAGIC on 7 January, 2022. Copyright resides with the data suppliers and the map must not be reproduced without their permission. Some information in MAGIC is a snapshot of the information that is being maintained or continually updated by the originating organisation. Please refer to the metadata for details as information may be illustrative or representative rather than definitive at this stage.

Figure 7: Priority habitats.

MAGiC

EPSML



Legend
Granted European Protected Species Applications (England)

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

0 0.75 1.5
 km

Projection = OSGB36
 xmin = 416300
 ymin = 621100
 xmax = 426400
 ymax = 625400

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Figure 8: Granted EPSMLs.

APPENDIX V: FIELD SURVEY PHOTOGRAPHS



Figure 9: Outbuildings - north/rear elevation.



Figure 10: Outbuildings and conservatory - north west/rear elevation



Figure 11: B1 - east elevation/courtyard.



Figure 12: B1 - south/front elevation.



Figure 13: B1 - conservatory - west elevation



Figure 14: B1 - gap under water table of E gable end.



Figure 15: B1 - gap under ridge tile.



Figure 16: B1 - gap under water table on the W corner of north gable end.



Figure 17: B1 - gap under end ridge tile on the N gable end.

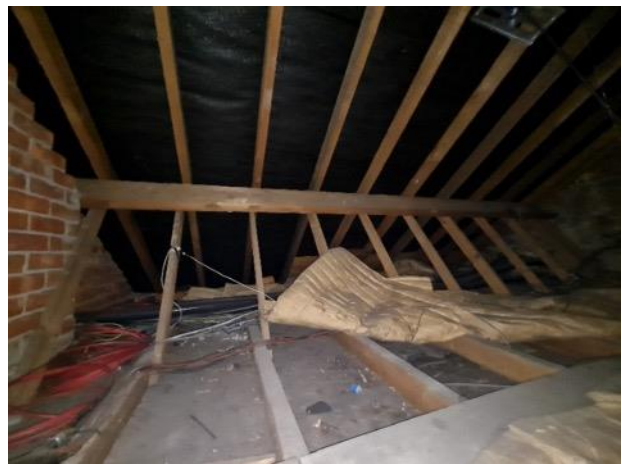


Figure 18: Outbuilding - loft.



Figure 19: Outbuilding - gaps in the wall on NW elevation.



Figure 20: Outbuilding - gap at eaves under end tile.



Figure 21: Outbuilding - loft - light entering underneath the end of corrugated asbestos roof.



Figure 22: Outbuilding - loft - jackdaw nest.



Figure 23: Outbuilding - bird nest.



Figure 24: Outbuilding - bird nest.



Figure 25: Rear garden area.



Figure 26: B1 - Gap in stone work at eaves of north elevation.

APPENDIX VI: SPECIES LIST

To be submitted to the Local Environmental Records Centre.

Site Name: Christon Bank
Grid Ref: NZ 0780 7172
Survey Dates May 2022

Submitted by: Tyne Ecology
Verified by: Tim Sexton

Common name	Scientific Name (if known)	Comment
Common pipistrelle	Pipistrellus pipistrellus	
Soprano pipistrelle	Pipistrellus pygmaeus	
Myotis		

APPENDIX VII: PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

The following local and national planning policy and both primary and European legislation relating to nature conservation and biodiversity status are considered of relevance to the current proposal.

Planning and biodiversity

Local Authorities have a requirement to consider biodiversity and geological conservation issues when determining planning applications under the following planning policies.

National Planning Policy Framework July 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, July 2021) states:

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- (a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- (b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services - including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- (c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- (d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- (e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- (f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.*

Legislation and biodiversity

Certain species of animals and plants found in the wild in the UK are legally protected from being harmed or disturbed. These species are listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) or are named as European Protected Species (EPS) in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. These two main pieces of legislation have been consulted when writing this report and are therefore described in detail within this section.

Other relevant legislation and policy documents that have been consulted include - The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006; The Hedgerow Regulations 1997; Biodiversity Action Plans, both UK-wide (UKBAP) and Local plans (LBAPs), and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

There is also legislation that legally protects certain animals - for example, the Protection of Badgers Act (1992) protects badgers and their setts, and the Deer Act (1991) places restrictions on actions that can be taken against deer species.

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [WCA] is the primary legislation for England and Wales for the protection of flora, fauna and the countryside. Part I within the Act deals with the protection of wildlife.

Most European Protected Species offences are now covered under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (see below), but some 'intentional' acts are still covered under the WCA, such as obstructing access to a bat roost.

The WCA prohibits the release to the wild of non-native animal species listed on Schedule 9 (e.g. Signal Crayfish and American Mink). It also prohibits planting in the wild of plants listed in Schedule 9 (e.g. Japanese Knotweed and *Rhododendron ponticum*) or otherwise deliberately causing them to grow in the wild. This is to prevent the release of invasive non-native species that could threaten our native wildlife.

The provisions relating to animals in the Act only apply to 'wild animals'; these are defined as those that are living wild or were living wild before being captured or killed. It does not apply to captive bred animals being held in captivity.

There are 'defences' provided by the WCA. These are cases where acts that would otherwise be prohibited by the legislation are permitted, such as the incidental result of a lawful operation which could not be reasonably avoided, or actions within the living areas of a dwelling house.

Licensing: certain prohibited actions under the Wildlife and Countryside Act may be undertaken under licence by the proper authority. For example, scientific study that requires capturing or disturbing protected animals can be allowed by obtaining a licence - e.g. bat surveys.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 came into force on the 01/01/2021 and are the principal means by which the EC Habitats Directive is transposed in England and Wales) update the legislation and consolidate all the many amendments which have been made to the Regulations since they were first made in 1994.

These regulations provide for the:

- protection of European Protected Species [EPS] (animals and plants listed in Annex IV Habitats Directive which are resident in the wild in Great Britain) including bats, dormice, great crested newts, and otters;
- designation and protection of domestic and European Sites - e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI] and Special Area of Conservation [SAC]; and
- adaptation of planning controls for the protection of such sites and species.

Public bodies (including the Local Planning Authority) have a duty to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive in exercising their function - i.e. when determining a planning application.

There is no defence that an act was the incidental and unavoidable result of a lawful activity.

Licensing: it is possible for actions which would otherwise be an offence under the Regulations to be undertaken under licence issued by the proper authority. For example, where a European Protected Species has been identified and the development risks deliberately affecting an EPS, then a 'development licence' may be required.

Species protection

The following protected species information is relevant to this report. Legislation is only discussed in relation to planning and development; other offences may exist.

Bats

All British bats are classed as European Protected Species and therefore receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making it an offence inter alia to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat;
- Deliberately disturb bats;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.

In addition, all British bats are also listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

If proposed development work is likely to destroy or disturb bats or their roosts, then a licence will need to be obtained from Natural England, which would be subject to appropriate measures to safeguard bats.

Birds

In the UK, the provisions of the Birds Directive are implemented through the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected it an offence to:

- kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or
- take or destroying an egg of any such wild bird.

The law covers all species of wild birds including common, pest or opportunistic species.

Special protection against disturbance during the breeding season is also afforded to those species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act.