

Ecology Statement

This statement is to confirm that Norfolk Wildlife Services has been commissioned to undertake an ecological impact assessment of a proposed barn conversion at Hill View Farm, Laxfield Road, Fressingfield, Eye, IP21 5PY.

An initial site visit was made on 26/04/2023 by me (S. Lambiase MCIEEM, Natural England bat survey licence registration #s 2015-11812-CLS-CLS and 2015-11813-CLS-CLS, great crested newt survey licence registration # 2015-19173-CLS-CLS).

- An inspection of the on-site pond noted a good size, sunny position and a decent quantity of macrophytes. Fish are reportedly present in the pond but GCN eggs were still discovered. There is a GCN presence within the site which will need accounting for during the site clearance and construction phase of the barn conversion development. District Level Licensing (Amber Zone, expected householder application) is considered the most appropriate means of mitigation.
- The collection of barns/outbuildings is in very poor condition, but nevertheless there is some credible bat roost potential. Per the Bat Conservation Trust's (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Table 4.1), the cluster of buildings is rated as having a range of 'low - moderate' roost potential. A very small number of the relatively common bat species (i.e. common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and/or brown long-eared bat) is considered the most likely roosting scenario.

Given the non-negligible bat roost potential, two night-time bat activity surveys are in the process of being completed.

- The first dusk bat roost emergence survey was completed on 16/05/2023 by John Harris MCIEEM (Natural England bat survey licence registration #s 2015-13039-CLS-CLS) and Ben Christie MCIEEM (Natural England bat survey licence registration # 2019-43514-CLS-CLS), assisted by a recording HikMicro Lynx Pro LH15 thermal monocular. No bat roost emergences were observed for the targeted buildings.
- The second dusk bat roost emergence survey is scheduled for 14/06/2023.

An Ecological Impact Assessment report will be produced after the completion of the final bat activity survey. Generally speaking, the ecological impact potential of the proposal is limited. The GCN breeding pond will not be directly impacted, so the GCN impact potential is related to terrestrial newt activity that could occur within the development footprint. The site preparation also needs to be mindful of mitigating for minor nesting bird potential and the conceivable possibility of a few slow-worm encounters. Whether or not any bat roost mitigation needs to take place is yet to be determined.

Seth Lambiase BSc MRes MSc MCIEEM Principal Ecologist

Office: 01603 625540

Mobile: 07778 519771

Web: www.norfolkwildlifeservices.co.uk

