



Ecological Update Survey: 12th November 2021

To be read in conjunction with:

- **Ecological Survey: Protected Species & Habitat of 30th June 2019.**
- **The bat activity survey for the site of 27th August 2019.**

**Corner Farm,
Hoxne,
Suffolk.**

Update report: 12th November 2021

Author: John Parden

Natural England Bats (All species) Licence No. 2015-14697-CLS-CLS

Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence No. -CLS-CLS 2021-53785-CLS-CLS

JP ecology

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1.0 Executive summary.

The site was surveyed by John Parden of JP ecology on 11th November 2021 and found to be unchanged from previous surveys.

The application is for Class Q change of use of an agricultural building to domestic residence. There are no rare or protected habitats on the site.

The buildings previous (2019) assessment of 'Low bat roosting potential' is unchanged and no bats or evidence of bats could be found within the structure consequently it is reasonable to conclude that the conclusions of the scoping and bat activity surveys conducted in 2019 remain true.

Mitigation and enhancement.

Further surveys.

- No further surveys are required to support the findings of the scoping survey

General mitigation – all species.

- The contact details of a suitably licenced ecologist should be made available to the development contractors.
- Advice must be sought from an ecologist if any protected species are inadvertently disturbed.

Obligatory mitigation.

- Nesting birds –
 - Nesting birds should not be disturbed during the nesting season typically 1st March to 31st August (species dependant).
 - Should it be necessary to strip the site during the nesting season, specifically demolition of the barn, the site should be searched by a suitably qualified ecologist and any nests protected until the young have fledged.
- Bats
 - All external lighting should be sensitive to bats.
 - The building should not be floodlit.
 - The lighting of driveways and pathways should be at ground level or low level lighting.
 - All lighting should be downward facing and shrouded to prevent light spillage.

Precautionary mitigation.

- Site clearance.
 - Amphibians (precautionary). The specifics of the clearance of the site with regard to Amphibians are as follows:
 - Any debris piles should be dismantled by hand and the materials kept in skips until moved off site or disposed of.
 - Any debris and materials arising from the proposed construction should be stored in skips and/or on pallets to prevent creating refuge sites for reptiles or amphibians.
 - The clearance of ruderals and vegetation > 300mm in height should be done during spring / summer (Feb to October) when amphibians and reptiles are active, all vegetation should be cut down to 150mm above ground level and left for at least an hour before final clearance to allow any reptiles or amphibians that may be present to disperse or to be carefully relocated to hedgerows in the local vicinity. Once cleared the land should be maintained as bare ground or short mown grassland throughout the development process.
 - If a great crested newt is discovered at any stage of the development, work should cease immediately, and an ecologist should be contacted for further advice.
 - Small mammals including hedgehogs.
 - Any debris and materials arising from the proposed construction should be stored in skips and/or on pallets to prevent creating refuge sites for reptiles or amphibians.
 - Clearance of any debris or waste should be done sensitively with consideration to disturbance of hedgehogs.
 - Vegetation above 300mm above ground level should not be cleared until temperatures are above 6C for at least 6 consecutive days to avoid disturbance of hibernating hedgehogs.
 - Any fences that might be erected should include a gap of 150mm long by 100mm high at some point in the base of each run of fencing to enable terrestrial vertebrates, including hedgehogs, to move through the plot and prevent entrapment.
 - To avoid the risk of causing injury or harm to small mammals, amphibians and reptiles during the construction process the generic method statement attached in appendix 1 should be made available to all contractors.
 - Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to grant planning permission then it is advised that the site be maintained as bare ground or close mown grassland until the development works start. Reason, to prevent the establishment of any features of ecological interest becoming established on the site prior to the commencement of works.

Ecological Enhancement.

- Birds. - 4 x Schwegler bird box (house sparrow terrace) and 2 x bat box, to be mounted in appropriate locations on the buildings.
- Marked boundaries around the car parking area should be a combination of open post and rail fences that allow easy and free migration of terrestrial vertebrates through the site and mixed species indigenous hedgerows.

Clients responsibility towards protected species.

The site owner has a responsibility to ensure that protected species or their resting places are not killed, injured or disturbed as a consequence of their actions.

Whilst the results of the survey are considered to be conclusive at the time that the survey was conducted, there is always a possibility that protected species might occupy the site between the period of the survey and the commencement of any works on the site. If any protected species are discovered during any construction works a qualified ecologist should be contacted for advice or assistance.

Contact details of suitably qualified and licenced ecologist:

John Parden, Natural England licenced ecologist (Licence no. 2016-20270-CLS-CLS, 2021-53785-CLS-CLS)

JP ecology – Office: 01379 586830 Mobile:07908 748079

If conditions within the development site / buildings or the development proposals are significantly altered prior to the planning application being submitted then further advice should be sought from an ecologist to ensure that the conclusions of the ecological survey remains valid.

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2.0: Contact details:

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Natural England Bats (All species) Licence No. 2015-14697-CLS-CLS
Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence No. 2021-53785-CLS-CLS

3.0 Introduction:

3.1 Brief:

John Parden (Licensed ecologist) of JP ecology was commissioned by Roberts Molloy Architects to conduct an update survey for Agricultural Barn at Corner Farm, Hoxne, Suffolk.

The objective of the survey was to:

- Determine whether the previous ecological surveys of 2019 remain valid.
- Determine the extent of surveys that are appropriate and whether there were any rare or protected species or habitats on the site.
- Determine appropriate scope and methods of the update survey.

The application is for Class Q change of use of an agricultural building to a domestic dwelling.

Plan 1. To show the buildings and its location on the site.



4.0 Surveys.

4.1 Methodologies

The application is for Class Q Change Of Use of an existing agricultural building that was previously surveyed in 2019 and found to have 'low' bat roosting potential and during bat activity surveys no bats were observed flying within or emerging from the building.

Consequently the appropriate scope of the survey was assessed to include:

- A site visit and physical inspection of the building to assess its current ecological interest.
- An assessment of the habitats on the proposed site.

Bat Survey – the bat survey was conducted in accordance with the guidance described in 'Bat Survey Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition 2016' (Collins).

The initial scoping survey (ref: JP ecology 30th June 2019) identified the building (Building A) was of 'low favourability' for roosting bats.

Subsequent bat activity surveys on the site conducted in 2019 did not observe any bats emerging from or flying within the building.

4.2 Update survey 2021.

The site was surveyed on 11th November 2021.

Habitats on site.

The habitats within the defined area of the development are built environment with ruderals growing against the walls of the barn on the north, east and south elevation and include:

- The barn subject to change of use.
- The existing concrete entrance driveway and service area.
- Ruderals growing immediately against the building.

The proposals do not include any rare or protected habitats.

Bat survey update.

The building was unchanged since the previous survey of 2019 and the findings of the previous surveys are considered to be relevant to the site.

The building is a combination of solid block and brick walls, rendered externally, and without a cavity within and includes a corrugated metal clad wall supported on a simple timber stud frame on its eastern elevation, all walls are without bat roosting opportunities within their fabric.

The roof was a combination of single skin corrugated metal sheeting and corrugated cement fibre sheeting supported on metal trusses and a simple timber frame, the roof is without bat roosting opportunities within its fabric.

The barn included open sided sections along its north and east facing elevation creating a light and drafty internal environment which is not favourable for roosting bats.

The floor was generally clear with a light scattering of leaf and straw debris only which was recently undisturbed, enabling a thorough search for evidence of bats within.

A thorough search of the building found no bats or evidence of bats in the form of bat droppings, urine splashes, feeding remains, scratch marks, staining or polishing.

Nesting birds. No active birds nests were found on the site.






Photo No.	Image.	Notes.
Photo 1		Image showing the open sided Northern section of the building showing solid block and brick walls, and metal profile roof supported on a simple timber frame without complex joint, cavities or voids within which bats could potentially roost.

Table 1: Illustrating site visit and survey results of 11 th Nov 2021.		
Photo No.	Photo No.	Photo No.
Photo 2		Image of the exterior of building A showing block and brick gable wall, rendered externally and without any bat roosting potential. Also showing the metal profile and cement fibre roof cladding supported on metal trusses without any bat roosting potential.
Photo 3		External image of the eastern facing corrugated metal clad wall. Also showing the ruderals, predominantly nettle, against the building.
Photo 4		Image showing the rendering to the exterior of the brick and block walls.
Photo 5		Showing typical area of floor, sufficiently clear to allow a thorough search for evidence of bats. Non were found.

Summary of scoping survey findings.

Table 2. Summary of bat roost potential and evidence of bats.		
Building number.	Bat roosting potential	Evidence of bats found
Barn	Low bat roosting potential.	No physical evidence of bats found.

5.0 Mitigation.

5.1 Further surveys.

- No further surveys are required to support the findings of the scoping survey

5.2 General mitigation – all species.

- The contact details of a suitably licenced ecologist should be made available to the development contractors.
- Advice must be sought from an ecologist if any protected species are inadvertently disturbed.

5.3 Obligatory mitigation.

- Nesting birds –
 - Nesting birds should not be disturbed during the nesting season typically 1st March to 31st August (species dependant).
 - Should it be necessary to strip the site during the nesting season, specifically demolition of the barn, the site should be searched by a suitably qualified ecologist for nests and any active nests protected until the young have fledged.
- Bats
 - All external lighting should be sensitive to bats.
 - The building should not be floodlit.
 - The lighting of driveways and pathways should be at ground level or low level lighting.
 - All lighting should be downward facing and shrouded to prevent light spillage.

5.4 Precautionary mitigation.

- Site clearance.
 - Amphibians. The specifics of the clearance of the site with regard to Amphibians are as follows:
 - Any debris piles should be dismantled by hand and the materials kept in skips until moved off site or disposed of.
 - Any debris and materials arising from the proposed construction should be stored in skips and/or on pallets to prevent creating refuge sites for reptiles or amphibians.
 - The clearance of ruderals and vegetation > 300mm in height should be done during spring / summer (Feb to October) when amphibians and reptiles are active, all vegetation should be cut down to 150mm above ground level and left for at least an hour before final clearance to allow any reptiles or amphibians that may be present to disperse or to be carefully relocated to hedgerows in the local vicinity. Once cleared the land should be maintained as bare ground or short mown grassland throughout the development process.
 - If a great crested newt is discovered at any stage of the development, work should cease immediately, and an ecologist should be contacted for further advice.
 - Small mammals including hedgehogs.
 - Any debris and materials arising from the proposed construction should be stored in skips and/or on pallets to prevent creating refuge sites for reptiles or amphibians.
 - Clearance of any debris or waste should be done sensitively with consideration to disturbance of hedgehogs.
 - Vegetation above 300mm above ground level should not be cleared until temperatures are above 6C for at least 6 consecutive days to avoid disturbance of hibernating hedgehogs.
 - Any fences that might be erected should include a gap of 150mm long by 100mm high at some point in the base of each run of fencing to enable terrestrial vertebrates, including hedgehogs, to move through the plot and prevent entrapment.
- To avoid the risk of causing injury or harm to small mammals, amphibians and reptiles and to raise awareness and promote best practice during the construction process the generic method statement attached in appendix 1 should be made available to all contractors.
- Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to grant planning permission then it is advised that the site be maintained as bare ground or close mown grassland until the development works start. Reason, to prevent the establishment of any features of ecological interest becoming established on the site prior to the commencement of works.

5.5 Ecological Enhancement (Illustrate in Biodiversity enhancement plan, Appendix 2).

- Birds. - 4 x Schwegler bird box (house sparrow terrace) and 2 x bat box, to be mounted in appropriate locations on the buildings.
- The southern and western boundary to the car parking area should be planted with a mixed indigenous species hedgerow.

5.6 Clients responsibility towards protected species.

The site owner has a responsibility to ensure that protected species or their resting places are not killed, injured or disturbed as a consequence of their actions.

Whilst the results of the survey are considered to be conclusive at the time that the survey was conducted, there is always a possibility that protected species might occupy the site between the period of the survey and the commencement of any works on the site. If any protected species are discovered during any construction works a qualified ecologist should be contacted for advice or assistance.

Contact details of suitably qualified and licenced ecologist:

John Parden, Natural England licenced ecologist (Licence no. 2016-20270-CLS-CLS, 2020-44655-CLS-CLS)

JP ecology – Office: 01379 586830 Mobile:07908 748079

If conditions within the development site / buildings or the development proposals are significantly altered prior to the planning application being submitted then further advice should be sought from an ecologist to ensure that the conclusions of the ecological survey remains valid.

Appendix 1.

Generic method statement to avoid harm to reptiles, amphibians and small mammals including hedgehogs and brown hare.

Timing:

- (a) Restrict works to the winter period (when amphibians are rarely active above ground) if the site is close to aquatic habitats or Amphibians are relevant to the site.
- (b) Keep duration of groundworks as short as possible.

Construction methods and special precautions:

- (a) Backfill trenches and other excavations before nightfall, or leave a ramp to allow newts to easily exit.
- (b) All open trenches, footings, and pipe runs should be covered with shuttering ply overnight and the edges sealed with damp sand.
- (c) Raise stored materials (that might act as temporary resting places) off the ground, eg on pallets.
- (c) For pipelines, use directional drilling to cross areas of core habitat and newt dispersal routes.
- (d) All caustic materials (cement, lime plaster etc) should be mixed on tarpaulin and folded at night or mixed on the floor of a sealed building.
- (c) No caustic material should be allowed to contaminate the adjacent ground or allowed to form run-off that may contaminate ponds or watercourses.
- (d) All piles of rubble and spoil should be removed from site and not left during late summer / winter to form hibernacula for Amphibians and reptiles.
- (e) All waste materials should be stored in skips resting on areas of shingle/bare or hard standing.
- (f) Keep vegetation around the developed site should be kept short to discourage use by reptiles and amphibians.
- (g) Fire sites should be in a designated area on shingle/bare ground and well away from the ponds/water bodies and should be burnt daily, they should always be checked for sheltering mammals eg. Hedgehogs.
- (f) Avoid installing structures that act as barriers close to ponds, or include gaps at ground level where walls or fences are unavoidable to prevent entrapment of reptiles, amphibians or small mammals within the construction area.
- (g) If any protected species (e.g. bats, great crested newts) are discovered during the redevelopment then work should stop immediately and advice sought from an ecological consultant.
- (h) If in any doubt contact a Natural England Licenced ecologist:
John Parden of JP ecology 01379 586830