



# MPECOLOGY

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**RE: INGLESTONE FARM, CHASE LANE, INGLESTONE COMMON, GL9 1BX**

## ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

*By email attachment*

*Date: 19/01/2024*

### Background

MPEcology were contacted by Mr I Rae to assess the potential for a residential property to support protected species, particularly roosting bats. The building at Inglestone Farm is located off Inglestone Common near Wickwar and falls within the unitary authority of South Gloucestershire Council (National Grid Reference ST 7498 8863). An extension to the eastern side of the building is planned and further information to support a planning application had been requested by South Gloucestershire Council.

Ingleston Farm sits immediately north (52m) of Lower Woods at the edge of Inglestone Common. Lower Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is one of the most extensive ancient deciduous woodlands in Avon. The underlying soils are characterised by damp, acid or mildly calcareous clays of the Vale of Berkeley. Woodland as well as grassland of Inglestone Common are botanically rich and support a wide range of invertebrates, birds and mammals.

### Site visit

An initial site visit to assess the potential for protected species was carried out on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The residential property was searched by a licensed bat surveyor to locate evidence of current or past bat roosts in the form of live bats, droppings, staining, feeding signs, and/or remains of bats.

### Results

The building comprised a detached residential property with stone and rendered walls with a roof finished in clay pan tiles. Slight gaps under roof tiles offered potential access to bats. A search of a loft void above an extension at the southern end of the building was undertaken. A few bat droppings (<10) were discovered in cobwebs near a chimney flue. The droppings appeared to have fallen into the loft void from the ridgeline / flashing where the extension met the wall of the adjacent two-storey

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structure. The size and shape of the droppings were consistent with those produced by pipistrelle bats. A sample was retained in case it was required for future DNA analysis.



**Photo 1:** Droppings were found in a cobweb within the roof void at the northern end of a single story extension.

Internally, a modern roofing membrane was visible beneath tiles. The only evidence of bats was a limited number of droppings in cobwebs suggesting use of a crevice feature rather than use of the loft void.



**Photo 2:** Roof void indicating location of droppings above the flue of a woodburning stove.

The site lies within an amber risk zone for Great Crested Newts<sup>1</sup>. The nearest pond identified using Ordnance Survey mapping was 225m to the north. The footprint of the proposed extension falls over an existing patio with little potential for newts.

#### Assessment

**Bats** - Further surveys will be required to identify the species of bat and type of roost found. Three emergence surveys beginning in May 2024 will be undertaken following the guidance of Collins *et al* (2023)<sup>2</sup>.

**Great Crested Newts** - Reasonable avoidance measures (RAMS) would appear appropriate to minimise any potential for disturbance of Great Crested Newts during construction. No other potential for protected species was identified.

<sup>1</sup> Great Crested Newt \_ Risk Zones (North Somerset and South Gloucestershire) – [www.data.gov.uk](http://www.data.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Collins, J (Ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4<sup>th</sup> edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London, ISBN-978-1-7395126-0-6

Author

The author of this report was Matthew Pickard, an ecologist with over 20 years' environmental consultancy experience, a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv), full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and a licensed bat surveyor.

Matthew Pickard BSc (Hons), MSc., CEnv, MCIEEM.

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