

Ecological Impact Assessment at
Haywood Farm, Haywood Lane,
Cheswardine,
Market Drayton, TF9 2LW
Grid Ref. SJ 7070 3037

On 16th August and 15th September 2023

Report completed 4th January 2024
Ref: HAY160823

Survey by:
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1. Summary

The purpose of the report is to assess the potential ecological impacts of a proposed development at Haywood Farm, Cheswardine and advise on any mitigation measures to comply with local planning policy and government legislation.

The proposed scheme involves the conversion of a brick barn to a veterinary practice.

The building and adjacent land were examined to establish the presence of or evidence of use by protected species of animals. A visual inspection was carried out to assess the potential or actual use by bats and birds, of the exterior and interior of the building. Two dusk emergence surveys were carried out.

Swallow nests were found in the building.

No evidence of use by bats was found.

If any birds should gain access to the building and begin constructing nests during the development, then the work in that area must stop until the young have left the nests.

Two artificial swallow nests will need to be provided to compensate for those lost to the development.

A lighting plan should be designed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines: <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

Bat and bird boxes are recommended as enhancement.

If the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures are taken there should be a net gain in biodiversity and no net loss of roosting or nesting sites, nor any danger of harm to any species.

2. Introduction

Susan Worsfold BSc (Hons) ACIEEM is an experienced wildlife surveyor, licensed bat worker and voluntary bat roost visitor. Registration number CLS0895 2015-12555-CLS-CLS (CL15 Bat Roost Visitor Level 1) and registration number CLS 0895 2015-12556-CLS-CLS (CL18 Bat Survey Level 2) (Natural England) and S086005/1 (Natural Resources Wales);
Licensed great crested newt worker, registration number 2016-19947-CLS-CLS (NE) and S086057/1 (NRW)

This report was commissioned by Berrys for the owners.

The site, at Haywood Farm, Cheswardine, comprises a brick barn surrounded by hard standing and short vegetation.

The proposed scheme involves the conversion of the barn into a veterinary practice.

The purpose of the report is to identify and address any significant ecological effects which are likely to occur as a result of the proposed development. This is necessary to comply with local planning policy and government legislation and avoid any offence being committed. Also, to describe any compensation, mitigation and enhancement measures which should be taken.

3. Methodology

3.1. Scope of the Assessment

The report incorporates a bat roost and nesting bird assessment, while also searching for use or potential use by any rare, threatened, endemic and non-native invasive species which might be associated with such a site in accordance with:

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and listed in:

Schedule 2. European protected species of animals

Schedule 5. European protected species of plants

The protection of Badgers Act 1992

Protected species which might be associated with such a site include bats and birds.

Two dusk emergence surveys were carried out in accordance with *Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn)* (Collins 2016) and the Interim Guidance Note: Use of night vision aids for bat emergence surveys and further comment on dawn surveys (*Bat Conservation Trust, May 2022*)

3.2. Desk Study

Shropshire Planning Portal was consulted for a review of previous ecological surveys carried out in the area. Magic Maps was consulted for the presence of designated sites and protected habitats.

3.3. Field Survey

The building was examined to establish the presence of or evidence of use by protected species of animals. A risk assessment was made before entering. A visual inspection was carried out to assess the potential or actual use by bats and birds, of the exterior and interior of the building. It was searched systematically for any signs of bats, including droppings, rub marks and urine stains at entrances to roosts and insect remains, such as moth or butterfly wings. Crevices were checked where possible.

Powerful lamps (LED Lenser H14 and P7) were used for examination under eaves. Binoculars were used to examine parts which were not otherwise accessible. Photographs were taken of all areas and those of relevance are shown in the appendices.

The preliminary survey was carried out on 16th August 2023 by Susan Worsfold.

Dusk emergence surveys was carried out on 16th August and 15th September 2023 by Susan Worsfold and Craig Thomas, an experienced assistant.

These were done in accordance with *Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn)* (Collins 2016) and the Interim Guidance Note: Use of night vision aids for bat emergence surveys and further comment on dawn surveys (*Bat Conservation Trust, May 2022*)

Frequency division detectors were used to record any bat sounds in and around the building for later analysis on the computer. These were Peersonic RPA3. An Anabat Express was used inside the building.

The whole building was in view of the observers and infrared night vision aids (NVAs) were used alongside observers or to provide extra detail on areas of interest. These were Nightfox Red night vision goggles, mounted on tripods, with Nightfox XB5 IR torches.

4. Baseline Ecological Conditions/Results

4.1 Designated Sites

The nearest designated site is Tyrley Canal Cutting (SSSI) 810 m west.

4.2 Habitats

Site: Rural, pastoral, arable, secluded. The building is surrounded by hard standing and short vegetation on all sides.

Barn: The building is in use as storage. Walls were of brick with no cavity. Windows were glazed and intact, doors were of wood with some gaps around the edges. The roof was of tile, pitched, unlined with a timber frame. There were gaps under tiles and in brickwork. There were no verge boards or soffits.

Adjacent land: The nearest pond was 180 m north. There were 12 ponds within 500 m according to maps. There was a significant area of woodland 110 m east. there is a good network of hedgerows surrounding the site, with several trees. There are no rivers or brooks within 500 m.

4.3 Species and Species Groups

Birds

Two swallow nests were found in the barn, at the northern end.

Bats

No evidence of use by bats was found. There was very little bat activity around the building during both surveys.

Other species

A hare was seen running E to W through the yard at the northern end of the building during the second survey.

5. Description of the Development

The proposed scheme involves the conversion of a single storey barn to a veterinary practice. This will involve intrusive work to the roof and walls. There will be no increase in footprint.

6. Assessment of Effects and Mitigation Measures

Designated Sites:

It is not considered that the proposal will have any significant impact on any designated sites due to the small scale of the development and distance from the sites.

Habitats:

No priority habitat is affected by the proposal. No vegetation is to be lost.

Species:

Birds

Since swallows have been using the barn it is important that work is done outside the nesting season, to prevent disturbance to these or any birds which may start building nests between the beginning of March and the end of September. If this occurs then work in that area must stop until all birds have left the nests.

Bats

The proposed work will not lead to the loss of any roosting sites or access, nor disturbance to individuals.

The site is suitable for foraging and commuting bats. Four species of bats were recorded in and around the building.

A lighting plan should be designed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines: <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

Residual Effects

No significant residual effects anticipated.

7. Compensation

Two artificial swallow nests to be fitted in either the stable or store at the south end of the building. There will need to be access via a large open window or door.

8. Enhancement Recommendations

A crevice dwelling bat box to be fitted externally at the south gable end, e.g. Vivara Low Profile WoodStone Bat Box. Further information is given in the bat box information pack available at <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/bat-boxes>.

One woodcrete nest suitable for small birds such as robin, blackbird, tit species and sparrow to be fitted to the adjacent barn at the north end:

House Sparrow Terrace - Wooden (or woodcrete) nest box with 3 sub-divisions to support 3 nesting pairs. To be placed under the eaves. Entrance holes: 32mm diameter. Dimensions: H310 x W370 x D185mm. Also suitable for tits, redstarts and spotted flycatchers. Place at least 2 m from the ground.

Planting is proposed near the northern end of the building. Native species are recommended such as field maple, rowan or bird cherry, or other fruit trees such as damson, apple or pear.

9. Ecological Constraints

None identified.

10. Monitoring

Not considered necessary.

11. Conclusions

If the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures are taken there will be a net gain in biodiversity and no net loss of roosting or nesting sites, nor any danger of harm to any species.

12. Bibliography

Bat Conservation Trust available at: <http://www.bats.org.uk>

BCT and ILP Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting available at:
<https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

Collins J. (Ed) (2016) *Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn)*.
The Bat Conservation Trust, London

Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora available at: jncc.defra.gov.uk

English Nature (2001) *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines* Peterborough: English Nature

Google Maps available at: <https://maps.google.com/maps>

Magic Maps available at: <http://magic.defra.gov.uk>

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*, Peterborough: English Nature

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. and McLeish, A. P. (2004) *Bat Worker's Manual*, Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Natural England available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>

Shropshire Planning Portal available at: <https://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/>

UK BAP Priority Habitats available at: jncc.defra.gov.uk

Wildlife and Habitat Conservation available at: <https://www.gov.uk/topic/environmental-management/wildlife-habitat-conservation>

Appendix 13.1: Activity Surveys

Survey Conditions

Date	Sunset/ Sunrise	Start Time	End Time	Temp. Start °C	Relative Humidity Start %	Temp. End °C	Relative Humidity End %	Cloud %	Wind 0-6	Rain
16/8/23	20:35	20:20	22:05	18	78	17	84	5	1	None
15/9/23	19:26	19:10	21:00	14	88	14	89	5	0	None

16/8/23

Observer or area

Sue Worsfold (SW) south east corner
 Craig Thomas (CT) north west corner
 South west corner

Equipment

Peersonic RPA3 + Nightfox Red NVA
 Peersonic RPA3 + Nightfox Red NVA
 Nightfox Red NVA

Bats recorded:

Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)
 Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
 Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*)

<i>Observer or Area</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>No. Bats</i>	<i>Observation</i>	<i>Identification from visual or correlation with sonograms</i>
SW	21:05	1	Flew E to W	Common pipistrelle
SW	21:08	1	Near gable end came from W to E	Common pipistrelle
SW	21:32	1	Flew E to W	Common pipistrelle
SW	21:34	1	Foraging nearby	Common pipistrelle

15/9/23

Observer or area

Sue Worsfold (SW) south east corner

Craig Thomas (CT) north west corner

South west corner

Equipment

Peersonic RPA3 + Nightfox Red NVA

Peersonic RPA3 + Nightfox Red NVA

Nightfox Red NVA

Bats recorded:

Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)

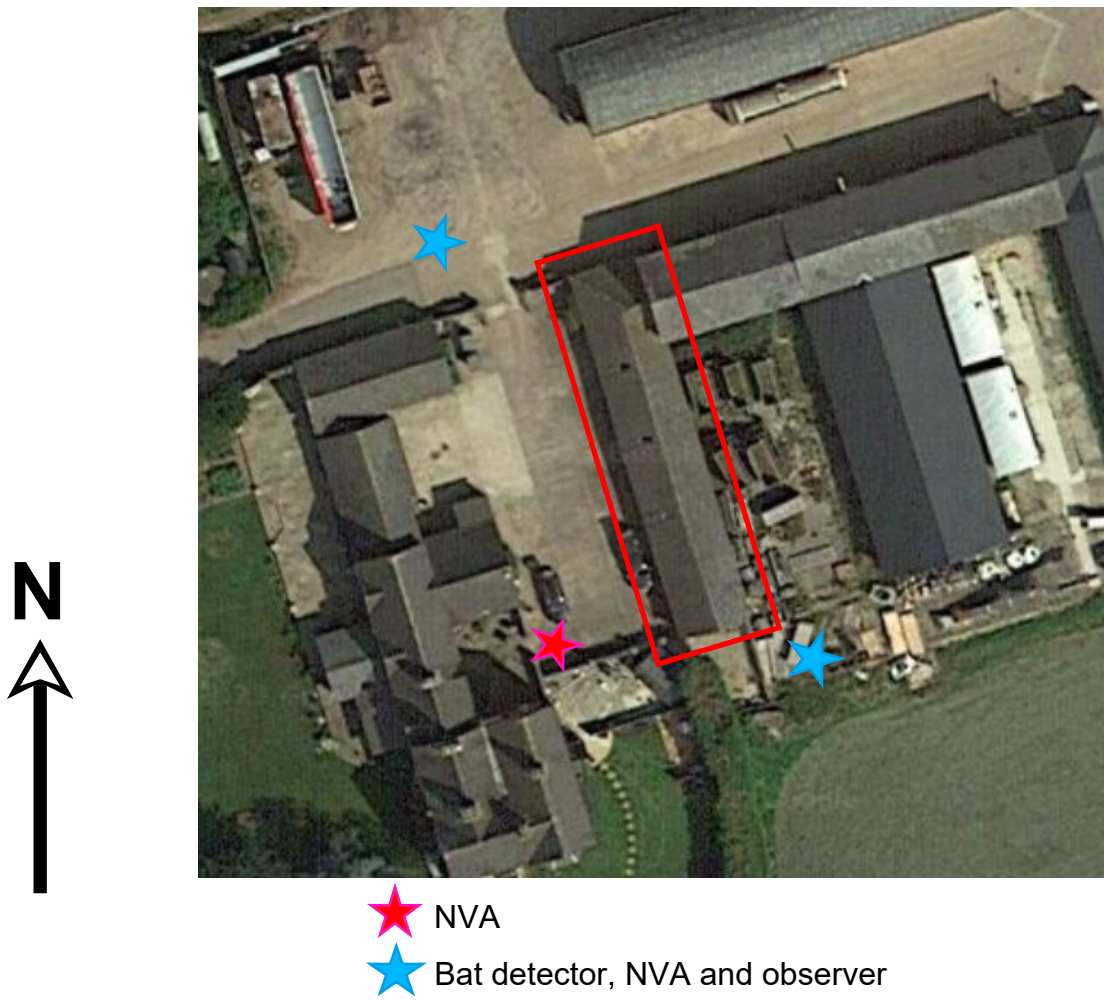
Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)

Myotis sp., Probably Daubenton's (*Myotis daubentonii*)

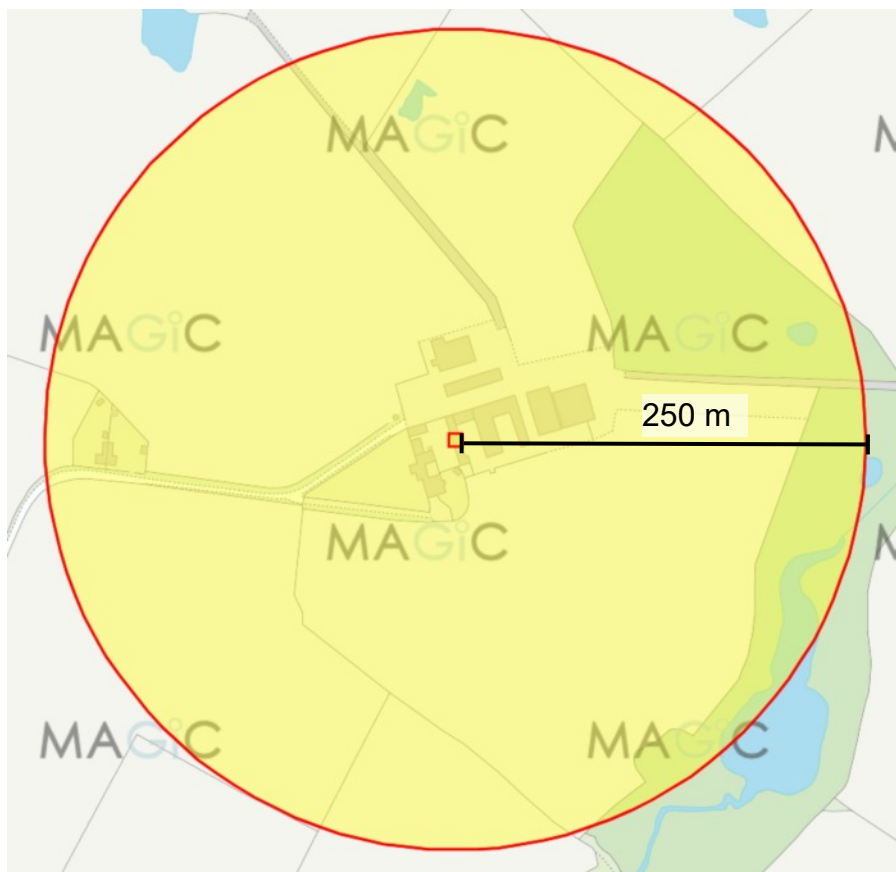
Long eared bat, presumed brown long eared (*Plecotus auritus*)

<i>Observer or Area</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>No. Bats</i>	<i>Observation</i>	<i>Identification from visual or correlation with sonograms</i>
SW	20:09	1	Flew W to E	Common pipistrelle
SW	20.13	1	Flew SW to NE	Common pipistrelle
SW	20:17	1	Foraging to the E followed by occasional foraging in the yard	Common pipistrelle

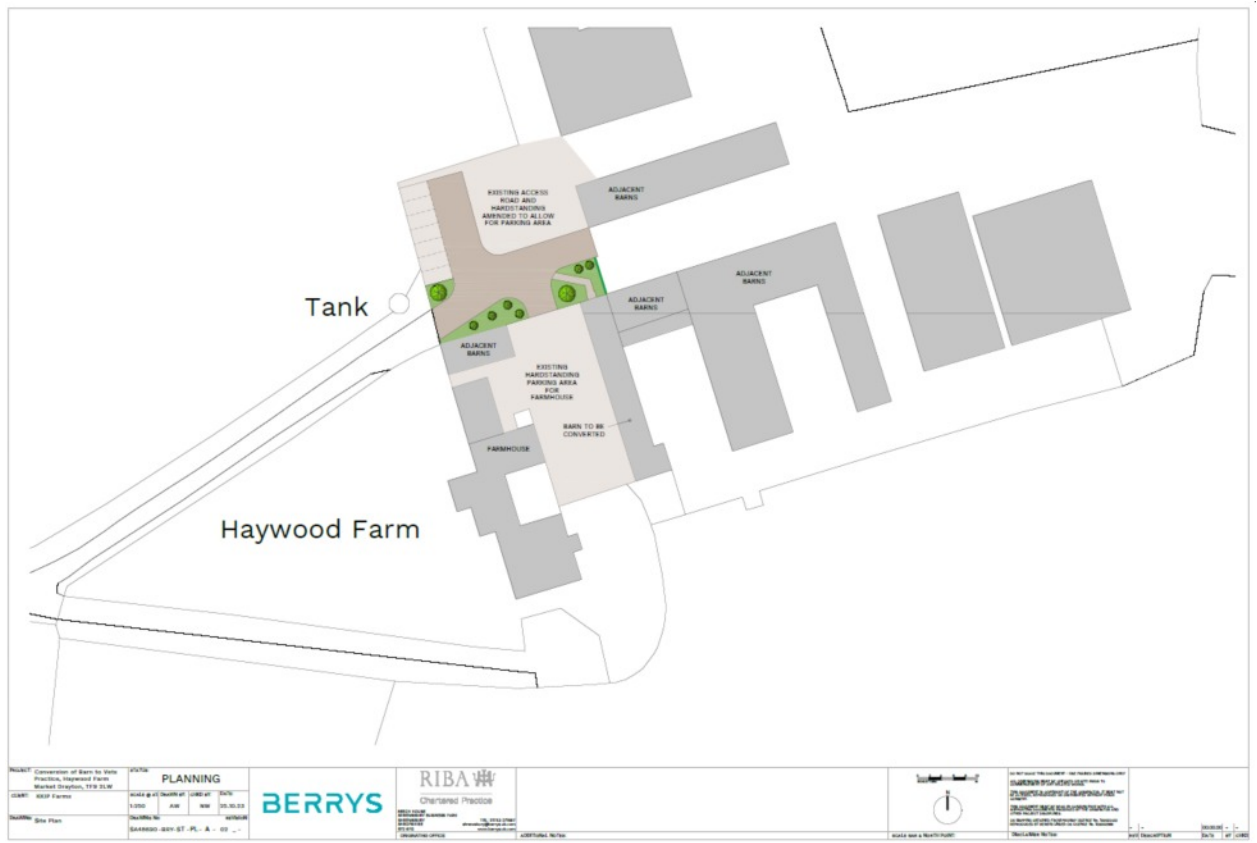
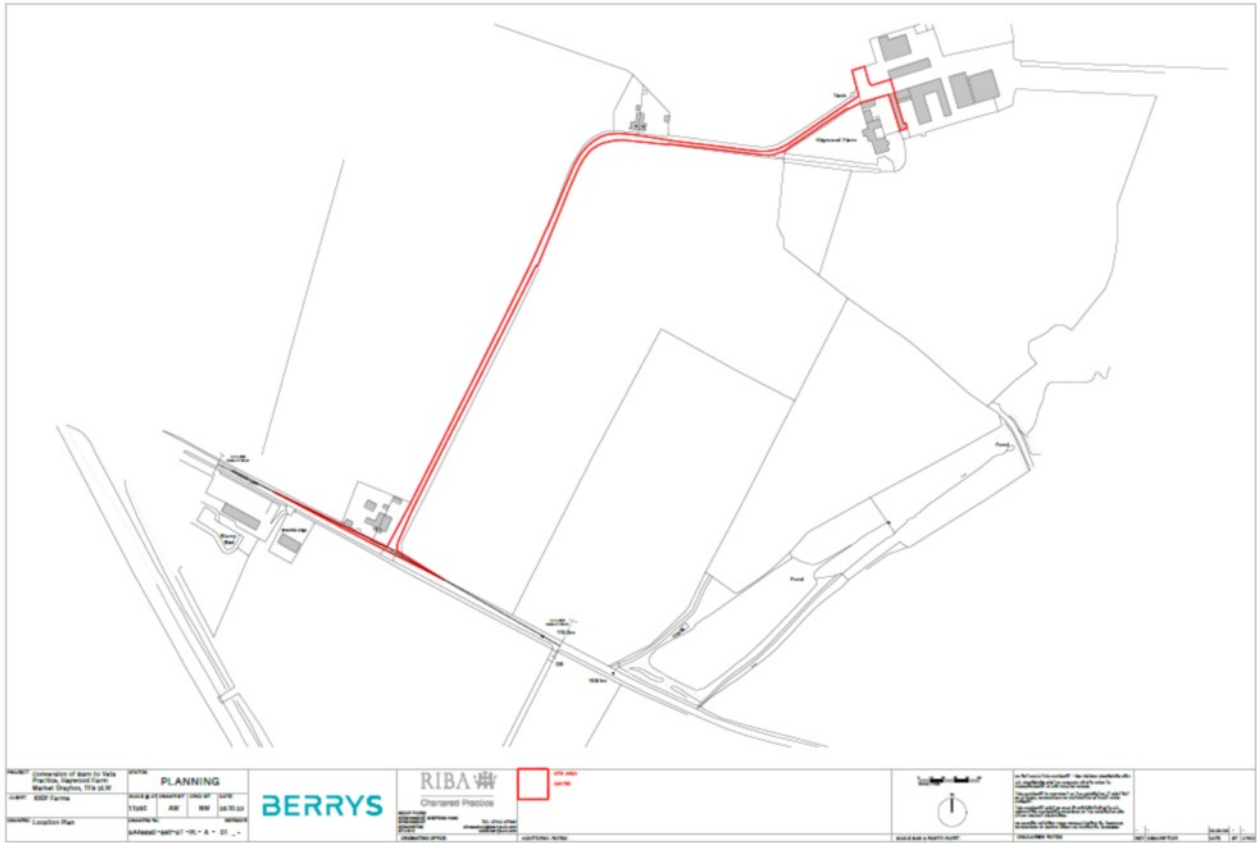
Appendix 13.2: Aerial Photograph Showing Position of Observers



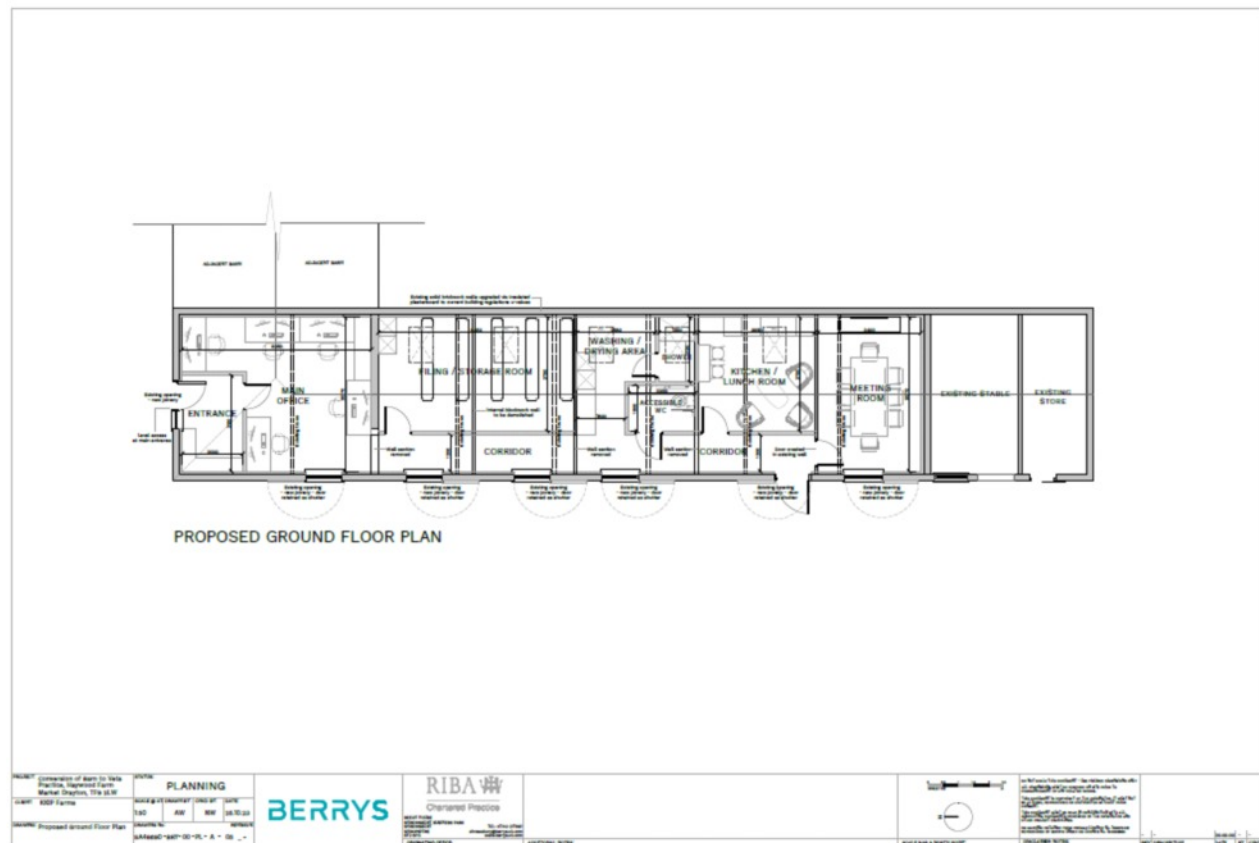
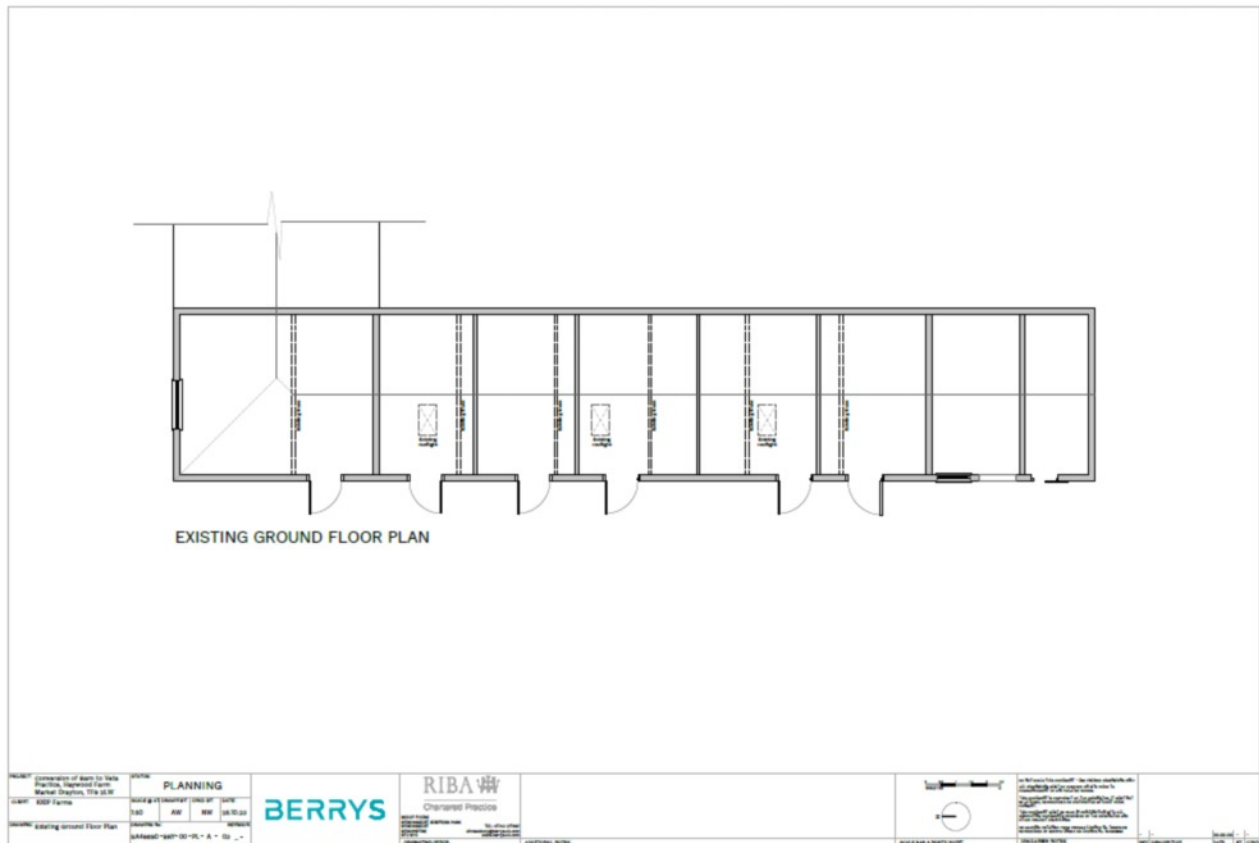
Appendix 13.3: Designated Sites and Zones of Influence



Appendix 13.4: Plans



Appendix 13.4 Plans



Appendix 13.5: Photographs



View from the north west



View from the south



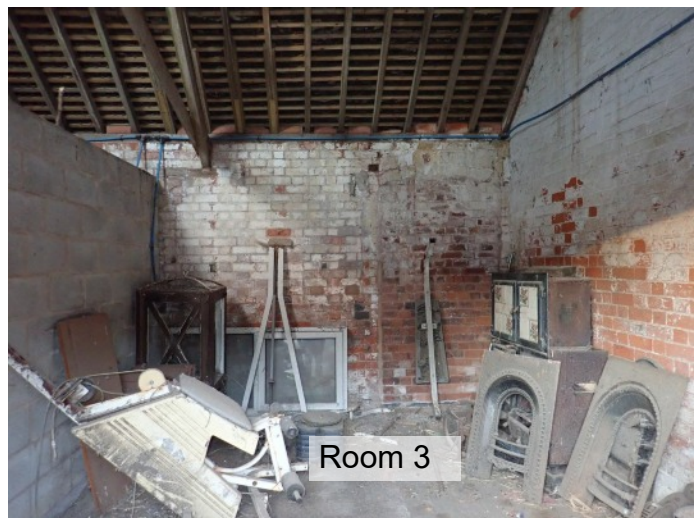
View from the south east



Southernmost room (1)

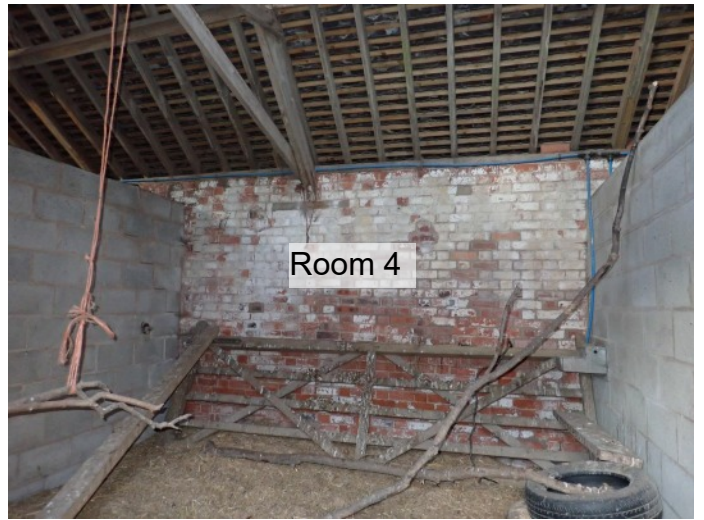


Room 2



Room 3

Appendix 13.5: Photographs



Appendix 13.5: Photographs From NVAs



Appendix 13.6: Legislation Relating to Bats

All bat species, their breeding sites and resting places are fully protected by law - they're European protected species.

You may be able to get a licence from Natural England if you can't avoid disturbing them or damaging their habitats, or if you want to survey or conserve them.

What you must not do

You're breaking the law if you do certain things including:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill bats
- damage or destroy a breeding or resting place
- obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places
- possess, sell, control or transport live or dead bats, or parts of them
- intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it's in a structure or place of shelter or protection

Either or both of the following could happen if you're found guilty of any offences:

- you could be sent to prison for up to 6 months
- you could get an unlimited fine

Activities that can harm bats

Activities that can affect bats include:

- renovating, converting or demolishing a building
- cutting down or removing branches from a mature tree
- repairing or replacing a roof
- repointing brickwork
- insulating or converting a loft
- installing lighting in a roost, or outside if it lights up the entrance to the roost
- removing 'commuting habitats' like hedgerows, watercourses or woodland
- changing or removing bats' foraging areas
- using insecticides or treating timber

In many cases you should be able to avoid harming the bats or damaging or blocking access to their habitats.

A bat survey will show what type, how many and how the bats are using the building or area so you can plan to avoid harming them.

If you can't avoid harming bats or their habitats, you can apply for a mitigation licence from Natural England.

Appendix 13.7: Legislation Relating to Birds

All wild bird species, their eggs and nests are protected by law. You must always try to avoid harming birds or to use measures which do not kill or injure them before considering taking harmful action.

In most cases you should be able to avoid harming wild birds by:

- timing your work to avoid the breeding season
- using a range of methods that deter but don't harm them

In exceptional cases the law allows certain exemptions to permit legal activities (such as a development with planning permission) and where avoiding harm isn't possible.

What you must not do:

You're breaking the law if you:

- intentionally kill, injure or take wild birds
- intentionally take, damage or destroy a wild bird's nest while it's being used or built
- intentionally take or destroy a wild bird's egg
- possess, control or transport live or dead wild birds, or parts of them, or their eggs
- sell wild birds or put them on display for sale
- use prohibited methods to kill or take wild birds

Some birds, known as 'schedule 1 birds', e.g. barn owls, have extra legal protection. For these bird species it's also an offence to do the following, either intentionally or by not taking enough care:

- disturb them while they're nesting, building a nest, in or near a nest that contains their young
- disturb their dependent young

You could get an unlimited fine and up to 6 months in prison for each offence if you're found guilty.

Activities that can harm birds

These activities can affect wild birds, particularly during breeding season:

- trimming or cutting trees, bushes, hedges and rough vegetation
- renovating, converting or demolishing a building
- creating disturbance, e.g. noise, lighting and vibration
- taking actions to prevent problems, e.g. shooting birds or removing nests

When you can get a licence

There are no licensing purposes to permit development or construction but there are ways you can continue development or construction when birds are present. These activities should rely upon the legal exemptions. You must make sure that you can comply fully with the terms of the exemption so that you don't break the law.

You can apply for a licence from Natural England in certain circumstances and for certain problems.

Licences are available for disturbing or harming birds for a limited number of reasons that include:

- preserve public health and safety
- preserve air safety
- do work for science, education or research
- prevent damage to crops or animal feed
- conserve plants and animals (including other wild birds)
- prevent damage to fisheries
- take part in photography, falconry, keeping or breeding birds