



Dean Farm, Shepton Mallet

Wildlife Protection & Enhancement Strategy

Prepared for: Mr Christopher Jerram

Date: June 2023



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Limitations

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This report is considered ‘valid’ for up to two years from the date the walkover survey was conducted. If an application is made after this, then it is advisable to undertake an updated survey. In addition, any significant change to the project should result in consultation with an ecologist as reassessment of the ecological constraints may be required.

Nash Ecology Ltd
Halfway Farm
Draycott Road
Cheddar
BS27 3RR

Tel: 07950 146082
email: info@nashecolology.com

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Scope

Nash Ecology Ltd was instructed to prepare a 'Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Strategy' (WPES) for the project at 'Dean Farm, Dean, Shepton Mallet, BA4 4SA' (Figure 1). The WPES relates to the proposed conversion of an agricultural barn into a residential dwelling (2022/1792/FUL). The following condition was attached to the permission:

"Condition 10: Wildlife Protection and Enhancement (Pre-commencement)

No development shall take place, until full details of a Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Scheme which shall include enhancements for bats and birds, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All works within the scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the development or in accordance with an approved schedule of implementation.

Reason: To prevent ecological harm and to provide biodiversity gain in accordance with DP5 of the Mendip District Local Plan Part 1: Strategy & Policies 2006-2029 (Adopted 2014). This is a pre-commencement condition as further surveys are likely to ensure appropriate protection and mitigation and subsequent enhancements might need to be included within the fabric of the building."

The current document presents the WPES to enable the associated condition to be discharged.

1.2 Ecological Baseline

No statutory designated sites (excluding geological) were identified within 2 km.

The Barn was situated within an area of hard standing – no vegetation will be lost to the scheme. The Barn was located within Dean Farm, a working farm located to the northwest of Dean, Somerset. The farm was accessed by a private driveway. The Barn was located within a complex of agricultural buildings. The wider landscape was dominated by agricultural land (pasture and arable) and quarries.

An active house martin (*Delichon urbicum*) nest, along with several crumpled nest cups, was present on the Barn's southern aspect. A dead swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) was found next to a window on the ground-floor. It is likely that the swallow accessed the Barn via the drainage hole and could not escape. A disused swallow nest cup was present in the upper-floor.

An initial inspection of the Barn did not record any evidence of bats; however, it did include a small number of features that could contain crevice-dwelling bats. A subsequent emergence survey did not detect any bats emerging from the Barn. As such, it was concluded that the Barn did not contain a bat roost.

2 RISK ASSESSMENT

In the absence of mitigation, the proposed development could result in the loss of an active house martin nest.

4 MITIGATION

4.1 Species

4.1.1 *Nesting Birds*

All wild birds are protected whilst nesting or rearing young under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Building works will be undertaken outside of the peak nesting season (i.e. it will be carried out between September and March). If this is not practicable, then the Barn will be inspected for active nests by a suitably trained ecologist to ensure they are not present immediately prior to works. Where active nests are encountered, no works will be permitted until the young birds have fully fledged.

3 ENHANCEMENTS

Two Beaumaris Bat Box Midi's (Plate 1) will be erected on the southern and western aspects of the Barn (see Figure 2). Two artificial house martin nest cups (Plate 2) will be fitted directly beneath the eaves of the northern aspect of the Barn (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Proposed Enhancements



Plate 1: Beaumaris Bat Box Midi



Plate 2: House Martin Nest Cup

