

JAMES BLAKE

A S S O C I A T E S

Protected Species Method Statement

for

Land at Bury Road, Chedburgh, Suffolk

on behalf of

Eastwood and Partners Ltd

February 2024


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James Blake Associates Ltd have made every effort to meet the client’s brief. However, no survey ensures complete and absolute assessment of the changeable natural environment. The findings in this report were based on evidence from thorough survey: It is important to remember that evidence can be limited, hard to detect or concealed by site use and disturbance. When it is stated that no evidence was found or was evident at that point in time, it does not mean that species are not present or could not be present at a later date: The survey was required because habitats are suitable for a given protected species, and such species could colonise areas following completion of the survey.

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Non-technical Summary

Site:	Land at Bury Road, Chedburgh, Suffolk.
Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference:	TL 79190 57385
Report Commissioned by:	Eastwood and Partners Ltd
Date of report:	February 2024

Considerations	Description	Potential impacts
Production of an ecological enhancement strategy	<p>Enhancement measures include provision of bat and bird boxes.</p> <p>Precautionary measures include timing of building demolition and any proposed vegetation clearance to avoid the nesting bird season and a sensitive lighting scheme for bats, particularly on the northern boundary.</p>	<p>Improvement of conditions on site for bats and birds.</p> <p>Safeguarding of any protected species using the site during construction.</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 James Blake Associates Ltd. (JBA) was commissioned by Eastwood and Partners Ltd to provide a Protected Species Method Statement for the proposed development site at land at Bury Road, Chedburgh, Suffolk (Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference: TL 79190 57385, taken from the centre of the site).
- 1.2 The site submitted a planning application for the demolition and replacement of a raw materials store, along with associated hardstanding in 2021. Full planning permission was granted in 2023.
- 1.3 This strategy addresses conditions 10 and 11 of DC/21/2303/FUL (West Suffolk Council) which state:

Condition 10

“All mitigation and enhancement measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and the Ecological Enhancement Strategy, (both by James Blake Associates Ltd, February 2022) and Bat Emergence Survey (James Blake Associates, June 2022) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species) as updated by the Environment Act 2021.”

Condition 11

“Prior to the commencement of development, a bats, reptiles, nesting birds, Great Crested Newts, Water Voles, Otters Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This will contain precautionary mitigation measures and/or works to reduce potential impacts to protected species during the construction phase. The

measures and/works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To conserve Protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species) as updated by the Environment Act 2021.”

- 1.4 JBA undertook a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) in February 2022 and produced a PEA Report in February 2022 (JBA 2022). A bat emergence survey was undertaken in May 2022 and Bat Emergence Survey report of the site was produced in June 2022 (JBA 2022).
- 1.5 An Ecological Enhancement Strategy (2022) was also produced in February 2022 (JBA 2022); however, JBA conducted a further site visit on 23rd January 2024 to update the original Ecological Enhancement Strategy to match changes to site and Local Planning Authority (LPA) comments and planning conditions. The revised Ecological Enhancement Strategy (JBA 2024) was produced to address Condition 12 of DC/21/2303/FUL (West Suffolk Council) and a Lighting Design Scheme (JBA 2024) to address Condition 13 of DC/21/2303/FUL (West Suffolk Council).
- 1.6 This report covers the application site (red-line boundary) and the requirement to provide further details regarding a method statement that contains precautionary mitigation measures and/or works to reduce potential impacts to protected species during the construction phase and the appointment of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) if required to protect and conserve any protected species on site as per condition 10 and 11 of DC/21/2303/FUL (West Suffolk Council).

Site Description

- 1.7 The site is located adjacent to the south of Bury Road and south of the A143 in Chedburgh, Suffolk. See Figure 1 for site location.
- 1.8 The site itself mainly consists of buildings and associated hardstanding with six treatment beds and a single pond and wet ditches to the eastern and southern boundary: all within the eastern area of the site. Amenity and semi-improved grassland, with hedgerows, scrub and boundary trees is also present on site. See Figure 2 for habitats within the site boundary.

Figure 1: Site location



(Reproduced from Magic Map Application: licence number 100059700)

Figure 2: Habitats within site boundary



Aims and objectives

- 1.9 The aim of this report is to provide a Protected Species Method Statement for the site to be used to discharge Conditions 10 and 11 of the planning permission by providing a detailed protected species method statement for the proposed development.

Wildlife Legislation and Planning Policy

- 1.10 The relevant wildlife legislations and planning policies are listed below:
- Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (WCA). [Amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)].
 - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (NERC) [As updated by the Environment Act, 2021]
 - The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act, 1996.
 - Conservation of Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
 - National Planning Policy 2023.

2. PROTECTED SPECIES METHOD STATEMENT

Species evaluation

- 2.1 The purpose of the proposed strategy outlined within this document is to protect and conserve any protected species present or likely to be present within or on the boundary of the wider site, or within the development area on site and to enhance the site for wildlife following construction where practical.
- 2.2 Although several protected species were considered within the original PEA to potentially use the boundary habitats on site e.g. defunct hedgerow, wet and dry ditches, scrub, poor semi-improved and amenity grassland and ponds, the actual area of development itself is hard-standing and a building comprising brick, breeze block, corrugated sheeting among other materials.
- 2.3 Bat surveys in 2022 established that no bats were roosting within B1, and that bat activity was largely restricted to the boundaries of the larger site, with activity being minimal and limited to only common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and nathusier's pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*), with very little foraging or commuting apparent within the area to be demolished and rebuilt. Providing the lighting plan is adhered to, any bats foraging or commuting around or across the site should remain unaffected by the demolition and construction.
- 2.4 Moreover, no presence of badger, water vole or otter was found to be present on site during the PEA (JBA, 2022), with only water vole noted during the desk study as being present 1.2km southeast of the site in 2014. Otter and water vole are unlikely to be present on the site or within boundary habitats despite potential suitability as more suitable habitats are present close to the site. Badger can move into an area quickly, but there was no evidence of their presence during a brief walkover in January 2024 and any use of habitats on site would likely be restricted to the semi-improved grassland and scrub on the site boundaries. All potential habitats will remain protected during the demolition and construction of the new shed. Moreover, the area due for demolition and construction only consists of hard-standing and buildings totally unsuitable for any of these species.
- 2.5 Habitat on site was also considered suitable for European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) with the presence of scrub, brush piles and poor semi-improved grassland and the species being recorded 1.2km southwest of the site boundary. Although, there is suitable habitat on the boundaries of the wider site, providing the precautionary measures are adhered to within this statement it is considered those species will be unaffected by the demolition and construction of the new shed building.
- 2.6 Although GCN were noted with 1.8km of the site during the desk study and the semi-improved grassland and scrub provides some limited sheltering or foraging opportunities, the two ponds present on site are unsuitable for use by GCN. Although no habitat suitability condition

assessment was done of the two ponds on site, both are settling ponds which have little to no emergent vegetation and are unlikely to be suitable for GCN. Three other ponds within 500m of the site boundary were also considered ecologically separated due to the presence of the A143 on the northern boundary. GCN are unlikely to be present on site and the potential foraging and sheltering habitat will be unaffected by the demolition and construction of the new shed.

- 2.7 Habitat suitable for reptiles to breed, shelter and forage was noted on site during the 2022 PEA with scrub, semi-improved grassland and some brash/log piles present on site. Moreover, there were records noted within the desk study of grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) being present within 0.6km of the site in 2012. However, habitats on the wider site will not be affected by the demolition or construction of the new shed, with only areas of hard-standing and buildings being affected.
- 2.8 The conservation objectives for the proposed works are to provide new opportunities for several bird species e.g. swift (*Apus apus*), jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*) and house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) to nest post-development and to provide potential roosting opportunities for small bat species e.g. common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and nathusiers' pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*) bats where appropriate to enhance the site for biodiversity and to contribute to the biodiversity interest of the area in the long term.

Mitigation measures before and during construction

- 2.9 A timetable for the implementation of ecological mitigation works has been drawn up (see Appendix A).
- 2.10 To summarise, before demolition and construction:
- A toolbox talk should be given to all site personnel to include all the ecological measures relevant to construction, including bats, birds, and other small animals, where appropriate.
 - Protective guards (Heras fencing or similar) to be placed around habitat to be retained, such as hedgerows, ditches, trees etc. to protect from accidental damage during construction.
 - Any areas of habitat and buildings which may be used by nesting birds which are required to be cleared should be done outside the nesting season (i.e. outside the period March to August inclusive). If these timings are not possible then a nesting bird check should be carried out by a suitably qualified ornithologist/ Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) no more than 48 hours prior to vegetation/building clearance. If birds are building a nest or sitting on eggs or chicks, then any clearance work should

be stopped until all chicks have fledged within a 10m radius within vegetation but would have to be delayed until fledging in any building due for demolition.

2.11 During demolition and construction:

- A pre-check should be undertaken by a qualified Ecologist or ECoW of the inside of the buildings prior to demolition to ensure no nesting birds or mammals have entered the building prior to demolition.
- If possible, all entrances or holes should be covered ahead of time to prevent mammals such as hedgehog, badger, rabbit, or fox from entering the building prior to demolition if the building is left unoccupied or used prior to demolition. Once demolition begins, there should be an escape route for small ground mammals where possible.
- Preferably the demolition should be a 'soft' demolition, with the ECoW informed ahead of time of the plan and timetable for demolition, with the large shed being dismantled in such a way as to allow any birds, small ground mammals and bats that may have been missed a chance to leave safely.
- All trenches left open overnight to be covered or an escape ramp provided to allow badger, otter, hedgehogs and other small mammals, as well as reptiles or amphibians etc. to climb out.
- The works should follow an appropriate construction method statement which will detail appropriate measures of reducing dust and water pollution.
- Security lighting will be kept to a minimal level (as necessary for safety and security), to be set on short timers, and to be sensitive to large moving objects only to ensure any bats are not discouraged from using established foraging or commuting routes (See Bat Lighting Strategy (JBA 2024)) for further details.
- Bat and bird boxes to be erected and integrated into new buildings. Boxes should not be lit by security lighting. See Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (JBA 2024) for further details.

2.12 Following construction:

- Management and maintenance of ecological features to be undertaken, where necessary. See Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (JBA 2024) for further details.
- Lighting Action Strategy to be implemented and maintained post-construction to ensure bat boxes, as well as foraging and commuting routes remain unaffected post-

development by maintaining minimum levels of lighting for operational purposes. See Bat Lighting Strategy letter report (JBA 2024) for further detail.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 A Protected Species Method Statement has been drawn up which will ensure the protection and conservation of any protected species present or likely to be present within or on the site boundaries or within the development area on site. and to enhance the site for wildlife following construction where practical.
- 3.2 The Protected Species Method Statement was written to discharge conditions 10 and 11 of DC/21/2303/FUL (West Suffolk Council) and it is felt with the implementation of the enhancements outlined in this report that Conditions 10 and 11 can be fully discharged.

References

Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) and Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2009) *Bats and Lighting in the UK*. Bats and the Built Environment Series. ILP, Rugby.

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Eastwood and Partners (2021) Yara Chedburgh Storage Shed _ New Store Proposed Layout -drawing number 45255/015.

Eastwood and Partners (2021) Yara Chedburgh Storage Shed _ New Store Ground Floor Plan - drawing number 45255/016.

Eastwood and Partners (2021) Yara Chedburgh Storage Shed _ New Store Proposed Elevations Sheet 1 of 2 - drawing number 45255/017.

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JBA (2022) Ecological Enhancement Strategy for land at Bury Road, Chedburgh, Suffolk.

JBA (2022) Bat Emergence survey report of land at Bury Road, Chedburgh, Suffolk for Eastwood and Partners Ltd.

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JBA (2024) Bat Lighting Strategy letter report for land at Bury Road, Chedburgh, Suffolk on behalf of Eastwood and Partners Ltd.

JBA (2024) Biodiversity Enhancement Plan for land at Bury Road, Chedburgh, Suffolk on behalf of Eastwood and Partners Ltd.

National Planning Policy Framework HMSO (September 2023)

Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan (2012), *Suffolk Local Biodiversity Action Plan Planning* Suffolk Biodiversity Action Partnership.

Web references

MAGIC:

<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

Appendix A: Suggested timetable for implementation of protected species method statement

Timings		Feature/species of interest	Action	Person responsible
When to Undertake	Year			
Pre-construction/demolition	2024	Bats, birds, small mammals	Toolbox to all site personnel to include all the ecological measures relevant to demolition/construction, including bats, birds and other small animals, where appropriate.	Site manager and ECoW
Pre-construction/demolition	2024	Bats, birds, small mammals	Protective guards (Heras fencing placed around habitat to be retained e.g. hedgerows, ditches, trees etc. to protect from accidental damage during construction.	Site manager
Pre-construction/demolition	2024	Birds	Nesting bird check.	ECoW/Ecologist
Pre-construction/demolition	2024	Bats, birds, small mammals	A pre-check inside buildings prior to demolition for birds or mammals	ECoW/Ecologist
Pre-construction/demolition	2024	Bats, birds, small mammals	Entrances/holes covered to prevent mammals from entering buildings prior to demolition if building left unoccupied for long time prior to demolition.	Site manager (with advice from ECoW)
Pre-construction/demolition	2024	Bats, birds, small mammals	'Soft' demolition, with ECoW informed ahead of time of plan & timetable for demolition	Site Manager (with advice from ECoW)
Pre-construction/demolition	2024	Bats	Security lighting kept to minimal level possible to be set on short timers.	Site Manager (with advice from ECoW)
During construction	2024	Bats, birds, small mammals	Cover trenches left open overnight or provide escape ramp for badger, otter, hedgehog small mammals, reptiles & amphibians to climb out.	Site manager
During construction	2024	Bats and birds	Bird and bat boxes to be erected on proposed building(s) as per Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy	Site manager and ECoW
Post-construction	From 2025	Bats	Annual check for damages from the ground	Site manager with advice from ECoW if boxes require replacing/fixing
Post-construction	From 2025 (between October and February)	Birds	Annual cleaning and check for damages (outside breeding bird season)	Site manager with advice from ECoW if boxes require replacing/fixing
Post-construction	From 2025	Bats	Lighting Action Plan to be implemented and maintained post-construction to ensure bat boxes, foraging & commuting routes remain unaffected post-development	Site manager and ECoW