

# **Preliminary Ecological Assessment**

**Land at Lower Cockhill Barn,  
Hothersall Lane,  
Hothersall,  
PR3 2XB**

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**Report prepared by:  
Dave Anderson  
Batworker.co.uk  
[dave@batworker.co.uk](mailto:dave@batworker.co.uk)  
07894 338290**

## **Summary**

In February 2019 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a preliminary ecological assessment of land at Lower Cockhill Barn, Hothersall Lane, Hothersall, PR3 2XB to assess the potential for impact on protected species.

A daytime survey was carried out on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019 in order to support plans to create access for stables.

**Land is considered to be of low conservation value, with no habitats of note present.**

**No evidence was recorded to suggest use of the site by protected species.**

**No evidence of badger was recorded within 100m of the site.**

**Nearby pond habitats were assessed as poor for suitability for great crested newts.**

**The surveyor does not consider the proposed development and change of use is likely to result in a breach of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) therefore the proposed development does not require an EPS Licence (EPSL) to proceed lawfully.**

## Introduction

In February 2019 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a preliminary ecological assessment of land at Lower Cockhill Barn, Hothersall Lane, Hothersall, PR3 2XB to assess the potential for impact on protected species.

A daytime survey was carried out on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019 in order to support plans to create access for stables.

## Survey and Site Assessment

### Objectives of the survey

The survey was carried out to determine current usage by protected species of the site and to establish status of those species using the site prior to development work being carried out.

### Survey site location



A central grid reference for the site is SD6220936304

### Site/Habitat description

The site consists of grazing land consisting of short sward improved grassland. A mature hedgerow runs along the field boundary to the west and east, the southern boundary being a more recently planted hedgerow. The land can be considered to be of low conservation value.



### **Surrounding habitat.**



*Red line illustrates proposed access tracks.*

The land is located in a rural setting in an area of improved and semi improved grassland used for livestock grazing. Three ponds are located within 250 metres of the site with no barriers present.

### **Pre Existing data on local species**

A search of the MAGIC website revealed no EPS licence applications within a 1km radius.

## **Field Survey Methodology**

### **Field survey**

A survey of the surrounding habitat was carried out to assess potential for other protected species and an assessment made for use by badgers.

This included a search for field signs, and assessment of pond habitat where applicable.

### **Personnel**

All surveys were conducted by Dave Anderson MSc, Natural England Science, Education and Conservation bat licence holder (2015-15784-CLS-CLS) a bat surveyor and ecologist with over 20 years experience.

### **Survey Summary**

| <b>Survey</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Timings</b> |
|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| Visual        | 21.02.19    | 1 Hours        |

### **Survey Constraints.**

Although carried out at a sub optimal time of year, given the low conservation value of the site it is felt that survey effort is sufficient to assess impacts.

## **Survey Results**

### **Badgers**

No evidence of presence of badgers was recorded within 100m of the site.

### **Great Crested Newt**



Three nearby ponds were assessed as being poor for habitat suitability for great crested newt due to the presence of waterfowl and high levels of disturbance resulting in considerable turbidity.

### **Conclusion**

Land is considered to be of low conservation value, with no habitats of note present.

No evidence was recorded to suggest use of the site by protected species.

No evidence of badger was recorded within 100m of the site.

Nearby pond habitats were assessed as poor for suitability for great crested newts.

The surveyor does not consider the proposed development and change of use is likely to result in a breach of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) therefore the proposed development does not require an EPS Licence (EPSL) to proceed lawfully.