

Extensions at The Old Blacksticks, Blacksticks Lane, Chipping, PR3 2WL

## LICENSED BAT SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT

September 2021

[ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd ref: 2021-237]

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## Document Control

Survey Type:	Surveyors <sup>1</sup>	Survey Date(s)
Daylight external survey and assessment	Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM	15 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
Dusk emergence survey	Victoria Burrows, Chris Swindells and Fiona Megarrell	15 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
Reporting	Personnel	Date
<b>Author</b>	Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM Principal Ecologist	29 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
<b>Signature(s)</b>		
<b>Checked</b>	Catie Haworth B.Sc. (Hons) Graduate Ecologist	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2021
<b>Revised and issued</b>	Victoria Burrows	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2021
<b>Report issued to</b>	Mr Trevor Allan	
<b>Version Number</b>	1	
<sup>1</sup> Licence reference numbers <b>Bats</b> Victoria Burrows, Natural England Class Survey Licence (bats, Level 2) Registration Number 2015-10390-CLS-CLS <b>Barn owl</b> Victoria Burrows Natural England Class Survey Licence Registration Number CL29/00061		

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## SUMMARY

### Introduction and Scope

- i. ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned to carry out a licensed bat survey and assessment of relevant parts of the property at The Old Blacksticks, Blacksticks Lane, Chipping PR3 2WL. The survey and assessment are required in connection with a planning application proposing the extension of the property in two areas on the southern elevation.
- ii. This report presents the results of a desktop study, a daylight licensed bat survey and assessment, a bat activity survey and a general ecological assessment carried out in August 2021. The survey was carried out by a licensed, qualified and experienced ecologist with assistants and in accordance with standard recognised survey guidelines.

### Results of Survey and Assessment

- iii. The site is located to the east of Blacksticks Lane and comprises a large residential property with associated managed landscaped gardens. Vegetation and habitats to the south of the southern elevation of the property (the area to be affected by the two extensions) comprises an area of hard-standing with stone flags and gravel extending to a herbaceous border. No invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) were detected in the proposed working area / construction zone of the two extensions.
- iv. The proposals will have no adverse effect on statutory or non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation.
- v. None of the habitats to be affected by the proposals are representative of semi-natural habitat or are Priority Habitat. No rare plants were detected.
- vi. Based on the presence of features suitable for use by roosting bats, the location of the property and the suitability of the surrounding habitats for use by foraging bats, the portion of the property to be affected by the works is assessed to be of 'low' suitability for use by roosting bats. To comply with the guidance at Table 7.3 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edn) (Collins, J. (ed), 2016) one bat activity survey was carried out.
- vii. No bat emergence or re-entry activity was detected and no survey evidence to indicate the presence of a bat roost was detected; the presence of roosting bats is reasonably discounted. Precautionary and best practice measures to be applied during the works are described at **Section 5.3**.
- viii. The vegetation in the herbaceous borders provide opportunities for use by nesting birds and sheltering hedgehog and the measures to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation and best practice are described at **Section 5.3**.
- ix. No other protected species were detected. No further surveys are required to inform the planning application.

### Conclusion

- x. The ecological survey and assessment of the portion of The Old Blacksticks property to be affected by the two extensions has not identified any significant ecological constraints on the proposals. The assessment has demonstrated that the works are feasible and acceptable in accordance with relevant ecological considerations and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- xi. The recommendations in **Section 5.0** outline the mandatory measures and additional actions to be applied at the site to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation, the NPPF and best practice and include recommendations for achieving a net gain for biodiversity.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and Rationale

1.1.1 ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned to carry out a licensed bat survey and assessment of relevant parts of the property at The Old Blacksticks, Blacksticks Lane, Chipping PR3 2WL in August 2021. The Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference at the centre of the site is SD 5918 4228. An aerial image of the site is appended at **Figures 1 and 2**.

1.1.2 The survey and assessment are required in connection with a planning application proposing the extension of the property in two areas on the southern elevation:

- a. Extension 1: Extension of the first floor bedroom over the existing steel framed balcony to extend the first floor room; and
- b. Extension 2: Attachment of a steel framed and glass extension on the southern elevation.

1.1.3 It is reported that no re-roofing or re-pointing works are proposed elsewhere at the property.

### 1.2 Scope of Works

1.2.1 The scope of ecological works undertaken in August 2021 comprised:

- a. A desktop study and search for known ecological information at the site and the local area;
- b. A search for invasive plant species within the proposed working area / construction zone of the two extensions;
- c. Assessment of the suitability of the relevant portion of the property to support roosting bat species at any time of year;
- d. Examination of the exterior and interior (where relevant) of the relevant portion of the property for evidence of the current and previous presence of roosting bat species followed by the appropriate scope of bat activity survey;
- e. Search and assessment of the habitats for use by nesting birds including species listed on Schedule 1 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and Priority Species;
- f. Provision of guidance in accordance with wildlife legislation, *National Planning Policy Framework* (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021), *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2016), and best practice in relation to the proposed works; and
- g. The identification of any further surveys or precautionary actions that may be required prior to the commencement of works.

## 2.0 METHOD OF SURVEY

### 2.1 Desktop Study and Data Search

2.1.1 The following sources of information and ecological records were consulted:

- a. MAGiC: A web-based interactive map which brings together geographic information on key environmental schemes and designations, including details of statutory nature conservation sites;

- b. MARIO Maps; and
- c. Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan.

## 2.2 Survey Date and Conditions

- 2.2.1 The site visit was carried out on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021; the weather conditions were dry with a gentle breeze (Beaufort scale 3) and a temperature to 17°C.

## 2.3 Survey Area

- 2.3.1 The survey area comprised the elevations and roof of the portion of the property to be impacted by the two proposed extensions and the likely construction access only. Following examination of the proposals, as illustrated on drawings prepared by Benthom Developments Ltd (Proposed Elevations Drawing BD\_092 P07) this was considered to be an appropriate zone of potential influence of the construction works and impact of the proposals.

## 2.4 Search for Invasive Plant Species

- 2.4.1 A search was carried out for the presence of invasive plant species, including those listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) within the proposed extension working areas.

## 2.5 Licensed Bat Survey and Assessment

### Daylight Survey and Assessment

#### *Surveyor and Survey Date*

- 2.5.1 The daylight licensed bat survey and assessment was carried out by Victoria Burrows, Natural England Class Survey Licence WML CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), Registration Number 2015-10390-CLS-CLS, on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021 (the weather conditions are as reported in **Section 2.2**). Victoria's qualifications and experience meet the criteria as defined in the *Technical Guidance Series Competencies for Species Survey: Bats* (CIEEM, 2013).

#### *Survey Guidelines*

- 2.5.2 The survey was carried out in accordance with standard methodology including the *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (Mitchell-Jones, 2004), the *Bat Workers' Manual 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* (Mitchell-Jones & Mcleish, 2004) and *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3<sup>rd</sup> edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2016).

#### *Habitat Assessment for Commuting / Foraging Bats*

- 2.5.3 Habitats within and adjacent to the site were assessed for their value and suitability for commuting and foraging bats in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3<sup>rd</sup> edn)*, (Collins, J. (ed), 2016). Reference has been made to the categories and descriptions / examples, presented below.

**Table 2.1: Consideration of Suitability of Foraging and Commuting Habitat for Bats**

Suitability	Commuting Habitat	Foraging Habitat
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting bats.	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by foraging bats.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat.	Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree or patch of scrub.
Moderate	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens.	Habitat that is linked to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape and is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. Habitats close to and connected to known roosts.	High-quality habitat that is well-connected to the wider landscape and is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Habitats close to and connected to known roosts.

**Daylight Survey and Inspection: Property**

- 2.5.4 An inspection and assessment of the external surfaces, walls and roofs of the relevant parts of the property was carried out to find potential bat roosting habitat or accesses into crevices areas where roosts may be present. Searches for evidence of bat presence in the form of droppings, urine stains, feeding signs, grease marks and other evidence were also carried out.
- 2.5.5 There is no roof void at the section of property to be affected by the works; an internal survey was not carried out or required.
- 2.5.6 The suitability of the relevant portion of the property for use by roosting bats has been assessed in accordance with Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)*, (Collins, J. (ed), 2016), taking into account any presence of gaps suitable for access by bats, features suitable for use by roosting bats within the buildings (including crevice dwelling species and species which can roost in the open in roof voids), and the suitability of the surrounding habitats for use by foraging and commuting bats.

**Trees and Shrubs**

- 2.5.7 A preliminary assessment of the trees and shrubs within the likely construction zone was conducted to assess their suitability for use by roosting bats, and to inform whether further surveys or precautionary measures were required.
- 2.5.8 Trees and shrubs were assessed from the ground using binoculars and a high-powered torch. Each tree was searched for the presence of the following features:

*Woodpecker holes, rot holes, hazard beams, other vertical or horizontal cracks or splits in stems and branches, partially decayed platey bark, knot holes, man-made holes, tear-outs, cankers in which cavities have developed, other hollows or cavities, including butt-rots, double-leaders forming compression forks with included bark, gaps between overlapping stems or branches, partially detached Ivy (Hedera helix) with stem diameters in excess of 50mm and bat, bird or dormouse (Muscardinus avellanarius) boxes.*

2.5.9 Terms used to describe any features present follow (where possible) those outlined and described in *Bat Tree Habitat Key, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (Andrews, H (ed), 2013) and *Bat Roosts in Trees: A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-care and Ecology Professionals* (BTHK, 2018).

**Equipment**

2.5.10 A list of equipment used is provided below.

**Table 2.2: Survey Equipment Used / Available for Use During Daylight Bat Survey**

Ladders
LED Lenser P14 torch
Canon Ixus digital camera
8x20 binoculars
Ridgid Micro Inspection Camera Borescope CA-300

**Bat Activity: Presence / Absence Survey**

2.5.11 To comply with the guidance at Table 7.3 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn) (Collins, J. (ed), 2016) one bat activity survey was recommended.

2.5.12 Three surveyors experienced in conducting bat surveys, were positioned at suitable locations to maximise the coverage of the relevant portion of the property and identified features to determine any entry into or exit by roosting bats. Surveyor positions are presented at **Figure 2** (appended).

2.5.13 Heterodyne detectors were used to determine any bat detected to species or group (*Myotis* species often cannot be reliably separated to species via their echolocation calls, for example). Recording bat detectors units (Anabat Express) were also used to record and analyse echolocation calls after the survey using AnalookW call analysis software. Any bat emergence or re-entry activity was recorded.

2.5.14 Two SANNCE CCTV systems (comprising a 1080N Digital Video Recorder with screen and 720P high definition cameras with night vision and supplemented with additional infra-red lighting) were used at the surveyor positions described in the table below as a supplementary survey technique.

2.5.15 The survey information is presented below.

**Table 2.3: Bat Activity Survey Dates, Weather Conditions and Surveyors**

Date	15 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
Sunset	20:41
Start time	20:20
End time	22:10
Wind	Beaufort scale 3 (gentle breeze) throughout
Precipitation	Dry
Air temperatures	16°C at 20:30 falling to 14°C at 22:00
Surveyor Position	Surveyor and Detector
1	Victoria Burrows Batbox Duet and Anabat Express SANNCE CCTV system
2	Fiona Megarrell Batbox Duet and Anabat Express SANNCE CCTV system
3	Chris Swindells Magenta and Anabat Express



## 2.6 Other Relevant Protected Species and Animal Life

### Bird Species

- 2.6.1 The relevant portion of the property was searched for pellets, faecal splashes and feathers which may indicate use by roosting or nesting barn owl in accordance with *The Barn Owl Conservation Handbook* (Barn Owl Trust, 2012) and *Barn Owl Tyto alba Survey Methodology and Techniques for use in Ecological Assessment. Developing Best Practice in Survey and Reporting* (Shawyer, 2011).
- 2.6.2 Incidental observations of use of the property and site by other nesting birds were also recorded.

### Badger

- 2.6.3 The survey area for badger covered the site (as annotated on **Figure 2**) and extended to accessible land within a radius of 50 metres from the site boundary. Private gardens / land were excluded from the survey.
- 2.6.4 The survey was conducted in accordance with guidance presented within *Badgers and Development* (Natural England, 2007) and *Badgers: surveys and mitigation for development projects* (Natural England, 2015).
- 2.6.5 The following signs of badger activity were searched for:
- Sett entrances, e.g. entrances that are normally 25 to 35cm in diameter and shaped like a 'D' on its side;
  - Large spoil heaps outside sett entrances;
  - Bedding outside sett entrances;
  - Badger footprints;
  - Badger paths;
  - Latrines;
  - Badger hairs on fences or bushes;
  - Scratching posts; and
  - Signs of digging for food.
- 2.6.6 Habitats within and surrounding the site were assessed in terms of their suitability for use by foraging and sheltering badger in accordance with their known habitat preferences as detailed in current guidance and *Badger* (Roper, 2010).

### Great Crested Newt

- 2.6.7 In accordance with current Natural England guidance (Natural England, 2020) all ponds within an unobstructed 500 metres of a site should be considered for their suitability to support breeding great crested newts. The potential of the proposed development to impact upon any great crested newt population(s) whose breeding ponds are within 500 metres must be considered.
- 2.6.8 The search of habitats in the wider area up to a distance of 500 metres from the site boundary revealed the presence of five ponds, as detailed below.

**Table 2.4: Ponds within 500 metres of the Site**

Pond Reference	OS Grid Reference	Distance and Direction from Working Area	Location (refer to Figure 1)
1	SD 59287 42259	75 metres to the east	Fish stocked garden pond
2	SD 59292 42332	104 metres to the north-east	New garden pond
3	SD 59381 42374	199 metres to the north-east	Field pond
4	SD 59567 42286	373 metres to the east	Field pond
5	SD 59101 42384	123 metres to the north-west	On the opposite side of Blacksticks Lane

**Consideration of Requirement for Further Survey**

2.6.9 The requirement for further survey at each pond was then assessed using the following criteria:

- a. Presence of dispersal barriers to great crested newt movements between ponds and the site, as detected during the walkover survey; and
- b. Distance of ponds from the site, and the potential influence of the proposed development of the site on any populations of great crested newt (if present at ponds), using the Natural England rapid risk assessment tool.

2.6.10 To inform the requirement for further surveys, the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment tool from *GCN Method Statement WML-A14-2 (Version April 2020)* (Natural England, 2020) has been completed. The tool has been completed based on the distances of the ponds from the site, and the size of the working area / construction zone (<0.01 ha). The rapid risk assessment tool assumes that great crested newt are present.

**Table 2.5: Rapid Risk Assessment Result**

Component	Likely Effect	Notional Offence Probability Score
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	0.001 - 0.01 ha lost or damaged	0.05
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.001 - 0.01 ha lost or damaged	0.005
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.001 - 0.01 ha lost or damaged	0.0005
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
	Maximum:	0.05
Rapid risk assessment result:	<b>GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY</b>	

2.6.11 The Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment indicates that the site is sufficiently small and distant from *all* ponds that any proposed development is highly unlikely to impact upon great crested newt populations or their favourable conservation status (if present); therefore no further survey or assessment in relation to great crested newt is required.

**2.7 Survey and Reporting Limitations**

2.7.1 No survey limitations were experienced.

2.7.2 All measurements within this report are approximate only, and have been either estimated whilst on site or calculated using mapping software (QGIS) or internet-based mapping services such as MAGiC and Google Earth.

## 2.8 Evaluation and Assessment Methods

- 2.8.1 Government advice on wildlife, as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021) and associated government circulars has been taken into consideration. Legislation relating to protected species, such as those listed under Schedules 1, 5, 6 and 8 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017*, is referenced where applicable, and any impacts to protected species are evaluated in accordance with current guidance.
- 2.8.2 The presence of any Priority Species, as listed under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006* is noted, and habitats are assessed in terms of their suitability and value for these species. The presence of habitats and/or species listed by the Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan has been taken into account in the evaluation of the site.

## 3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

### 3.1 Desktop Study and Data Search

#### Statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

- 3.1.1 The property and immediate surrounds are not afforded any statutory designation for nature conservation. There are no statutory designated sites within a 2 kilometres radius of the site.
- 3.1.2 The property lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone for the Bowland Fells Special Protection Area (SPA) and SSSI located a minimum of 2.2 kilometres to the north of the site. The SSSI Impact Risk Zone requires the Local Planning Authority to consult with Natural England on likely risks from the following development categories (Ordnance Survey, 2021):

*Infrastructure:* Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.

*Wind and Solar Energy:* Wind turbines.

*Air Pollution:* Any industrial / agricultural development that could cause air pollution (including: industrial processes, livestock and poultry units with floorspace greater than 500m<sup>2</sup>, slurry lagoons greater than 750m<sup>2</sup> and manure stores greater than 3500 tonnes).

*Combustion:* General combustion processes greater than 50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis / gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration / combustion.

*Waste:* Landfill including inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill and hazard landfill.

*Discharges:* Any discharge of water or liquid waste of more than 20m<sup>3</sup>/day to ground (i.e. to seep away) or to surface water, such as a beck or stream.

- 3.1.3 The proposals at the site do not involve any of these works and therefore do not meet the criteria to require consultation with Natural England in relation to the likely risks of impacts on the designated sites.

#### Non-statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

- 3.1.4 Consultation of MARIO Maps indicates that the property and immediate surrounds are not afforded any non-statutory designation for nature conservation.

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### Priority Habitats Inventory

- 3.1.5 The Priority Habitats Inventory<sup>1</sup> was checked via MAGiC map. There are no Priority Habitats identified on the property or immediate surrounds.

### 3.2 Vegetation and Habitats

- 3.2.1 The property is located to the east of Blacksticks Lane and comprises a large residential property with associated managed landscaped gardens.
- 3.2.2 Refer to **Photos 1 and 2**. The vegetation and habitats to the south of the southern elevation of the property (the area to be affected by the extensions) comprises an area of hard-standing with stone flags and gravel extending to a herbaceous border with ornamental varieties of shrubs and plants such as Lupin (*Lupinus* sp.), Sedum (*Sedum* sp.), Lavender (*Lavandula* sp.), Iris (*Iris* sp.), Lamb's-ear (*Stachys byzantine*) and *Euonymus* species.
- 3.2.3 Further south is a strip of short mown grassland with Perennial Rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) and White Clover (*Trifolium repens*).

### Invasive Plant Species

- 3.2.4 No Japanese Knotweed or other invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) were detected at the proposed working area / construction zone.

### 3.3 Licensed Bat Survey and Assessment

#### Habitat Assessment for Commuting / Foraging Bats

- 3.3.1 The habitats surrounding the property comprise an established mature garden with areas of more recently created landscape planting. Further south are fields of semi-improved sheep grazed pasture bordered by wooded copses and scattered mature trees.
- 3.3.2 This mosaic of habitats provide optimal opportunities for a variety of species of foraging and commuting bats including pipistrelle species, brown long-eared and *Myotis* species and are therefore considered to be of moderate suitability for use by foraging bat species.

#### Daylight Survey: Relevant Portion of Property

- 3.3.3 Refer to **Photos 3 to 12**, appended. The portion of the property to be extended comprises a two storey stone building with a pitched slate covered roof with stone parapets at the gable ends. It is understood that the property was constructed circa 2009.

#### ***Extension 1: First Floor Bedroom***

- 3.3.4 In the location of the proposed first floor bedroom extension is a steel and timber framed balcony with a glass balustrade. No potential roost features were found at the balcony and this structure is assessed to have negligible suitability for use by roosting bats.
- 3.3.5 The stone elevation walls on the main property in this location are well pointed and sealed with mortar; no gaps or opportunities for bat access were found.

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<sup>1</sup> A spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.

- 3.3.6 The slate covered roof with a southern aspect (and the section with a northern aspect on the opposite site of the pitch) is intact; no slipped, missing or lifted slates were found. A gap is present at the timber fascia / gutter board at the eaves of the property which may lead to a deeper cavity / roosting opportunity. No bats were observed behind this feature and no droppings were found on the floor or adhering to the elevation wall in this location.

**Extension 2: Glass Framed Extension**

- 3.3.7 The conditions in the location of Extension 2 are similar to that described at Extension 1 with a well-pointed elevation wall and sealed windows frames. No gaps were detected between the stone elevation walls and the stone sills, lintels, jambs and mullions bordering the window frames.
- 3.3.8 No bats were observed behind the timber fascia / gutter board in this location and no droppings were found on the floor or adhering to the elevation wall in this location.

**Assessment**

- 3.3.9 Owing to the presence of minor gaps and the suitability of the surrounding habitats for the attraction of foraging bats, the portion of property to be affected by the works is assessed (in accordance with *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2016)) to be of 'low'<sup>2</sup> suitability for use by roosting bats.

**Daylight Survey: Trees**

- 3.3.10 No trees / shrubs within the likely working area support features suitable for use by roosting bats.

**Bat Activity Surveys**

- 3.3.11 To comply with the guidance at Table 7.3 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2016), one bat activity survey was carried out at the southern elevation of the property with one surveyor positioned on the northern side of the roof pitch to be affected by Extension 1).

**Dusk Emergence Survey: 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

- 3.3.12 No bat emergence or re-entry activity was observed or detected on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021.
- 3.3.13 **Table 8.2**, appended, provides an account of the observations made during the dusk emergence survey and the results of the recording bat detectors.
- 3.3.14 Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) was the only detected bat species flying over the site. The first bat was recorded to enter the survey area from the west by Surveyor 3 at 21:05 (24 minutes after sunset).
- 3.3.15 No other bat species were detected during the survey.

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<sup>2</sup> As defined at Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)* (Collins, J. (ed), 2016): 'A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and / or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a larger number of bats (i.e. to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).

### **3.4 Other Relevant Protected Species and Animal Life**

#### **Bird Species**

- 3.4.1 No evidence of the current use of the surveyed section of the property by nesting birds, including barn owl, was detected.
- 3.4.2 The shrubs along the southern margin of the proposed working area may be used by nesting passerine birds.

#### **Badger**

- 3.4.3 No badger setts or evidence of badger was detected at the site or survey area. The presence of badger is reasonably discounted.

#### **Hedgehog**

- 3.4.4 The herbaceous borders are suitable for use by sheltering and feeding hedgehog (a Priority Species) and hedgehog droppings were found on the lawn and paved areas.

## **4.0 EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT**

### **4.1 Description of Proposals**

- 4.1.1 The proposals, as illustrated on the *Proposed Elevations* and *Proposed 3D Views* prepared by Benthom Developments Ltd (drawings BD\_092 P07 and P09), comprise the extension of the property in two areas on the southern elevation:
- a. Extension 1: Extension of the first floor bedroom over the existing steel framed balcony to extend the first floor room. These works will involve the removal of slates on the south-facing roof pitch of the property and the removal of the timber fascia / gutter board; and
  - b. Extension 2: Attachment of a steel framed and glass extension on the southern elevation.

### **4.2 Designated Sites**

- 4.2.1 It is considered that the site is sufficiently small and distant from all designated sites for nature conservation that the proposed development will have no direct or indirect impact on the designated sites and their features of special interest.

### **4.3 Vegetation and Habitats**

- 4.3.1 None of the habitats to be affected by the proposals are representative of semi-natural habitat or are Priority Habitat. No rare plants were detected at the site.

### **4.4 Protected Species**

#### **Bats**

- 4.4.1 No evidence of current or previous use of the surveyed section of the property / portion to be affected by the extension works by roosting bats was detected during the daylight survey and the dusk emergence survey carried out in August 2021.

- 4.4.2 In accordance with the results of the surveys and assessment it is considered that appropriate and proportionate survey effort has been carried out to determine the likely bat roost status at the site and to demonstrate compliance with the survey guidelines. No further surveys are necessary to inform the planning application.
- 4.4.3 It is recognised that the wider garden habitats are traversed by bats (common pipistrelle) however, in the presence of an appropriate lighting strategy and given the favourable opportunities for it is advised that the impact of the proposals on foraging and commuting bats from roosts in the local area is not likely to be significant. Recommendations in relation to lighting are presented at **Section 5.2**.

#### **Other Animal Life**

- 4.4.4 The herbaceous borders along the southern site margin provide opportunities for use by nesting birds and sheltering hedgehog. Recommendations and actions to be applied to ensure the protection of breeding birds and hedgehog during the site preparation and construction period are described at **Section 5.3**.
- 4.4.5 Appropriate and proportionate survey effort and / or assessment, in accordance with standard survey guidelines has been applied to discount adverse effects on other relevant protected species. No further surveys for other protected species are necessary to support a planning application.

## **5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

- 5.1.1 The recommendations described below aim to ensure that the proposals are implemented in accordance with relevant wildlife legislation, Natural England guidance, the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021), local planning policy and best practice.

### **5.2 Site Design**

#### **Appropriate Use of Lighting**

- 5.2.1 Paragraph 185(c) in Chapter 15 (conserving and enhancing the natural environment) of the NPPF states that development should:

*“limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.”*

- 5.2.2 Any external lighting to be installed at the site must involve the use of appropriate products and screening, where necessary, to ensure no excessive artificial lighting shines over the recommended roost provisions (see below), the garden habitats and other habitats outside the curtilage of the residential property, as lighting overspill may deter use by wildlife such as foraging bats.
- 5.2.3 The lighting scheme will be designed with reference to current guidance, namely:
- Guidance Note 8: Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK* (Institution of Lighting Professionals & Bat Conservation Trust, 2018); and
  - Bats and lighting: Overview of current evidence and mitigation guidance* (Stone, 2014).



## Provisions for Bats and Other Wildlife

5.2.4 To ensure further provisions for roosting bats are accommodated at the property it is recommended that two bat boxes are installed on the Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) trees to the east of the property.

5.2.5 Suitable box specifications are detailed below:



**Insert 1:** Schwegler 1FF, Greenwood Ecohabitat’s single cavity and Schwegler 1FD bat boxes

5.2.6 Bat boxes should be installed to the following guidelines (Bat Conservation Trust, 2016):

- a. At least 4 metres above the ground (where safe installation is possible);
- b. Sheltered from strong winds and exposed to the sun for part of the day (usually south or south-west). Ideally several bat boxes will be installed to provide a variety of different thermal options for bats. Grouping a number of boxes each with a different aspect can achieve this; while a number of boxes is preferable to one, a single box is still viable and may be used by roosting bats;
- c. Located close to unlit linear features, such as lines of trees or hedgerows; and
- d. Installed where the bat box entrance is not cluttered or impeded by branches, or accessible to predators (such as cats) by large branches underneath them.

## 5.3 Mandatory Actions and Best Practice During Site Preparation and Construction

### Precautionary Actions in Relation to Bats

5.3.1 Although no evidence of use of the working area by roosting bats has been detected, owing to the presence of features suitable for use by roosting bats, particularly at the slate covered roof and the timber fascia / gutter board, it is recommended that these features are removed carefully by hand. Slates should be lifted upwards, rather than slid and the underside of the slate should be checked for bats prior to stacking or discard.

### ***Discovery of a Bat During Works***

5.3.2 If at any time during the works a bat is discovered or suspected all contractors must withdraw from the area and ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd (01772 750502) or the Bat Conservation Trust must be contacted for further guidance.



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### Nesting Birds

- 5.3.3 All wild birds are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) while they are breeding. It is advised that any works such as that will affect habitats suitable for use by nesting birds are scheduled to commence outside the bird nesting season. Commencement of works in the nesting season must be informed by a pre-works nesting bird survey, carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist. The bird breeding season typically extends between March to August inclusive.
- 5.3.4 If breeding birds are detected the ecologist will issue guidance in relation to the protection of the nesting birds in conjunction with the scheduled works. This may involve cordoning off an area of the site until the young birds have fledged.

### Protection of Hedgehog

- 5.3.5 Owing to the detected presence of hedgehog, during the site preparation and construction operations it is essential that the following best practice and Reasonable Avoidance Measures are applied:
- Dense vegetation must only be cleared following an inspection for nesting and hibernating hedgehog;
  - No trenches must be left open overnight. Trenches or holes must be covered with a board or fitted with a means of escape (such as ramped edge or a sloping plank of timber). This will ensure that any inquisitive animals do not become trapped;
  - Any pipes must be stored with caps on (to prevent animal entry);
  - No fires must be lit at the site; and
  - Any chemicals or harmful materials must be stored so that they cannot be accessed by inquisitive animals.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The ecological survey and assessment of the portion of The Old Blacksticks property to be affected by the two extensions has not identified any significant ecological constraints on the proposals. The assessment has demonstrated that the works are feasible and acceptable in accordance with relevant ecological considerations and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 6.2 The recommendations in **Section 5.0** outline the mandatory measures and additional actions to be applied at the site to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation, the NPPF and best practice and include recommendations for achieving a net gain for biodiversity.

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**8.0 APPENDIX 1: TABLES**

**Table 8.1: Photographs Taken August 2021**



**Photo 1:** Southern elevation of property showing proposed locations of Extension 1 and 2 and the herbaceous borders



**Photo 2:** Southern elevation of property showing balcony in position of Extension 1



**Photo 3:** Southern elevation of property showing balcony in position of Extension 1



**Photo 4:** Southern elevation of property



**Photo 5:** Balcony at Extension 1



**Photo 6:** Underside of balcony at Extension 1





**Photo 7:** Roof slates above balcony at Extension 1



**Photo 8:** Gap beneath the eaves at Extension 1



**Photo 9:** Northern / opposite side of property to Extension 1



**Photo 10:** Northern / opposite side of property to Extension 1 showing roof pitch with skylights



**Photo 11:** Elevation wall to be covered by Extension 2



**Photo 12:** Extension 2 as viewed through infra-red cameras during bat activity survey

**Table 8.2: Bat Activity Survey 1, 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021, Sunset Time 21:43, Start Time 21:20**

**Surveyor Position 1: Victoria Burrows**

Time	Species	Notes
21:29	Common pipistrelle	Pass (entering survey area from the west)
21:47	Common pipistrelle	Pass
22:06	Common pipistrelle	Pass
22:09	Common pipistrelle	Pass
22:10	End	
The Anabat Express made the following recordings: 4 common pipistrelle recordings between 21:30 and 22:10		

**Surveyor Position 2: Fiona Megarrell**

Time	Species	Notes
22:19	Common pipistrelle	Pass
21:47	Common pipistrelle	Pass
22:07	Common pipistrelle	Pass
22:09	Common pipistrelle	Pass
22:10	End	
The Anabat Express made the following recordings: 10 common pipistrelle recordings between 21:30 and 22:10		

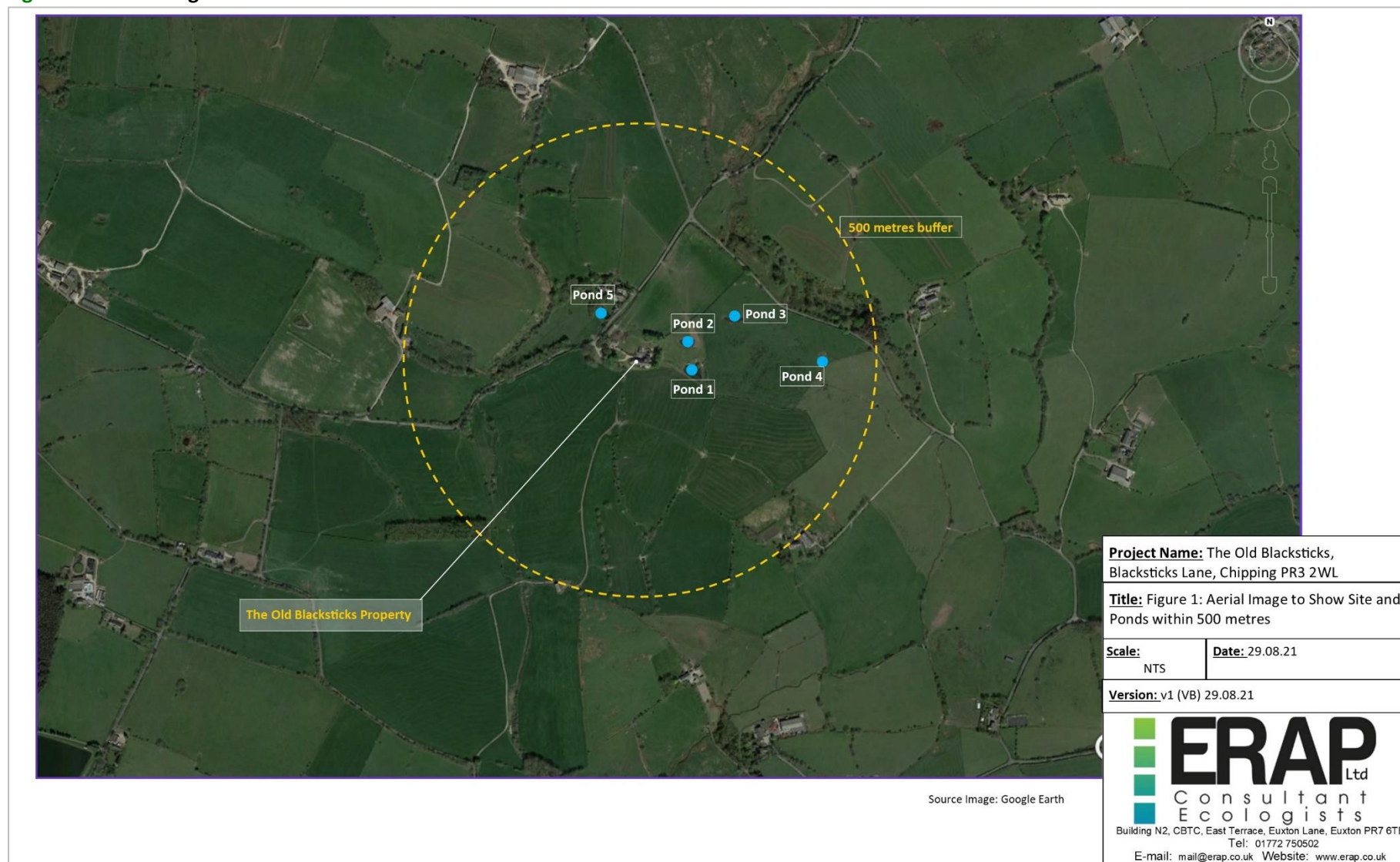
**Surveyor Position 3: Chris Swindells**

Time	Species	Notes
21:05	Common pipistrelle	Pass over hard-standing area (west to east)
21:40	Common pipistrelle	Pass
21:41	Common pipistrelle	Feeding over hard-standing area between house and garage
21:46	Common pipistrelle	Feeding nearby
21:52	Common pipistrelle	Feeding nearby
21:58	Common pipistrelle	Feeding nearby
22:07	Common pipistrelle	Feeding nearby
22:10	End	
The Anabat Express made the following recordings: 13 common pipistrelle recordings between 21:05 and 22:10.		



## 9.0 APPENDIX 2: FIGURES

**Figure 1: Aerial Image to Show Site and Surrounds**



**Figure 2: Plans of the Property Showing Bat Surveyor Positions**

