Lower Beatrix Farmhouse, Dunsop Bridge, BB7 3BE

Bat Building Inspection

Simply Ecology Limited

Ref: SE/LSRQ012/01

December 2025

For:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

1.1.1 In October 2025, Simply Ecology Limited was commissioned by Lewis Surveying to undertake a Building Assessment for bats at Lower Beatrix Farmhouse, Dunsop Bridge, Clitheroe, BB7 3BE (OS grid reference SD664513). See Plan 1 for Site location and Plan 2 for Location Plan.

1.2 Aims

1.2.1 The aims of this ecological assessment were to:

- Identifying potential structures of the buildings that could be used by bats.
- Identifying if there was any evidence of bats around the buildings.
- Providing an assessment of the likely importance of the site for bats and their conservation.
- To confirm the presence or absence of protected species, with a particular emphasis upon bats, within the proposed development site.
- To enable the client to comply with legislation afforded to protected sites and species.

1.2.2 To achieve this, an appraisal of the building and any protected species on the site was undertaken on 6th November 2025. This submission presents the results of the surveys at the site.

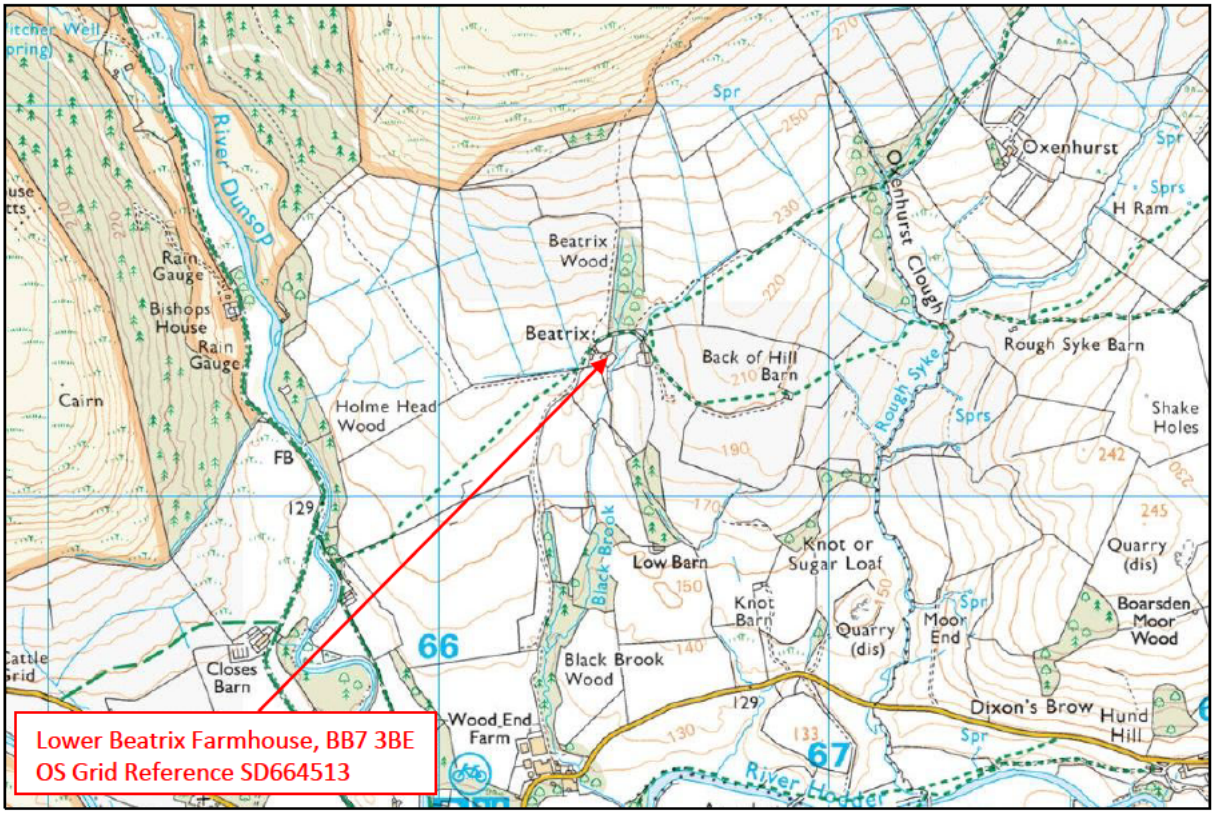
1.3 Site Description and Proposed Works

1.3.1 The Site is located in a rural setting near the village of Dunsop Bridge, ~12.5km northwest of Clitheroe. The building was a stone-built, two-storey detached residential property built in the 18th Century with a footprint of approx. 170m².

1.3.2 The land use around the property is agricultural with arable and pastoral fields bounded by low hedgerows which represent only limited foraging habitat or linear commuting features. The fells of the Trough of Bowland to the north which has low suitability for bats.

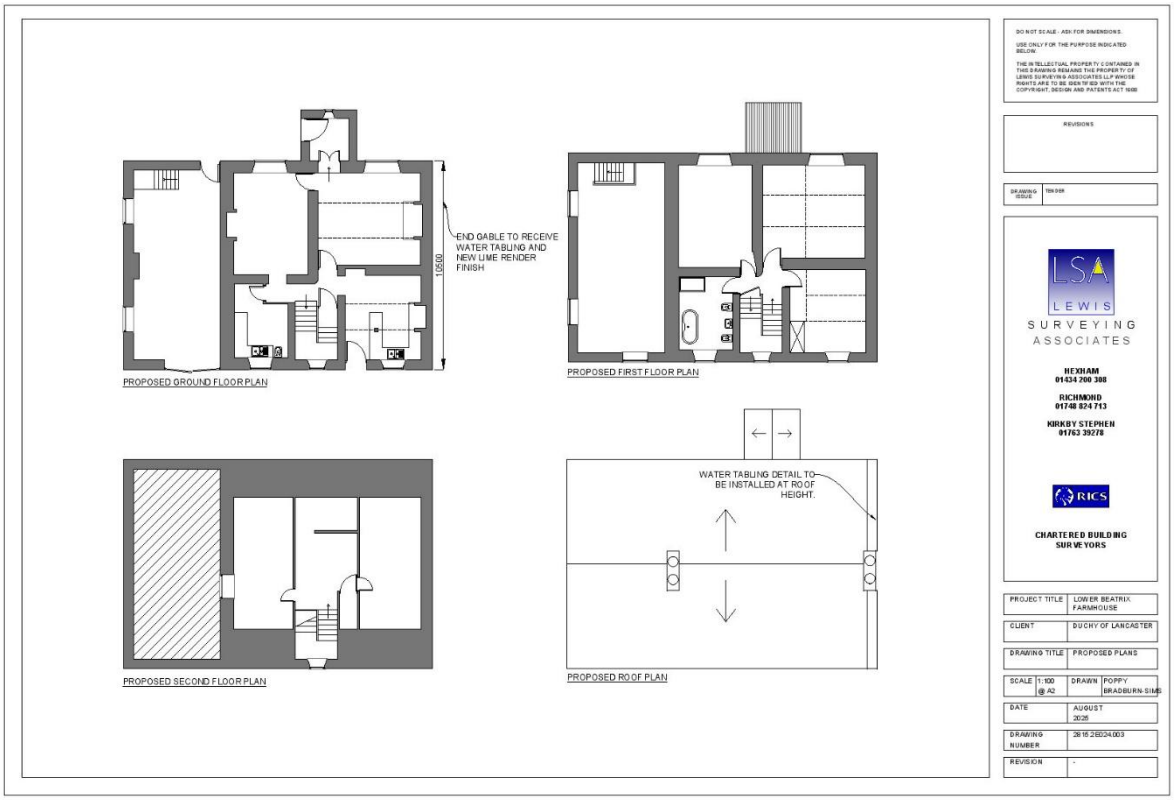
1.3.3 There are pockets of woodland, including Beatrix Wood Black Brook Wood, and the River Dunsop nearby which offer good potential for foraging bats but these are rather isolated in the wider landscape.

1.3.4 The surveys described in this report were commissioned to inform a listed building application to add water tabling/coping stones to the gable end of the property to combat problems with water ingress. See Plan 3 and Plan 4.

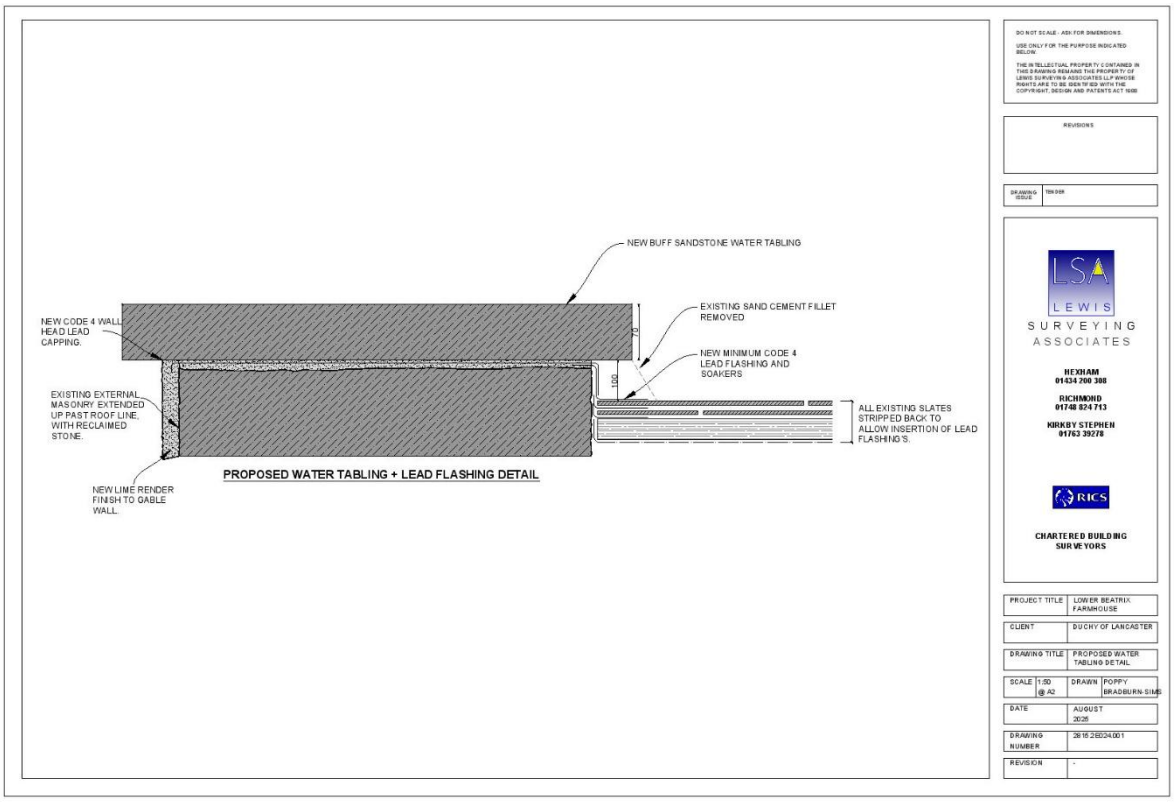


Plan 1: Site Location.

Plan 2: Location Plan.



Plan 3: Proposed Floor and Roof Plan.



Plan 4: Proposed water tabling and lead flashing works.

Plate 1: General view of the west-facing elevation of the property (with MEWP in foreground).

2.0 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

2.1 Bat Building Inspection

2.1.1 An inspection of the building was specifically carried out to search for bats. The building survey was undertaken in accordance with the standard methods described in the 'Bat Worker's Manual' (JNCC 2004) and 'Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines' (BCT 2023). In accordance with best practice, the survey comprised the following elements:

- An inspection of the exterior of the building to look for obvious signs of bat activity (such as droppings) and assessing the potential for entry/exit into the property. Lighting was provided by a Shadowhawk 20,000 lumen LED torch and Black Diamond Men 325 lumen headlamp. Any cracks or inaccessible areas were inspected using a ProVision PV-636 endoscope and/or a DJI Mini 3 camera drone.
- An internal inspection of voids was also undertaken to determine whether bats were present, to look for signs of activity (such as discarded prey items and droppings) and to assess potential suitability for bat species. Lighting was provided by a 20,000 lumen LED torch and a 325 lumen headlamp.

2.1.2 The following signs were searched for, as these would indicate bat presence:

- Staining around a hole, caused by natural oils in the bats' fur.
- Stains beneath a hole, caused by bat urine.
- Scratch marks around a hole, caused by bat claws.
- Bat droppings beneath a hole.
- Audible squeaking from within a hole, especially on hot days or at dusk.
- Insects (especially flies) around a hole.

2.1.3 An assessment of the surrounding habitat quality for bats was carried out by walking the area on foot and later from reference to OS maps aerial images (Bing Maps). These searches were used to identify important land use and habitat features known to be favoured by bats.

2.1.1 Where there was evidence bat presence found (e.g., droppings found below a cavity, bats heard inside a feature or observed flying to or from a feature) or actual bat presence, the feature was categorised as a **confirmed** roost.

2.1.2 Unless a bat roost was confirmed, once surveyed each structure was categorised into one of four categories, namely high, moderate, low or negligible suitability according to its **potential** to support roosting bats. These categories are determined in line with Bat Conservation Trust guidelines for assessing habitat and feature suitability (see Table 1).

2.1.3 Subsequent advice/action would depend on the findings of the building surveys. If potential was found, then subsequent bat activity surveys would be required in accordance with standard methods described in the 'Bat Worker's Manual' (JNCC 2004) and 'Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines' (Bat Conservation Trust 2023).

2.2 Personnel

2.2.1 The building inspection and the report verification were undertaken by Jason Reynolds MSc MCIEEM. Jason is an experienced ecologist who has been continuously employed in the field of nature conservation since 1995 (30 years' experience) and has a wealth of experience in both the statutory nature conservation agencies and private consultancy. During his career has worked in Conservation Officer roles for the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, English Nature, Environment Agency, Cumbria Wildlife Trust and Durham Wildlife Trust prior to setting up Simply Ecology ecological consultancy in 2007, where he is the Lead Ecologist. He has an MSc from The University of Aberdeen and his thesis investigated the relationship between habitat type and complexity and the foraging behaviour of Pipistrelle bats. Jason holds protected species survey licences for all British bats, white-clawed crayfish and great crested newts.

2.3 Timing and Constraints

2.3.1 The building survey was undertaken on 6th November 2025. The timing of the building inspection to search for signs of bats posed no constraints as building inspections can be undertaken at any time of year. An assessment of a building's potential to support bats can therefore be made according to evidence found, building condition, location and the experience of the surveyor.

2.3.2 A mobile Elevated Working Platform was used to carry out a close up inspection of all working area, and it was possible to reach a robust conclusion about the potential of the property to support roosting bats.

Table 1: Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites, using BCT Good Practice Guidelines (BCT 2023).

Potential Suitability	Description	
	Roosting habitats in structures	**Commuting and foraging habitats**
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels)	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats although an element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats although an element of uncertainty remains for bats with non-standard behaviour.
Low	A structure or a tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only limited potential (aligns with BS8596: 2015 Surveying for bats in trees and woodland (BSI, 2015).	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 habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection conditions (e.g. temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels, levels of disturbance) and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established once presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of tress and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by a larger number of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat	Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree- lined watercourse and grazed parkland

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Building Inspection

3.1.1 The target building was a detached two storey residential property (see Plate 1 and Plate 2). The building is constructed of local stone and the gable end where the works will be carried out had a pebbledash render coat. The pitched roofs had slate tiles. The building was occupied at the time of the Roost Assessment and was found to be in good condition.

Plate 2: General view of the south facing aspect of the house (gable end subject to inspection on LHS).

3.1 Bat Building Inspection

3.1.1 Overall, the pitched roof of the property was intact, there were some slates that were cracked or had been re-fixed into place, but it was generally in good condition (see Plate 3). No detailed assessment of the entire roof was needed as the working area is at the verge, so this is addressed below.

3.1.2 Similarly, no inspection of the ridge was undertaken as this was not necessary due to no connection to the verge and did not fall within the Zone of Influence of the proposed works.

3.1.3 The verge along the gable end was inspected at height using a Mobile Elevated Working Platform (MEWP) (see Plate 4).

3.1.4 Lead flashings around the chimney were inspected and found to be intact and well fitted (see Plate 5). No lifting or gaps were present, and therefore **no potential roost features (PRFs) were identified** in this area.

3.1.5 The MEWP access showed that the verge render was variable in quality and coverage (see Plate 6). In most areas, the mortar bedding between the pebbledash render and slate tiles was generally intact and well sealed, offering negligible roosting potential (see Plate 7 and Plate 8).

3.1.6 However, in some areas, the verge mortar was patchy and inconsistent (see Plate 9). Occasional gaps were noted, but many of these were too small and exposed to be suitable for bats.

3.1.7 The external render and stonework adjacent to the verge were in good condition (see Plate 9). No significant cracks or holes were identified that could provide roosting opportunities.

3.1.8 A handful of larger voids were present. These did not provide access to roof battens or enclosed cavities, reducing suitability for crevice-dwelling bats (see Plate 10). These gaps were considered to open and draughty to provide meaningful roosting opportunities

3.1.9 No other features within the verge zone of influence, such as doors or windows, were relevant to the assessment. These elements were excluded from inspection as they have no structural connection to the proposed works.

3.1.10 The walls and flat surfaces around the building were searched for evidence of bat activity. No bat droppings were identified on any of the surfaces.

3.1.11 No loft space was present inside the property to inspect as the bedroom ceilings follow the roofline. Therefore, this concluded the inspection.

3.1.12 **In summary**, the target building was a detached stone residential property with pitched roofs; it was assessed for potential roost features and signs of bat activity in the area where modifications to the roof will be carried out to install water tabling (to address problems of water ingress on this exposed gable end). The inspection found that the verges were largely well mortared and there were no gaps. However, some gaps under slates in the verges required closer inspection. However, no evidence of bat activity was found and none of the gaps were considered suitable for crevice dwelling bats, being either too small or too large and airy. The nature of these features, combined with the upland fringe, exposed nature of

the site (see Plate 11) meant that overall bat roosting potential in the working area was considered to be Negligible.

Plate 3: The pitched main roof was in good condition.

Plate 4: The water tabling will occur along the verge, so the roof edge and chimney and whether they offered any PRFs were the key area for inspection.

Plate 5: The survey started by inspecting the chimney. Lead flashings around the chimney were intact and offered no roosting potential.

Plate 6: Once up at height in the MEWP, it was clear that the mortaring along the verges was patchy/inconsistent.

Plate 7: The close-up inspection found that the verges were generally well sealed, and large parts of the mortar offering nil roosting potential.

Plate 8: A thick bed of mortar was present between the pebbledash and the slates, and mostly had no roosting potential.

Plate 9: There were some gaps in the verge which, were too small and did not have roosting potential.

Plate 10: The larger gaps between the two layers of slate offered no access to the roof battens and the gap did not offer a suitable crevice for bat roosting.

Plate 11: The landscape around the Farmhouse has a small amount of woodland nearby, but is in an exposed and open location, which reduces overall suitability for bats.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 In October 2025, Simply Ecology Limited was commissioned by Lewis Surveying to undertake a building inspection for bats at Lower Beatrix Farmhouse, Dunsop Bridge, Clitheroe, BB7 3BE. It is understood that the proposed works comprise works to the verge of the roof to install water tabling in order to address current problems of water ingress.

4.2 Bats

4.2.1 An bat scoping survey of this residential property was undertaken. The residential building was heated and occupied at the time of survey and in a good state of repair. The building was subject to a thorough external survey.

4.2.2 If bats are present, the proposed works could have the potential to affect any roost of protected bat species. The survey found that verge was largely intact and well mortared. Some small gaps were present but these were considered too small to be Potential Roost Features. Larger gaps were also observed under the slates, but closer inspection found these to be large and exposed and unsuitable for crevice dwelling bats. No evidence of bat activity was found. Overall, the verge was considered to have **negligible suitability for roosting bats**.

4.2.3 In conclusion, it was the professional ecologist's opinion that the verge working area has **negligible suitability** for roosting bats and there was no reasonably foreseeable likelihood that bats were present in the working area and no roosts will be impacted by the work.

4.2.4 As such, the following advice is provided:

- *It is advised* that all works can continue with no need for any supervision by the Appointed Ecologist. No Natural England licence is necessary in this instance as no impact upon any bat roost is predicted. This is due to the lack of any signs of current or historical use of the buildings by bats. **Reason**: This will deliver compliance with: Section 9 (1 & 4) of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Part 3 (41; 1 & 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and Section 15 (187 & 193) of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) and the Local Authority's statutory duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity under The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 which is reflected in the Local Plan.

5.0 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. [Eds.] (2004). *The Bat Workers Manual (3rd edition)*. Joint Nature Conservancy Council, Peterborough.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made

Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents/2023-10-17

Environment Act 2021

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents

National Planning Policy Framework 2024:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2006/ukpga_20060016_en_1

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents

ANNEX A: STATUTORY AND PLANNING CONTEXT

A.0.1 The client is advised that many species of British wildlife are legally protected. The following section provides a brief overview of the protection afforded to species commonly encountered during development. The Recommendations at the end of this report will advise as necessary, but it is also useful for the client to have an understanding of the legal protection as this helps to ensure that the law is complied with.

A.1 Badgers

A.1.1 Badgers are protected under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA), and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is illegal to:

- Kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger or to attempt to do so;
- Interfere with a badger sett by damaging or destroying it;
- Obstruct access to or any entrance of a badger sett;
- Disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett

A.1.2 A badger sett is "any structure or place that displays signs indicating current use by a badger". Natural England, the Government's statutory nature conservation body, classifies a sett as active if it has been occupied within the last 12 months.

A.1.3 Operations that might cause disturbance of an active sett entrance can be carried out under licence from Natural England. If any badgers are found during the course of the survey, this will be highlighted in this report.

A.2 Birds

A.2.1 All wild birds are protected against killing or injury under The WCA 1981 (as amended). This protection extends to bird's nests during the breeding season, which makes it an offence to damage or destroy nests or eggs. Birds that are listed on Schedule 1 of the Act receive additional protection against intentional or reckless disturbance during the breeding season. This makes it an offence to disturb these species at or near to their nesting site.

A.3 Protected Species (includes bats, otter, hazel dormouse, great crested newts, and others)

A.3.1 The client is advised that all bats and great crested newts are European Protected Species (EPS). These EPS are protected under legislation in England and Wales via the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Regulation 43). A full list of PS is provided in Schedule 2 of the Regulations. In addition, these PS also receive the protection of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) in respect of Section 9 (4)(b & c) and (5).

A.3.2 If both national and international legislation are taken together, the legislative protection afforded to these species makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally/ deliberately kill, disturb, injure or capture them.

- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any breeding site or resting place.
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a European Protected Species.

A.3.3 If an activity is likely to result in any of the above offences, derogation from the legal protection can be issued in the form of a European Protected Species licence issued by Natural England. Licences for development purposes are issued under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) and only allow what is permitted within the terms and conditions of the licence. If any EPS are found during the course of the survey, this will be highlighted in this report.

A.4 Protected Mammals and Reptiles (includes water vole, red squirrel, reptiles and others)

A.4.1 All native reptiles and a variety of British mammals also receive protection under The WCA 1981 (as amended). Schedule 5 of The WCA lists animals that are protected. The degree of protection varies. Water voles and red squirrel are examples of species with full protection. The Act makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure, take, possess, or trade in any wild animal listed in Schedule 5, and prohibits interference with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places.

A.4.2 All native reptiles in the UK are protected. The commoner species such as grass snake, common lizard, slow worm and adder are protected only from unlawful killing and injuring. In practice this may require a reptile protection scheme before implementing a planning permission but no specific licence is required. Sand lizard and smooth snake listed as EPS (see A3.3 above).

A.4.4 If any protected species are found during the course of the survey, this will be highlighted in this report.

A.5 Non-native invasive species

A.5.1 A number of non-native plant species growing wild in the UK are listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA due to their invasive nature and the detrimental impact they can have on native habitats and wildlife. This legislation makes it an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant species which is included in Part II of Schedule 9.

A.5.2 This legislation should be considered during site clearance works which could lead to the spread of Schedule 9 listed plant species from the site if plant material is not properly handled and disposed of. Development proposals should also consider the removal of invasive species from areas of site that would otherwise remain unaffected by works in order to avoid the risk of these invasive plants spreading from the site in the future and enhance habitats within the site. This would in turn free up space for wildlife friendly planting, prioritising use of native species within planting schemes where appropriate.

A.6 Planning Considerations

A.6.1 When considering each planning application, the presence of protected species, such as those listed above, is a material consideration which must be fully considered by

the Local Authority when granting planning permission. If a licence from Natural England is required, then prior to issuing any planning consent, the local planning authority will need to be satisfied that there is no reason why such a licence would not be issued. Therefore, in reaching the planning decision the local planning authority will need to have regard to the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The three licensing tests given in the Regulations must be considered. In summary, these are that:

1. The development is required for the purpose of:

- Preserving public health or public safety;
- For other imperative reasons of over-riding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;
- For preventing serious damage to property.

2. There is no satisfactory alternative.

3. The proposal will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status.

A.6.2 All necessary information would need to be provided to the planning authority as part of the planning application in order to address the above tests.

A.6.3 The Natural Environment and Communities Act (NERC Act) 2006 extended the biodiversity duty set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act to public bodies and statutory undertakers to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. The Duty is set out in Section 40 of the Act, and states that:

"Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity"

A.6.4 The Duty applies to all local authorities, community, parish and town councils, police, fire and health authorities and utility companies. Section 41 (S41) of this Act (the 'England Biodiversity List') also requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. This list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40(1) of the Act.

A.6.5 Building upon this duty is The Environment Act 2021, which introduced the statutory basis for Biodiversity Net Gain as part of a goal to reverse species abundance decline by 2030. Under this framework, developments are required to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value compared to pre-development conditions via the use of a measurable and quantifiable Metric. This can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite gains, or statutory biodiversity credits. This approach ensures that biodiversity is a central consideration in the planning process.

A.6.6 Finally, Local Authorities must follow the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which provides guidance on the interpretation of the law in relation to wildlife

issues and development. For each development proposal considered by the Local Planning Authority the NPPF states that the authority must aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.