



**FIELD HOUSE BARN, FULLSHAW LANE,
LANGSETT.**

MAP REF: SE 20932 01254

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page Number
1. INTRODUCTION.	3
2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.	4
3. SURVEY RESULTS.	7
4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN.	16
5. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.	18
6. RECOMMENDATIONS.	20
7. REFERENCES.	22
Appendix I. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.	24
Appendix II. BAT INFORMATION	25
Appendix III. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA – PRE-DEVELOPMENT.	27
Appendix IV. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA – POST-DEVELOPMENT.	28

1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. There are plans to submit a planning application to convert the existing Field House Barn into three residential units for holiday lets.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. That survey was carried out on 24th July 2025. This report outlines the findings of all surveys and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.4. Appendices I to III of this report provides additional information on specific species and are designed to assist the reader in understanding the contents of this report.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. Prior to visiting the site, the survey area was cross referenced to maps and aerial photographs to give a general idea of the habitats and potential issues within the area and to identify potential access and walking routes.

2.2. The survey area was walked where access was agreed and public rights of way were used where no access was agreed. All habitats within and immediately around the survey area were documented and the dominant species within that habitat listed in line with the UK Habitat Classification methodology to identify the broad habitat types throughout the survey area.

2.3. The survey area and immediate surrounding area was thoroughly searched for evidence of badger (*Meles meles*) activity by looking for the following signs in line with Harris S, Cresswell P and Jefferies D (1989). *Surveying Badgers*. Mammal Society: -

- * Badger setts.
- * Badger latrines or dung pits.
- * Badger snuffle holes and evidence of foraging.
- * Badger paths.
- * Badger prints in areas of soft mud.
- * Badger hairs caught on fencing.

2.4. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 50m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) activity by looking for the following signs, in line with Rob Strachan, Tom Moorhouse and Merryll Gelling (2011). *Water Vole Handbook: Third Edition*: -

- * Water vole burrows.
- * Water vole faeces and latrines.
- * Water vole feeding stations.
- * Water vole runs.
- * Water vole prints in areas of soft mud.
- * Water vole lawns.
- * Predator field signs.

2.5. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 50m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of otter (*Lutra lutra*) activity by looking for the following signs

in line with the P Chanin (2003). *Monitoring the Otter and Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers: Monitoring Series No10 Guidelines*: -

- * Otter prints in soft mud.
- * Otter spraints.
- * Otter Holts.

2.6. The survey area was searched for watercourses and waterbodies. Where found, and where safe to enter the water, all were thoroughly searched for the presence of crayfish, for approximately 50m in each direction of the site, by searching under rocks and logs. Where stated, crayfish traps were also deployed into the watercourse. All survey work was carried out in accordance with the *Conserving Natural 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No 1, Protocol for Monitoring the White Clawed Crayfish*.

2.7. The survey area was searched for mature trees and derelict buildings and where found these were checked for potential bat roosting sites in line with Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)* by looking for the following signs: -

- * Holes, cracks or crevices.
- * Bat Droppings.

2.8. The land immediately adjacent to the survey area was assessed for bat roosting potential and bat foraging potential. Connective routes and flight lines were also assessed whilst on site and using maps of the area.

2.9. The area within 500m of the survey site was cross referenced to maps to highlight all ponds close to the site. Where possible, all ponds identified were accessed using agreed access or public rights of way to assess the potential for great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) to be present.

2.10. The survey area was assessed for the potential for reptiles and suitable reptile habitats. Where applicable the area was also searched for the presence of reptiles.

2.11. Where appropriate, the habitat within and surrounding the survey area was searched for species such as hazel, oak, honeysuckle, bramble and other species which may provide potential habitat for hazel dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*). Field signs such as feeding remains and nests were also searched for where possible, in line with P Bright, P Morris and T Mitchell-Jones *the Dormouse Conservation Handbook 2nd Edition*.

2.12. Where appropriate, the area within and surrounding the survey area was assessed for its potential to house habitat for red squirrels. Field signs of red squirrels were searched for at least every 50m, looking for any dreys, feeding signs or sightings of red squirrels.

2.13. All surveys were carried out in line with the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM) survey standards and advice.

2.14. This document is prepared in line with The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the government policy on biodiversity and nature conservation and places a duty on Planning Authorities to give material consideration to the effect of a development on legally protected species when considering planning applications. The NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance on “Natural Environment” also promote sustainable development by ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity and that it is conserved and enhanced within the development.

2.15. This report is prepared in line with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act that came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

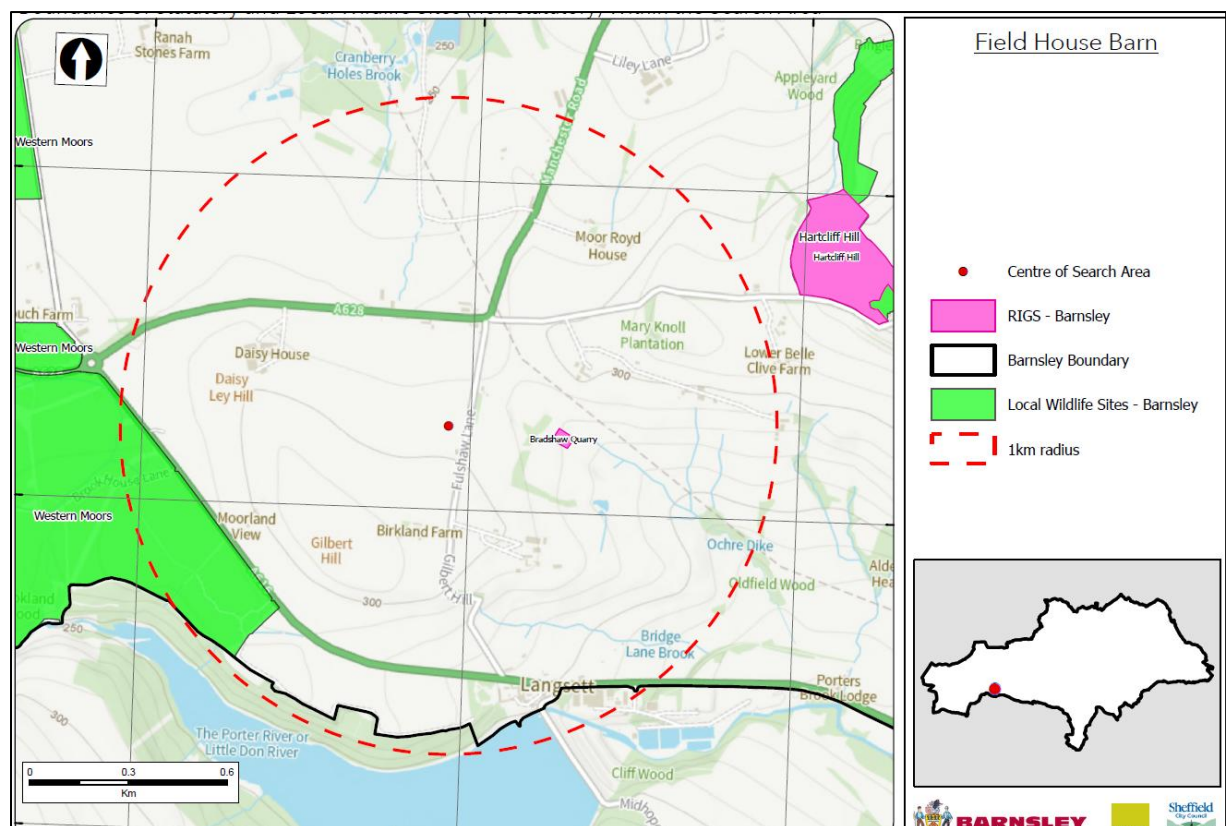
2.16. This survey was carried out by Derek Whitcher who has over twenty years’ experience of surveying for wildlife and has run his own wildlife consultancy since 1998. He has extensive experience of a wide variety of survey techniques for a variety of species of protected wildlife supplemented by attendance on a wide range of training courses through CIEEM, FSC and BCT. As a member of CIEEM he is committed to continuous professional development, a continual process of learning and career development, a condition of CIEEM membership. He holds current Natural England survey licences for barn owl, bat, great crested newt and white clawed crayfish.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. A data search request was submitted to Barnsley Biological Records Centre for existing records of designated sites and protected species within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.2. There are no national and international designated sites in the search area as shown on the map above. There are no locally designated sites close enough to the site to be affected by the proposed works.



3.1.3. There are no amphibian or reptile records in the search area.

3.1.4. There are badger, brown hare and hedgehog records in the search area but none for the survey area.

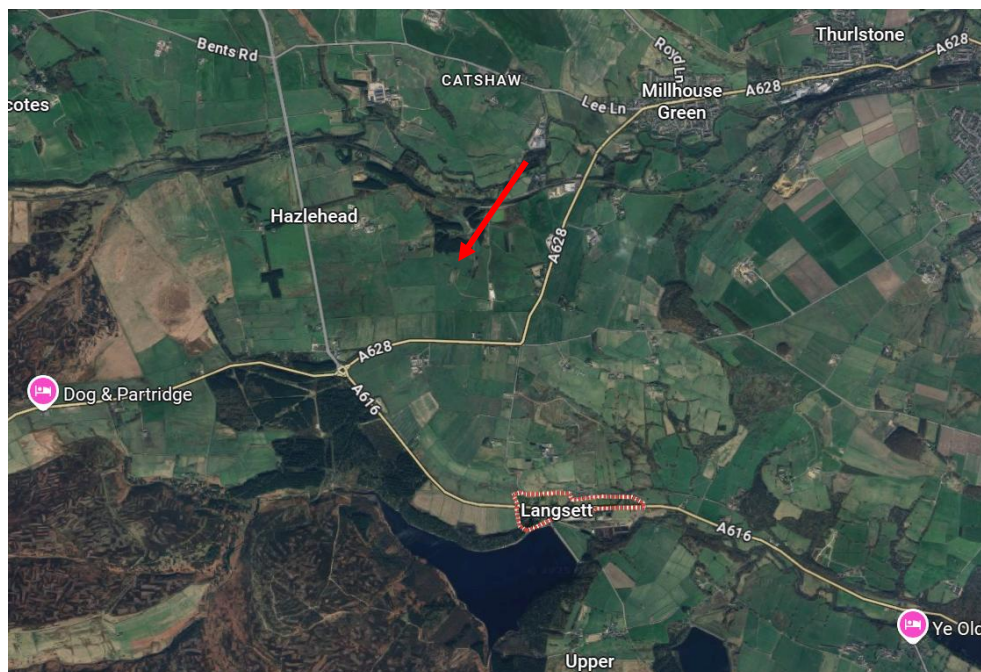
3.1.5. There are abundant bird records around the area but none for the survey area.

3.1.6. The South Yorkshire Badger Group holds records within the area surrounding the site but there are no records on or adjacent to the survey area.

3.1.7. A data search request has been submitted to South Yorkshire Bat Group for existing records of bat roosts in the area around the site. There are no records close to the survey area.

3.2. The Surveyed Area.

3.2.1. The aerial photograph below shows the location of the site marked with a red arrow and the surrounding area. The site is located in a rural area on the hills above Penistone, surrounded by open grazing land to all sides.



3.2.2. The site is shown below with the proposed development area shaded in yellow.



3.3. Description of Habitats.

3.3.1. Appendix IV of this report contains an annotated map marked up with the varying habitats that are on the site. The primary habitats on and adjacent to the site are: -

- g3c – Other neutral grassland.
- u1b – Developed land, sealed surface.
- u1b5 – Building.
- u1c – Artificial, unvegetated, unsealed surface.

3.3.2. Biodiversity calculations have been calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, the current version at this time.

3.3.3. g3c – Other Neutral Grassland.

This is dealt with below as three separate parcels of land.

3.3.3.1. The first is the proposed site access that will utilise a gate to the adjacent field and a corner of that field. At the time of this survey, that area was being grazed by sheep with a short, close grazed sward.



3.3.3.1.1. The sward is approximately 50mm high and the species present include Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*).

3.3.3.2. The second area is to the east of the barn, between it and Fullshaw Lane.

3.3.3.2.1. This area is shown in the photographs below. The foundations of a new dwelling on the adjacent plot have been excavated and piled onto part of this area. Under the rules of the scheme, this is classed as degraded land and must be classed to be the habitat it was prior to degrading. Therefore, this plot is dealt with in its entirety as if it were still other neutral grassland.



3.3.3.2.2. Species present included tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Timothy (*Phleum pratense*), creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*), meadow pea (*Lathyrus pratensis*), spear saltbush (*Atriplex* spp.), common knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), thistle (*Cirsium* sp(p)), dock (*Rumex* sp.), mouse-eared hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*), teasel (*Dipsacus sylvestris*), nettle (*Urtica dioica*), rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*) and ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*).

3.3.3.3. The third area is around the side and back of the barn.

3.3.3.3.1. This is very similar to the area to the front of the barn except there are piles of stone and the area to the rear of the barn is heavily worn by sheltering sheep.



3.3.3.3.2. Species present included tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*), meadow pea (*Lathyrus pratensis*), thistle (*Cirsium* sp(p)), dock (*Rumex* sp.), Mouse-eared hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*), teasel (*Dipsacus sylvestris*), nettle (*Urtica dioica*), rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*) and ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*).

3.3.3.4. The condition assessments for these habitats are within the Statutory BNG Condition Assessment document that accompanies this report. The condition of all of the grassland area is poor, failing the essential criteria but passing three other criteria.

3.3.4. u1b - Developed land, sealed surface.

3.3.4.1. There is an area of concrete at the front and down the side of the barn classified as developed land with a sealed surface.



3.3.4.2. There is no condition assessment for this habitat.

3.3.5. u1b5 – Building.

3.3.5.1. There is one building on the site, the barn. This is shown below and is dealt with in more detail later in this report.



3.3.5.2. There is no condition assessment for this habitat.

3.3.6. u1c – Artificial, unvegetated, unsealed surface.

3.3.6.1. The existing drive from Fullshaw Lane towards the barn is an artificial, unvegetated surface. This is shown below.



3.3.6.2. There is no condition assessment for this habitat.

3.4. Description of Fauna.

3.4.1. There were no badger setts or badger field signs present anywhere within the survey area. Badger setts are known to exist in the surrounding area but not within 200m of the survey area.

3.4.2. There is no watercourse close to the site and therefore no habitat for water voles, otters or white clawed crayfish.

3.4.3. The closest pond to the site is 400m to the southeast of the survey area. However, there are no amphibian records in the data search results.

3.4.4. There is one barn present in the survey area.

3.4.4.1. The barn is built with concrete blockwork walls with corrugated sheeting on the rear gable end and a timber panel on one side. The roof is pitched and covered with corrugated sheets, all as shown in the photographs below.



3.4.4.2. Internally the barn is open to the underside of the roof with a mezzanine floor to front and rear. There have been sheep in the barn and the floor is covered with their droppings. There was also one chicken in the barn at the time of the survey.



3.4.4.3. No bat or barn owl droppings or bat field signs were identified inside the barn and there were no nesting birds or old nests present.

3.4.4.4. The barn was assessed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines, Edition 4 to have negligible potential for roosting bats.

3.4.5. The site lies in an elevated and exposed area of open grazing fields. This surrounding habitat is assessed to have a low potential for foraging bats.

3.4.6. There are few opportunities for nesting birds in the survey area limited to nests inside the building.

3.4.7. The site is assessed to have little potential for reptiles. The site comprises open grazing fields with no potential shelter for reptiles.

3.4.8. The site is assessed to be an unsuitable habitat for hazel dormouse as it lies well outside of their natural range and the habitat is totally unsuitable.

3.4.9. The site is assessed to be totally unsuitable habitat for red squirrels, located outside the natural range for the species.

3.4.10. No alien, invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act were found growing on the site.

3.4.11. The grassland on the site provides some potential foraging for hedgehogs although the site is elevated and exposed and there is little shelter on the site.

3.4.12. The grassland on site is long and unlikely to be suitable for brown hare.

4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN.

4.1. Baseline biodiversity calculations have been carried out using the Statutory Metric tool, the current metric at the time of writing this report. The calculations have been completed for baseline area habitats. The condition assessments for each habitat are shown in the attached condition assessment document and the baseline biodiversity values are shown in the attached metric calculation tool as well as being listed below.

4.2. Area Habitats – Pre Development.

Habitat Type	Area in Ha	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Biodiversity Units (BU).
Other neutral grassland	0.089	Medium	Poor	0.35
Developed land, sealed surface	0.045	V.Low	N/A	0
Artificial, unvegetated, unsealed surface.	0.027	V.Low	N/A	0
Total	0.161			0.35

4.3. There are 0.35BU of area habitat on the site pre-development.

4.4. The following table shows the area habitats present on the site post development.

4.5. Area Habitats – Post Development.

Habitat Type	Area in Ha	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Biodiversity Units.
Other neutral grassland	0.04	Medium	Good	0.35
Developed land, sealed surface	0.11	V.Low	N/A	0
Modified grassland	0.013	Low	Poor	0.03
Rural trees (8)	0.0204	Medium	Moderate	0.06
Total	0.163			0.44

4.6. These figures give a 25% increase in area Biodiversity. This is well above the 10% required but is necessary to achieve the Trading Summary Results needed.

4.7. The following are the headline results achieved.

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.09
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	25.11%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.35	0.39	0.00
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓

No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓

No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

5. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

5.1. There are no international or nationally designated sites within the search area and no non-statutory sites within 2km of the survey area and therefore there will be no impact from the development.

5.2. The habitat on the site that will be impacted by the proposed development will be predominantly other neutral grassland. There are currently 0.35Bu of area habitats present in the survey area.

5.3. No badger setts or badger field signs were identified anywhere in the survey area. Therefore, the development will have no impact on this species.

5.4. There is no watercourse close to the site and therefore no habitat for water voles, otters or white clawed crayfish. There will therefore be no negative impact on these species.

5.5. The closest pond to the site is 400m to the southeast of the survey area. However, there are no amphibian records in the data search results. The proposed development will have no negative impact on amphibians.

5.6. There is one building present in the survey area. This was assessed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines to have negligible potential for roosting bats. The proposed development will have no negative impact on roosting bats in buildings.

5.7. There are no trees in the survey area and therefore no opportunities for roosting bats in trees. The proposed development will not impact on bats roosting in trees.

5.8. The site lies in an elevated and exposed area of open grazing fields. This surrounding habitat is assessed to have a low potential for foraging bats. The proposed development of this existing building will have no impact on foraging bats.

5.9. There are few opportunities for nesting birds in the survey area, limited to opportunities in the barn. The proposed development will have no impact on nesting birds as long as the development commences outside the nesting bird season.

5.10. The site is assessed to have little potential for reptiles. The site is surrounded by open grazing fields with no potential shelter for reptiles. The proposed development will have no negative impact on reptiles.

5.11. The site is assessed to be an unsuitable habitat for hazel dormouse, located outside the natural range for the species. The proposed development will have no negative impact on the species.

5.12. The site is assessed to be totally unsuitable habitat for red squirrels, located outside the natural range for the species. The proposed development will have no negative impact on the species.

5.13. No alien, invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act were found growing on the site. Therefore, there is no potential to cause the spread of Schedule 9 plants in the wild.

5.14. The grassland on the site provides potential foraging for hedgehogs although there is little shelter on the site. There are hedgehog records in the data search results so it is possible they will visit the site. Nevertheless, the proposed development is unlikely to impact on the species.

5.15. The fields around the survey area are assessed to be suitable for brown hares and there are records in the data search results. Nevertheless, the proposed development that converts the existing barn will have no impact on brown hares.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS.

6.1. This Biodiversity Net Gain report shows that the proposed development will give a Biodiversity Net Gain in excess of the minimum requirements.

6.2. If any work commences between March and August, this should be immediately preceded by a thorough nesting bird survey carried out by a suitably experienced person. Any nests identified must remain undisturbed until the young have fledged from the nest.

6.3. It is recommended that a precautionary method of working is in place to prevent any impact on hedgehogs and brown hares throughout the development. As a minimum this should include:

- All personnel to be briefed on the identification of the species in question.
- Vegetation to be cleared no lower than 200mm before being taken to ground level.
- Any potential places of shelter to be moved by hand.
- Materials to be stored on pallets where possible.

6.4. No excavations should be left open overnight to prevent small mammals or badgers being trapped. If any excavations must be left open, mammal ramps should be left in place to allow any small mammals or badgers to escape unharmed.

6.5. It will be necessary to incorporate biodiversity enhancements in the building on the site in line with the NPPF.

6.6. To achieve this, bat roosting opportunities will be provided in the new building in the form of one integrated bat brick, which should be provided in the gable ends.

6.7. In addition, two integrated swift nest boxes should be provided in the new building.

6.8. Further biodiversity enhancement will be provided by one bee brick built into the external walls of the new building.

6.9. As an additional enhancement, it is recommended that 13cm x 13cm gaps should be left at the bottom of any fences to encourage the use of the gardens by hedgehogs.

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Checked by:	
Ruth Georgiou, BSc, MCIEEM	Date: 15 th August 2025.

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JNCC, Peterborough.

Appendix I. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.

Ecology

The nesting season will vary according to the weather each year but generally commences in March, peaks during May and June and continues until September. It is also worth remembering that some birds nest in trees and scrub, but others are ground nesting or prefer man-made structures or buildings.

Surveys

Nesting bird surveys search for potential nest sites in vegetation, buildings etc. Potential nesting sites are observed over a suitable period of time for bird movements or calling male birds that would indicate the presence of a nest. The presence of a nest can be identified from the field signs without the necessity to see the nest itself, thereby avoiding any disturbance of the nests. The best way to avoid this issue is to plan for vegetation clearance to be carried out outside the bird-nesting season.

Legislation

Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part 1. -(1) Of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - kills, injures or takes any wild bird; takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Part 1. -(5) of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturbs young of such a bird, he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the above by inserting after “intentionally” the words “or recklessly”.

Appendix II. BAT INFORMATION.

Ecology

There are currently 18 species of bat residing in Britain, 17 of which are known to breed here. They are extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

Many species appear to be diminishing in numbers, probably due to habitat change and shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet.

As their diet consists solely of insects, bats hibernate during the winter when their food source is at its most scarce. They will spend the winter in hollow trees, caves, mines and the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly the pipistrelle (the commonest and most widespread British bat) can quickly adapt to man-made structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

Surveys

During walkover surveys, bat roosts can be identified by looking for:

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices within any building, tree or other structure.
- Bat droppings along walls, window cills, or on the ground.
- Prey remains, such as insect wings.

Further investigations can be made using endoscopes, by carrying out aerial inspections of trees or by conducting bat activity surveys during dusk and dawn over summer months.

Legislation

Bats are protected under Appendix II and III of the Bern Convention (1982), Schedule 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (some species under Annex II), Annex II of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) and EUROBATS agreement. Numerous species are also listed

under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) making them species of principal importance.

All bats and their roosts are therefore protected in the UK. This makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any bat, to interfere with any place used for shelter or protection, or to intentionally disturb any animal occupying such a place.

The UK has designated maternity and hibernacula areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) under the Habitats Directive. Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan also includes action for a number of bat species and the habitats which support them.

Where development proposals are likely to affect a bat roost site, a licence is required from Natural England.

Appendix III. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA PRE DEVELOPMENT.



Appendix IV. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA POST DEVELOPMENT.

