



Tel: 01798 861 800, E-Mail: info@ecologyco-op.co.uk

R.e. Church Farm, Church Farm Walk, Upper Beeding

This letter provides the results of an updated walkover survey of the above site, undertaken on 11th August 2025. This updates the findings of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal undertaken in 2021¹; in addition to a reptile presence/absence survey and bat activity surveys were undertaken for the site in 2022. The site measures approximately 0.5 ha. and it is proposed that the site will support a new development of four detached properties (Figures 1 & 2).

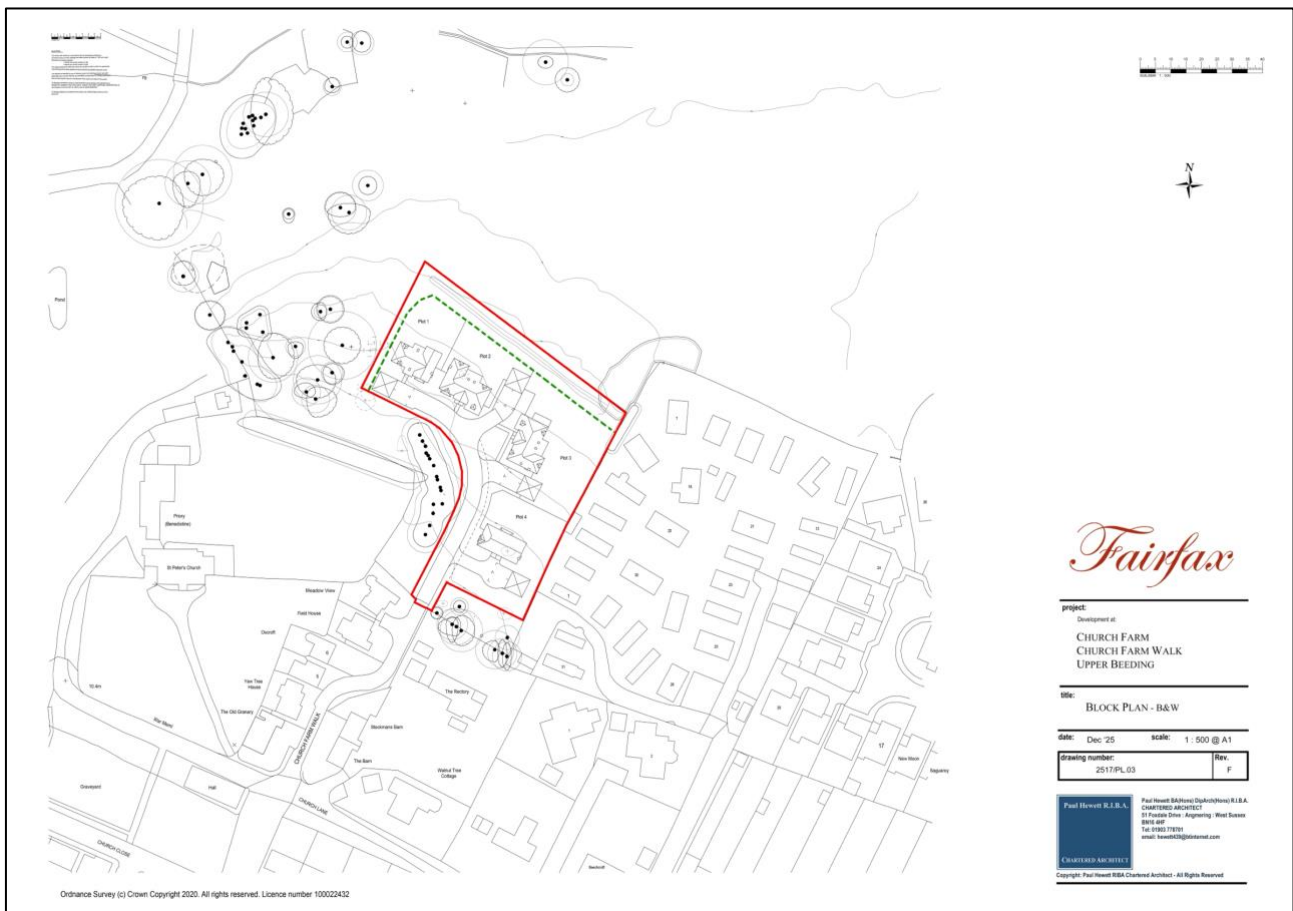


Figure 1. Proposed layout of the site at Church Farm. Image produced by Paul Hewett RIBA – Image 2517/PL03, Rev F, December 2025.

¹ The Ecology Co-op (2022). Interim Ecological Report; Church Farm, Upper Beeding.

In summary, the results of the 2021/22 surveys identified that the site supports a field of dense bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. scrub with scattered shrubs and trees. The site lies within the River Adur Water Meadows & Wyckham Wood Local Wildlife Site. The bramble scrub had been cleared in-between the two visits to the site in 2021.



Figure 2. Ariel image showing the location of the site.

The results of the reptile survey undertaken during 2022 identified that the site supports populations of slow worms *Anguis fragilis* (maximum count of six) and grass snakes *Natrix helvetica* (maximum count of 1). The results of the bat activity surveys identified that the site supports foraging habitat utilised primarily by common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, with infrequent passes noctule *Nyctalus noctule* and *Myotis* sp. bats and a single recorded pass by a barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*.



Photograph 1. View across the northern section of the site.



Photograph 2. Blackthorn scrub to the northeastern boundary of the site.



Photograph 3. View from the southern boundary.



Photograph 4. View from the northern boundary looking east.

The results of the 2025 site visit show that the conditions within the site have largely remained the same (see Photographs 1–4). The site is dominated by recently flailed bramble scrub and fringed with blackthorn and bramble scrub.

Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) data for statutory protected species for up to 1km from the site were acquired. No records for badgers were supplied due to the sensitive nature of this data. Records for six species of amphibians were returned, records for four species of reptiles were returned and seven species of bats were returned.

The site still supports good habitat for reptiles and 'moderate' value foraging habitat for bats. Ecological surveys for planning application purposes are generally considered to be accurate for up to 18 months². Therefore, it will be necessary to update the reptile surveys, through the deployment of artificial refugia and then after a settling period, the refugia will be checked on seven occasions during suitable weather conditions at an appropriate time of the year.

The 2022 bat survey applied three survey visits to the site, though at the scale of the development proposed, it would appear disproportionate to undertake extensive bat activity survey to inform an impact assessment. The nature of the development as an extension to existing residential curtilage at 0.5 hectares in size means that there is not considered to be any risk of causing severance of habitat connectivity for bats and the loss of the immediate foraging resources at the site, which has supported bramble scrub. Mitigation for the development will need to focus on a sensitive lighting scheme that ensures strict restrictions on external lighting, whilst habitat compensation measures and the establishment of new roost features will also need to be incorporated.

As detailed within the 2022 report, vegetation clearance should only take place outside of the bird nesting season (March–August). All other recommendations contained within the 2022 report remain relevant and should be followed.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Ryan Walker
CEnv

Office: Unit 4 Langham Stables, Langham Lane, Lodsworth, West Sussex, GU28 9BU
Phone: 01798 861 800

For further information on The Ecology Co-op, please visit www.ecologyco-op.co.uk

² <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>