

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Brookside Farm, Dagbrook Lane Henfield, West Sussex BN59SH

Client:

Tanya Elsam and Bob Miller

Survey date:

11/05/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Horsham District Council for “Demolition of existing barn and erection of one detached self-build dwelling and associated works”.

On the assumption that site conditions and habitats remain unchanged, the results of this assessment will remain valid for 18 months from the date of this survey i.e. until November 2027, in accordance with CIEEM guidance in the lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. This survey and report should be updated if a planning application has not been submitted within this timeframe.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in the proceeding sections of this report.

Table 1: summary of key findings arising from this survey.

Key Findings
• Various precautionary working methods have been recommended which have been fully detailed within the fauna section of this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the PEA was to obtain data on existing ecological conditions, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the likely significance of ecological impacts on the proposed development. The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

Methodology

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2025](#).

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2025](#).

Survey Details

The site survey was undertaken on 11/05/2026 by Chantae Bleakman-Wells BSc(Hons), MSc, MRSB, Senior Ecologist (GCN licence holder 2025-13005-CL08-GCN and Accredited Agent to Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2025-86119-CL18-BAT).

Table 2: the weather conditions during the survey.

Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
9.8	84.0	40	18.5	None

Survey Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

2. SITE LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Site Location & Context

The site is centred at National Grid reference TQ 20994 14906 and has an area of approximately 0.10ha. The site is situated in a rural landscape, surrounded by grassland, networks of hedgerows and ditches, and pockets of woodland. Main road A2027 runs approximately 850m east of the site. A review of LandIs Soilscales shows that the site is situated on slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils.

The site is well-connected to nearby habitats through field margins, hedgerows and tree lines.

Priority Habitats

There are seven priority habitats within 2km of the site. These comprise deciduous woodland, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, traditional orchard, ancient & semi-natural woodland, coastal saltmarsh, lowland meadows and lowland fens. The closest priority habitat comprises deciduous woodland, located 105m south from the site.

Designated Sites

Statutory Designations within 2km

There are two statutory designations within 2km of the site, as detailed below:

Table 3: the statutory designated sites within 2km of the site boundary.

Designation	Distance from Site
South Downs National Park	1330m W
Brighton And Lewes Downs Biosphere	1330m SE

SSSI Risk Zone

The site does not fall within the impact risk zone for any Sites of Specific Scientific Interest.

Non-Designated Sites

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the local records centre. Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site do not host habitats likely to be of designating quality.

2.2 Foreseen Impacts

No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development, due to the small scale and low overall impact of the development from such sites (where known), alongside additional factors such as distance in combination with connectivity disrupting barriers.

2.3 Recommendations

No recommendations.

3. ONSITE HABITATS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

3.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)

The majority of the site comprises hard standing. There is an elderberry shrub present at the south and west of the building.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment.

Ruderal/Ephemeral (81)

Ruderal vegetation was present within approximately half of the open barn structure, with pioneer species such as bramble, thistle and nettles dominating.

Species present within this habitat include bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), wood dock (*Rumex sanguineus*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*).

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the ruderal/ephemeral was assessed to have a moderate condition value.

Other neutral grassland (g3c)

The east of the barn comprises a small area of grassland.

Species present within this habitat include yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), smooth sow-thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), forget-me-not (*Myosotis sp*), pot marigold (*Calendula officinalis*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), red fescues (*Festuca rubra*), common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), red valerian (*Centranthus ruber*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*).

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the other neutral grassland was assessed to have a moderate condition value.

Building (u1b5)

There is one open barn present within the site.

3.2 Foreseen Impacts

No direct impacts to any notable habitats on site will occur as a result of the proposed development. The small area of grassland may be damaged by heavy machinery during construction, but is anticipated to return to current condition within a short period of time (<5 years) post development.

3.3 Recommendations

Where possible, avoid any impacts to the small area of grassland to the east of the barn.

4. INVASIVE SPECIES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

4.1 Summary of Survey Findings

No non-native invasive or otherwise problematic plants were recorded on site or are considered likely to be on site, but, given seasonal limitations and the sites wider context, may be visible at other times of year.

4.2 Foreseen Impacts

None.

4.3 Recommendations

No further surveys but remain vigilant.

5. FAUNA: BATS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

5.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There is 1 EPSL within a 2km radius of the site, as detailed below:

Table 4: EPSL survey returns for bats within a 2km radius.

EPSL Reference	Bat Species Affected	Distance from Site <i>(EPSL records are accurate to 100m)</i>	Impacts Allowed by Licence
2017-29484-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle and Soprano pipistrelle	~1.5km north-east	Destruction of a resting place

There are no Special Areas of Conservation designated for bats within 10km of the site.

Foraging and commuting habitat

There is limited amount of suitable foraging habitat for bats within the site, in the form of a small area of other neutral grassland. Woodland and grass fields within the wider landscape provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats.

Roosting habitat

Buildings to be impacted by the proposed development were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats below. There is a total of one building on site; barn (B1). There was no direct evidence of roosting bats identified and no suitable bat roosting features.

Buildings

B1 : Barn

The building is an open fronted barn, comprised of corrugated metal sheets with a double dutch roof and a lean-to roof on the west elevation. The barn was unlined and no suitable roosting features or direct evidence of bats was observed.



Building B1

5.2 Foreseen Impacts

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within B1 and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in this location as a result of the proposed development. The risk to bats is acceptably low.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

No impacts are foreseen.

Foraging and commuting habitat

The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats. However, the proposed development will likely cause an increase in the current lighting levels, which may spill on to bat foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.

Artificial lighting

The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats or the retained building without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.

5.3 Recommendations

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

None.

Foraging and commuting habitat

No further surveys are required.

Artificial lighting

A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/08/bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night-ilp-guidance-note-update-released>

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of one integrated bat box at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats.

The bat boxes will be incorporated into the fabric of the new dwelling. Suitable bat boxes include Vivara Pro UK Build-in WoodStone® Bat Box, Habibat Bat Box,

Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or similar alternative brand.

Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.

6. FAUNA: BIRDS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

6.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Buildings

No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within B1, however the building is considered suitable for common bird nesting.

Trees and vegetation

No habitat for schedule 1 birds was observed.

Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site is not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.

Barn Owls

The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls.

6.2 Foreseen Impacts

Buildings

The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.

Trees and vegetation

None foreseen.

Barn Owls

None foreseen.

6.3 Recommendations

Buildings

The building demolition should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August if possible. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged or an ecologist has confirmed the nesting attempt has concluded.

Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged or an ecologist has confirmed the nesting attempt has concluded.

Trees and vegetation

No additional surveys required.

Barn Owls

No further barn owl surveys required.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

Installation of three integrated swift bricks and two house marten nest bowls within the proposed building will enhance the site for breeding birds.

The integrated swift bricks (considered to be universal nest bricks for small bird species) to be integrated within the fabric of the building during construction, to be clustered together. To be suitable for swifts, they will need to be placed at least 5m above ground level under the eaves of a building. Integrated nesting bricks are preferable to bird boxes; even if it cannot fulfil the height requirement for swifts, it will still be suitable for other passerine species. Suitable examples include PRO UK Rendered Build-In Swift Box, PRO UK Visible Build-In Swift Box, Woodstone® Build-in Swift Nest Box Deep or similar alternative brand.

House marten bowls will be placed at the apex of the building or under the eaves, on exterior wall with a minimum of 2m height. Suitable examples include Gable End and Apex House Martin Nest, Slide Out House Martin Nest, Vivara Pro WoodStone® House Martin Nest or similar alternate brand.

These bird boxes should be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain, and strong sunlight, and should be placed on an open aspect with no trees or large shrubs potentially obstructing flight paths.

7. FAUNA: REPTILES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

7.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site.

Habitat suitability

The dominant habitat onsite is hard-standing and a building, which are unsuitable for reptiles. There is a small patch of grassland which is considered to provide limited suitability for foraging and commuting reptiles. There are no opportunities for sheltering or hibernating reptiles.

Wider landscape

Habitats in the wider landscape, including pockets of woodland and grass fields with hedgerows provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for reptiles and may represent important resources for local reptile populations. The presence of reptiles utilising these adjacent habitats cannot be discounted.

7.2 Foreseen Impacts

No suitable habitat will be removed during construction. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of reptiles, if present.

7.3 Recommendations

A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures:

- Vegetation will be managed and maintained at a short sward (5cm) to discourage reptiles.
- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.

- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

8. FAUNA: AMPHIBIANS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

8.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL and survey data

A review of the MAGIC database returned two EPSL records for amphibians within 2km of the site.

Table 5: EPSL survey returns for amphibians within a 2km radius.

EPSL Reference	Amphibian Species Affected	Distance from Site <i>(EPSL records are accurate to 100m)</i>	Impacts Allowed by Licence
2015-17216-EPS-MIT	GCN	~1.3km north	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2009-1258	GCN	~760m south-east	Destruction of a breeding place

A review of the MAGIC database for EPSL for great crested newts (GCN) within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. 1 EPSL was identified, as detailed below:

Aquatic habitat suitability (including ponds within 500m)

Great crested newts (GCN) exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001).

There are no ponds within the site. There is a collection of ~nine ponds approximately 500-650m north-east of the site. There is one pond 500m north-west of the site. Furthermore, there are a series of drains and ditches to the west of the site.

Terrestrial habitat suitability

The site provides limited suitable terrestrial habitat for amphibians given the lack of optimal habitat (i.e. scrub, rank grassland). The areas of hard standing and small patch of grass offer suboptimal habitat for terrestrial amphibians. Given the small amount of suitable habitat (grassland) and the distance of the site from suitable ponds, it is unlikely that amphibians will migrate on to site.

8.2 Foreseen Impacts

When georeferencing the proposed development plans over scaled mapping of the site, it is noted that the development area is likely to result in the significant disturbance of ~40m² of grassland. If great crested newts are present within the ponds 500m north-east and north-west of the site, or any of the ditches to the west of the site (within 250m and within 100m of the site) when completing the rapid risk assessment published by Natural England (Natural England 2015), the proposed development produces a green risk score, which states: Offence highly unlikely.

8.3 Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to great crested newts, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures:

- Vegetation to be managed and maintained to a short sward height (<5cm) prior to and throughout the duration of the works
- Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand outside the amphibian hibernation window and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent amphibians from utilising these areas.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.

- If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
- In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

9. FAUNA: RIPARIAN ANIMALS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

9.1 Summary of Survey Findings

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed for riparian animals (otters and water voles). No EPSLs relating to riparian animals are present within a 2km radius of the site.

Habitat suitability

There are no water courses on or connected to the site. There are also no riparian habitats present on site or within an influencing distance.

9.2 Foreseen Impacts

No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

9.3 Recommendations

No further surveys for riparian animals required.

10. FAUNA: HAZEL DORMOUSE

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

10.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed for hazel dormouse. No EPSLs relating to hazel dormouse are present within a 2km radius of the site.

Habitat suitability

Dormice typically utilise a three-dimensional habitat structure as to commute between feeding and breeding sites whilst avoiding predation. As such habitats on site are considered unsuitable for hazel dormice and therefore the likelihood of this species being present on site is considered acceptably low.

Furthermore, for isolated habitats in the UK, research indicates that dormice require 20ha of woodland habitat to support a viable population (Bright et al. 1994). 20ha of woodland is not present on or directly adjacent to the sites.

10.2 Foreseen Impacts

No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.

10.3 Recommendations

No further hazel dormouse surveys required.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

12. FAUNA: INVERTEBRATES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

12.1 Summary of Survey Findings

The small patch of grassland and the ruderal vegetation within the barn structure likely provide common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter. The site contains no further notable habitats which may provide niches for specialised or protected invertebrates.

12.2 Foreseen Impacts

None foreseen.

12.3 Recommendations

No further surveys.

13. FAUNA: OTHER NOTABLE SPECIES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

13.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Hedgehogs

The small patch of grassland onsite provides limited foraging opportunities for hedgehogs.

13.2 Foreseen Impacts

Hedgehogs

Construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.

13.3 Recommendations

Hedgehogs

██████████ a precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.

- If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

13.4 Suggested Biodiversity Enhancements

Hedgehogs

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs:

- Planting fruit bearing trees increase foraging opportunities.
- Creation of brash piles or installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas.

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY/HABITAT MAP



APPENDIX 2: LOCATION MAP





APPENDIX 4: SITE IMAGES



Other neutral grassland



Ruderal/Ephemeral



Developed land; sealed surface



Building



Building



Building



Building



Building



Building

APPENDIX 5: BASELINE CONDITION SCORE TABLES

Other neutral grassland (g3c) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Y
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	N
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens. For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.	Y
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Y
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA5) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Y
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m2 present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (Schedule 9 species cannot contribute towards this count).	N
		Total 4/6
	Condition moderate due to passing 4 of 6 criteria. Essential criteria (F) for good condition not met.	

Ruderal/Ephemeral (81) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	Y
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	N
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area.	Y
B O N U S	There is a complete absence of invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement).	Y
		Total 3/4
	Condition moderate due to passing 3 of 4 criteria.	

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VERSION CONTROL

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Chantae Bleakman-Wells BSc(Hons), MSc, MRSB, Senior Ecologist	11/05/2026
Final	1.0	Chantae Bleakman-Wells BSc(Hons), MSc, MRSB, Senior Ecologist	12/05/2026
Final (Updated with proposed plans)	2.0	Chantae Bleakman-Wells BSc(Hons), MSc, MRSB, Senior Ecologist	08/06/2026