

Abbas Ecology

Extended Phase I Habitat survey and Protected species surveys at:

Greenhurst, Fitzalan Road, Arundel. BN18 9JS

For: Nick Watkins, Renaissance Retirement Ltd.

Report
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01 OF 02

01: Nick Watkins, Renaissance Retirement.
02: Abbas Ecology

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It should be noted, that whilst every effort is made to meet the client's brief,
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Reference Number: AE/3634A

Executive Summary

Survey date: 11/09/17 (Phase I). 21 and 25/09/17, bat activity. October dates – reptile survey
Location: Greenhurst, Fitzalan road, Arundel, BN18 9JS.
Grid Reference: TQ 019 068
Surveyor: J Crewe

This site consists of a 2 storey modern house set at the S end of the plot with a garden area at the N, towards Fitzalan road. The site is immediately adjacent to the Blastreat works site where ecology survey work was carried out in 2016 and reported under AE 3634. The proposed development of 2 linked blocks of retirement apartments will be built across both sites.

The Phase I survey conclusion was that further survey for bats was required on site in order to assess the use of crevice features on and around the roof of the building. The potential was regarded as low; there was no internal evidence of bat use and only a few missing and loose tiles. As the survey work was proposed for late in the bat activity season it was agreed that 2 activity surveys would take place rather than one. Dawn and dusk activity surveys were conducted and no evidence found that bats were using the buildings on site to roost.

The Phase I survey visit also found potential for common reptiles to be present in the overgrown lawn and marginal areas near dense scrub to the West of the driveway. A full reptile survey was conducted in October; this was late in the season but the weather was warm and reptiles were active on other sites. None were found here and it was concluded that this site does not hold a reptile population.

No further ecological survey work is required here prior to development but it is recommended that site clearance takes place out of the bird nesting season, usually March – August inclusive. If work has to take place at other times vegetation and buildings must be checked for nesting birds by an ecologist immediately before work begins.

Scope

Phase I Survey

An extended phase I survey looks at the area to assess its likely value for protected species and other wildlife. It is not a specific survey for any one species and looks for general habitat types but it will identify the need for further survey work if required.

Bat activity surveys

Bat activity surveys are used to detect bats leaving roosts at dusk and/or re-entering roosts at dawn. Surveyors watch all potential access points, using acoustic detectors to listen for bat calls and record these for later analysis.

Reptile surveys

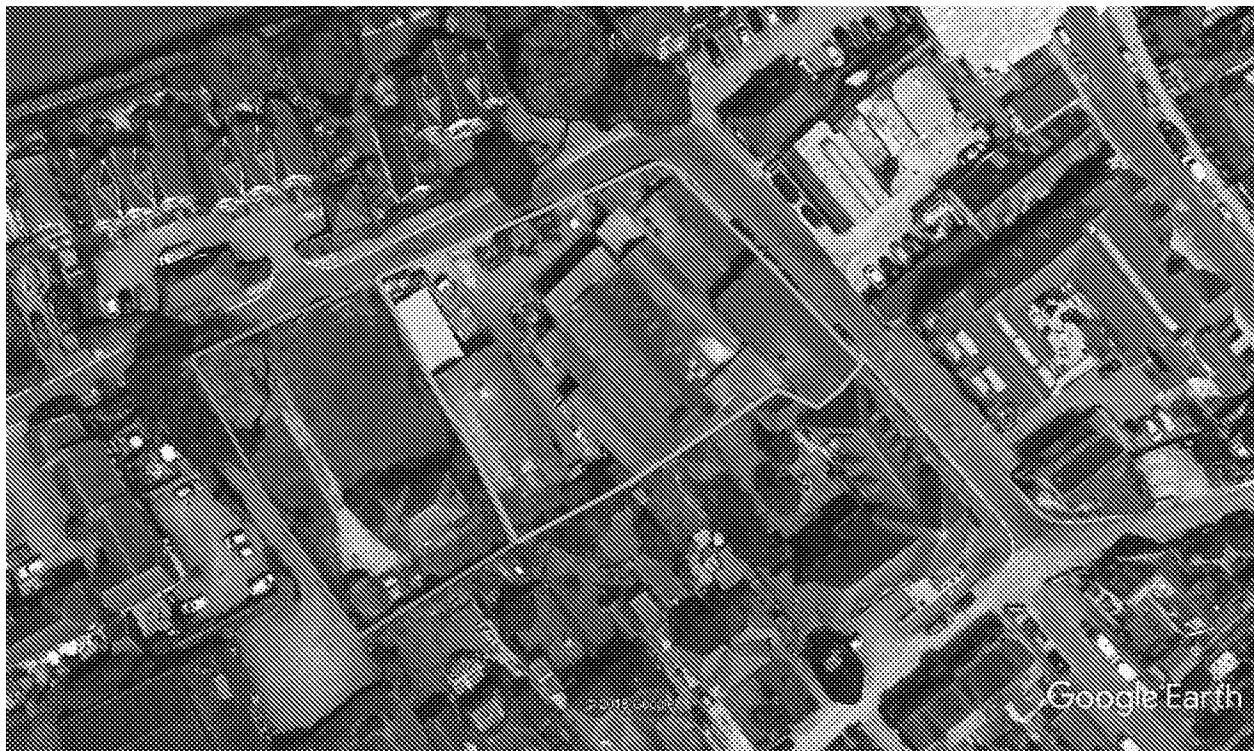
Sites are surveyed for reptiles by putting down artificial refugia such as pieces of corrugated iron or roofing felt. These warm up in early sunshine, providing reptiles with a sheltered place to increase body heat before foraging. The surveyor visits the site to look for reptiles basking in the open and beneath the refuges; site visits only take place in suitable, warm conditions and at least 7 visits are required to confirm presence/absence for reptiles.

Site

The site consists of a 2 storey house in a medium sized plot. Both house and garden are suffering from neglect and the house is boarded up after use by squatters. There is low potential for crevice roosting bats and medium potential for common reptiles.

Plan

The building surveyed will be demolished and the site cleared to build a retirement property development. A plan of this is given below.



Aerial view: the site boundary is outlined in red, adjacent Blastreat site in blue. (Copyright Google Earth)



The development proposal

I. Species records

The NBN Atlas was checked for species records within 2km of the site. This showed a scattering of bat records, none immediately close to the site. There are three records for grass snake to the N of the search area and a number of hedgehog records; none were near to Fitzalan road. No badger records were found.

2. Methodology: Phase I survey

Equipment

- Camera
- Torch
- Binoculars

The entire site was surveyed for protected species, and for the potential for protected species. Habitat features of interest were also noted. Species looked for included:

Bats: Features on and in buildings that could be used by bats were looked for and assessed for potential.

Breeding Birds: The surveyor looked for potential or previous nest sites on and around the buildings.

Reptiles and Amphibians: Habitat features that could be suitable as hibernacula or feeding/resting areas were looked for.

Badgers: Any area that could be used for feeding or could potentially contain a Badger sett was surveyed and any signs noted.

Otter and Water voles, Dormice: The surveyor looked for habitat features suitable for these species.

Habitat: The surveyor looked for BAP quality habitats that could be used by protected species.

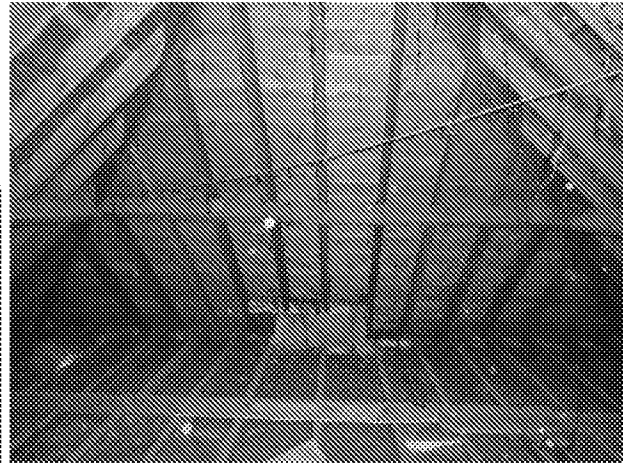
Legislation relating to the species above can be found in Appendix I of this report.

3. Results and Conclusions: Phase I habitat survey.

Bats: The attic of the main house was accessed and checked for signs of bats; no droppings or other evidence were found. There were missing roof tiles externally, soffit damage and a small area of hanging tiles. The hanging tiles were checked from a stepladder and no signs of bats or bat droppings found. Further survey for bats is recommended to assess use of external crevice habitat.



House with overgrown front garden



Attic space; lined with boarding, no bat evidence.

The garage to the West of the property was checked internally and spaces beneath roof tiles examined from the stepladder. No bat evidence was found and potential for bat use was thought to be negligible.



The garage building



Small roof void in the garage – no evidence.

Breeding birds: The site has marginal vegetation that is likely to be used by nesting birds. No bird's nests were seen during the survey visit. Birds might use crevice features around the main building such as gaps under hanging tiles.



Mature hedge in the background on the E boundary. Overgrown scrubby vegetation at the rear.

Reptiles and Amphibians: The site has vegetation which would provide suitable habitat for reptiles and common amphibians. Some areas were judged to have high potential to hold populations of common reptiles. There are no records for amphibians on the NBN Atlas and Great Crested Newts are unlikely to occur here. Further survey for reptiles is recommended.



Overgrown lawn with high reptile potential

Grassy margins by dense scrub.

Badgers: No evidence was found to suggest that badgers use this site.

Otters and Water voles: There is no suitable aquatic habitat for these species on this site. The search within the NBN Atlas found no otter records although there are a number of water vole records. Almost all of these are N of the A27, and the habitat between the site and the river to the S does not have suitable habitat for the terrestrial phase of this species.

Dormice. There is almost no suitable habitat for this species and the connectivity to the wider landscape is poor, making it very unlikely that Dormice could use this site.

Habitats: The site has an overgrown lawn and scrubby habitat with a lot of Buddleia; none of this is of high ecological value.



The rear of the property – buddleia scrub



Garden debris in the overgrown lawn.

Protected species summary table

Bats Potential	Breeding birds: Potential	Reptiles: Potential	Otters and water voles: N
Badgers N	Protected amphibians: N	Bap Habitat N	Dormice: N

Constraints: No significant issues.

4. Methodology: Bat activity surveys and external inspection.

Survey dates: 21/09/17 (dawn), 25/09/17 (dusk).
Location: Greenhurst, Fitzalan road, Arundel, BN18 9JS.
Grid Reference: TQ 019 068
Surveyors: Alex Coggins, Emily, George Vann (dawn)
J. Crewe, J Chamblor, K. Williams (dusk).
Times: Survey 1: 04:45 – 07:00. Sunrise time 06:45
Survey 2: 18:45 – 20:20. Sunset time 18:53
Weather: Survey 1: Fine, clear, breezy 16°C.
Survey 2: 75% cloud, wind 1 – 2, warm 17°C

Survey 1 - dawn

Surveyors were positioned as shown below, using acoustic bat detectors fitted with recording equipment. The survey commenced 2 hours before sunrise and continued until a few minutes after sunrise.

Survey 2

The survey procedure was as described for survey 1. The survey began 10 minutes before sunset and continued until 1.5 hours after sunset.



Survey positions
indicated by ☆

5. Results and conclusions: Bat activity surveys

No bats were seen to emerge from roosts on the buildings surveyed during survey 1. Bat activity was very low, with 2 surveyors noting a Common Pipistrelle at 06:26, commuting across the site and no other records.

There was a reasonable level of bat activity on the second survey. Noctules were seen and heard foraging high overhead between 18:50 and 20:00. Soprano Pipistrelles were noted commuting from 19:15 -20:05, and both this species and Common Pipistrelle were seen and heard foraging at the roadside edge of the front garden and to the West of the site at intervals throughout. There was no indication that any of the bats seen and heard had used roosts on the buildings.

The survey results suggest that this site does not hold a bat roost; it is of low importance for foraging bats, with occasional use by Pipistrelle ssp, which spent more time foraging near street lights rather than over the garden.

6. Methodology: Reptile survey

Approximately 25 pieces of roofing felt were laid out around the site on 20th September; survey work commenced on 25th September and continued until 11th October. The temperature was consistently warm and suitable for reptiles to remain active; slowworms and grass snakes were being found on other sites at this time.



Felt pieces (0.5m²) in the front garden.

7. Results

Survey Number	1	Temp (°C)	17	Sky (Octares 0-8):	6
Date	25/09/2017	Surveyor	Jon Crewe	Wind (Beaufort scale 0-12):	1
Time	17.30	Rain	None		
Species	Life Stage		Number	Location	
None found					
Survey Number	2	Temp (°C)	16.2	Sky (Octares 0-8):	2
Date	27/09/2017	Surveyor	Carly Teague	Wind (Beaufort scale 0-12):	1
Time	14.10	Rain	None		
Species	Life Stage		Number	Location	
None found					
Survey Number	3	Temp (°C)	15.7	Sky (Octares 0-8):	3
Date	29/09/2017	Surveyor	Carly Teague	Wind (Beaufort scale 0-12):	1
Time	12.00	Rain	None		
Species	Life Stage		Number	Location	
Survey Number	4	Temp (°C)	16	Sky (Octares 0-8):	4
Date	03/10/2017	Surveyor	Carly Teague	Wind (Beaufort scale 0-12):	1
Time	14.20	Rain	None		

Species	Life Stage		Number	Location	
None found					
Survey Number	5	Temp (°C)	15.8	Sky (Octares 0-8):	3
Date	05/10/2017	Surveyor	Carly Teague	Wind (Beaufort scale 0-12):	1
Time	11.00	Rain	None		
Species	Life Stage		Number	Location	
None found					
Survey Number	6	Temp (°C)	15.8	Sky (Octares 0-8):	5
Date	09/10/2017	Surveyor	Carly Teague	Wind (Beaufort scale 0-12):	1
Time	10.30	Rain	None		
Species	Life Stage		Number	Location	
None found					
Survey Number	7	Temp (°C)	16.2	Sky (Octares 0-8):	4
Date	11/10/2017	Surveyor	Carly Teague	Wind (Beaufort scale 0-12):	2
Time	12.00	Rain	None		
Species	Life Stage		Number	Location	
None found					

No reptiles were found sheltering beneath felts or other garden debris on any of the survey visits. There were no observations of reptiles basking or foraging in the open on the site.

8. Conclusions

This site does not hold a reptile population.

9. Discussion

The Phase 1 survey at this site found habitat suitable for roosting and foraging bats, breeding birds and reptiles. Phase 2 surveys found no evidence that bats were roosting on the site; there was a small amount of foraging activity over the garden. Surveys found that no reptiles were present, and it is thought that there is not a population here. No birds' nests were found, but it is possible that common garden birds use the site to breed, given the availability of scrubby overgrown vegetation with good cover.

The development should include mitigation for garden birds and House Martins which were noted near the Blastreat site on surveys there. The development should include enhancements to benefit local bat populations. Outline recommendations are given below.

10. Recommendations

- No further ecological survey is required before development commences.
- Vegetation clearance and demolition of the buildings must take place outside the bird nesting season, or an ecologist must check the site for nesting birds immediately before work commences. The bird nesting season can be taken as March – end August inclusive for this site.
- The new building should incorporate a swift terrace and 3 x House Martin cups. The Swift terrace must be fitted on the N facing elevation and include at least 2 nest boxes close together. The House Martin boxes must be fitted under the eaves, preferably on an E or W facing elevation. All three should be fitted close together.
- The new building should incorporate 3 x Schwegler IFR bat tubes. These can be fitted high up on any elevation, and must not be illuminated by external lighting, if fitted.
- Planting on the site should incorporate native species of tree and shrub and include flowering plants from the RHS “Perfect for pollinators” guidance. This will provide a food source for pollinating insects allow bats and birds to forage on the site.
- Any external lighting provided should be low lux and hooded to avoid light scatter upwards. Warm tone LED lighting should be used rather than white or blue light sources.
- Fencing around the new development should include access points for small mammals such as hedgehogs, as there are gardens and green spaces with reasonable connectivity to the SW.

J D Crewe 25/01/18

Appendix I: Legislation (summary)

7.1 Wildlife Protection legislation

Mammals:

Otters, dormice, water voles, and **all bat species** are fully protected under section 9 (5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). According to this act it is an offence to:

- Intentionally capture, kill or injure one of these animals
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used by one of these animals for shelter or protection
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb an animal whilst it is using this place
- sell, offer for sale or advertise for one of these animals live or dead

Designated as European Protected Species' **otters, dormice**, and **all bat species** receive additional protection from the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, under Schedule 2 which implements the EC Directive 92/43/EEC in the United Kingdom. In accordance with this act, it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture or kill a European Protected Species
- Deliberately disturb a European Protected Species
- Damage or destroy the breeding site or resting place of a European Protected Species

The **greater and lesser horseshoe bats, barbastelle** and **bechstein's bats**, are also listed under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations. Areas which support populations of these species can therefore be considered for designation as a Special Areas of Conservation (**SACs**).

Badgers receive protection from the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. According to this act, it is an offence to:

- to willfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger;
- to attempt to do so; or
- to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett.

Reptiles and Amphibians:

Slow worms, adders, grass snake, viviparous lizard, are protected against intentional killing, injuring or sale under section 9 (1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Great crested newt, natterjack toad, sand lizard and **smooth snake** are fully protected under section 9 (5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These species also receive additional protection as **European Protected Species** under schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, which implements the EC Directive 92/43/EEC in the United Kingdom.

5.2 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system, Part IV Conservation of Species Protected by Law, (Circular 06/05).

The National Planning Framework (NPPF, 2012) recognizes the above as an active document. With regard to the Natural Environment, NPPF states:

“development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be permitted” and “opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged” (Para 118).

Also, the “presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14) does not apply where development requiring appropriate assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives is being considered, planned or determined” (Para 119).

It encourages planning policies to “minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity by identify[ing] and map[ing] components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation” (Para 117).