
Ecological Method Statement (Watching Brief)

For proposed development at:

Ryebank Farmhouse,
New Barn,
Grevatts Lane,
Climping,
BN17 5RF.

Survey and Report by:
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Director

10th July 2019
Project Ref: 17277

Disclaimer

This statement is prepared by Bright Green Environmental for the sole and exclusive use of Mr Baird in response to his particular instructions. No liability is accepted for any costs, claims or losses arising from the use of this report or any part thereof for any purpose other than that for which it was specifically prepared or by any other parties other than Mr. Baird. No information provided in this report can be considered to be legal advice.

The findings of this report are based on the findings of the surveys carried out by Bright Green Environmental as stated and do not prove or disprove the absence or presence of any protected species. Bright Green Environmental cannot be held liable in any way for any legal actions brought against the landowner or developer in connection with this report.

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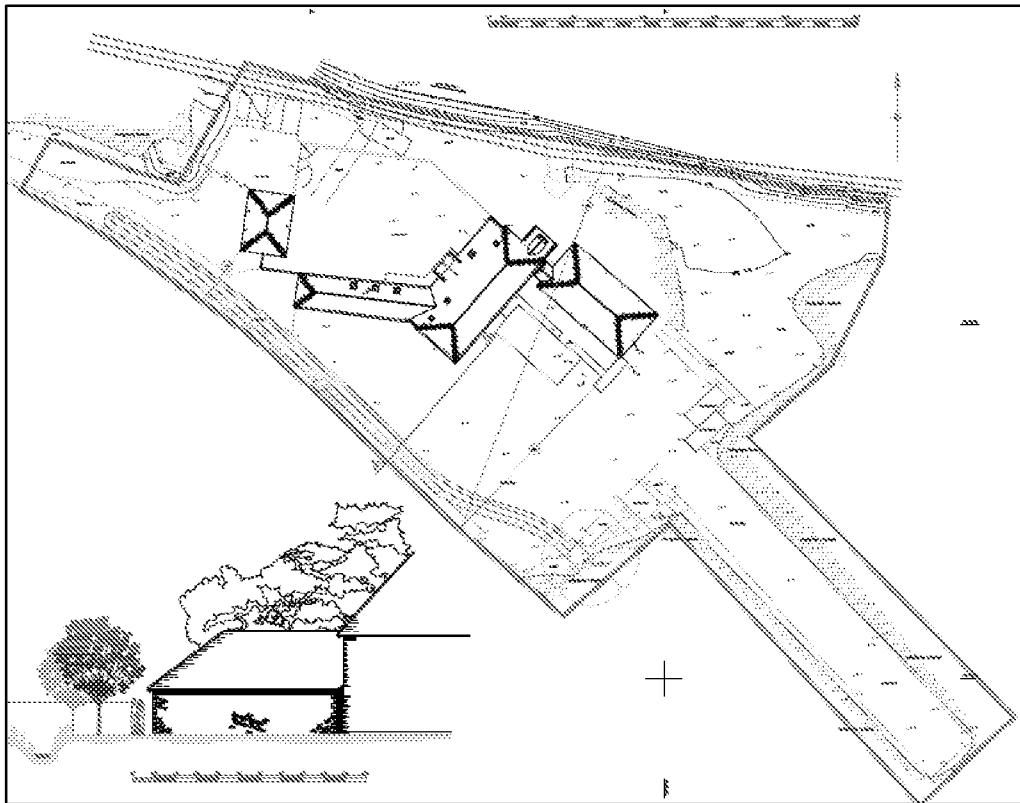
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1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

- 1.1.1. Bright Green Environmental was instructed by Mr Baird to provide an Ecological Method Statement (Watching Brief) for the undertaking of the project to avoid harm to protected or priority species present or likely to be present at the proposed site known as Ryebank Farmhouse, New Barn, Grevatts Lane, Climping, BN17 5RF.
- 1.1.2. The surveyor and author is an associate member of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (AIEMA) and subject to the IEMA Professional Code of Conduct and licensed by Natural England to survey for bats (2016-20863-CLS) and great crested newts (2016-23214-CLS). He has extensive experience in undertaking various ecological surveys on behalf of public and private sector clients, throughout the UK

Figure 1.1 Proposed layout



- 1.1.3. This statement has been prepared using the site information gained through the site visit by Bright Green Environmental on 2nd July 2019 and review of the Phase I Ecological Survey by ADAS Ltd. 2017, to address the discharge of conditions 6 & 7 of the planning permission ([CM/28/17/PL](#)).

1.2. Scope of Proposed Works

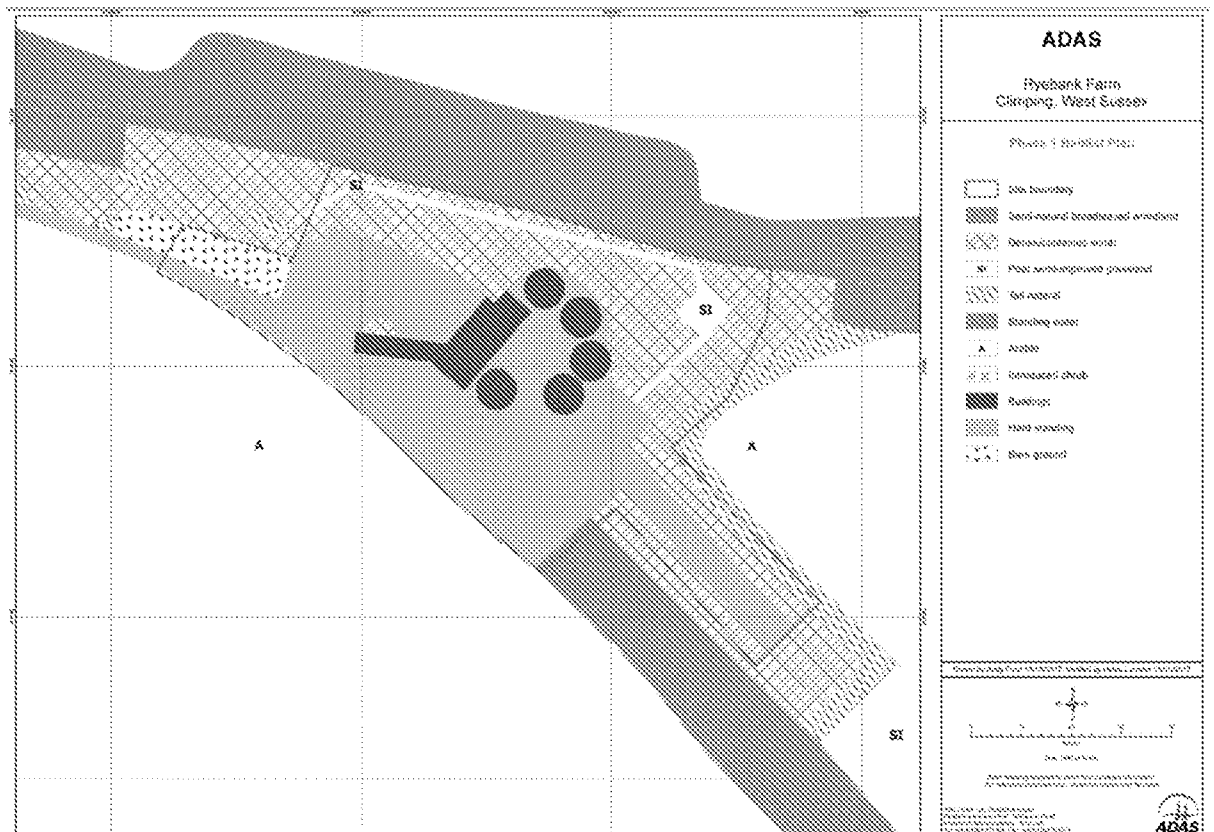
1.2.1. The works are understood to involve the following elements:

- Conversion of existing agricultural buildings.
- Demolition/removal of structures such as silos and extensive concrete yard areas.
- Vegetation clearance to allow for landscaping of the site.
- Limited excavations for the construction of foundations.

1.3. Phase 1 Habitat Survey

1.3.1. The Phase I Ecological Survey by ADAS 2017 identified the various habitats on site.

Figure 1.2 Phase 1 Habitat Plan



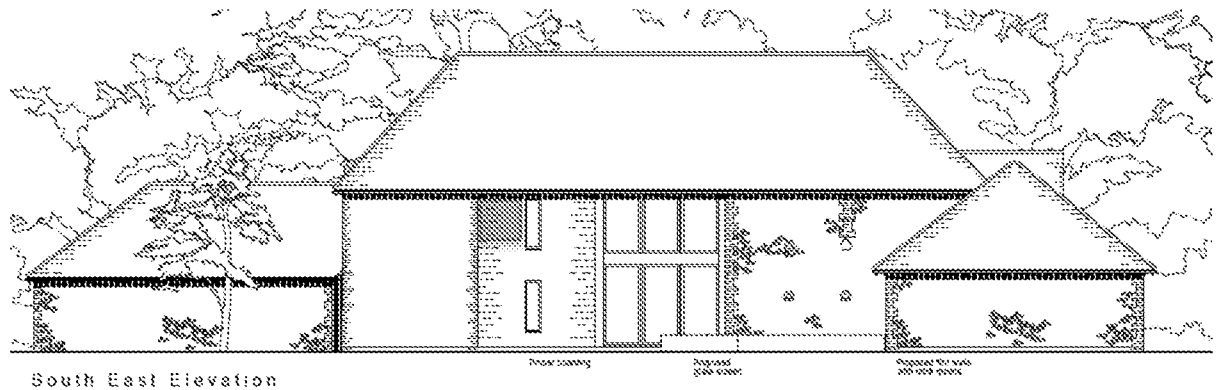
2. Method Statement and Enhancement Strategy

- 2.1.1. The following methods are considered appropriate to minimise risk of harm of the proposed development to sensitive habitats and or priority or protected species.
- 2.1.2. Prior to any site works a 'toolbox talk' by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to any commencement of works to inform site works of the potential harm to sensitive habitats and species and the precautionary measures that must be employed at the site to protect them.

2.2. Bats

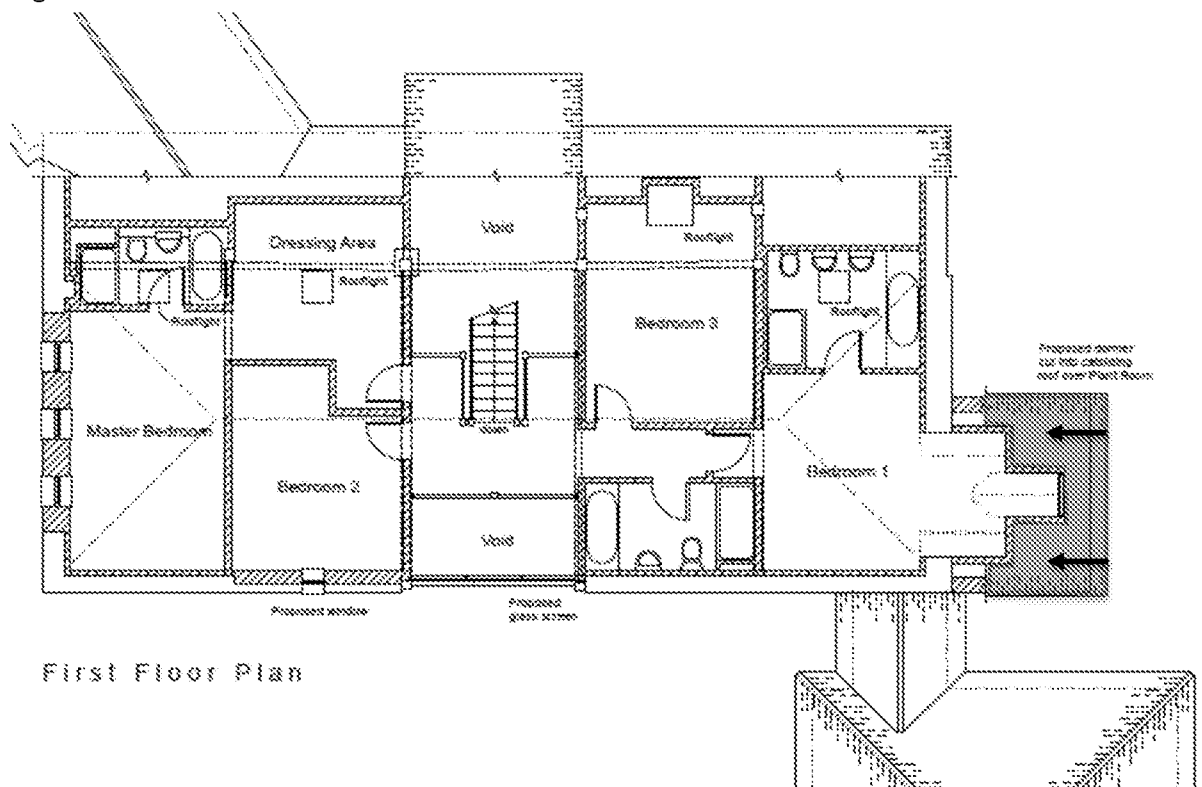
- 2.2.1. To minimise risk of disturbance to potential foraging and commuting bats, during and post development, any external lighting should be minimised as follows:
- Any task lighting (during construction) or safety/security lighting on the new building, should not be directed at boundary vegetation, mature trees.
 - Any necessary safety/security lighting should be PIR activated, set on short timers and be sensitive to large moving objects only.
 - Other lighting around the site should be kept to the minimal feasible level and be directed downward and shielded to minimise light spillage.
 - Hoods, cowls or directional lighting should be used to avoid light directed at the sky or towards boundary vegetation or ditches.
 - The brightness of the lamps should be kept as low as feasibly possible (ILE/BCT, 2007; BCT interim guidance 2014).
- 2.2.2. The proposed landscaping is considered to provide a sufficient mix of suitable foraging habitats to support bats.
- 2.2.3. The inclusion of roosting provision within the building is will enhance the sites roosting opportunities for bats as detailed below and indicated on figure 2.3.
- 2.2.4. Inclusion of 3 linked Schwegler 2FR behind timber weatherboarding on the south east elevation facing the arable field and proposed boundary ditch and hedgerow. This will be sited to the left-hand side of the weatherboarding away from the large feature windows.

Figure 2.1 South east elevation showing location of bat boxes



2.2.5. In addition roosting provision is proposed beneath the roof tiles on the catslide roof over the plant room to the north eastern elevation and within the roof void over this part of the building where traditional bitumous felt can be used as it is non habitable. This faces the proposed gardens and ditch and tree line along the northern boundary of the site. Access to the roof void and tile felt void will be via 2 bat access tiles (as indicated) and cuts in the felt lining.

Figure 2.2 Location of roof tile void and bat loft



2.2.6. The erection of 2 Schwegler 2FD bat boxes within the tree line that extends to the south east of the site will provide additional roosting opportunities within suitable habitat. These will not be placed in close proximity to the barn owl box due to risk of predation. Inclusion

2.3. Great Crested Newts, Amphibians and Reptiles

2.3.1. Although no reptiles were found on the site and the nearest record of Great Crested Newts is over 340m to the north the overgrown nature of the site does present suitable habitat for amphibians (in their terrestrial stage) and reptiles for refuge, hibernation and foraging.

2.3.2. To minimise any residual risk of harm to great crested newts or other amphibians the following precautionary measures should be followed and are considered appropriate:

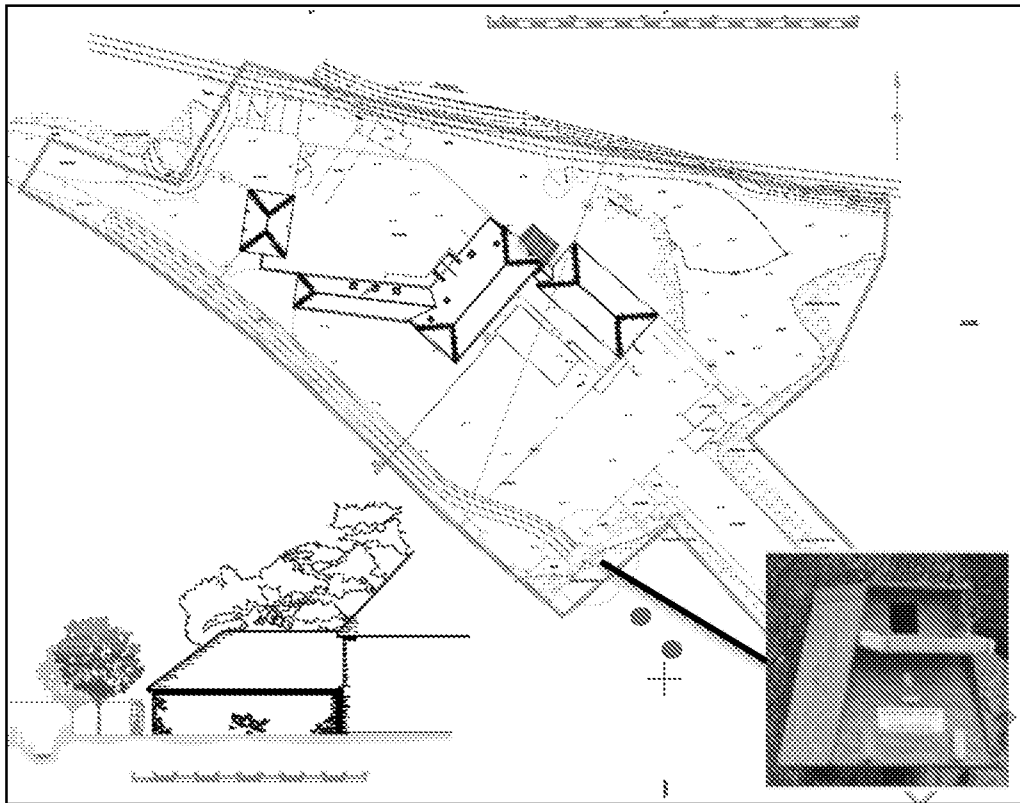
- A 'toolbox talk' by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to any commencement of works to inform site contractors of the potential presence of amphibians and reptiles, the protection afforded them and the precautionary measures that must be employed at the site, and actions to take if they are found.
- Vegetation, removal of materials and suitable refugia will be carried out under supervision by an ecological clerk of works.
- Vegetation will be cut directionally to a height of 150mm to allow any reptiles present to move out of the working area naturally. The direction of cutting will be selected to encourage the movement of any reptiles present into boundary habitats which will not be affected.
- A second cut to 50mm should be undertaken after a period of 4-7 days to allow any individuals present to disperse.
- The works must be undertaken during the active season between the 1st March and 1st November.
- All vegetation will be placed directly into skips, removed or burnt straight away on areas of bare ground/concrete/hardstanding to prevent potential areas of refuge being created for amphibians or reptiles to shelter in.
- Cleared vegetation should be maintained short throughout the construction process, to prevent attracting reptiles and amphibians into the site.
- Suitable refugia, for example log piles, dilapidated buildings, sheet materials etc. will be dismantled, removed carefully by hand, and disposed of in skips or taken off site to prevent potential areas of refuge being created for amphibians or reptiles to shelter in.
- Any excavations will be open for the minimal period possible and be inspected prior to pouring concrete by the contractor.
- Any excavations left open overnight will have an escape ramp installed to allow escape of any individuals.
- All works will be undertaken during daylight hours.

- In the unlikely event that reptile is observed on the site, activities in that area should cease and guidance sought from a suitably qualified ecologist or Natural England.
- Any excavated spoil will be removed off site, placed into skips or spread thinly on the cleared areas of vegetation to avoid creating spoil heaps that could create refuge habitat.
- Demolition materials should be removed off the site or placed into skips immediately to prevent amphibians from sheltering in the materials and being harmed.
- The removal of any cracked concrete hardstanding adjacent to vegetation around the barns, must be undertaken under supervision, with the use of breakers.
- In the unlikely event that a Great Crested Newt, is observed on the site, activities in that area should cease and guidance sought from a suitably qualified ecologist or Natural England. If the proposals are considered likely to result in a breach of legislation, then an EPS Great Crested Newt License must be obtained.
- In the unlikely event that reptile or other amphibian is observed on the site, activities in that area should cease to allow the individual to move away on its own. If it is in immediate harm, then it should be lifted by gloved hand and placed in area outside of the area of works.

2.4. Birds and Barn Owls

- 2.4.1. Any vegetation clearance must be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive). If this is not possible a Breeding Bird Survey must be undertaken, to avoid infringing legislation which protects all nesting birds (WCA 1981). If an active nest is identified, there will be a delay in this area (and an exclusion zone, as recommended by the project ecologist), until all young birds have left the nest.
- 2.4.2. Barn owl nest box provision is proposed through the inclusion of a barn owl nest box on the mature willow to the southern side of the site. This is located a suitable distance from the residential barns to prevent future disturbance and adjacent to the suitable foraging along the arable field edge within an established linear tree line.

Figure 2.3 Plan of location of barn owl box and bat roost provision



Source <https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/product/barn-owl-nestbox-for-use-on-trees/>

Key:

-  Schwegler 2 FD bat boxes in trees
-  Bat roof tile and loft over plant room
-  Schwegler 2FR bat boxes in weatherboarding

3. Conclusion

- 3.1.1. Providing the advised method statement is adopted the proposed development is unlikely to have an adverse impact upon protected species.
- 3.1.2. The site can be enhanced from its current condition through the inclusion of bat roost and barn owl nest provision.
- 3.1.3. The proposed landscaping and removal of significant areas of concrete is considered to represent an increase in the biodiversity value of the site.
- 3.1.4. Overall the proposed development is considered to represent a net biodiversity gain for the site.

If you require any further information in relation to the ecology of the site, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Statement written by

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