



Preliminary Bat Inspection  
House at Willow Barn  
Wykin Lane  
Stoke Golding  
Hinckley and Bosworth  
NGR SP40159 96698

Survey by  
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|  |                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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## Non-Technical Summary

The site surveyed comprises a building and part of an adjacent residential garden located at Willow Barn, Wykin Lane, Stoke Golding, Hinckley and Bosworth, centred at NGR SP40159 96698. An inspection of the building was completed on the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

The defined survey area comprises an existing residential property, previously converted from agricultural use, and which is currently occupied. It is positioned within a well-maintained residential garden in a rural location on the edge of the village of Stoke Golding. There is a Farm unit and farm buildings to the north. Wykin Lane runs along the western boundary of the property. Open arable fields lie to the east and south. There are some significant hedgerows and individual mature broadleaved trees present in the vicinity. A review of the available data obtained from MAGIC confirms that the property surveyed is not a Statutory or Non-Statutory site of ecological significance and there are no such sites close to the property.

The survey has identified the following habitats within the proposed development area:

- Building previously converted for residential purposes
- Vegetated Garden and Driveway
- Ornamental Pond
- Hedgerow with trees

The building is a converted single storey barn of brick construction with a pitched roof. It is of traditional brick construction and extends to the north in an 'L' shape. Only the southern corner of the building will be disturbed where the proposed extension is to be added and this part of the building has been inspected. The proposed footprint of the new extension comprises a lawn of modified grassland which is frequently mown and species poor, being dominated by dwarf perennial ryegrass.

An assessment of the survey area has identified the following potential for protected species to be present:

| Species                         | Suitable habitat on site / evidence of presence                                                                                                                                       | Likelihood of presence on site                                                                                             | Further Survey / Mitigation recommended                                                                             |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Nesting Birds</b>            | Ground nesting within the garden highly unlikely due to lack of cover and presence of predatory cats. No evidence of nesting activity identified on or within the building structure. | Very low.                                                                                                                  | No further surveys or specific mitigation measures are recommended.                                                 |
| <b>Reptiles</b>                 | Garden is sub-optimal habitat and no evidence of reptiles or any significant features suitable for these species was found.                                                           | Negligible                                                                                                                 | No further surveys or specific mitigation measures are recommended.                                                 |
| <b>Amphibians</b>               | Ornamental pond is suitable for amphibians and common species may be present. There is no record of GCN in this location. Lawn area is sub-optimal for amphibians.                    | Moderate within pond and boundary hedgerow                                                                                 | No further surveys are recommended. Grassland area should be inspected before any vegetation clearance takes place. |
| <b>Bats</b>                     | No physical evidence of bat activity was found associated with the building but there are minor structural features present which may be of interest to roosting bats.                | The building has low roost potential and requires a further bat activity survey to comply with the 2023 survey guidelines. | A dusk activity survey should be carried out during the optimum survey period May – August inclusive.               |
| <b>Badger and other mammals</b> | No field signs of badger were found in any part of the garden or boundary areas inspection.                                                                                           | Negligible                                                                                                                 | No further surveys or specific mitigation measures are recommended.                                                 |

**Constraints:**

The following ecological constraint has been identified:

- ***The building to be extended requires a bat activity survey to be completed*** to confirm the presence / absence of roosting bats in accordance with the recommendations within the Bat Survey Guidelines due to the presence of minor features associated with the south facing roof and chimney stack.
- The lawn area where the new extension is proposed should be inspected prior to vegetation clearance to ensure there are no amphibians present.
- The nearby pond and boundary hedgerow should be excluded from any area of disturbance associated with the construction of the new extension by fencing whilst works are underway.

**Appraisal and Recommendation**

The nearest Statutory and Non-Statutory sites of ecological interest are sufficiently distant from the proposed development area that the small scale of the development being proposed will have no impact on these.

The survey area comprises an occupied residential property and vegetated garden occupied by a lawn in the area where the extension is being proposed. The existing building and vegetated garden have limited biodiversity at the present time due to the management of this land and no evidence of any significant locally rare plants, plant communities or habitats were identified. There is no reason to consider that the extension of the existing building across a small section of the existing lawn area will have any significant impact on local biodiversity.

The inspection completed in January 2024 did not identify any physical evidence or field signs of protected species within the existing building to be extended or adjacent residential garden dominated by a mown lawn. After inspection of the site, assessment of its landscape context and a review of the biological records for this area, it is recommended that a further bat activity survey should be carried out within the optimum bat activity season to comply with Survey Guidelines.

In addition, it is recommended that a precautionary inspection of the lawn area should be carried out by an ecologist before any vegetation clearance takes place and the existing ornamental pond within the garden adjacent to Wykin Lane and the boundary hedge along the edge of the garden should be protected by temporary fencing whilst any construction work is underway to ensure these cannot be disturbed, even by accident.

**General Recommendation:** It is recommended that at least one bat roost tube should be incorporated into the structure of the house on the south or west facing side of this in a suitable position to provide opportunities for bat species.

As the property is in a good location for foraging bats it is recommended that any external lighting should be minimal and that if there is any lighting it should be directed away from the ornamental pond and boundary hedgerow. The Guidance provided within 'Bat and Lighting' Natural England 2014 identifies that the best lights to promote bat commuting and foraging in an area are "Narrow Spectrum Lights with no UV content, low pressure sodium and warm white LED, or directional downlights - illuminating below the horizontal plane which avoid light trespass into the environment. The specification for any external lighting to be applied by the lighting engineer should therefore be for narrow spectrum directional lights. The specific make and model of lighting will be determined by the lighting engineer as there are a number of varieties that can be chosen and he/she will be the qualified and competent person to determine the correct specification.

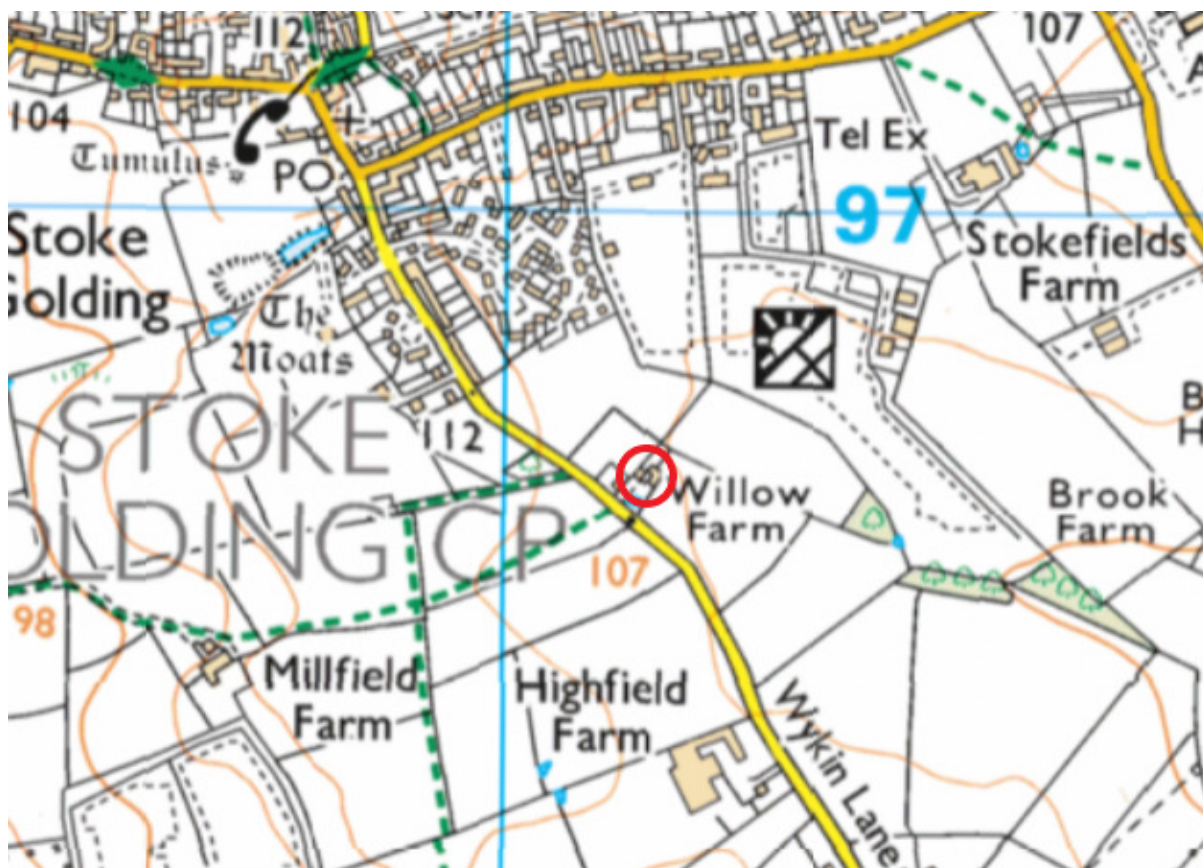
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## Part 1: Site Details

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Site Description and Location

The site surveyed comprises a building and part of an adjacent residential garden located at Willow Barn, Wykin Lane, Stoke Golding, Hinckley and Bosworth, centred at NGR SP40159 96698. The location of the site is shown on the plan within **Figure 1** and an aerial photograph has been provided within **Figure 2** to place the site in context.



**Figure 1: Site location.**

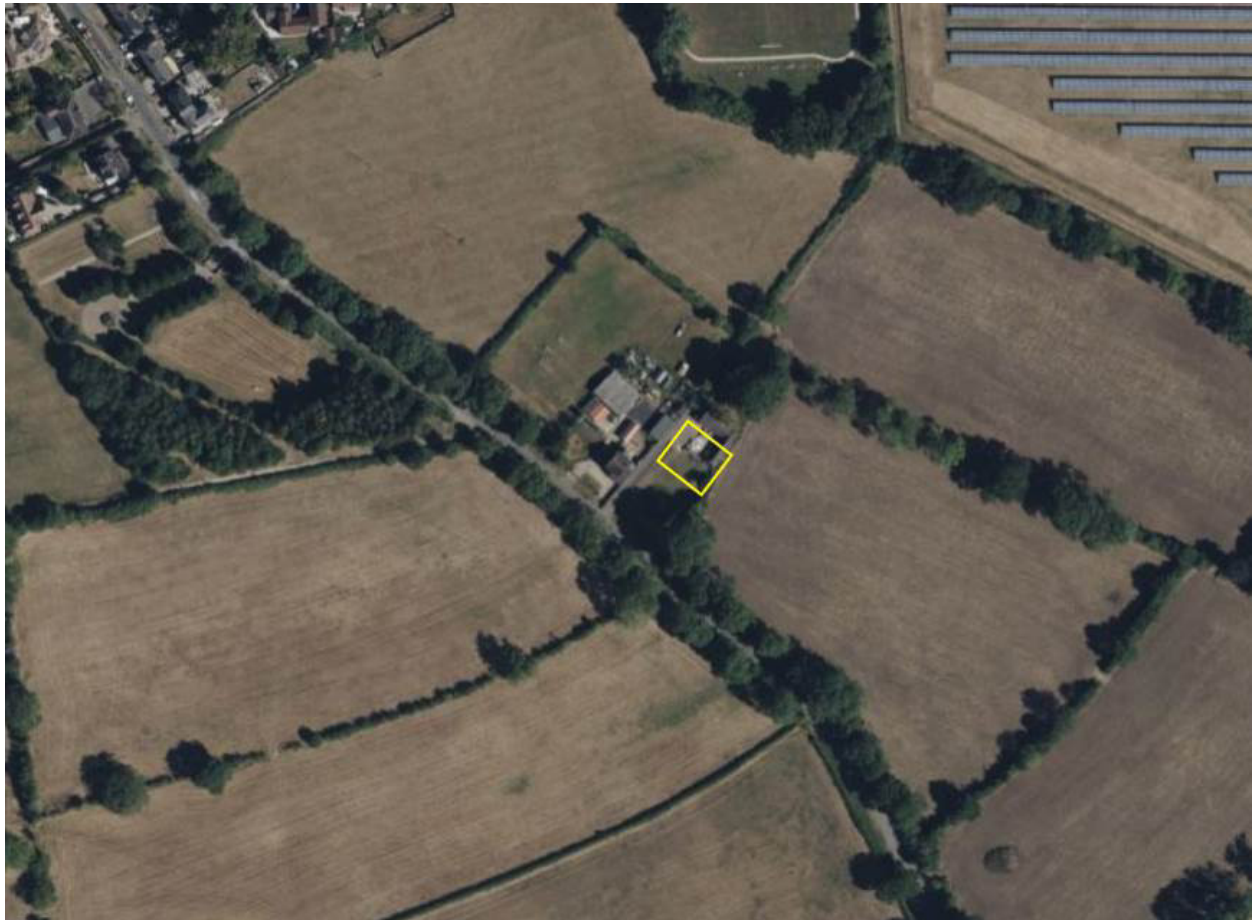
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The Client has requested a survey of the building being considered for extension within the garden interior to determine whether there is any evidence of protected species present. An inspection of the building was completed on the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and details of the survey are provided in the table below. A photographic record of key areas is included alongside target notes within the report and a list of plant species identified in the site during the survey is included within **Appendix 1**.

| Date                          | Time                                                                              | Location                                               | Weather                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 | 11.30 – 12.30                                                                     | Willow Barn<br>Wykin Lane<br>Stoke Golding<br>CV13 6HW | Clear sky with minimal high cloud. Wind 13mph from the north west. Temperature 9°C humidity 74% at 1018hPa. |
| <b>Accessibility</b>          | All areas of the building accessible to search for evidence of protected species. |                                                        |                                                                                                             |

The defined survey area comprises an existing residential property, previously converted from agricultural use, and which is currently occupied. It is positioned within a well-

maintained residential garden in a rural location on the edge of the village of Stoke Golding. There is a Farm unit and farm buildings to the north. Wykin Lane runs along the western boundary of the property. Open arable fields lie to the east and south. There are some significant hedgerows and individual mature broadleaved trees present in the vicinity. A contextual aerial photograph has been provided below.



**Figure 2: Site Contextual Aerial Photograph**

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## 1.2 Objective of the Report

This report is a Preliminary Bat Inspection (PBI) of the property identified in yellow within the aerial photograph above. The objective of the inspection is to identify if there is any potential for protected species, particularly roosting bats, to be present on the building but also assesses the potential for other protected species to be present. Development of the site for the purpose of constructing a new extension to the existing residential property will require planning approval and this report has been prepared to provide information as part of any future planning application process. To this end the report is required to comply with the recommendations and principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 as amended (NPPF). The report contains Biological Records and has been prepared to meet the standard required by BS42020 (British Standard for Biodiversity and Development).

Chapter 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023) describes the Government's national policies on promoting 'an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment.' NPPF is accompanied by Planning Practice Guidance on 'Biodiversity, ecosystems and green infrastructure' (2014) and ODPM Circular 06/2005.

NPPF 2023 sets out the Government's objectives for planning in regard to the protection of biodiversity. Planning policy context requires that Planning policies and decisions should be

based on up-to-date information about the natural environment and other characteristics of the area including an assessment of existing and potential components of ecological networks (NPPF paragraph 43).

The measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development (BS 42020:2013, section 5.5).

This appraisal has been provided to provide information to the Planning Authority in order to help meet the requirements of the NPPF and enable the Authority to assess the potential for the property to support protected species such as roosting bats in accordance with the Code of Practice within BS42020 and guidelines issued by CIEEM in 2012. The report also identifies any habitats or species present that require more detailed surveys prior to any improvements being undertaken.

## **Part 2: Survey Methodology and Results**

### **2. Appraisal Methodology**

#### **2.1 Baseline Study**

Within NPPF 2023 the principles by which the protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the context of proposed development are described. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity [such as protected species] resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused, and*
- b) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.*

The biodiversity of a site area and the potential presence of protected species are factors relevant to all developments irrespective of the size scale and will apply to any development at the property being assessed. As this is a small residential building rather than an open green area of larger structure, it was considered appropriate in the first instance to access biological records obtained from MAGIC and NBN.

Following the appraisal of the available information, an inspection has taken place to obtain specific site data at the site.

#### **2.2 Habitat Assessment Methodology**

The property was inspected on the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The inspection was completed in accordance with the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2017) issued by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM) and BS42020 (British Standard for Biodiversity and Development).

It is recognised that the surveyed comprises the inspection of a single building surrounded by residential garden and therefore a detailed habitat assessment is not required since the entire survey area will be assessed as being 'Developed Land Sealed Surface' and 'Vegetated Garden'. The survey required a systematic inspection of the existing building and immediately surrounding land looking for evidence of protected species. This method

was extended, in line with the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to record details on the actual or potential presence of any notable or protected species or habitats.

Plans showing the elevations of the existing bungalow surveyed are included as **Figure 3** within section 3 of this report.

## 2.3 Protected Species Assessment Methodology

A methodical inspection was carried out to look for any evidence of protected species using the building and to identify any immediately adjacent habitats with potential to provide significant shelter or foraging opportunities for these. The survey was carried out by Christopher Barker, an experienced ecological consultant and Chartered Environmentalist holding Class Licenses issued by Natural England.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 consolidates the various amendments that have been made to the Regulations. The original (1994) Regulations transposed the EC Habitats Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) into national law.

“European protected species” are those which are present on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. They are subject to the provisions of Regulation 41 of those Regulations. All European Protected Species are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Taken together, these pieces of legislation make it an offence to:

- a. Intentionally or deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal included amongst these species
- b. Possess or control any live or dead specimens or any part of, or anything derived from these species
- c. deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species
- d. deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal, or
- e. intentionally, deliberately or recklessly damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal, or obstruct access to such a place

For the purposes of paragraph (c), disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely—

- a. to impair their ability—
  - i. to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
  - ii. in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate;or,
- b. to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Although the law provides strict protection to these species, it also allows this protection to be set aside (derogation) through the issuing of licences. The licences in England are currently determined by Natural England (NE) for development works. In accordance with the requirements of the Regulations (2017), a licence can only be issued where the following requirements are satisfied:

- i) The proposal is necessary ‘to preserve public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment’
- ii) ‘There is no satisfactory alternative’

iii)) The proposals 'will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

General faunal activity, such as mammals or birds observed visually or by call during the course of the surveys was recorded. Specific attention was also paid to the potential presence of any protected, rare or notable species, and specific consideration was given to bats, birds, badgers, amphibians and reptiles as described below.

**Breeding Birds:** All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. The inspection of the site included a search of hedgerows, ground vegetation and tree canopies looking for evidence of active or former nests.

**Bats:** All species of Bat within the UK are protected under the Habitat Regulations that amended and incorporated the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. These regulations make it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a bat [WCA section 9(1)]
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a bat [WCA section 9(2)]
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a bat [WCA section 9(4)(a)]
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose [WCA section 9(4)(a)]

Potential bat roost locations in relation to buildings are described within this report (taken from Table 4.1 of the updated Bat Survey Guidelines 2023) as:

**None** No habitat features on site are likely to be used by any bats at any time of year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices / suitable shelter at all ground /underground levels).

**Negligible** No obvious habitat feature on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features at times.

**Low** A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year. These potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be used for maternity and not a classic cool / stable hibernation site but could be used by individual hibernating bats)

**Moderate** A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (i.e. such as maternity or hibernation irrespective of species conservation status).

**High** A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat. These structures have potential to support high conservation value roosts (i.e. maternity or classic cool / stable hibernation site)

**Common Reptiles:** All species of British reptile are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The common species (adder, grass snake, slow worm

and common lizard) are only protected against intentional killing and injuring (but not taking).

The survey included a search of all areas where suitable habitat for reptiles to shelter under or bask may be present, lifting logs and other suitable features to search underneath. The surveyor also maintained a careful watch whilst moving across the site to look for signs of reptiles moving to cover.

**Great crested newts** are afforded legal protection under European and UK law. The law provides protection to adults, juveniles, efts (immature GCN) and eggs and it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly or as an incidental result of actions:

- Intentionally or deliberately capture, kill, or injure Great Crested Newts
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used for shelter or protection (including resting or breeding places) whether occupied or not
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb Great Crested Newts when in a place of shelter
- Possess a Great Crested Newt, or any part of it, unless acquired lawfully
- Sell, barter, exchange or transport or offer for sale Great Crested Newts or any part of them.

The survey included a search of any ponds and wetland areas within the site or immediate surrounding area nearby (where these features were accessible) and an assessment of ponds in the local area using Ordnance Survey Maps and aerial photographs to consider the potential for these species to access the site area.

**Badger:** Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This makes it an offence to wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or to attempt to do so; or to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett. Sett interference includes disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, as well as damaging or destroying a sett or obstructing access to it. A badger sett is defined in the legislation as “*a structure or place, which displays signs indicating current use by a badger*”.

The survey searching for evidence of badger activity comprised two main elements. The first element involved searching for evidence of Badger setts. For any setts that were encountered, each sett entrance was noted and mapped. The following information was recorded:

- Number and location of well used / active entrances; these are clear from any debris or vegetation and are obviously in regular use and may, or may not, have been excavated recently.
- Number and location of inactive entrances; these are not in regular use and have debris such as leaves and twigs in the entrance or have plants growing in or around the edge of the entrance.
- Number of disused entrances; these have not been in use for some time, are partly or completely blocked and cannot be used without considerable clearance. If the entrance has been disused for some time all that may be visible is a depression in the ground where the hole used to be and the remains of the spoil heap.

The second element of the survey involved searching for signs of Badger activity such as well-worn paths and push-throughs, snagged hair, footprints, latrines and foraging signs, so as to build up a picture of any use of the site by Badger.

**Invasive Species:** Attention was paid to the presence of any invasive species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). However, the detectability of such species varies due to a number of factors, e.g. time of year, site

management, etc., and hence the absence of invasive species should not be assumed even if no such species were detected during the Phase 1 survey.

A range of invasive non-native plant species are listed in Schedule 9 (Part 2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to plant or cause these introduced invasive plants to grow in the wild, effectively making it illegal to spread the plants during development operations.

## 2.4 Consultations

The evaluation of ecological features and resources is based on professional judgement whilst also drawing on the latest available industry guidance and research. The approach taken in this report is based on that described by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2016).

Within this frame of reference, certain sites may carry a statutory ecological designation, e.g. Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for internationally important sites or Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for sites of national importance. Sites of more localised nature conservation importance do not receive statutory protection but may be designated by Local Planning Authorities or other bodies, e.g. Wildlife Trusts. Such non-statutory designations or 'Local Sites' include Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) and Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs), for example.

A review of the available data obtained from MAGIC confirms that the property surveyed is not a Statutory or Non-Statutory site of ecological significance and there are no such sites close to the property. The nearest Statutory Site is Kendalls Meadow SSSI situated 2.2km to the north.

The survey covers an existing residential property which is currently occupied. Taking in account the issue of 'proportionality', as referenced in the 2023 Bat Survey Guidelines and Clause 4.1.2 of BS42020 wherein "*professionals should take a proportionate approach to ensure the provision of information within the (planning) application is appropriate to the level of environmental risk it presents,*" it was considered appropriate to initially review records obtained from the National Biodiversity Network and MAGIC in the first instance for a 1km radius around the property being surveyed.

| Scientific Name                  | Common Name          | No. of Records | Location                       |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Triturus cristatus</i>        | Gt Crested Newt      | 1              | Nearest record 900m east       |
| <i>Natrix natrix</i>             | Grass Snake          | 3              | Nearest record 900m east       |
| <i>Zootoca vivipara</i>          | Common Lizard        | 1              | Nearest record 900m east       |
| <i>Turdus iliacus</i>            | Redwing              | 2              | Records within 500m            |
| <i>Turdus pilaris</i>            | Fieldfare            | 1              | Record within 500m             |
| <i>Tyto alba</i>                 | Barn Owl             | 1              | Record within 1km              |
| <i>Arvicola amphibius</i>        | European Water Vole  | 2              | Nearest record 900m east       |
| <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> | Common Pipistrelle   | 6              | Nearest record 800m north      |
| <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>     | Soprano Pipistrelle  | 4              | Nearest record 900m south east |
| <i>Plecotus auritus</i>          | Brown Long-eared Bat | 7              | Nearest record 800m north      |
| <i>Nyctalus noctula</i>          | Noctule              | 1              | Nearest record 900m east       |

The nearest European Protected Species Mitigation License issued by Natural England is a for a small roost situated in a property on the north western edge of Hinckley 2km to the south east of the building being surveyed.

There is one records of **great crested newt (GCN)** within 1km of the site situate din ponds 900m to the east on the northern boundary of Hinckley. There are other GCN records along the south western edge of Hinckley over 1.5km from the survey area. There are no records

of other amphibians but it is noted that there is an ornamental pond within the garden of the property which could support amphibians.

There are records of **reptiles** in this area associated with suitable habitat 900m to the east. The open agricultural land surrounding the property being surveyed is considered to be sub-optimal habitat to support large numbers of reptiles.

The building could provide nesting opportunities **for birds** and species such as House Martin and Swallow are recorded in this area. The likelihood of ground nesting is considered to be very low due to the lack of cover and presence of predatory cats nearby.

There are records of roosting and foraging **bats** in this area with two species of Pipistrelle, and Brown Long-eared bats recorded in the area, roosting within Hinckley. The surrounding agricultural land does contain some trees and tall hedgerows and could provide viable foraging and commuting routes for local bat populations. If there are suitable structural features present it is possible that the building could support roosting bats.

There are no records of **badger** activity in this area. The existing residential house and garden will be sub-optimal habitat for this species. There are no nearby records for Water Vole or Otter and the site is sub-optimal for these species.

### 3. Survey Findings

#### 3.1 Description of property and target notes

The survey has identified the following habitats within the proposed development area:

- Residential property
- Modified Grass (Lawn)
- Pond (within the garden)
- Hedgerow (along the garden boundary)

#### **Target Note: Building**

The building is a converted single storey barn of brick construction with a pitched roof. It is of traditional brick construction and extends to the north in an 'L' shape. Only the southern corner of the building will be disturbed where the proposed extension is to be added and this part of the building has been inspected. The brickwork throughout is in excellent condition with no gaps, holes, cavities or other feature on the exterior which might be of interest to roosting bats or nesting birds.

The property has tightly fit grey uPVC windows and French doors which provide no potential access into the building structure for bats or birds.

The roof is pitched and constructed from rosemary tile with lining underneath. The roof appears in excellent condition with no missing, broken, lifted or damaged tiles visible on the roof exterior. The roof edges appear effectively sealed. There are velux-style windows in the roof structure and these appear tightly fitted.

However, there are two areas where minor features are present:

- There are gaps between the overlapping angle ridge tiles on the south facing gable leaving a potential access to any cavity under the angle ridge tile
- There are small gaps around the chimney stack on the south gable end of the property where bats may be able to access any cavity behind the flashing and tiles adjacent to the chimney.

The minor features above are marked on the elevation within **Figure 3**. No other significant external features were identified associated with the property.



Front (west face) and yard



South gable end



West facing roof structure

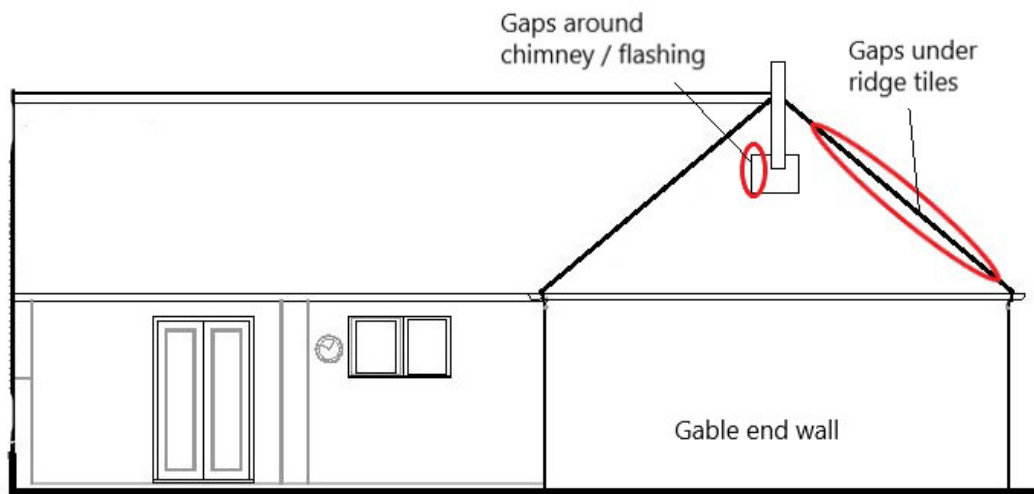


South and east facing roof structure



Close up of south gable roof and chimney

Internal inspection of the building confirms that there is no enclosed loft space as the entire internal space is utilised for living space. The underside of the roof has been plaster-boarded and painted with the timber roof support beams exposed and treated. The underside of the ceiling is painted white as shown in the photograph below.



**Figure 3 - Property Elevation**



**Roof interior**

The inspection of the exterior and interior spaces of the building did not identify any signs of roosting bats or any evidence of nesting birds. No droppings, feeding debris, guano or nesting materials was found in any part of the property inspected.

As minor features have been found associated with the external roof structure and the building is in a rural location easily accessible to foraging and commuting bats, it is concluded from the preliminary inspection that this building has **Low Roost Potential**, (*i.e. it is a structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year. These potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be used for maternity and not a classic cool / stable hibernation site but could be used by individual hibernating bats)*)

**Target Note: Modified Grass**

The proposed footprint of the new extension comprises a lawn of modified grassland which is frequently mown and species poor, being dominated by dwarf perennial ryegrass.



Lawn area where extension is proposed



Wall along edge of lawn



View of garden and south side of property

**Target Note: Pond (off site)**

At the southern end of the garden immediately adjacent to Wykin Lane is an ornamental pond. This pond is approximately 16m x 9m, kidney shaped with no shade around the margins. The water quality appears good and it is likely this water body will support amphibians. This pond is sufficiently far from the existing building and footprint of the proposed development to avoid any direct disturbance.



Ornamental pond



Ornamental pond

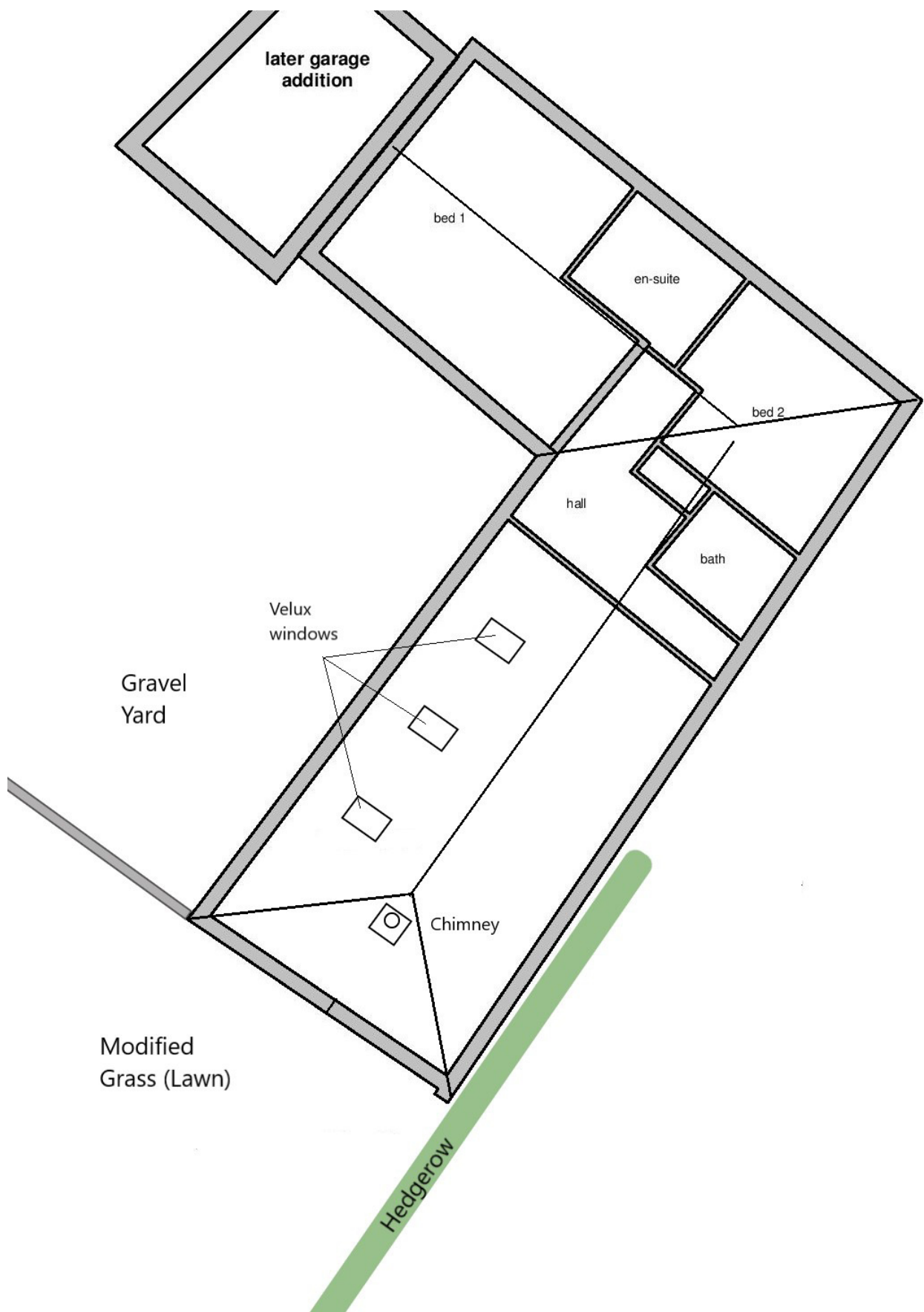


View of pond from position of proposed extension

**Target Note: Boundary Hedge**

Along the eastern edge of the garden is an untrimmed Hawthorn hedgerow which is fairly sparse in places and overgrown in parts by bramble.





**Figure 4 – Property Plan**

### 3.2 Evidence of Protected Species

During the inspection of the existing building and garden notes were made on the suitability of habitats for protected species and any sightings or signs of protected species were recorded:

- The suitability of habitats for badger (*Meles meles*) was recorded and any evidence of badgers including setts, dung pits, badger paths, hairs, bedding, footprints and scratching trees was noted.
- Trees with features suitable for roosting bats were noted, such as hollows (e.g. old woodpecker holes), cracks and cavities within trunks and branches, crevices behind loose bark and ivy growth on trunks.
- The existing building was searched for evidence of roosting bats and nesting birds and any structural features which may allow access into the building interior of internal roof structure was identified.
- The suitability of the garden surrounding the bungalow was assessed for reptiles such as Grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) and amphibians (including great crested newts - *Triturus cristatus*).
- The suitability of site was assessed for nesting birds.

Surveying in January is a sub-optimal time for many protected species. However, an experienced surveyor can make reliable judgements about the quality and composition of habitats and their potential suitability for protected species. Only an initial assessment of the site was made and no stage 2 surveys were carried out. As such, a lack of evidence of a protected species does not necessarily indicate an absence of these species. The table below provides a summary of the potential for protected species to be present within the site.

| Species              | Present within 1km | Connectivity                                                                          | Suitable habitat on site / evidence of presence                                                                                                                                       | Likelihood of presence on site                                                                                             |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Nesting Birds</b> | Yes                | Good via adjacent agricultural land.                                                  | Ground nesting within the garden highly unlikely due to lack of cover and presence of predatory cats. No evidence of nesting activity identified on or within the building structure. | Very low.                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Reptiles</b>      | Yes                | Garden and surrounding land appear sub-optimal for these species.                     | Garden is sub-optimal habitat and no evidence of reptiles or any significant features suitable for these species was found.                                                           | Negligible                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Amphibians</b>    | Yes                | Limited due to the lack of nearby ponds and drainage channels in the surrounding land | Ornamental pond is suitable for amphibians and common species may be present. There is no record of GCN in this location. Lawn area is sub-optimal for amphibians.                    | Moderate within pond and boundary hedgerow                                                                                 |
| <b>Bats</b>          | Yes                | Reasonable due to the presence of tree canopy cover in this rural location.           | No physical evidence of bat activity was found associated with the building but there are minor structural features present which may be of interest to roosting bats.                | The building has low roost potential and requires a further bat activity survey to comply with the 2023 survey guidelines. |

|                                  |     |                                                                           |                                                                                             |            |
|----------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Badger and larger mammals</b> | Yes | There are no records of badger and the garden area is effectively fenced. | No field signs of badger were found in any part of the garden or boundary areas inspection. | Negligible |
|----------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|

**Birds:** The local area supports a range of bird species which includes some Schedule 1 species and also species such as Swallow and House Martin which are associated with building. However, no evidence of redundant nesting activity was identified and no structural features of potential interest to nesting birds were found associated with the building or the surrounding garden. Further surveys are not recommended.

**Reptiles:** The inspection of the garden and driveway around the building was completed on a grid pattern and no field evidence or optimal habitat for these species was identified. Further surveys are not recommended.

**Amphibians:** The presence of significant numbers of amphibians in the area surveyed is considered unlikely although the nearby ornamental pond and hedgerow adjacent to this could support foraging and breeding amphibians. The presence of GCN is considered unlikely as the nearest colony is 900m to the east. Further surveys are not recommended as the pond lies outside the area that will be used for construction and the boundary hedgerow will also remain undisturbed. It is recommended that the lawn area where the new extension is to be placed should be carefully inspected immediately prior to vegetation removal.

**Chiroptera:** The building has some external features present associated with the south facing roof structure where there are exposed gaps between the overlapping angled ridge tiles and also the chimney stack on the south gable end of the building which could be of interest to roosting bats in the future. Whilst no field evidence of bat activity was found externally or internally, ***this building is considered to have Low Roost Potential and in compliance with the 2023 Bat Survey Guidelines a further dusk activity survey is required to comply with the guidelines. This further survey should be completed during the optimum bat activity season (May – August).***

**Invertebrates:** The small garden area and bare yard surrounding the building do not appear to support a diverse range of flora. The potential for a significant assemblage of invertebrates to be present within the survey area is quite low at the present time and further invertebrate surveys are not recommended.

**Mammals:** During the inspection of the survey area a thorough search for evidence of badger was completed. No significant established tracks or trails indicative of badger activity were found within the survey area and no sett entrances found. Further surveys for badger are not recommended due to the lack of field signs and effective fencing around the boundary of the garden. The potential presence of Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) in the garden cannot be ruled out as there are local records of this species being seen within the surrounding 1km area. Measures to protect hedgehogs should be taken and this should include an inspection of any vegetation close to the bungalow ahead of any clearance work being carried out. Any found should be moved to a temporary refugia located in a suitable position within hedgerow on the eastern boundary outside of the area of disturbance.

### 3.3 Ecological Constraints

#### **Constraints:**

The following ecological constraint has been identified:

- The building requires a bat activity survey to be completed to confirm the presence / absence of roosting bats in accordance with the recommendations within the Bat

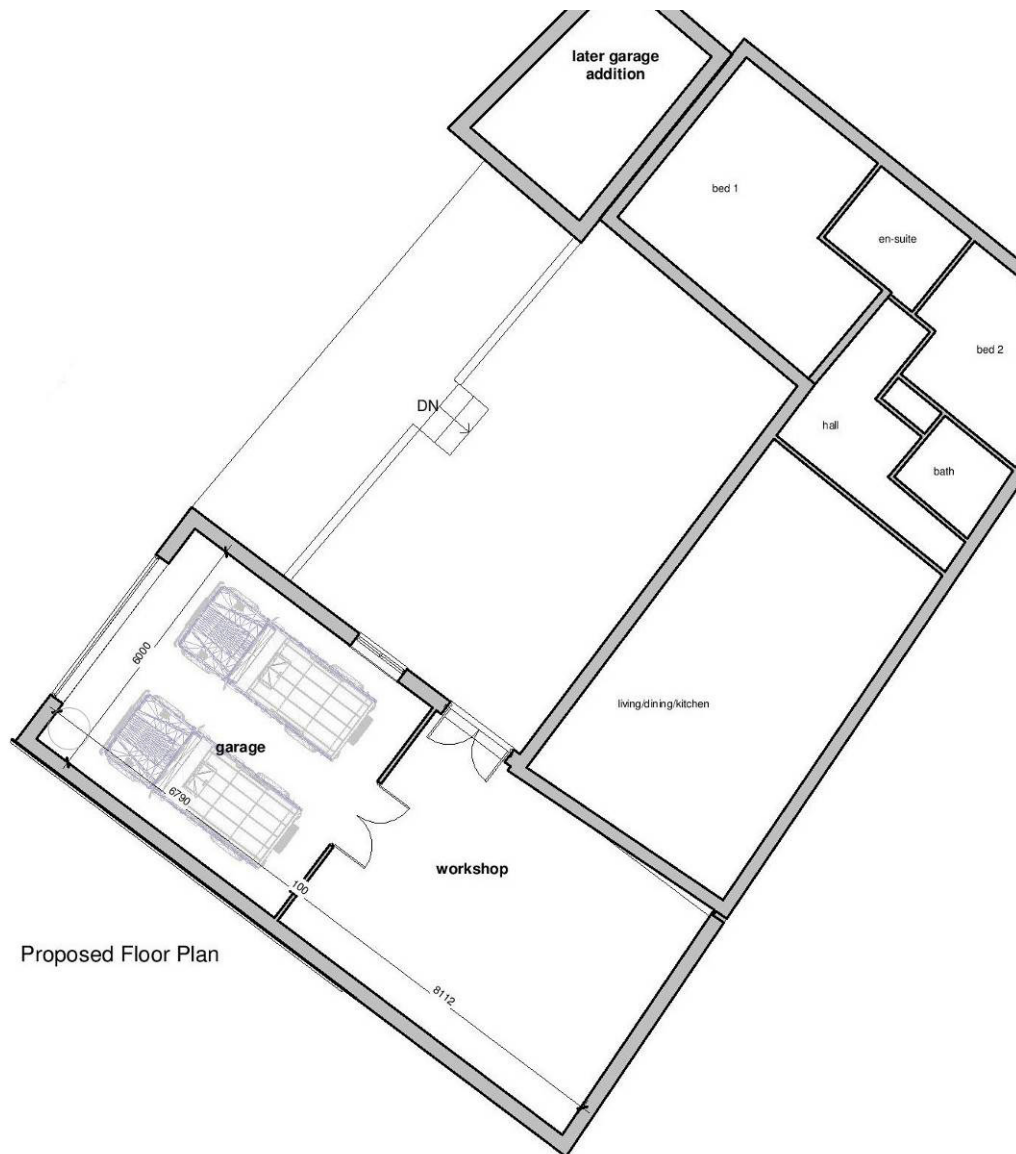
Survey Guidelines due to the presence of minor features associated with the south facing roof and chimney stack.

- The lawn area where the new extension is proposed should be inspected prior to vegetation clearance to ensure there are no amphibians present.
- The nearby pond and boundary hedgerow should be excluded from any area of disturbance associated with the construction of the new extension by fencing whilst works are underway.

### Part 3: Initial Ecological Appraisal

#### 4. Impact of Proposed Site Development

Within the NPPF 2023, guidance on the provision or retention of biodiversity within any proposed area for development and measures to ensure the safeguarding of protected species are provided. It is understood that the intention is to extend the southern fae of the existing property into the existing garden where there is lawn.



**Figure 5 – Proposed Development Layout**

#### 4.1 Potential Impact on nearby Statutory and Non-statutory sites

The nearest Statutory and Non-Statutory sites of ecological interest are sufficiently distant from the proposed development area that the small scale of the development being proposed will have no impact on these.

#### 4.2 Impact of the Proposals on Site Biodiversity

The level of biodiversity within the site being assessed must be a consideration in determining the impact on biodiversity that may arise from any development on the site. Within the NPPF 2023 it states that any development proposal should seek to “*contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change.....*”

Within the Guidance it specifically states that “*Planning.... decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by.....protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils.....recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.*”

The survey area comprises an occupied residential property and vegetated garden occupied by a lawn in the area where the extension is being proposed. The existing building and vegetated garden have limited biodiversity at the present time due to the management of this land and no evidence of any significant locally rare plants, plant communities or habitats were identified. There is no reason to consider that the extension of the existing building across a small section of the existing lawn area will have any significant impact on local biodiversity.

#### 4.3 Impact of the Proposals on Protected Species

The requirements of Part IV of ODPM / Defra Circular 06/2005 in regard to the protection of certain species are still applicable under NPPF. The presence of protected species at the site must be taken into consideration. Under the requirements of the NPPF provision in relation to the presence of protected species on, or making use of, a site proposed for any development must be taken into account. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where development requiring appropriate assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives is being considered, planned or determined or where the impact on protected species is considered to outweigh the benefit of development.

The inspection completed in January 2024 did not identify any physical evidence or field signs of protected species within the existing building to be extended or adjacent residential garden dominated by a mown lawn. After inspection of the site, assessment of its landscape context and a review of the biological records for this area, it is recommended that a further bat activity survey should be carried out within the optimum bat activity season to comply with Survey Guidelines.

In addition, it is recommended that a precautionary inspection of the lawn area should be carried out by an ecologist before any vegetation clearance takes place and the existing ornamental pond within the garden adjacent to Wykin Lane and the boundary hedge along the edge of the garden should be protected by temporary fencing whilst any construction work is underway to ensure these cannot be disturbed, even by accident.

**General Recommendation:** It is recommended that at least one bat roost tube should be incorporated into the structure of the house on the south or west facing side of this in a suitable position to provide opportunities for bat species. A suitable roost tube would be one

such as the Woodcrete rendered tube shown below. Alternative, a bat access tile can be placed on the south facing roof structure immediately below the ridge tile to allow bats to access any cavity between the tile and the underlying lining.



As the property is in a good location for foraging bats it is recommended that any external lighting should be minimal and that if there is any lighting it should be directed away from the ornamental pond and boundary hedgerow. The Guidance provided within 'Bat and Lighting' Natural England 2014 identifies that the best lights to promote bat commuting and foraging in an area are "Narrow Spectrum Lights with no UV content, low pressure sodium and warm white LED, or directional downlights - illuminating below the horizontal plane which avoid light trespass into the environment. The specification for any external lighting to be applied by the lighting engineer should therefore be for narrow spectrum directional lights. The specific make and model of lighting will be determined by the lighting engineer as there are a number of varieties that can be chosen and he/she will be the qualified and competent person to determine the correct specification.

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2015 – 10140 – CLS - CLS

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