

**Extended Phase 1
Habitat Survey of
Sheepfold Farm,
Bronington, Whitchurch,
Wrexham, SY13 3HD
GR SJ 49462
39375**

Survey by:
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Summary

22.12.15

An extended phase 1 survey of land at Cae Bach, Bronington, Whitchurch, Wrexham SY13 3HD was carried out on 8th December 2015 by Susan Worsfold for Worsfold and Bowen of Springfields, Station Road, Llanymynech, Shropshire SY22 6ED.

The area investigated is shown in Annexes 1-2.

Evidence of protected species was searched for at the request of Tim Evans of The Shed, Pant Lane, Dudleston, Ellesmere, Shropshire SY12 9EP, in relation to repairs and change of use of the barn and land and construction of a shower block and associated septic tank and soakaways.

Details of the survey methods and findings are included. The findings are supported by photographic evidence.

Plants

No important or endangered species of plants were found on the site.

Birds

There is not considered to be any threat to nesting birds as long as hedges are not trimmed between the beginning of March and the end of July.

Great crested newts (GCN)

There is not considered to be any risk of harm to GCN or threat to their conservation status as long as reasonable avoidance measures are taken as described on page 6.

Bats

There is not considered to be any risk of harm to bats or threat to their conservation status.

Other protected species

There was no evidence of any other protected species on the site or within 30 m of the site.

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Scope

An extended phase 1 survey of land at Cae Bach, Bronington, Whitchurch, Wrexham SY13 3HD was carried out on 8th December 2015 by Susan Worsfold for Worsfold and Bowen of Springfields, Station Road, Llanymynech, Shropshire SY22 6ED at the request of Tim Evans of The Shed, Pant Lane, Dudleston, Ellesmere, Shropshire SY12 9EP, in relation to repairs and a change of use of the barn and land and construction of a shower block and associated septic tank and soakaways. The area investigated is outlined in the location maps (Annexe 1), the aerial photograph (Annex 2), and the site is shown in the site plan (Annexe 3) and survey diagram (Annex 4)

Evidence of the presence of protected species was sought as defined in:

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
and listed in: Schedule 2. European protected species of
animals

Schedule 5. European protected species
of plants The protection of Badgers Act
1992

Protected species which might be associated with such a site include bats, owls and other breeding birds. The area around the site might be used by badgers, dormice, amphibians and reptiles, and might contain protected plant species.

Background

The land is currently not in use but has been used as grazing for sheep. The barn had been used for raising cattle.

Procedures and equipment

The site and boundaries were examined to establish the presence of any important or endangered plants, and for evidence of use by protected species of animals. The variety of plant species was mapped according to the convention of Phase 1 habitat surveys as described by the JNCC (2010). Photographs were taken of all areas (Annex 5).

Personnel

Susan Worsfold BSc GradCIEEM

Licensed bat worker and voluntary bat warden, registration number CLS0895 (Class Survey Licence WML CL18 - Bat Survey Level 2) and registration number CLS0985 (Class Survey Licence WML CL15 Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor Level 1) (NE) and 55624- OTH- CSAB:2014 (NRW);

Licensed great crested newt worker, registration number CLS00895 (NE) and 55625:OTH:SA:2014 (NRW)

Findings

Description of the site and relevant surrounding environment

The Site

The area of the site is approximately 0.4 ha. Most of this will remain apart from that needed for construction of the shower block and potentially extra car parking at the north end. The boundary at the north end is a well maintained hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) hedge and the ground flora is dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) with some dock (*Rumex* sp.), nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*). The track from the road leads to an area of hard standing at the north end of the barn, which has become colonised by grasses, dock, bramble, thistle and nettle.

The Barn

The barn is of one storey with a corrugated fibre cement roof on a metal frame with transparent corrugated plastic roof lights. The walls are of wood planks with no lining which do not overlap. They are supported by solid concrete walls beneath. The barn is open at the north and south ends. There are no verge boards.

The Ponds and ditch

The ponds shown on maps to the south west of the site were inaccessible and not on the client's land. However, since they are approximately 200 m from the site there is not considered to be any risk of harm to individual GCN or threat to their conservation status. The ditch is approximately 90 m from the site of the proposed shower block, but this was dry and it is reasonable to assume it is dry for most of the year if not all.

No badger setts were seen on the site or within 30 m of the site. No evidence of use by dormice was found on or near the site.

No evidence of use of the site or nearby environment by any other protected species was found.

Impact Assessment and Recommendations

Plants

No protected species of plants were found on the site. There are no plans to remove any sections of hedgerow at the north boundary and it did not meet the criteria for an 'important' hedgerow as defined in

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1997/1160/schedule/1/made> in any case.

Birds

1. It is recommended that one woodcrete nest suitable for small birds such as robin, blackbird, tit species and sparrow should be fixed onto the building, and one woodcrete nests suitable for swallows. House Sparrow Terrace - Wooden (or woodcrete) nest box with 3 sub- divisions to support 3 nesting pairs. To be placed under the eaves of buildings or incorporated into walls. Entrance holes: 32mm diameter. Dimensions: H310 x W370 x D185mm. Also suitable for tits, redstarts and spotted flycatchers. Place at least 2 m from the ground.

Swallow nest - H110mm x W250mm x D140mm. The nest should be placed inside an enclosed outbuilding or shed, porch or garage leaving a distance of at least 6cm between the top of the nest and the ceiling. There must be access for the birds through an open window or sky- light.

Other designs of nest boxes may also be suitable.

2. Hedges should not be trimmed between the beginning of March and the end of July, to avoid disturbing or destroying active bird nests.

3.If birds should gain access to the buildings and begin building nests before or during the work, then the work in that area will have to stop until the young have left the nests (see Annex 6).

Great Crested Newts (GCN)

4. The nearest ponds are approximately 200 m from the site, therefore there is not considered to be any risk of harm to individual GCN or threat to their conservation status using the rapid risk assessment tool WML-A14- 2.xls (Natural England 2012) as guidance. The ditch is approximately 90 m from the site of the proposed shower block, but this was dry and it is reasonable to assume it is dry for most of the year if not all. However, to prevent killing or injuring any foraging or commuting GCN reasonable avoidance measures are taken as described on page 6 and care should be taken when removing piles of rubble or debris such as that found in the area to the north of the barn.

Bats

5. The site and environment is suitable for use by foraging and commuting bats and some of the trees nearby are suitable as roosts. It is recommended that a bat box is fitted externally or incorporated into the building. Further information is given in the bat box information pack available at

<http://www.bats.org.uk/index.php>

6. A lighting plan should be designed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines: http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html

Other protected species

7. There was no evidence of any other protected species on the site or within 50 m of the site.

Reasonable Avoidance Measures with Regard to Great Crested Newts

It is a criminal offence to harm a great crested newt.

Great crested newts spend most of their time on land, returning to still water only to breed once they are mature at about 3-4 years of age.

They may travel more than kilometre from their breeding pond.

They move about mostly at night, and by day creep underground or beneath shelter such as stones or logs.

They hibernate during the winter, which is generally from the beginning of November until late March, depending on the weather. Hibernation is underground in burrows made by other small animals or beneath substantial cover such as large stones or piles of logs.

1. The vegetation in all areas should be kept as short as possible.
2. Ground works must not be undertaken during the active season, i.e. March to October.
3. If any trenches cannot be filled the same day they will need a ramp of earth made at the ends of the trenches, to the full depth of each trench, so that newts can climb out. It is not sufficient to leave a piece of wood against the sides, which would allow small mammals to escape, but not newts, which are not good climbers. The trenches must be inspected carefully before infilling, and any animals carefully removed and released into the surrounding hedgerows (but see para 8 below).
4. Building materials should be stored clear of the ground (say, on pallets) so as to avoid crushing any animals which might seek refuge under them, when the materials are lifted. Any such storage must be on a gravel drive or other hard surface, and not on a lawn or other soft surface.
5. If any potential refuges such as piles of rubble or logs need to be moved before work starts, care must be taken when moving them. This should be done by hand.
6. Any open pipework should be capped overnight. All open trenches and pipework should be inspected at the start of each working day to ensure no animal is trapped.
7. Any excavated material which is not replaced on the same day must either be removed from the site or stored on a hard surface and covered with an impermeable membrane, such as a plastic sheet or tarpaulin, and the edges of the sheet secured so that no amphibians can gain access.
8. If any great crested newt is discovered in the area of the work, then work in that area must stop and a licensed great crested newt worker contacted immediately for advice.

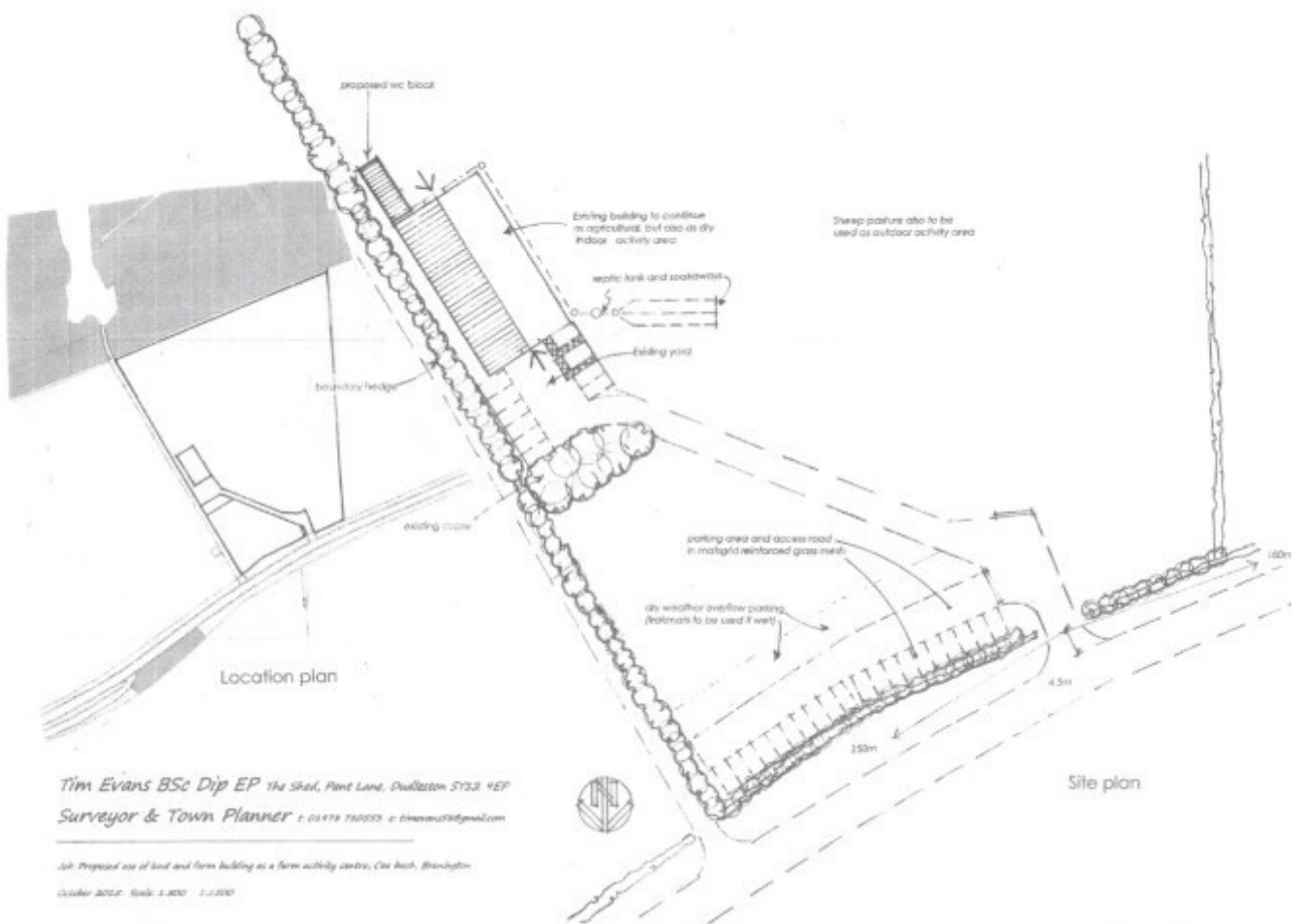
Annex 1.1: Location Map

Annex 1.2: Location Map

Annex 2: Aerial Photograph

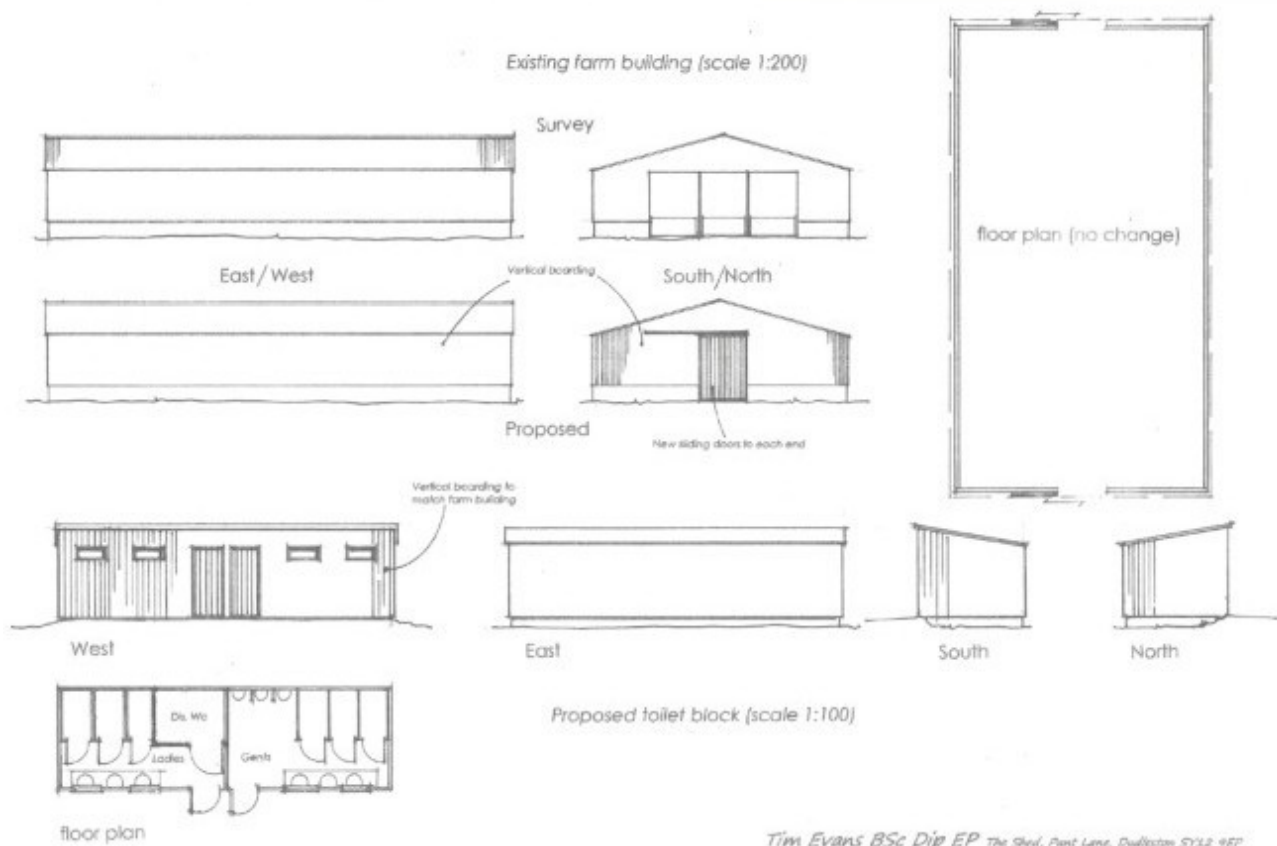
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Annex 3.1: Location Plan



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Annex 3.2: Floor Plans



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Job: Proposed use of land and farm building as a farm activity centre, Casbach, Brinsington
 October 2017. Scale: 1:500

Annex 4: Survey Diagram

Annex 6: Birds and the Law

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence, with certain exceptions, To:

- a) intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
- b) intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built
- c) intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird
- d) have in one's possession or control any wild bird (dead or alive) or part of a wild bird which has been taken in contravention of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 or the Protection of Birds Act 1954
- e) have in one's possession or control an egg or part of an egg which has been taken in contravention of the Act
- f) have in one's possession or control any birds of a species occurring on Schedule 4 of the Act unless registered and ringed in accordance with the Secretary of State's regulations.
- g) intentionally (or recklessly, in England and Wales only) disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building or is at (or near) a nest with eggs or young; or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Annex 7: Legislation regarding great crested newts

Great Crested Newts are a European Protected Species (EPS). Their legal protection is now provided by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which replaces earlier legislation and which implement the EC Directive 92/43/EEC in the United Kingdom. They are listed on Schedule 2 of those regulations.

It is an offence, with certain exceptions, to:

- deliberately capture or kill any wild animal of a EPS;
- deliberately disturb any such animal;
- deliberately take or destroy eggs of any such wild animal;
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such a wild animal;
- keep (possess), transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead wild animal or plant of a EPS, or any part of, or anything derived from such a wild animal or plant.

A person found guilty of an offence is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to a fine not exceeding level 5 (currently £5,000 per offence) on the standard scale, or to both. (Each animal affected counts as a separate offence).

References

Hundt, L (2012) *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines*, 2nd Edition. Bat Conservation Trust.

JNCC, (2010), *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey - a technique for environmental audit*, ISBN 0 86139 636 7