Stuart Edmunds Wildlife

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

SITE LOCATION: Drury Lane Cottage, Ty-Broughton

SY13 3BD

DATE: 17 November 2025

AUTHOR: Stuart Edmunds

PREPARED FOR: Greg and Morwen Browne



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1. Introduction/Background

1.1 Author

The Principal Author of this report is Stuart Edmunds. The Principal Author has over 15 years of experience in ecological consultancy and wildlife conservation. He has attended several training courses on botany, newt conservation, bat ecology and mammal conservation and has been Chairman of Shropshire Mammal Group since 2012. He has worked on many mitigation schemes and has successfully delivered ecological projects throughout the UK to the benefit of species including hazel dormice, great crested newts, pine martens, otters and bats. He is currently the holder of a dormouse class licence and works as an accredited agent under WML-CL18 Bat Class Licence (number 2018-34449-CLS-CLS).

The detail provided within this report is a true and accurate reflection of both the Site conditions at the time of the survey, as well as the professional opinion of the Principal Author.

1.2 Purpose and Brief

Greenscape Architects Ltd. commissioned Stuart Edmunds Wildlife on behalf of Greg and Morwen Browne to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal ('PEA') on land immediately surrounding a cottage and garage at Ty-Broughton (see land within the red line boundary in Appendices), known herein as 'the Site', which is centred approximately at OS National Grid Reference SJ 46802 42384.

The key objectives of a PEA are to:

- Identify the likely ecological constraints associated with a project
- Identify any mitigation measures likely to be required, following the 'Mitigation Hierarchy'
- Identify any additional surveys that may be required to inform an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA)
- Identify the opportunities offered by a project to deliver ecological enhancement

1.3 Description of Site and Local Area

The Site is a residential property consisting of a cottage, detached garage and privately maintained garden covering an area of approximately 0.33 acres. The Site is surrounded by fields which are currently used as grazing for livestock. It is located next to a lane lined with old oak trees and within 150m of two constant ponds, both of which lie in the centre of the grazed fields with no connectivity to the property.

1.4 Development Proposals

The Proposed Development is to create a small (1.5m x 4m) extension to link the cottage to the adjacent garage. The work will also involve renovation work on the existing garage, including the removal of the existing asbestos roof panels and construction of a new roof to cover the garage and extension between the garage and cottage. There are no requirements for additional infrastructure to be constructed for the development and there is good quality vehicle access to the Site already in place.

National and international legislation considered in respect of the Proposed Development is summarised as:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regula tions 2017 (HMSO, 2017) Afford protection to certain species and habitats listed on the relevant schedules
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (HMSO, 1981)
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (HMSO, 2006) Places a duty on planning authorities to consider priority habitats and species in planning applications.

2. Methods & Methodology

2.1 Desk Study & Consultation

A desk study was carried out to gather background ecological data. Biological records have been obtained from the National Biodiversity Netwok (NBN) and the Land App for statutory and non-statutory wildlife sites and protected and notable species within 1km of the centre of the Site. There are currently no records of protected wildlife species and no protected areas within 500m of the Site.

Aerial imagery (Google) has been consulted to assess connectivity and the extent of green space immediately adjacent to the Site and within the local area. No previous ecological reports have been found for other developments in the immediate area.

2.2. Field Survey

The field survey (comprising the methods detailed below) was carried out on 5th November 2025 by The Author of this report.

Weather conditions at the time of survey were sunny and dry and there were no weather conditions acting as a limitation to the survey. A Phase 1 Habitat Survey was carried out at the Site, following guidelines of the basic survey methodology (JNCC, 2010) and provides further details in relation to the presence of notable or protected habitats and evidence of/suitability for protected/notable species, specifically:

- Badger (Meles meles)
- Bats (Chiroptera spp.)
- Great crested newt (Triturus cristatus) and other amphibians
- Hedgehog (Erinaceus europaeus)
- Invertebrates
- Hazel dormouse (Muscardinus avellanarius)
- Reptiles
- Otter (Lutra lutra)
- Water vole (Arvicola amphibius)
- Wild birds
- Protected plants

The Proposed Development area was assessed during the site survey for bat roost potential, nearby plants and trees were checked for signs of bird nests and two ponds were assessed for suitability for great crested newts.

Preliminary Roost Assessment ('PRA')

The PRA and subsequent assessment of suitability of trees at the Site for roosting bats followed current best practice guidance (Collins, 2016). An inspection of the garage roof was made externally to look for potential entry points for bats, such as gaps in the mortar or unsealed end sections of corrugated roof materials. The internal inspection of the garage involved a search along any exposed surfaces around the outer edges of the building for bat droppings, urine stains and individual bats.

Old oak trees within 50m of the Site were inspected for field evidence of bats including: droppings, individual bats (live or dead), feeding remains, scratch marks, urine staining, grease marks and clean cobweb-free gaps around potential entrance points and roost sites. Trees were inspected at ground level only and with binoculars where required. With respect to roost type, the assessments in this report are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after evidence of presence is determined.

3. Evaluation of Ecological Features

The potential of the Site to support legally protected or notable species was determined through a review of field observations and desk study information. The likelihood of the occurrence of any protected and/or invasive species is ranked as follows:

• Negligible – while presence cannot be absolutely discounted, the Site and immediate surrounding area supports very limited habitat for a species or species group. There may be no local records of the species/species group from the data search, and the surrounding habitats are considered unlikely to support wider populations of a species/species group. The Site may also be outside or peripheral to the known natural range of a species/species group.

• Low – habitats within the Site are of poor to moderate quality for a given species/species group. There are few or no returns from the data search, but presence cannot be discounted based on the national distribution of the species/species group, the nature of surrounding habitats, habitat fragmentation or recent on-site disturbance, etc.

• Medium – habitats within the Site are of moderate quality providing some opportunities for a given species/species group. The desk study reveals historic local occurrence of the species/species group and the Site is within the national distribution and with suitable surrounding habitat. Factors limiting the likelihood of occurrence may include small habitat area, habitat isolation, and/or disturbance

• High – habitats within the Site are of high quality for a given species/species group. The desk study provides evidence of local occurrence. The Site may be within/peripheral to a national or regional stronghold and/or has good quality surrounding habitat and good connectivity

• Confirmed Presence - presence confirmed from the most recent site survey or by recent, confirmed records.

3.1 Ecological Baseline and Assessment

Based on biological records information and other online information (Land App) no non-statutory wildlife sites are present at or adjacent to the Site. Non-statutory wildlife sites are present over 1km of the Site, however these are at a sufficient distance from the Site and there would be no adverse effects to the non-statutory sites as a result of the Proposed Development.

No significant adverse effects to non-statutory wildlife sites are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development.

3.2 Habitats assessment

The garden area surrounding the site has been planted within the last 20 years and is itself surrounded by large areas of grazed pasture with no hedgerow connectivity. Some self-seed native plants such as bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg*.) are present in small patches along the northern perimeter of the garden. Most other plant species have been planted in small patches and there is no dominant species present. Fruit trees, hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and hazel (*Corylus avellana*) have been planted along the northern perimeter line.

The surrounding grazed land is not ecologically important at or above the local level. A number of mature pedunculate oak (Quercus robur) line the driveway from the lane towards the property, but are considered to be far enough from the development Site to avoid any disturbance.

3.3 Species Groups Note on Biological Records

Mammals

Although the desk study did not show any local protected species records for the immediate area, the Site and garden surrounding it were searched for signs of hazel dormice due to the presence of fruit-bearing trees and hazel. The potential for hazel dormice presence is low due to the lack of quality connectivity to the garden and no evidence of dormice was found.

A search for other protected mammal species including badgers (*Meles meles*) and water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) along lines of vegetation, a small pond 50m from the Site and a second isolated pond 150m from the Site resulted in no evidence of either species being present.

Nearby hedgerows could be used by hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and polecats (*Mustela putorius)* as cover and nesting grounds, but they are deemed to be far enough away from the area of development to avoid being disturbed by the renovation works.

Bats – Roosting Habitat

The large oak trees near the Site may support suitable roosting habitat for bats, though there are no arboreal works planned as part of the development and the trees will remain undisturbed. There is no evidence that bats have entered the garage to roost.

The inspection of the garage roof space showed one possible entry point through a gap in the join between west side wall and roof, but the rest of the roof is well sealed and is inaccessible to bats. The western wall of the main cottage, which will become connected to the garage is also well sealed, with no accessibility for bats.

Bats – Foraging and Commuting Habitat

The Site supports very suitable foraging habitat via the grassland, trees and nearby pond habitat; however given the presence of significant areas of woodland and grassland in the wider area it is highly unlikely that the Site provides a significant foraging resource for bats in the local area and no further surveys for foraging bats are considered to be necessary in respect of the Proposed Development. The scattered trees and hedgerows may provide some cover for commuting bats but are unlikely to contribute to any important corridors in the local area given their lack of connection to other suitable commuting habitats. No further surveys at the Site are required for foraging or commuting bats. Overall, the Proposed Development is very unlikely to impact bat roosts or foraging activities.

Nesting Birds

Many records of bird species within the local area were obtained from the NBN Atlas. Records included yellowhammer (Emberiza citrinella), bullfinch (Pyrrhula pyrrhula), redwing (Turdus iliacus), robin (*Erithacus rubecula)*. During the site survey, blue tits (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), great tits (*Parus major*) and house sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) were observed in shrubs around the garden.

Suitable habitat for nesting birds around the Site includes trees, hedgerow and garden shrubs. Where these are proposed for removal, there is potential to breach wildlife legislation in relation to nesting birds (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981). The legislative breach may be avoided by timing the removal of vegetation outside of nesting season (generally March to August inclusive) or if vegetation is to be removed inside nesting season it should be checked for the presence of nesting birds by an ecologist prior to removal, and any nests retained until chicks have fledged and no further nesting is observed. During the site survey on 5th November, no bird nests were found within 10m of the development area and no nests were found in surrounding garden shrubs.

Great Crested Newt

No records of great crested newt were found on data searches (NBN) within 1km of the site. There are two ponds within 250m of the Site which could be suitable for newts for spawning during the spring and summer. The first pond is isolated in a grazed field around 20m from the end of the garden and over 50m from the proposed development area. A second larger pond surrounded by trees 160m from the Site has much more potential for newts, but again is isolated in the centre of a larger grazed field with sheep and not connected to the property. Given the lack of woodland or hedgerow connections from both ponds, it is considered highly unlikely that great crested newts will migrate from them to the Site if present. The risk to great crested newt (if present in these ponds) in relation to the Proposed Development is very low. On the basis of negligible risk to terrestrial great crested newt in relation to the Proposed Development, no further survey efforts for great crested newt are therefore necessary.

4. Key Ecological Constraints

There are not considered to be any significant ecological constraints to the Proposed Development, however it is recommended that advice is given to the clients should they think that any birds or bat species have taken residence within the Site after this report is submitted. The Proposed Development does not involve the destruction or removal of protected plant species or habitats and at present provides negligible potential for protected mammal and bird species. There is good quality tree cover and hedgerow habitat near the Site with potential to support protected species, but they are not connected to the Site and will not be impacted by the development.

5. Conclusion

The Proposed Development Site is very small (less than 5m x 5m) and involves renovations to the existing garage and construction of a link between the garage and cottage, which will be built on an existing gravelled pathway between the two buildings. This area is not favourable for use by wildlife and there are no native plant species growing between the two buildings. The habitats around the Site are not considered to pose significant ecological constraints to the Proposed Development.

Nesting birds may pose a constraint if vegetation clearance is undertaken within a few metres from the buildings during the nesting season, avoidance and mitigation measures have been detailed to avoid and reduce potential impacts in the “Nesting Birds” section above.

Overall, the Proposed Development will have no impact on surrounding habitats, great crested newts or bat roosts as it considered to be far enough away from any sites with potential for those species to not cause disturbance. No protected habitats will be removed or impacted by this development.

Appendices

1. Site location image (Stadia Maps Imagery)

Red lines show the area surveyed within the property and the proximity of the pond on neighbouring land



Appendix 2. Plant species table

Common plant species recorded within 20m of the Development Site.

Common name	Scientific name
Hawthorn	Crataegus monogyna
Blackthorn	Prunus spinosa
Bramble	Rubus fruticosus agg
Hazel	Corylus avellana
Buddleja	Buddleja americana
Apple	Malus domestica
Pear	Pyrus communis
Wild grape/porcelain berry	Ampelopsis glandulosa
Pedunculate oak	Quercus robur
Elder	Sambucus nigra
Common ivy	Hedera helix
Dog rose	Rosa canina
Common nettle	Urtica dioica
Cocksfoot	Dactylis glomerata
Rosebay willowherb	Chamaenerion angustifolium
Common thistle	Cirsium vulgare
Pyracanthus	Pyracantha coccinea

Appendix 3. Site photographs

1. Area for extension construction



2. Garage as seen on 5th November 2025.



3. Image showing lack of gaps for bat entry into garage



3. Perimeter line behind garage



5. Wall of cottage showing no signs of entry for bats



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