environmental business solutions

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ECOLOGICAL REPORT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT BANKSFIELD FARM, BOGGARDS LANE, CHARLESWORTH (Prepared by Environmental Business Solutions on Behalf of Stamford Wing)

June 2011

SURVEY CONDUCTED BY ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

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1. STUDY SITE

1.1 Banksfield Farm, Charlesworth (Drawing No J101133-04 April 2011), consisting of a Two storey stone farm house in good condition, the sloping slate roof, attic and boards are in very good condition. Stone barn with open access, slate roof in very poor condition. Small garden area enclosed within fencing and stone walls.

1.2 Surveys conducted on 3rd and 4th June 2011.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Environmental Business Solutions have been commissioned to conduct a baseline ecological survey of the above site by for the purpose of planning permission. The baseline ecological surveys consist of;

- General Walk over survey
- Barn Owl survey
- Bat roost survey

2.2 W Gaudie Licence Nos; Bat roost surveying 20101300

3. PURPOSE OF REPORT

3.1 To evaluate the ecological value of the site in its present state.

3.2 To establish the likelihood of any protected species being present (Wildlife and Countryside act 1981, schedule 1 (birds), schedule 5 (animals) and schedule 6 (plants)).

3.3 To give guidance on the future development and management of the site, so as to obtain a net biodiversity gain to the area as a whole.

4. OVERVIEW

4.1 The site as it stands is of low ecological importance. It consists of a mainly enclosed area of garden, along with a two storey stone farm house in good condition, the sloping slate roof, attic and boards are in very good condition. Stone barn with open access, slate roof . There are a few areas of scrub along the edge of the site, consisting mainly of bramble and Elder.

4.2 The site is surrounded by agricultural land.

4.3 No suitable ponds for great crested newts were noted within 500m of the site.

4.4 The buildings on site were physically surveyed for bat and barn owl presence , none were found.

4.5 No definite signs of protected species were found. No ponds suitable for Great crested newts, no waterways suitable for water voles and no signs of badger setts were noted. No direct evidence of bats was discovered, however the surrounding mature trees and other buildings may support bat roosts.

5. SURVEY METHODS

5.1 MAGIC interactive map was accessed for possible designated land within 500m of the site (http://magic.defra.gov.uk/website/magic/).

5.2 General walkover. Site surveyed on foot, looking for signs of tracks, trails, dwellings whilst searching for evidence of larger mammals such as badger, fox, rabbit, hare etc, along with suitable habitat for amphibians and reptiles.

5.3 Bat roost survey. See separate report.

5.4 Barn Owl survey. Day time visits.

5.4.1 Conditions. On both visits conditions were dry with good visibility.

5.4.2 Surveyor. Mr W Gaudie, BSc hons wildlife conservation, MIEEM,

5.4.3 Method. Barn Owl survey. As per; Barn Owl Trust (1989, revised 2001). *Survey Techniques – Leaflet No 8.* & English Nature / Barn Owl Trust (2002). *Barn owls on site – A guide for developers and planners.* ISBN 1 857166108

5.4.4 Buildings. Visible roof spacings, voids, cracks greater than 75mm and ledges (external) were searched for signs of all owl species habitation such as droppings, Pellets, feathers and nest debris.

5.4.5 Trees. Mature standard trees situated in open fields, hedgerows and woodland edges and considered to be of ample girth and age (normally +1m Oak, +0.5m Ash and Sycamore) situated within a radius of 100m of the marquee were examined for signs of all owl species habitation such as droppings, Pellets, feathers and nest debris

5.4.6 Equipment. Meteos Skywatch weather station, Visual OpticsVO18-10ww endoscope, Petzl Ticker LED head torch, Cluson Smartlite 1,000,000 candlepower torch.

5.5 Night time visits.

5.5.1 Date. 3rd and 4th June 2011.

5.5.2 Time. Dusk for 2 hours.

5.5.3 Conditions. 30% Cloud and dry. Minimum temperature 2.5◦C

5.5.4 Surveyors. Mr W Gaudie, BSc hons wildlife conservation, MIEEM,

5.5.5 Method. Woodland edges, open fields and roads close to the site where walked and signs of Barn Owls noted.

6. SURVEY RESULTS.

6.1 No designated sites where noted within 500m of the site

6.2 General walkover. No water bodies suitable for supporting GCN, amphibians or water voles were discovered on site. No signs of other protected species or invasive species were discovered. No signs of large mammals were discovered.

6.3 Bat roost survey. No signs of bat habitation were discovered. See separate report.

6.4 Barn Owl survey. No signs of Barn Owl or other nesting birds noted.

7. PROTECTED SPECIES

7.1 No evidence of protected species (Wildlife and Countryside act 1981, schedule 1 (birds), schedule 5 (animals) and schedule 6 (plants)) being present on site was found

8. INVASIVE SPECIES

8.1 No invasive species were discovered on site.

9. EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT ON ECOLOGY OF AREA

9.1 As the site is thought to be of low ecological value it is thought that any detrimental effects on the wildlife in the area during the development stage would be minimum and in the short term only. If the recommendations below are followed then the development would have a positive effect on the biodiversity of the area.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Only native trees and shrubs should be used within the proposed development.
Plants that attract invertebrates should be used were possible, so as to attract higher fauna.

10.2 The number of trees and shrubs planted within the development should out number those removed.

10.3 Replacement trees and shrubs should be placed within the site (especially around boundaries) so as to create habitat corridors for fauna.

10.4 The creation of hedge rows should be promoted using a mixture of native plants should be used, e.g. Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Holly, Bird cherry, Hazel and Dog rose.

10.5 Bird boxes should be planned into future management schemes.

10.6 Bat boxes should be planned into future management schemes.

10.7 Any tree work should be conducted out of the breeding bird survey or after a full breeding bird survey has been conducted.

11. SUMMARY

It appears that the development will have little detrimental effect on the ecology of the site in the short term and a positive one in the long term.

It is the opinion of EBS that by complying with the above recommendations, that the site development will deliver a net biodiversity gain to the area.

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ECOLOGICAL CONSULTANT