



Black Barn,
Deadman's Hill,
Sandon,
Hertfordshire,
SG9 0RJ
By email only

11/03/2026

Dear Vikki Carter,

Reference: Black Barn, Deadman's Hill, Sandon, Herts SG9 0RJ

The following report details the findings and recommendations for the site of Black Barn, Deadman's Hill, Sandon, Herts SG9 0RJ. The client commissioned Cherryfield Ecology to undertake a material change check (MCC) to confirm whether there were any changes in habitat or in the potential for protected species to be present. Proposals include for the construction of a residential dwelling.

A bat emergence survey (BES) was conducted in 2021 (Naturally Wild) which found the site to have a likely absence of roosting bats. An updated preliminary roost assessment (PRA) and BES was conducted in 2024 (Cherryfield Ecology). The survey again found a likely absence of roosting bats, but confirmed the presence of barn owl, *Tyto alba*.

Background Context

The site consists of a single barn (B1). B1 is a timber built, two-storey barn, with a brick plinth. The roof is gable ended and pitched with metal roofing sheets covering it. The rear of the barn is open access. The barn is surrounded by modified grassland, arable fields, and a native hedgerow to the south.

The 2021 BES found a likely absence of roosting bats, but the hedgerow to the south was found to be a commuting route. Barn owl pellets were found within B1 during the 2024 PRA, and a barn owl mitigation plan was drawn up for the development. The 2024 PRA found no evidence of bats, and the 2024 BES found a likely absence of roosting bats. Therefore, no further action was recommended in relation to bats.

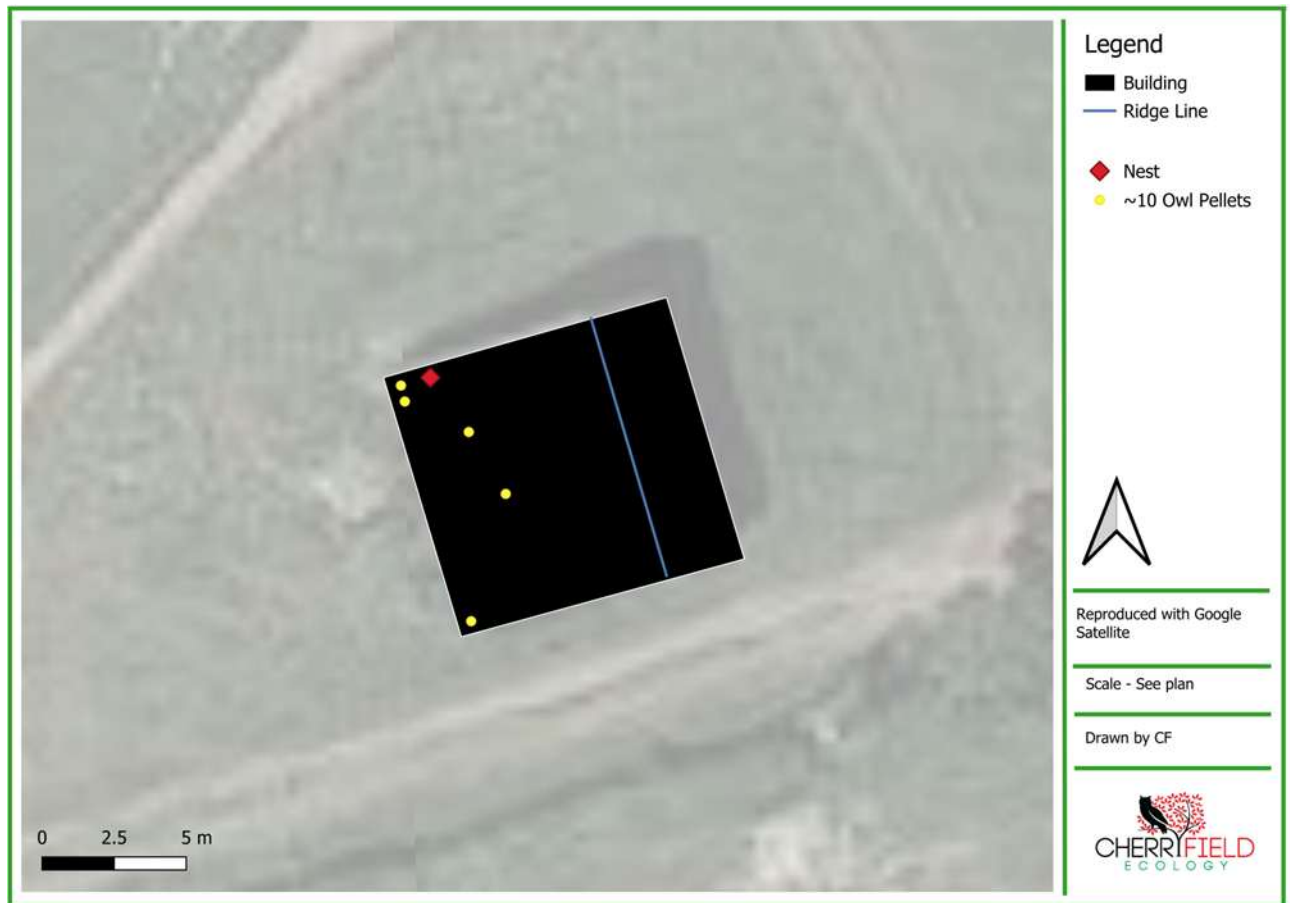


Figure 1: 2024 PRA and BES Plan.

Material Change Check

The updated site visit was conducted on 04/02/2026. This found the building on site to be in line with previous PRA, with no material changes noted.

The potential for bats and barn owls also remains the same, with a disused barn owl nest and ~20 owl pellets present in B1. [REDACTED]

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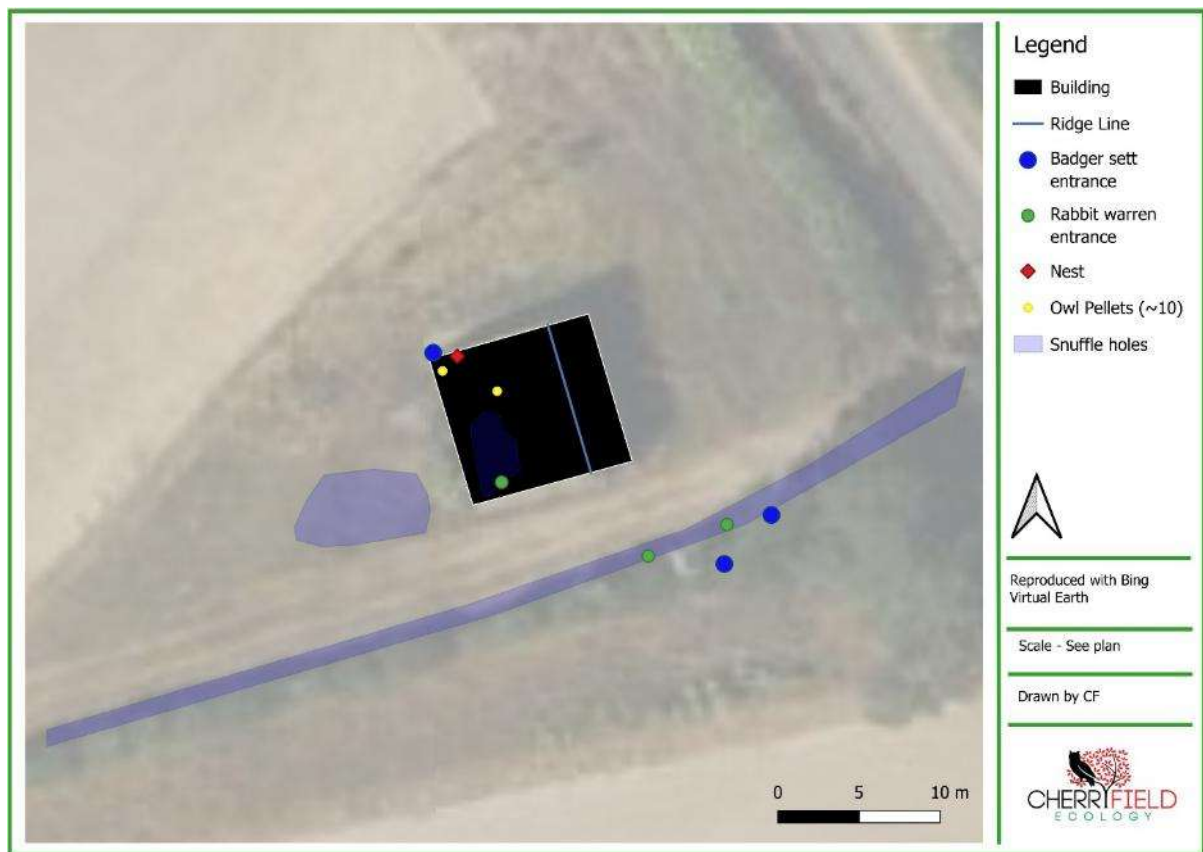


Figure 2: Protect species evidence during the MCC site visit.



Figure 3 and 4: Exterior of B1.



Figure 5 and 6: Interior of B1.



Figure 7 and 8: Disused owl nest and owl pellets.



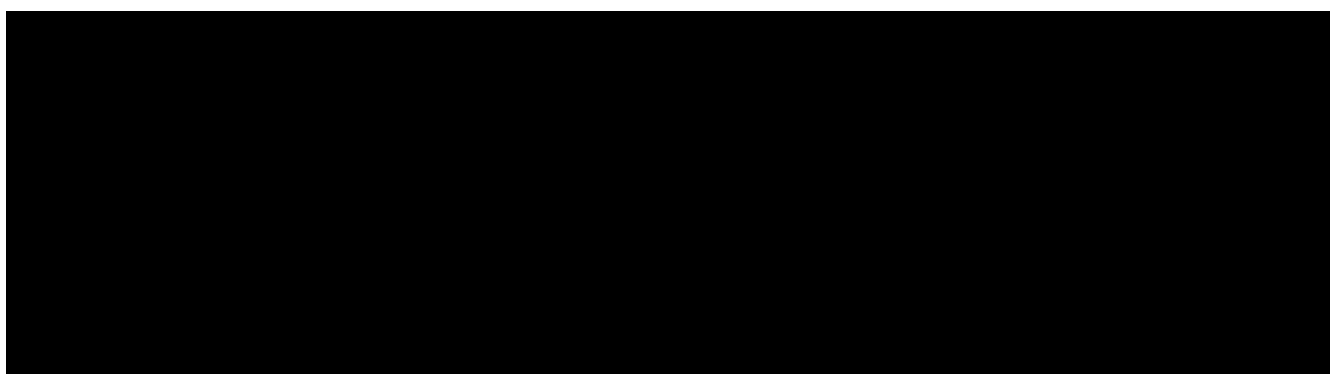
Figure 9 and 10: Badger sett entrances along hedgerow to the south.



Figure 11 and 12: Badger sett entrance at northwest corner of B1 and snuffle holes.



Figure 13 and 14: Snuffle holes and rabbit entrance within B1.

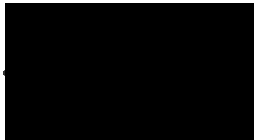


Bats - The current survey data is valid until the next survey season (May 2026). Therefore if works do not commence before this time, a single **update presence/likely absence surveys (low)** will be required (one survey), with four surveyors to cover the building B1; this must be undertaken between May to August. If bats are found to be present, two further surveys may be required (a minimum of three weeks apart), with at least one undertaken within the May to August window and one in September if required.

Breeding Birds - The development should take place outside the bird nesting season (March to August). If this is not possible, it is recommended that a qualified ecologist is on-site to ensure the building/vegetation is not occupied by breeding birds, prior to demolition/clearance. Should an occupied nest be found, a buffer zone would need to be created until the nest is no longer in use.

A barn owl mitigation plan has been drawn up for the site and this should be adhered to.

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