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29th May 2025

Henry Wagstaff
Wilbury Planning Ltd.
No.5 61 Wilbury Road
Hove
East Sussex
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Ref: 22076

Dear Henry

Project: Twineham Court Farm, Bob Lane, Twineham, RH17 5NH. Update Ecological Walkover

CT Ecology Limited has been commissioned to undertake an update ecological walkover across land at Twineham Court Farm in the Mid Sussex District of West Sussex in May 2025. This letter summarises the findings of the current assessment and serves to confirm whether the baseline conditions remain the same as those identified during the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) undertaken in January 2023 or whether there are any significant changes. The update walkover was carried out by Carly Teague BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIEEM; a suitably qualified ecologist with over 17 years' experience as a professional ecologist.

The baseline habitats recorded in May 2025 remain broadly the same as those identified during the previous PEA and full habitat information is provided in the associated PEA report compiled for the site (CT Ecology 2023). The application site is dominated by a series of former agricultural buildings with associated fields, boundary features and a pond. Vehicular access is via an aggregate track extending from Bob Lane to the south. All buildings remained in a similar condition as that were recorded in 2023, with the exception of the farmhouse which has been subject to minor external renovation works which have been on-going since 2023. In addition, a newly constructed agricultural building was within the northern extent of the survey site; adjacent to the north of building 2.

The grassland itself continues to be subject to regular on-going management; the sward was dominated by a small number of coarse grassland species which included Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*). Forbs were restricted throughout the sward and were mostly associated with the verges which have likely been subject to less intensive farm management. Species included creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), and toothed medic (*Medicago polymorpha*). The pond condition was also the same as that recorded in 2023. The water body continued to be heavily shaded by trees including alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) in addition to alder and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) scrub. The water was covered in an oily film and no aquatic plant species were observed within the water column at the time of the update assessment. The water level was extremely low.

Areas of mixed scrub persisted around the site boundaries and throughout the northern site extent. Species included bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), blackthorn, hazel (*Corylus avellana*), and elder (*Sambucus nigra*). A number of mature semi-mature and self-seeded trees were also scattered throughout the site. Species included silver birch (*Betula pendula*), hazel, oak (*Quercus* sp.), elder, wild cherry (*Prunus avium*) and eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* sp.). Many trees continued to show signs of poor growth due to a lack of management. A non-native hedgerow comprising Leyland cypress (*Cupressocyparis leylandii*) extended to the north of the farmhouse (Building 11).

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In terms of protected species, previous surveys undertaken throughout 2023 confirmed the presence of roosting and foraging bats at the site together with confirmed presence of a low non-breeding population of great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) within the on-site pond and presence of a good breeding population of slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) and a low breeding population of grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) within areas of less managed grassland adjacent to the agricultural buildings. Suitable mitigation was subsequently devised for these species groups and this is detailed within separate protected species survey reports compiled for the site (CT Ecology 2023a and 2023b). During the original PEA, the site was also assessed as providing high potential to support breeding birds and badger. The site boundaries also form part of the wider ecological network, providing wildlife corridors for more mobile species including bats, great crested newts and badgers to move through the landscape.

Based on the results of the update PEA, the broad habitat types and associated features supported remain the same as those recorded during the 2023 assessment and therefore the recommendations made in the original PEA report together with the results of the protected species surveys and associated mitigation measures remain valid for the site.

I trust this letter provides a sufficient summary of the site following the update ecological walkover survey. This document should be read in conjunction with the associated PEA report (CT Ecology 2023) and protected species surveys reports (CT Ecology 2023a and 2023b) which provide full details regarding the ecological surveys and associated recommendations to include ecological mitigation measures in order to inform the proposed development at the site.

Yours sincerely

Carly Teague BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM

Director

References

* CT Ecology Ltd (2023). *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Land at Twineham Court Farm, Bob Lane, West Sussex*. Unpublished report for Telbridge Properties. East Sussex: CT Ecology Ltd.
* CT Ecology Ltd (2023a). *Protected Species Survey Report for Land at Twineham Court Farm, Bob Lane, West Sussex*. Unpublished report for Telbridge Properties. East Sussex: CT Ecology Ltd.
* CT Ecology Ltd (2023b). The Farmhouse, *Twineham Court Farm. Bat Survey Report*. Unpublished report for Telbridge Properties. East Sussex: CT Ecology Ltd.