BARN OWL SURVEY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2026

Standen Phase 5 and 6
Littlemoor Road,
Clitheroe,
BB7 1HF

URBAN GREEN

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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Legend:

Red Line Boundary

0.85

Kilometers

N

Client: Taylor Wimpey		Issue: 01	
Project: Standen Phase 5&6		Scale @ A4 1:10,000	
Title: Site Context		Approved by: AH	Checked by: HM
Drawing Ref: UG_1451_SITE_CONTEXT		Author: CL	Date: 21/05/2024

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Legend

N

- Red Line Boundary
- Vantage Points
- Building
- Tree Group
- Tree
- Survey 1 - Flight Lines
- Survey 2- Flight Lines
- Survey 3- Flight Lines

0 25 50 75 100 m



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Client:	Taylor Wimpey		
Project:	Standen Phases 5 & 6		
Title:	Barn Owl Survey Results Map		
Issue: 01		Figure: 02	
Drawn: JH	Checked: OJ	Approved: JH	
Project: UG1451	Scale @ A3: 1:3019	Date: 22/09/2026	
Dwg No: UG_1451_ECO_BO_01		Revision: 01	

1 Introduction

1.1 Scope

1.1.1.1 Taylor Wimpey is proposing to develop land at Littlemoor Road in Clitheroe (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The proposals include the development of a residential estate in two phases, with associated hard and soft landscaping areas of public open space (POS).

1.1.1.2 Urban Green has been appointed to complete updated barn owl surveys and produce a technical report for the site following the lapse in validity of previous barn owl survey work completed on site in 2023.

1.2 Site Context

1.2.1.1 The site is located at National Grid Reference SD 74382 40702 and comprises a total area of 17.2ha (see Figure 1).

1.2.1.2 The site is located on the rural-urban fringe of Clitheroe town, which is present approximately 1km north of the site. An unnamed tributary of Pendleton Brook (a tributary of Mearley Brook which flows into the River Ribble) is present on site, running north to south-west through the centre of the site. Pendleton Brook borders the south of the site, running from east to west. The River Ribble is located approximately 1.5km west of the site, with Mearley Brook present approximately 350m west of the site. Residential properties are located to the north, north-west and west of the site, with arable grassland present on all other aspects. Areas of woodland are present within the wider area to the south of the site. The A59 is present approximately 600m east of the site.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

1.3.1.1 This report has been produced to demonstrate the results of a barn owl survey which was completed at the site to confirm likely absence or presence of breeding barn owl. Appropriate mitigation and suitable habitat compensation are detailed (if required). The report has been produced in support of the proposed planning application.

1.4 Previous Surveys

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Urban Green, 2022)

1.4.1.1 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was conducted at the site by Urban Green in February 2022.

1.4.1.2 During the PEA, the site was assessed as providing suitable foraging and commuting potential for barn owl, specifically owing to the fields and tree lines and connectivity to the wider environment, which provides further suitable habitats in the form of various grassland fields (including rough grassland) and woodlands.

1.4.1.3 A large disused barn situated within the western section of the site was assessed as having nesting suitability, detailing the building as having exposed wooden beams and two owl pellets found on the floor of the barn. As such, further barn owl surveys were recommended.

Barn Owl Survey (Urban Green, 2023)

1.4.1.4 Urban Green conducted three vantage point surveys on site under the guidance of Josh Broster (Director and Principal Ecologist/Ornithologist at EYRIE Ecology and Ornithology LTD.) between the 1st June and 16th July 2023.

1.4.1.5 Over the three surveys undertaken on the barn, barn owl was only recorded briefly during the final survey and comprised of foraging and commuting behaviour before commuting to site. No barn owl activity was recorded in relation to the barn throughout the survey effort.

1.5 Surveyors

1.5.1.1 The barn owl surveys were conducted by Jake Healy (Principal Ecologist), Toby Mills (Senior Ecologist), Olivia Jones (Ecologist), Georgia Selvey (Ecologist), Siobhan Smyth (Assistant Ecologist) and Seasonal Ecologists: Valerie Kane, Jennie Furby and Mat Jacobs.

1.5.1.2 This report was authored by Olivia Jones.

2 Methods

2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1.1 Sources of information used in the desk study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Desk Study Sources of Information

Source	Date Consulted	Information Sought
Online aerial imagery	03/09/2026	Review of satellite imagery.
Lancashire Environment Record Network (LERN)	18/05/2026	Records of barn owls within 2km of the site boundary.
Barn Owl Trust Barn Owl Suitability Map Barn Owl Online Survey	04/09/2026	Review of general land suitability for barn owls and breeding probability based on submitted records within 5km of the site.

2.2 Barn Owl Survey Methodology Overview

Desk Study

2.2.1.1 A recent data search was conducted in May 2026 from Lancashire Environment Record Network (LERN) for recent records of barn owls within 2km of the site boundary.

2.2.1.2 A search for further barn owl records was also conducted using the Barn Owl Trust Online Surveys.

Vantage Point Surveys

2.2.1.3 Three vantage point surveys were conducted on site. Vantage point surveys are static visual surveys, during which areas of interest are observed for a period of 1.5 to 2 hours. Surveyors scan suitable barn owl habitat, looking for barn owl (resting or in flight) and listening for barn owl calls/begging chicks.

2.2.1.4 Surveyors were in position a minimum of 1 hour before sunset until 1 hour after sunset on dry, still evenings in conditions optimal for barn owl activity following best practice guidelines.

Table 2. Survey Metadata

Survey Number	Start Time/Finish Time	Weather Conditions	Surveyors
Survey 1 – 09/06/2026	20:38pm/22:38pm	**Cloud cover (oktas/8)**- 1/8 **Temperature (°C)**- 23°C start, 17°C finish **Wind Speed (Beaufort Scale)**- 1	VP1 – Toby Mills VP2 – Olivia Jones VP3 – Mat Jacobs
Survey 2 – 23/07/2026	20:23pm/22:23pm	**Cloud cover (oktas/8)**-1/8 **Temperature (°C)**-18°C start, 16°C finish **Wind Speed (Beaufort Scale)**-1	VP1 – Siobhan Smyth VP2 – Olivia Jones VP3 – Jennie Furby
Survey 3 – 20/08/2026	19:28pm/21:28pm	**Cloud cover (oktas/8)**- 7/8 **Temperature (°C)**- 15°C start, 13°C finish **Wind Speed (Beaufort Scale)**- 1	VP1 – Georgia Selvey VP2 – Valerie Kane VP3 – Siobhan Smyth

2.3 Constraints to the Survey

2.3.1.1 Updated Nest Verification Surveys were not possible due to structural concerns of the building's poor and dilapidated condition. However, a previous internal inspection was conducted in 2022, which detailed the building as having exposed wooden beams and two owl pellets within, confirming that nesting potential was within the building. As Vantage Point Surveys are an acceptable alternative where Nest Verification Surveys cannot be carried out, these were conducted instead.

2.3.1.2 Barn owl surveys can be undertaken at any time of year; however, the optimal survey period is typically between mid-June and late July, coinciding with the peak barn owl breeding season. The first and second surveys were completed in July 2026 and therefore fell within the optimal survey window. The third survey was completed on 20th August 2026. Although undertaken outside the peak survey period, this August visit remained suitable for identifying late broods and recording general barn owl activity within the site.

3 Results

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Habitat Suitability

3.1.1.1 The site supports a range of suitable barn owl foraging, roosting and nesting habitats, comprising a connected network of grassland parcels, including areas of other neutral grassland (g3c), together with hedgerows, mature trees, other broadleaved woodland (w1g), and a large disused barn that provides suitable internal roosting and nesting opportunities. Unmanaged grassland margins are likely to support breeding small rodents, further enhancing the site's value as foraging habitat.

3.1.1.2 The site is situated within a wider landscape of extensive pastoral farmland characterised by a well-connected network of hedgerows, grassland and scattered woodland, with relatively low-density residential development beyond the main urban area of Clitheroe. This connected habitat mosaic provides high-quality foraging and commuting habitat capable of supporting several barn owls.

3.1.2 Local Data Records

Lancashire Environmental Record Network

3.1.2.1 A recent desk study search provided by LERN Record Centre in 2026 returned no recent or historic records of barn owls within 2km of the site.

Barn Owl Trust Online Surveys

3.1.2.2 A search for records of barn owls within 5km of the site was conducted using the Barn Owl Online Survey. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 3. Barn Owl Trust Online Survey Results

Record Type	Distance from the Site	Year of Record	Further Information
Occasional roost	2.4km	2021	-
Barn owl sighting	2.9km	2019	One barn owl
Regular roost	4.6km	2020	Nest and Roost
Barn owl sighting	4.5km	2014	One barn owl

3.1.2.3 Upon consultation with the Habitat Suitability Map, the site lies within an area between landscape 'very suitable' and 'quite suitable' for barn owls.

3.2 Barn Owl Survey

3.2.1.1 The locations of the three survey vantage points (VP1–VP3), together with the barn owl flight paths, are shown on Figure 2.

3.2.2 Survey 1 – 9th July 2026

3.2.2.1 Barn owl activity was high during the survey, with the greatest level of activity recorded from VP3. The first record of barn owl activity occurred at 21:00 from VP3, with the final record of activity at 22:15 at VP1.

3.2.2.2 Two emergence and re-entry events were recorded from VP3, occurring at 21:00 and 21:03, respectively. Both events involved the bird emerging from, and subsequently re-entering, the open barn door on the western elevation of the building.

3.2.2.3 Foraging and commuting activity associated with the same emerging barn owl was recorded from all three vantage points. Observations confirmed that the bird utilised the four grassland parcels immediately surrounding the building. A limited level of foraging activity was also recorded within an offsite grassland parcel to the north, after which the barn owl returned to the grassland parcels adjacent to the building.

3.2.2.4 During the survey, the barn owl was recorded perched upon the temporary metal fencing surrounding the building from VP2. From inspection using close-focusing binoculars, the bird appeared to have dark plumage, indicating that the emerging barn owl is an adult female.

3.2.2.5 No prey delivery, indicating potential chick presence, into the building was recorded during the survey.

3.2.3 Survey 2 – 23rd July 2026

3.2.3.1 Barn owl activity during this survey was lower than Survey 1; however, two barn owls were recorded on site. The first record of barn owl activity occurred at 20:42 from VP2, with the final record of activity at 21:42 at VP3.

3.2.3.2 One emergence of the adult female from the barn door was identified at VP3 at 20:55. One instance of foraging and catching a small rodent within the eastern field was recorded from VP2 at 21:32. The individual was seen to carry the prey item to a large, mature tree adjacent to the building, perched in a tree for approximately 9 minutes before carrying the rodent offsite toward the southwest, towards Pendleton Brook at 21:41. No prey delivery, or return to the building was identified during the survey.

3.2.3.3 A second smaller, and lighter-coloured owl was identified foraging within the hedgerow along the eastern boundary next to VP1 at 21:15. Foraging behaviour was limited to the eastern onsite parcel of the site. This owl's behaviour was seen to be clumsy and unsteady when attempting to perch on the hedgerow, suggesting that the second owl is a recently fledged juvenile male bird.

3.2.4 Survey 3 – 20th August 2026

3.2.4.1 Barn owl activity during this survey was relatively low, with no emergence recorded from the building. Activity was limited to a single individual foraging and commuting across the site, with observations recorded only from VP1. The first instance of activity was recorded between 20:15 and 20:19, when an individual was observed foraging over a tall forb grassland parcel to the east before moving out of view. At 20:36, a barn owl was heard screeching to the south but was not seen by the surveyor. The final sighting was recorded at 20:56, when a foraging barn owl was observed over grassland parcels to the south-west, before moving through the northern and western grassland parcels and leaving the site to the north-west.

3.2.4.2 No prey delivery, indicating potential chick presence, into the building was recorded during the survey.

3.3 Other records

3.3.1 Other Species

3.3.1.1 Tawny owl (*Strix aluco*) activity was frequently recorded during all barn owl surveys. Individuals were identified within both onsite and offsite woodland, either calling or commuting across the site. Occasional occurrences of wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*), blackbird (*Turdus merula*), carrion crow (*Corvus corone*) and kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) were also identified utilising the site.

3.3.2 Other Sightings of Barn Owl

3.3.2.1 During the third dusk emergence survey of the building, conducted on 18th August 2026, one barn owl was observed foraging and commuting over the western grassland parcels between 20:35 and 20:45, before leaving the site. No barn owl emergence from the building was recorded.

4 Ecological Assessment and Recommendations

4.1 Evaluation

4.1.1.1 Based on the findings of the surveys, the site was confirmed to provide foraging value to barn owl. The absence of prey delivery, emergence of two birds or begging calls from dependent young suggests that the barn building is likely to be a current roosting site for one adult female barn owl.

4.1.1.2 Based on the internal building description provided in 2022 (Urban Green, 2022), the building does not appear to contain loft voids suitable for nesting barn owl. However, the exposed wooden beams provide suitable perching opportunities for roosting. Photographs taken in 2022 also show cavities within the dilapidated stone brick walls; where these extend into suitably sized internal voids, they may provide potential nesting opportunities for barn owl.

4.1.1.3 Although no evidence of active breeding was recorded during the surveys, the building provides suitable roosting and nesting opportunities for barn owl. The confirmed use of the building as a roost by an adult barn owl indicates that the feature may continue to be used and could potentially support nesting in future breeding seasons, particularly given the availability of suitable foraging habitat within and adjacent to the site.

Legislation

4.1.1.4 The proposed development involves demolition of the building and the loss of potential barn owl foraging habitat. Barn owls are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure, take or disturb barn owls, or to damage or destroy an active nest, eggs or dependent young.

4.1.1.5 Active barn owl nests are protected only while in use, whereas non-breeding roost sites do not receive the same legal protection. However, barn owls remain protected at all times. Works affecting confirmed or potential roosting or nesting features should therefore follow precautionary working methods, and incorporation of appropriate mitigation.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1.1 It is recommended that the building be demolished in a timely manner, to prevent the establishment of a nest. This should be undertaken under precautionary working methods (please see below).

Precautionary Working Methods

4.2.1.2 The following precautionary working methods should be followed during the demolition phase of the building:

- Demolition and vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside the core breeding season (which is March–August inclusive), where practicable. However, late broods may occur outside of this window; therefore, precautionary working measures should be applied at all times of the year.
- A pre-commencement check should be conducted of the building by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- A toolbox talk should be provided to all site personnel detailing barn owl ecology, legal protection and procedures should a barn owl be encountered.
- Soft-stripping of the building under ecological supervision, with external cladding, roof coverings, and other potential access points removed carefully and progressively to allow any concealed wildlife to disperse.
- Retention of suitable foraging habitat where feasible, and minimisation of unnecessary lighting in areas used by barn owls.

Barn Owl Boxes

4.2.1.3 The provision of at least one barn owl box should be installed on site to mitigate the loss of a roost site.

4.2.1.4 The box should be erected in a place that would not encourage nesting owls to become susceptible to high-speed traffic collisions (such as motorways). Barn owl boxes should not be installed along the eastern boundary, facing the A59 (to the east).

4.2.1.5 The locations of the boxes need to be in an area of appropriate green space being retained as part of the development, that provides connectivity to suitable foraging habitat and should have a buffer of at least 60m from the construction area during works.

4.2.1.6 It is recommended that barn owl boxes are installed upon mature, thick-trunked trees within retained areas of greenspace to the south of the site. Upon consultation with the associated Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) (Urban Green, 2026a), the ideal trees for mounting a barn owl box include the following:

- T47 – A mature Pendunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) with a 950mm DBH. This tree is situated at grid reference SD 74450 40478.
- G60 – A group of mature mixed species trees with an average DBH of 1000mm. These trees are located at SD 74496 40330.

4.2.1.7 Boxes should be affixed to a thick trunk (ideally between 450 and 600mm), at least 3 metres above ground level. The tree should have a high canopy, with few to no low-hanging branches. The entrance hole should be visible from open ground and facing open foraging habitat (e.g. grassland, arable land).

Table 4. Barn Owl Box Recommendation

Nest Box Type	Image
Barn Owl Nest Box Barnowltrust.org.uk Measurements: • **Height** – 710mm • **Width** – 740mm • **Depth** – 500mm • **Weight** – approx. 20.1kg	

4.2.1.8 Once all works on site have been completed the risk of disturbance to breeding barn owl is greatly reduced though, there is still some level of risk present through recreational activity of homeowners/dogwalkers. As such, it is recommended that the landscape designs seek to incorporate a 20m buffer, either through erection of fencing or planting to restrict close access and the risk of vandalism.

Barn Owl Box Maintenance

4.2.1.9 The owl nest box should incorporate a removable front access panel to facilitate the periodic removal of accumulated nest debris. Maintaining adequate internal box depth is essential to reduce the risk of barn owl nestlings falling from the nest chamber, which may result in mortality through neglect or predation. The nest box should therefore be cleaned when nest debris exceeds approximately 75mm in depth.

4.2.1.10 Where Jackdaws (*Corvus monedula*) occupy the nest box, annual cleaning is recommended due to the greater accumulation of nesting material. Nest boxes used exclusively by breeding Barn Owls typically require cleaning every 2–3 years. All maintenance should be undertaken while wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves and a dust mask).

4.2.1.11 As barn owls are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), nest boxes must only be cleaned outside the breeding season, between November and January. Maintenance is preferably carried out during dry, calm weather to minimise disturbance to any roosting owls and avoid flushing birds into adverse weather conditions.

Other Recommendations

4.2.1.12 It is also recommended that the landscape design seeks to retain the most valuable foraging and commuting habitat on site, specifically the rough grassland margins and open areas along the woodland. Where possible, new areas of rough grassland could be created on site within the soft landscaping.

5 References

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