

# Bat and Bird Scoping Survey of The Shingles, Chelvey Batch, Backwell

Client Dexter Design

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# Non-technical Summary

## Background

In May 2022, Crossman Associates was commissioned by Mr K Cook to undertake a bat and bird survey of The Shingles, Chelvey Batch, Somerset, BS48 3BZ. The dwelling is a timber framed and shingle clad bungalow with a double pitched roof clad in slate. Proposals are to enlarge the dwelling via adding another storey and side extensions.

## Methodology

The scoping survey was undertaken by Fairbrass Knowles, a fully licensed bat worker and experienced ecologist. The building was inspected both externally and internally for any evidence of bat / bird presence, such as droppings, food remains, staining or actual bats / birds.

## Results

The dwelling is a timber framed bungalow that has the exterior elevations clad in individual cedar shingles. The Roof is a straightforward double pitched design that is clad with slate. The dwelling has a full length and width spacious roof void. Overall, the dwelling remains in good condition and is occupied. During the survey no evidence of roosting bats or nesting birds was noted and overall, the dwelling is assessed to provide bats with **Negligible Suitability** for roosting bats.

## Recommendations

There is no recommendation for further survey works.

- Precautionary approach to be taken in relation to bats and birds
- Ecological enhancement to include tree mounted bat and bird boxes and 2 number sparrow terraces.

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# 1. Background

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- 1.1. In May 2022, Crossman Associates was commissioned by Mr K Cook to undertake a bat and bird scoping survey of The Shingles, Chelvey Batch, Backwell, Somerset, BS48 3BZ; site Ordnance Survey grid reference ST 4795 6736.
- 1.2. Figure 1 within Appendix II provides a site location map.
- 1.3. Proposals are to enlarge the dwelling via adding a second storey and side extensions.
- 1.4. The objectives of the survey were to:
  - Make an assessment of the likely presence or absence of bats
  - Identify any legislative or planning policy constraints relevant to the site
  - Determine the need for further surveys, compensation or mitigation

## Site Description

- 1.5. The dwelling is a timber framed bungalow that has the exterior elevations clad in cedar shingles. The Roof is a straightforward double pitched design that is clad with slate. The dwelling has a full length and width spacious roof void. Overall, the dwelling remains in good condition and is occupied.
- 1.6. The dwelling includes an above average sized garden that consists of lawns and borders. Also present, adjacent to the entrance driveway and on the eastern side of the plot is an area that provides a cluster of mature trees. In total the plot amounts to approximately 2,500 m<sup>2</sup>.

- 1.7. The dwelling lies within the small settlement of Chelvey Batch which lays approximately 0.5 km to the south of the village of Backwell. Immediate surroundings include a cluster of dwellings which occupy land to the north and west, where they occupy the sides of Chelvey Batch Road. To the south, the land is dominated by north-east end of Brockley Wood, which also extends both east and westwards. The wood provides an extensive area of mixed broad-leaved and coniferous woodland that to the south-west connects into Kings Wood.

## Legislation

- 1.8. In the UK all species of bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Under this legislation it is a strict liability offence to injure or destroy a bat or to disturb damage or destroy the resting place of a bat. Under this legislation the UK is obliged to fully take into account bats within the planning process and the level of bat activity on-site must be fully assessed prior to the assessment the planning application.
- 1.9. In Britain all wild birds are granted legal protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended). This legislation protects the birds, their eggs and nests whilst being built or in use.

## 2. Methodology

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### Desktop Study

#### *Data search*

- 2.1. The MAGIC website was accessed to gain information on any statutory site designations within 4 km of the site that are designated for bats.

#### *National Planning Policy*

- 2.2. National Planning Policy has been reviewed for policies that relate to nature conservation relevant to the site.

### Field Survey

#### *Bat scoping survey*

- 2.3. The building was methodically inspected internally and externally for any evidence of roosting bats, including actual bats, droppings, urine staining and evidence of feeding activity such as discarded insect wings and cases.
- 2.4. The building was also assessed for its suitability to support roosting bats by considering several factors including whether bats can access internal and external voids within the building and whether these voids provide adequate protection and shelter for roosting bats. If the building is not confirmed as a roost, it is assessed from High to Negligible Suitability as follows (refer to Appendix III for further details);

- **High Suitability** – many roosting opportunities. Buildings tend to be old, large and rural
- **Moderate Suitability** – some roosting opportunities. Building tend to be old, rural with some recent maintenance
- **Low Suitability** – few roosting opportunities. Buildings tend to be modern, urban and well maintained
- **Negligible Suitability** – insignificant roosting opportunities. Buildings tend to be small, modern, urban and very well maintained.

### *Birds*

- 2.5. The building was also inspected for the presence of birds including house sparrow *Passer domesticus*. The buildings were checked for field signs including nesting material, accumulations of droppings and/or pellets.

## 3. Results

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### Desktop Study

#### *Data Search*

- 3.1. The site also falls within a band that is covered by the following designation:

#### *North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC)*

- 3.2. The North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is designated as a site of international significance for bats. The North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC as a whole is designated for several important hibernation sites for Annex II species; lesser horseshoe bats *Rhinolophus hipposideros* and hibernation and maternity roost sites for greater horseshoe bats *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* (supporting 3% of the UK population) as well as for Annex I habitats, semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (important orchid sites) and Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines.
- 3.3. The SAC also comprises several component Sites of Special Scientific Importance (SSSIs) including the King's and Urchin Wood SSSI and Brockley Combe Stables SSSI both of which support important greater horseshoe bat maternity roosts.
- 3.4. The zone is divided into three distinct areas; A, B & C which reflect the likely importance of the habitats for greater and lesser horseshoe bats and proximity to maternity roosts. Within the consultation zone development is likely to be subject to particular requirements, depending on the sensitivity of the site. The guidance also identifies the juvenile sustenance zones for both the horseshoe species which lay 1 km around known maternity roosts.



- 3.5. There are two known maternity roosts for greater horseshoe bat, as outlined below:
- Brockley Combe Stables lays approximately 800 m to the south-west of the site.
  - Kings and Urchin Wood lays approximately 1.4 km to the south-west of the site.
- 3.6. The greatest amount of bat foraging activity is generally focussed within Bands A which are situated within a 2.2 km radius of known maternity roosts, however the bats can make regular use of key foraging habitat that lies within 4 km of known maternity roosts i.e. within Bands B.
- 3.7. Where proposals within Bands A or B have the potential to affect significant features, early discussions with the local planning authority are essential and further surveys may be necessary.
- 3.8. The proposed site lies within Band A of the North Somerset Bat Consultation Zone for greater horseshoe bats. The dwelling has a well-sealed roof void which is not accessible to horseshoe bats, which are species that require direct flight access into the roosting area.
- 3.9. The garden, which is above average in size, does provide potential foraging habitat for bats including horseshoe bats, however the relative smallness of the site in context with the wider landscape means that the site on its own is not significant to bats in the wider context. Furthermore, the proposals are small scale and will see no removal of hedgerows, trees or the loss of any significant vegetation thus maintaining any potential bat flyways.
- 3.10. Any planned exterior lighting will require strict control and is covered under the Recommendation section at the end of the report.

### *Planning Policy*

3.11. National policy guidance is provided by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government' planning policies for England and how they should be applied to planning applications.

#### Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- Planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
  - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
  - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
  - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
  - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
  - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into

account relevant information such as river basin management plans;  
and

- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

## Field Survey

### *Bat scoping survey*

- 3.12. Survey work was undertaken by Fairbrass Knowles, an experienced ecologist and fully licensed bat worker, and took place on 17 May 2022. The building was fully accessible.
- 3.13. The external and internal conditions of the building are described in the table below and photographic reference can be found within Appendix II.
- 3.14. A table within Appendix III; information sheets set out the criteria for the way a building is assessed for its potential to support roosting bats.

| Building | Feature  | Feature Description   | Bat suitability          |
|----------|----------|---|--------------------------|
|          | Overview | <p>The dwelling is a timber framed bungalow that has exterior elevations clad in cedar shingles. The Roof is a straightforward double pitched design that is clad with slate. The dwelling has a full length and full width spacious roof void. Overall, the dwelling remains in good condition and is occupied.</p>  | Negligible Suitability ☒ |
|          | Exterior | <p>The dwelling is constructed from a timber frame that is over clad with individual cedar shingles. All are present, remain in good condition and the majority remain snugly fitted, providing no significant crevices. A few have warped slightly (mainly on the western elevation) and have lifted slightly, however this does not lead to the creation of any significant cavity and the lifting does not provide any form of access to the inner wall.</p> <p>All windows and doors remain in excellent condition, all seal well within their reveals and all close tightly.</p> |                          |

| Building | Feature  | Feature Description  | Bat suitability |
|----------|----------|--|-----------------|
|          | Interior | <p>Areas of living accommodation are composed of well-sealed and decorated rooms.</p> <p><i>Roof void</i></p> <p>The dwelling has 1 number roof void, which occupies the entire length and width of the main roof with a floor to ridge height of approximately 3 m.</p> <p>The roof is supported by a lightweight timber truss roof made from gauged timber, which all remain in good condition with no evidence of decay or complex carpentry.</p> <p>The underside of the roof and the gable ends are lined with breathable roofing membrane which all remains well-fitted with no evidence of significant rips or holes.</p> <p>The floor is lined with traditional glass fibre loft insulation.</p> <p>Overall, the roof void provides a well-sealed feature that during the survey provided no evidence of any significant access points that bats could make use of to gain access to the void.</p> |                 |

| Building | Feature | Feature Description  | Bat suitability |
|----------|---------|--|-----------------|
|          |         | <p><b>During the survey no bats, bat droppings or any other bat related evidence was found to be present.</b></p>  |                 |
|          | Roof    | <p><i>Main roof</i></p> <p>The main roof is a simple double pitched design that is entirely clad with slates with simple ridge tiles.</p> <p>All slates and ridge tiles remain well fitted and due to the close-fitting design of the slates no significant crevices are present.</p> <p>All verges and eaves remain very well-sealed and provide no evidence of significant cracks, crevices, damage or decay.</p> <p>The roof has 1 number small low height brick chimney, which remains well-pointed, with the lead flashings that seal the chimneys to the roof all remain tightly fitted with no evidence of any significant crevices.</p> <p>Overall, the roof provides a well-sealed area that provides no significant crevices suitable for roosting bats, and during the survey no evidence was noted to suggest the presence of roosting bats.</p> |                 |

### *Birds*

- 3.15. During the survey no evidence of nesting or roosting birds were found in association with any aspect of the dwelling.

## Evaluation

### *Bats*

- 3.16. During the scoping survey no droppings, staining, feeding remains or actual bats were observed.
- 3.17. The dwelling is in a well-maintained condition and has been constructed from uniform building materials, which include a tight-fitting roof clad with tight fitting slates that preclude any gaps or potential access points for bats. The eaves and verges all remain well-sealed as the exterior walls, which provide bats with no significant roosting opportunities. The presence of a bat roost is considered very unlikely, and the dwelling is considered to have **Negligible Suitability** for roosting bats.

## 4. Recommendations

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- 4.1. The recommendations in the paragraphs below should be followed to help ensure that wildlife and important ecological features are protected during the course of works. Recommendations also set out mitigation measures to minimise harm where this cannot be avoided and provide compensation measures to allow the proposals to meet current legislative and planning policy objectives.
- 4.2. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) states that a public authority must 'in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity; Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat'.
- 4.3. Under the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.

### Species recommendations

#### *Bats*

- 4.4. **Due to the lack of evidence of bats and the Negligible Suitability of the building to support bats, it is not considered necessary or beneficial to undertake any further survey work.**
- 4.5. Due to the transitory nature of bats there is a small possibility that bats could be encountered during building works; therefore, all works must proceed under a cautionary approach. Tiles and roof panels will be removed in a vertical rather than horizontal sliding motion. Soffits and masonry will be dismantled using a 'soft' approach taking care with cavity walls where present. All site workers will be



vigilant at all times and in the very unlikely event that a bat is found then works must stop immediately and advice should be sought from Crossman Associates or Natural England (telephone number 0300 0603900).

#### Exterior lighting

- 4.6. The site is located within a semi-rural location and is likely that bats are present using the garden and the wider environs for foraging / commuting, therefore the inappropriate use of external lighting has the potential to disturb and discourage the areas usage by bats and other nocturnal wildlife, leading to the potential severance of wildlife corridors, therefore any external lighting schemes planned should consist of modern LED lights that provide directional and softer less harsh lighting; alternatively lights can be cowed or louvered. Exterior lighting schemes should be implemented during the development to avoid the possibilities of the fitting of less desirable lighting schemes.
- 4.7. The choice of lighting is important to minimising light spill and it is recommended that the following factors are considered to reduce the impact as much as possible;
- Narrow spectrum lights with no UV content
  - Low pressure sodium and/or warm white LED
  - Directional downlighting, illuminating downwards and below the horizontal plane to avoid light trespass
- 4.8. Refer to Appendix III for an information sheet on lighting.

#### Ecological enhancements

- 4.9. During the construction phase of the new development there is a good opportunity to incorporate inexpensive ecological enhancements that aim to increase the biodiversity of the site.

## *Bats*

### Tree mounted bat boxes

- 4.10. To boost the sites ecological capacity in respect of bats and meet the government NPPF guidance, it is recommended that a tree-mounted bat roosting box is installed onto mature trees within the garden.
- 4.11. One Chillon woodstone bat box is recommended. The boxes should be placed on the southern or western trunk of four mature trees approximately 3 – 4 m high. The box opening should be free of dense foliage.
- 4.12. The Chillon woodstone bat box is available from Wildcare environmental suppliers; [www.wildcare.co.uk](http://www.wildcare.co.uk) Telephone number 01451 493885.

## *Birds*

### Tree mounted bird boxes

- 4.13. The property also has a number of mature trees these provides an excellent location to mount a range of bird nesting boxes that are suitable for a variety of birds associated with garden / farmland habitats and the following provides suggested models;
- 1 number Vivara Barcelona Open Nest Box. Suitable for blackbird, robin, wren and song thrushes.
  - 1 number Vivara woodstone general purpose next box (28 mm and 32 mm entrance holes). Suitable for tits and house sparrows.

The Shingles,  
Chelvey Batch,  
Backwell,  
Somerset.

4.14. Bird boxes are available from [www.wildlifeservices.co.uk](http://www.wildlifeservices.co.uk) telephone number 0333 9000 92, or [www.vivara.co.uk](http://www.vivara.co.uk) telephone number 0800 012 9107.

## 5. Limitations

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- 5.1. This report records wildlife found during the survey and anecdotal evidence of sightings. It does not record any plants or animals that may appear at other times of the year and were therefore not evident at the time of visit.
- 5.2. This report represents a preliminary assessment only. Recommendations and conclusions are subject to change should further findings significantly differ from those collected from the survey efforts to date.
- 5.3. The advice contained in this report relate primarily to factual survey results and general guidance only. On all legal matters you are advised to take legal advice.

## 6. References

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**Bat Conservation Trust (BCT)** *Bats and Lighting in the UK* BCT

**HMSO (1981)** *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and subsequent amendments)*. HMSO

**HMSO (1995)** *Biodiversity*. The UK Steering Group Report

**Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)** *Common Standards Monitoring Guidance for Reptiles and Amphibians* (2004) JNCC

**Mitchell-Jones, A.J (2004)** *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* English Nature

**Mitchell-Jones, A.J , & McLeish A.P. (2012)** *The Bat Worker's Manual* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)

**Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)**

**Website** at [www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk)

**Stace, C. (1997)** *New Flora of the British Isles 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Cambridge University Press

**TSO (2012)** *National Planning Policy Framework*. TSO

**TSO (2006)** *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act* TSO

## Appendix I – Site Figures



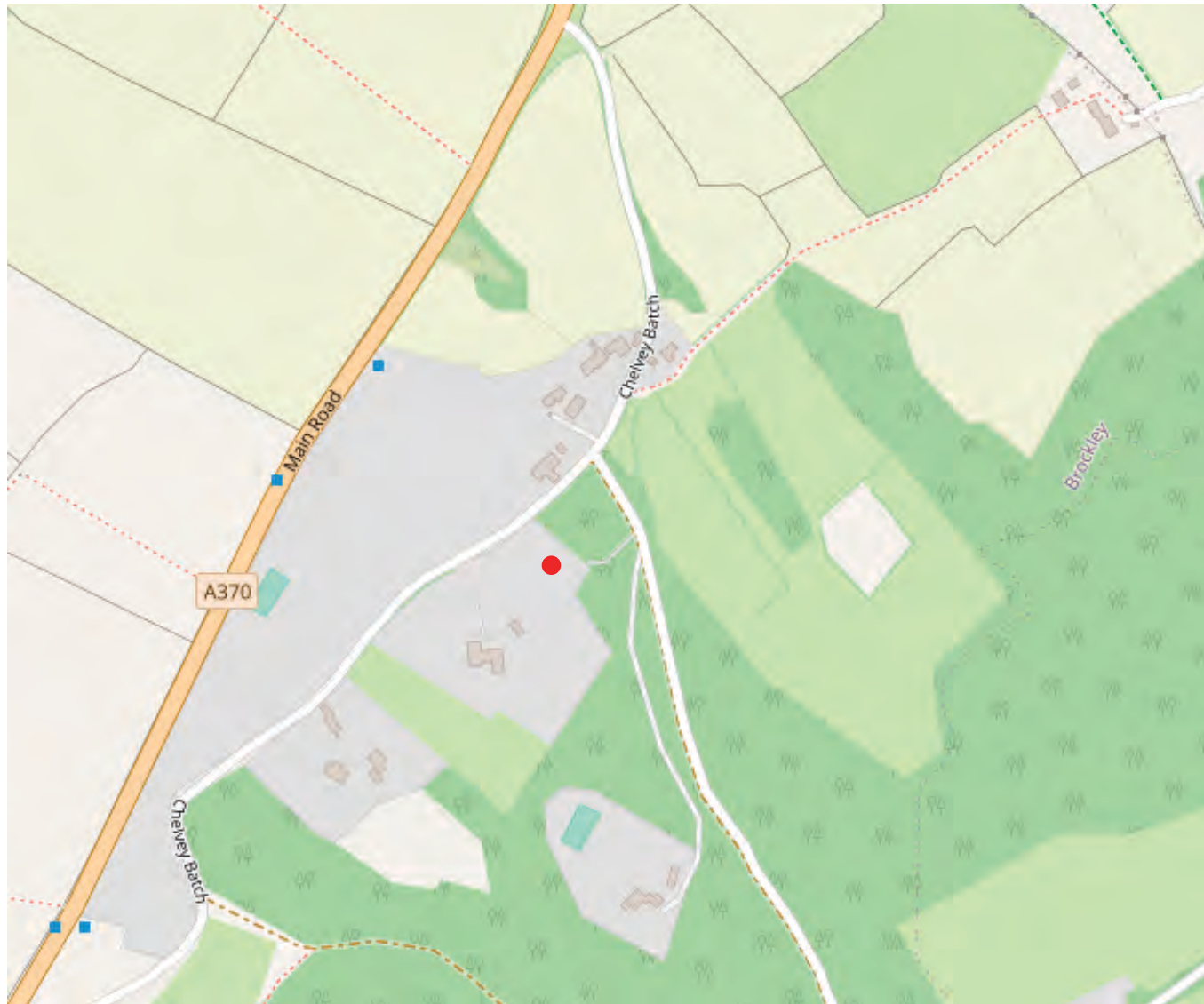
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Site location



Client Dexter Design  
Title Location plan  
Site The Shingles, Backwell  
Figure 1  
Date 17 May 2022  
Scale Not to scale



## Appendix II – Site Photographs





## Photographs 1- 3



Photograph 1:

Eastern elevation



Photograph 2:

Southern elevation



Photograph 3:

Western elevation

## Photographs 4 - 6



Photograph 4:

Soffits all fit well and provide no significant crevices, damage or decay.



Photograph 5:

Timber walls are formed from a timber main frame over clad with individual shingles which are all present and most fit very tightly. A few shingles have lifted, but do not lead to any crevices and are not considered to be significant for either resting birds or roosting bats.



Photograph 6:

The roof is clad with tight fitting slate, ridges are fitted with well seated ridge tiles and the brick chimney remains well-pointed and the lead flashings all remain tight.

## Photograph 7



### Photograph 7:

The dwelling has a large roof void which is formed from a gang nail timber truss. During the survey no evidence of bat occupation was noted, and overall, the void remain well-sealed.



## Appendix III– Information Sheets

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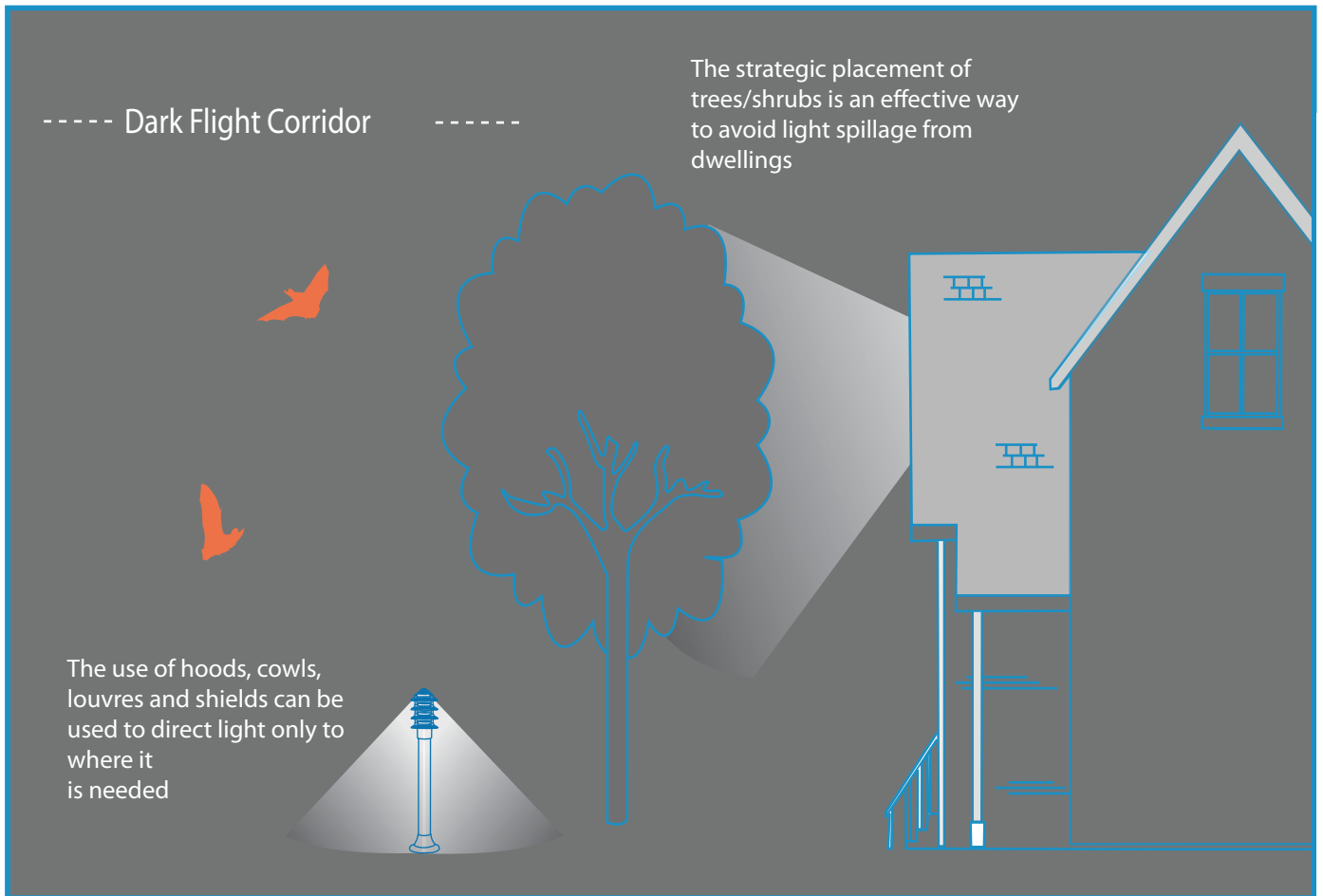
## Bat Habitat Suitably Criteria

| Bat Roosting Suitability | Criteria   | Survey requirement to prove likely absence |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Negligible               | Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.  | No further survey work required            |
| Low                      | A building, structure or tree with one or more potential roosting sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically; however, these possible roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used by large numbers of bats and are unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation roosts. | One activity survey                        |
| Medium                   | A building, structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to the size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habit, but is unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.  | Two activity surveys                       |
| High                     | A building, structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.  | Three activity surveys                     |

Survey requirements are taken from Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (2016), which is the recognised industry standard guidance used by local planning authorities and other statutory consultees.

# Sensitive Lighting for Bats

MITIGATION GUIDELINE N° 001



## Lamp Type

The impact of light on bats can be minimised by the use of low/high pressure sodium lamps.

## Lighting Column

The height of lighting columns should be kept as low as possible to reduce the impact of light spill. For example, when designing lighting for pedestrian walkways, use short bollard lights that produce a low level light (as low as 3 lux) directed downwards.

## Light Mapping

Mapping the light spill of a lighting scheme using computer software can prove essential in designing schemes that are fit for purpose, that minimise energy costs and create dark flight corridors and foraging areas for bats.

## Light Levels

Proposed light levels within landscape plans should be as low as possible. If lighting is not needed, don't light.

## Timing of Lighting

The times at when lighting is left on should be limited where possible. The use of movement sensors and timers for lights is useful for saving energy and reducing the amount of time a light is left on.

## Impacts of Light on Bats

As nocturnal mammals, light causes disturbance to bats and many species will actively avoid lit areas. The illumination of bat roosts can delay bats emerging and thus shorten their foraging time and may eventually lead to bats abandoning their roost. The illumination of foraging or commuting areas may also lead to an increase in the rate of predation of bats by predators.

  
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