



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment

Flat 19 – 21, High Street, Markayte, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 8PG

GSP Architects

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Industry Guidelines and Standards

This report has been written with due consideration to:

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- British Standard 42020 (2013). Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.
- British Standard 8683:2021 (2021). Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain.

Proportionality

The work involved in preparing and implementing all ecological surveys, impact assessments and measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development. Consequently, the decision-maker should only request supporting information and conservation measures that are relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. Similarly, the decision-maker and their consultees should ensure that any comments and advice made over an application are also proportionate.

This approach is enshrined in Government planning guidance, for example, paragraph 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework for England.

The desk studies and field surveys undertaken to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) might in some cases be all that is necessary.

(BS 42020, 2013)

Executive Summary

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by GSP Architects to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Flat 19 - 21 High Street Markayte St Albans Hertfordshire AL3 8PG (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for the extension and conversion of existing building to site frontage and new building to rear (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”).

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Table 8 of this report.

| Feature | Foreseen impacts | Recommendations <i>Measures required to adhere to guidance, legislation and planning policies.</i> |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Roosting bats | The proposed development will result in the renovation of both buildings. This could result in destruction of any bat roosts present and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats. | Two bat emergence and re-entry surveys are required during the active bat season (May – September) to confirm presence or likely absence of a bat roost in the building. Both of the surveys should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. One of these surveys should be a dawn re-entry survey or infra-red cameras should be used as an aid. Surveys should be a minimum of two weeks apart. Seven surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the buildings. Surveys are likely to be required before planning permission can be granted. If bat roosts are confirmed in the building one additional survey will be required to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission. |
| Foraging and commuting bats | The scrub on site could be used by foraging and commuting bats. The proposed development will include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas. | A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development. |
| Badger | No impacts are anticipated on badgers as a result of the proposed development. | Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to bat roosts, further badger surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction. |

| | | |
|----------|--|--|
| Hedgehog | No impacts are anticipated on hedgehogs as a result of the proposed development. | A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction. |
| Birds | The scrub will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local bird populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, the proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests. | Works should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building/tree/vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged. |

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1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by GSP Architects to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Flat 19 – 21, High Street, Markayte, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 8PG (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for the extension and alteration of existing buildings to form three cottages together with three new build cottages to the rear of the site. (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). A plan showing the proposed development is provided in Appendix 1.

The aim of the PEA was to obtain data on existing ecological conditions, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the likely significance of ecological impacts on the proposed development. The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author’s knowledge, by any other consultancy.

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference TL 0516 9669 and has an area of 0.071ha. The site comprises a disused hardware store, and an outbuilding located to the rear. The high street is located to the south. The site is enclosed by residential properties to the north, south and west. A green corridor is present to the east of the site. However, the corridor is in a poor condition and is short in extent with no connections to the wider landscape due to urban infrastructure including the highway to the north and high street to the south.

A site location plan is provided in Appendix 2.

1.3 Scope of the Report

The PEA element of this report describes the baseline ecological conditions at the site, evaluates habitats within the survey area in the context of the wider environment and describes the suitability of those habitats for notable or protected species. It identifies possible ecological constraints as a result of the proposed development and summarises the requirements for further surveys and mitigation measures to inform subsequent mitigation proposals, achieve planning or other statutory consent and to comply with wildlife legislation.

The PRA element of this report provides a description of all features suitable for roosting, foraging and commuting bats and evaluates those features in the context of the site and wider environment. It further documents any physical evidence collected or recorded during the site survey that establishes the presence of roosting bats. It provides information on possible constraints to the proposed development as a result of bats and summarises the requirements for any further surveys to inform subsequent mitigation proposals, achieve planning or other statutory consent and to comply with wildlife legislation.

To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:

- A desk study has been carried out.

- A field survey has been undertaken to record baseline information on the site and surrounding area including habitat types and their suitability for notable or protected species, including roosting bats.
- Invasive plant and animal species (such as those listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act) have been identified.
- Potential impacts on features of value, as a result of the proposed development, have been identified.
- Recommendations for further surveys and mitigation have been made.
- Opportunities for the enhancement of the site for biodiversity have been set out.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

The desk study included a review of the magic.gov.uk database for statutory designated sites within a 2km radius of the site. Landscape value and the presence of notable habitats as well as granted European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) and notable species records held on magic.gov.uk database has also been considered where these are within influencing distance of the site.

2.2 Field Survey

The survey was undertaken by George Collier-Smith (Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2018-33540-CLS-CLS) on 26/07/2022.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

An extended habitat survey was undertaken, following the methodology set out in *Phase 1 Habitat Survey Methodology* (JNCC, 2010). All land parcels are described and mapped and, where appropriate, target notes provide supplementary information on habitat conditions, features too small to map to scale, species composition, structure and management. Botanical species lists were compiled with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).

During the survey, habitats were assessed for their suitability to support protected species, and field signs indicating their presence recorded. The assessment takes into consideration the findings of the desk study, the habitat conditions on site and in the context of the surrounding landscape, and the ecology of the protected species.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

The PRA focussed on two built structures which will be affected by the proposed development as well as providing an overview of the wider site and the surrounding landscape for bat roosting, foraging and commuting habitat.

For any surveyed buildings

A non-intrusive visual appraisal was undertaken from the ground, using binoculars to inspect the external features of the building(s) for features which bats could use for roosting, including access or egress points and for signs of bat use including droppings, scratch marks, insect remains and urine smear marks. The surveyor paid particular attention to the floor and flat surfaces, window shutters and frames, lintels above doors and windows. An endoscope was used to complete a close-up inspection of any accessible features, where appropriate.

For any surveyed trees

A visual inspection was undertaken from ground level using binoculars and, where accessible and safe to do so, an internal inspection of any features which bats could use for roosting was completed using an endoscope, torch and ladders.

Suitability Assessment

Built structures and trees were categorised according to the likelihood of bats being present and the types of roost that the identified features could support. This is summarised in Table 1 for buildings below. Roost suitability is classified as high, moderate, low and negligible and dictates any further surveys required before works can proceed.

Table 1: Features of a building that are correlated with use by bats

| Classification | Feature of building and its context |
|-----------------------|--|
| Moderate to high | Buildings or structures with features of particular significance for larger numbers of roosting bats e.g. mines, caves, tunnels, icehouses and cellars. Habitat on site and surrounding landscape of high quality for foraging bats e.g. broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is connected with the wider landscape by strong linear features that would be used by commuting bats e.g. river and or stream valleys and hedgerows. Site is proximate to known or likely roosts (based on historical data). Buildings with high suitability could support roosts of high conservation value such as maternity or hibernation roosts. |
| Low | A small number of possible roost sites or features, used sporadically by individual or small numbers of bats. Potential roost features may be suboptimal for reasons such as shallow depth, poor thermal qualities or upwards orientation with exposure to inclement weather or predators. Habitat suitable for foraging in close proximity, but isolated in the landscape. Or an isolated site not connected by prominent linear features. Few features suitable for roosting, minor foraging or commuting. |
| Negligible | Unsuitable for use by bats. |

2.3 Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood, and the known distribution of species as recovered during the searches of historical biological records.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

No internal access to either building was available at the time of the survey.

The northern elevation of the barn to the rear of the site could not be viewed due to its position on the site boundary. These limitations have been taken into account during the evaluation of the site and requirement for further surveys and mitigation.

3.0 Results and Evaluation

3.1 Designated Sites

No statutory designated sites were identified within 2km of the site.

3.2 Field Survey Results

The results of the field survey are illustrated in Appendix 3. The weather conditions recorded at the time of the survey are shown in Table 4.

Table 3: Weather conditions during the survey

| Date: 26/07/2022 | |
|------------------|------|
| Temperature | 24°C |
| Humidity | 70% |
| Cloud Cover | 50% |
| Wind | 1mph |
| Rain | None |

Habitats and Flora

The following habitats are present within and adjacent to the site:


- Buildings
- Hardstanding
- Dense Scrub
- Fencing

A description and photographs of each habitat are provided in Table 5.

No protected or non-native invasive plant species (as listed under Schedules 8 or 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) were identified on the site.

Table 4: Description and photographs of habitats within and adjacent to the site

| Habitat Type | Habitat description | Photograph |
|--------------|--|--|
| Buildings | Buildings and their value to roosting bats are described in the PRA section of the report below. | Photographs of the buildings are found in the PRA section of the report. |
| Hardstanding | The site is dominated by hardstanding in the form of concrete overlaid with gravel. | N/A |

| | | |
|--------------------|--|---|
| <p>Dense Scrub</p> | <p>A section of thick scrub is present immediately south-east of B2. This has likely arisen as a result of a lack of regular management and maintenance. Species identified include common nettle and bramble.</p> |  |
| <p>Fencing</p> | <p>Timber fencing encloses the site to the east and the south.</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

Fauna



Bats

A search of the magic database returned no granted EPSLs for any protected species within a 2km radius of the site.



A mature tree line is present to the east, beyond the site boundary. This could be used by local bat populations for foraging and commuting.



The results of the PRA are provided in Table 5. No evidence of roosting bats was identified during the survey.

Table 5: Assessment of the suitability of the site for bats

| Feature Ref | Description | Photographs |
|---|--|--|
| <p>B1 exterior – western elevation</p> | <p>B1 is a disused hardware store attached to a two storey dwelling. The main dwelling has a pitched roof and has hipped clay roof tiles. The tiles are in a good overall condition, and there are no raised elements on this elevation. The brickwork and UPVC windows offer no roosting value as they are void of any gaps or cracks which could be utilised by crevice dwelling species.</p> <p>The lower flat roof extension comprises a brick structure, and the roof has a timber structure fit with horizontal cladding. The cladding is showing some signs of dilapidation and is broken in places. The broken elements do not provide suitable roosting opportunities for bats because they do not provide access to an external cavity suitable to support a roosting bat. The brickwork is in a good condition and there are no gaps or cracks present.</p> |  |
| <p>B1 exterior – northern elevation</p> | <p>The brickwork at the gable end is in a good condition, and there are no cracks present. The small tiled roof section is also in a good condition, and there are no raised elements.</p> <p>A flat roof extension is also present. It has a felt roof, and a wooden weatherboard is present. The weatherboard is broken in one place (pictured opposite), but there are no gaps between the boarding and the brickwork in any place. The flat roof is fit with bitumen felt; this is frayed in one corner, but does not create any suitable gaps for roosting. Three small wooden windows are present, and all are in a good condition.</p> |  |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>B1 exterior – eastern elevation</p> | <p>The brickwork is in a great condition and there are no gaps present. There are numerous UPVC windows, and a UPVC weatherboard between the two gable ends. There is a gap present between the boarding and brickwork, which is assessed to provide a suitable roosting feature of crevice dwelling bats. The tiles on the roof are in a good condition and there are no raised elements.</p> |  |
| <p>B1 exterior – eastern elevation roosting feature</p> | <p>The gap between the weatherboard and brickwork is pictured opposite.</p> |  |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>B1 exterior – southern elevation</p> | <p>The brickwork is in a good overall condition, and there are no gaps present. There is one UPVC window which is also in a good overall condition. There are raised tiles present on the roof structure which provide suitable crevices for crevice dwelling species.</p> <p>A lower roof extension is also present. It has a bitumen felt roof and flashing present around the roof. Both are in excellent condition and there are no raised elements. The UPVC doors and windows do not provide any roosting value as they are void of any cracks or gaps.</p> |  |
| <p>B1 exterior – southern elevation roosting feature</p> | <p>Pictured opposite are the section of raised tiles present on the roof structure of the southern elevation.</p> |  |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>B2 exterior – western elevation</p> | <p>B2 is a single storey outhouse located to the east of B1. There is a large crack in the brickwork, and a gap between the wooden weatherboard and the brickwork which both provide suitable roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats. There is a wooden window present, and one of which is left open and provides internal access into the building.</p> |  |
| <p>B2 exterior – roosting feature</p> | <p>A close view of the crack in the brickwork, and gap between the weatherboard and the brickwork.</p> |  |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>B2 exterior – northern elevation</p> | <p>The brickwork on this elevation is in good condition, and there are no gaps or cracks present. The roof is fit with corrugated metal sheeting; there are some gaps along the edge of the roof but this type of material is subject to temperature fluctuations and as such, the gaps created are unsuitable for roosting. The wooden windows are in a good condition and there are no gaps present. A wooden extension is located to the east, and there are gaps between the cladding which could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats for roosting.</p> |  |
| <p>B2 exterior – southern elevation</p> | <p>The brickwork is in an ok condition, but there are gaps in the brickwork which provide suitable roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats. There are no gaps present on the roof structure, and the window frames are also in a good overall condition. A few of the windows are open which provide internal access. There are gaps between the boarding of the eastern extension which provide suitable roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats.</p> |  |

Other Species

A search of the magic database returned no granted EPSLs for any protected species within a 2km radius of the site. An assessment of the suitability of the site for protected or notable species is provided in Table 7.

Table 7: Assessment of the suitability of the site for protected or notable species

| Species | Assessment of suitability |
|----------------------|--|
| Amphibians | <p>There are no ponds located on site and there are no ponds located within 250m of the site boundaries. As a result, there is an absence of aquatic opportunities for amphibians with suitable connectivity to the site.</p> <p>Although, the scrub on site provides suitable terrestrial habitat due to its long length and structural diversity which provides suitable refuge opportunities from predators, the dominating hard standing enclosing the scrub to the south and west is unsuitable habitat and is likely to limit dispersal opportunities onto the site for amphibians.</p> <p>Furthermore, connectivity to higher value habitats in the wider landscape is absent, owing to the lack of ponds present within close proximity to the site. In addition, the site is enclosed by fencing to the east and south. The High Street, which is located to the west is a busy main road and acts as another physical barrier.</p> |
| Reptiles | <p>The scrub on site provides suitable terrestrial habitat due to its long length and species diversity which provide suitable refuge opportunities from predators. The site however is dominated by hard standing, which is unsuitable habitat.</p> <p>A green corridor is present to the east, immediately beyond the rear of the site. However, fencing enclosing the east site boundary is continuous and non-porous to reptiles and is likely to prevent access onto the site from the green corridor for reptiles. It is further noted that the green corridor is small in extent and is significantly isolated from the wider landscape by urban infrastructure and is highly unlikely to support a viable reptile population. In addition, the site is also enclosed by fencing to the south and The High Street to the west, both of which represent further physical barriers to dispersal for reptiles.</p> |
| Badgers | <p>No badger setts, or signs of badger activity were recorded on site. Furthermore, there were no badger setts identified within 30m of the site boundaries. The site is considered unsuitable for sett excavation due to the flat terrain and unsuitable hard standing habitat.</p> <p>The green corridor to the east of the site provides suitable foraging, commuting and sett building opportunities for badgers. However, the fencing present to the east acts as a barrier between the corridor and the site.</p> |
| Hazel Dormouse | No suitable habitat present. |
| Hedgehog | <p>The scrub provides suitable terrestrial opportunities for hedgehogs.</p> <p>The green corridor to the east of the site is likely to provide suitable foraging, commuting and hibernation opportunities. The presence of a physical barrier along the eastern border in the form of a fence, means connectivity to the green corridor is poor.</p> |
| Otter and Water Vole | No suitable riparian habitat present. |
| Birds | The scrub on site is likely to provide nesting opportunities for birds. However, due to the small extent and type of habitats recorded, the site is not suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/ or notable bird species. |
| Invertebrates | Habitats on site are considered suitable to support an invertebrate assemblage that is common and widespread only. Due to the small extent and type of habitats recorded, the site is not suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/ or notable invertebrate species. |

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations

4.1 Informative Guidelines

A summary of the relevant legislation and planning policies is provided in Appendix 4.

Likelihood of the Presence of Protected Species

Where physical evidence of the presence of protected species is indeterminate during the survey, the habitats on site are evaluated as to their likelihood to provide sheltering, roosting, foraging, basking or nesting habitat.

Where this report supports a planning application, the ecological interest of the study area (i.e. the area covered by the desk study and field survey) and the proposed development has also been evaluated in terms of the planning policies relating to biodiversity.

4.2 Evaluation

Taking the desk study and field survey results into account, Table 8 presents an evaluation of the ecological value of the site and also details any ecological constraints identified in relation to the proposed development which will comprise extensions and alterations to form three cottages to High Street frontage together with three new build cottages to the rear of the site.

Table 8: Evaluation of the site and any ecological constraints

| Ref | Summary of Survey Findings | Foreseen Impacts | Recommendations <i>Measures required to adhere to guidance, legislation and planning policies.</i> | Biodiversity Enhancements <i>The Local Planning Authority has a duty to ask for enhancements under the NPPF (2021)</i> |
|--------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Designated sites | <p>The site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory designation.</p> <p>There are no statutory designated sites within 2km of the site.</p> <p>The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from Herts Environmental Records Centre.</p> | No impacts to designated sites are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such sites (where known) as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers. | None. | None. |
| Habitats and flora | <p>There are no notable habitats within the site but four habitats are present within 2km of the site, the closest being deciduous woodland located 190m east from the site.</p> <p>Other habitats within the site are common and widespread and have low ecological value.</p> | No impacts to any notable habitats are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such habitats as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers. | None. | <p>The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native tree, hedgerow and shrub planting. • Creation of wildflower grassland. • The creation of a wildlife pond • A green roof on new buildings. |

| | | | | |
|------------|---|--|-------|---|
| | No protected or notable plant species were recorded during the survey. | | | Species-specific enhancement opportunities are detailed later in this table. |
| Amphibians | There is no suitable aquatic habitat on site or within 250m of the site boundaries and as such, it is considered unlikely that amphibians including great crested newts would be present on site. | No impacts are anticipated on amphibians, including great crested newt, as a result of the proposed development. | None. | The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for amphibians: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a wildlife pond • Creation of amphibian refugia and hibernacula using debris and brash from site clearance. • Planting of native scrub and grassland to increase foraging opportunities. |
| Reptiles | Due to the dominating unsuitable habitat and poor connectivity to the drier landscape, it is considered unlikely that reptiles would be present on site. | No impacts are anticipated on reptiles as a result of the proposed development. | None. | The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for reptiles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a wildlife pond • Creation of reptile refugia and hibernacula using debris and brash from site clearance. |

| | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting of native scrub and grassland to increase foraging opportunities. The creation of basking areas such as rock piles or areas of cleared ground with shelter nearby. |
| Roosting bats | <p>B1 is assessed to provide low roosting value to bats.</p> <p>B2 is assessed to provide moderate roosting value for bats.</p> <p>There were no granted EPSLs for bats present within 2km of the site.</p> | <p>The proposed development will result in the demolition or full renovation of the buildings on site. This could result in destruction of any bat roosts present and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats.</p> | <p>B1:</p> <p>One bat emergence or re-entry survey is required during the active bat season (May – September) to confirm presence or likely-absence of a bat roost in the building. The survey can be either a dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey. Four surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building. The survey is likely to be required before planning permission can be granted. If bat roosts are confirmed in the building two additional surveys will be required to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. Surveys should be a minimum of two weeks apart. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission.</p> <p>B2:</p> <p>Two bat emergence and re-entry surveys are required during the active bat season (May – September) to confirm presence or likely absence of a bat roost in the building. Both of the surveys should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. One of these surveys should be a dawn re-entry survey or infra-red cameras should be used as an aid. Surveys should be a minimum of two weeks apart. Three surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building.</p> | <p>To be confirmed upon completion of the surveys.</p> |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| | | | <p>Surveys are likely to be required before planning permission can be granted.</p> <p>If bat roosts are confirmed in the building one additional survey will be required to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission.</p> | |
| Foraging and commuting bats | <p>The scrub is likely to provide foraging and commuting habitats for bats.</p> <p>There is a line of mature trees present just beyond the eastern boundary which could be used by foraging and commuting bats.</p> | <p>The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats.</p> <p>The proposed development will include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.</p> | <p>A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use narrow spectrum light sources to lower the range of species affected by lighting. • Use light sources that emit minimal ultra-violet light. • Avoid white and blue wavelengths of the light spectrum to reduce insect attraction and where white light sources are required in order to manage the blue shortwave length content they should be of a warm / neutral colour temperature <4,200 kelvin. • Not use bare bulbs and any light pointing upwards. The spread of light will be kept in line with or below the horizontal. <p>Light spill will be reduced via the use of low-level lighting used in conjunction with hoods, cowls, louvers and shields. Lights will also be directional to ensure that light is directed to the intended areas only.</p> <p>External lighting will be on PIR sensors that are sensitive to large objects only (so that they are not triggered by passing bats) and will be set to the shortest time duration to reduce the amount of time the lights are on.</p> | <p>The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for foraging bats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a wildlife pond • Planting of native tree, shrub and hedgerows to increase foraging opportunities. |

| | | | | |
|----------------|---|--|---|-------|
| | | | Wall lights and security lights will be 'dimnable' and set to the lowest light intensity settings. There are several products on the market that allow the control of the light intensity and the duration that the lights are on. All lighting on the developed site will make use of the most up to date technology available. | |
| Badger | Due to the highly mobile nature of badgers, the future presence of foraging and commuting badgers cannot be ruled out. The scrub provides limited foraging and commuting habitat, and there is some connectivity to the west as there is open access to the site, however the fence to the east limits connectivity to the green corridor. However, the highly mobile nature of badgers means the future presence of foraging and commuting badgers cannot be discounted. | No impacts are anticipated on badgers as a result of the proposed development. | Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to bat roosts, further badger surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which badgers could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. | None. |
| Hazel dormouse | No suitable habitat present. | No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development. | None. | None. |
| Hedgehog | The scrub on site provides foraging, commuting and | No impacts are anticipated on hedgehogs as a result of the proposed development. | A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: | None. |

| | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|--|--|
| | <p>hibernation opportunities. Furthermore, the mobile nature of hedgehogs means the future presence of foraging and commuting hedgehogs cannot be discounted.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site clearance will be undertaken outside of the hedgehog hibernation season (November to March) insofar as is possible. Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use. Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. <p>If a hedgehog is found then this should be moved by gloved hand to an undisturbed and sheltered area of the site or adjacent land.</p> | |
| Otter and Water Vole | No suitable riparian habitat present. | No impacts are anticipated on otters as a result of the proposed development. | None. | None. |
| Birds | The scrub provides suitable nesting opportunities for birds. In addition, access into B2 is available for birds. | The scrub will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local bird populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, the proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests. | Scrub clearance works should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building/tree/vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged. | The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes onto new buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings) Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace (buildings) Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) Or a similar alternative brand. Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain |

| | | | | |
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| | | | | and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole. |
| Invertebrates | Habitats on site are considered suitable to support an invertebrate assemblage that is common and widespread only. | No impacts are anticipated on notable species or populations of invertebrates as a result of the proposed development. | None. | <p>The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for invertebrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native tree, hedgerow and shrub planting. • Creation of wildflower grassland. • The creation of a wildlife pond. • A green roof on new buildings. • Retention of deadwood on the site. |

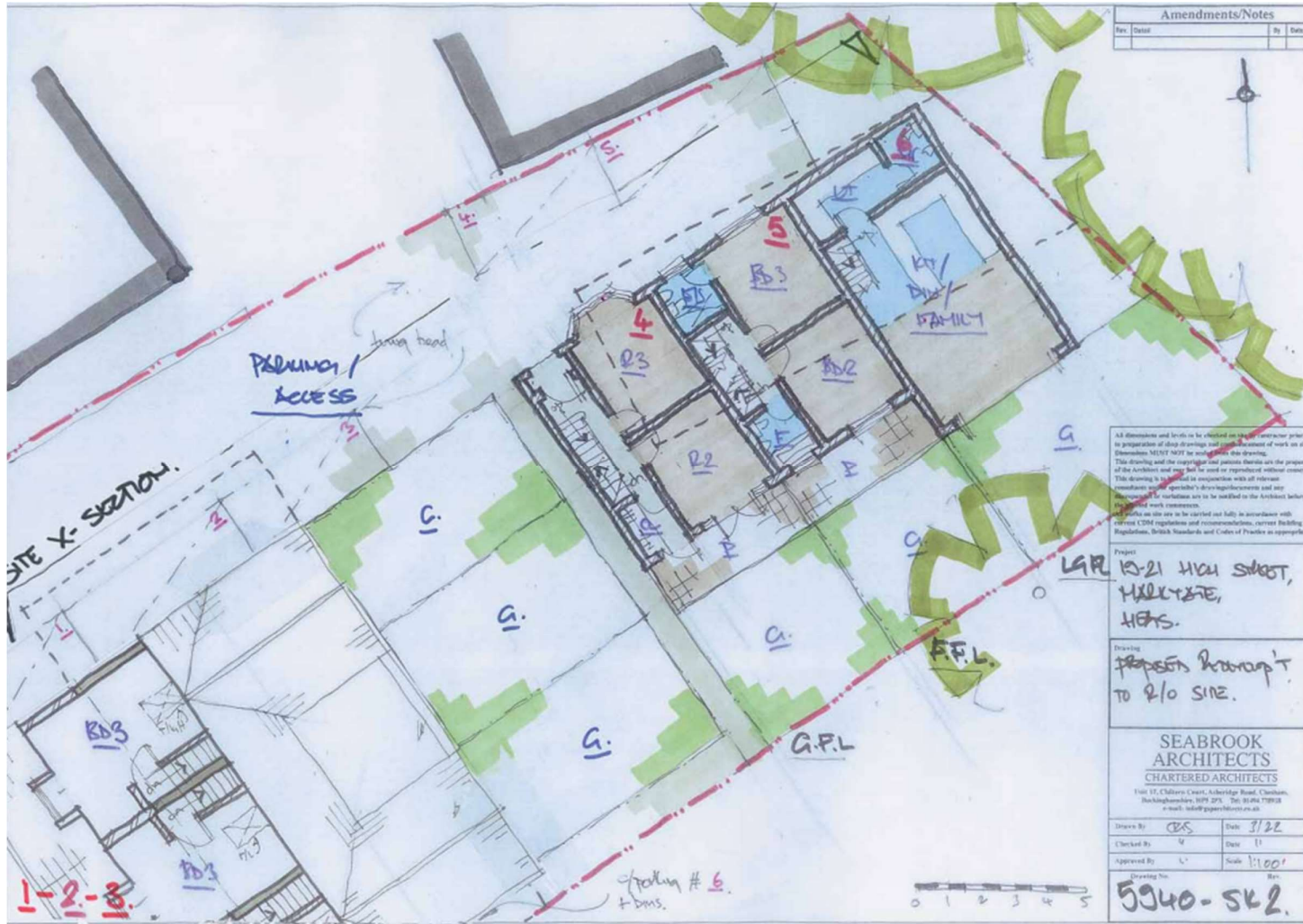
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Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



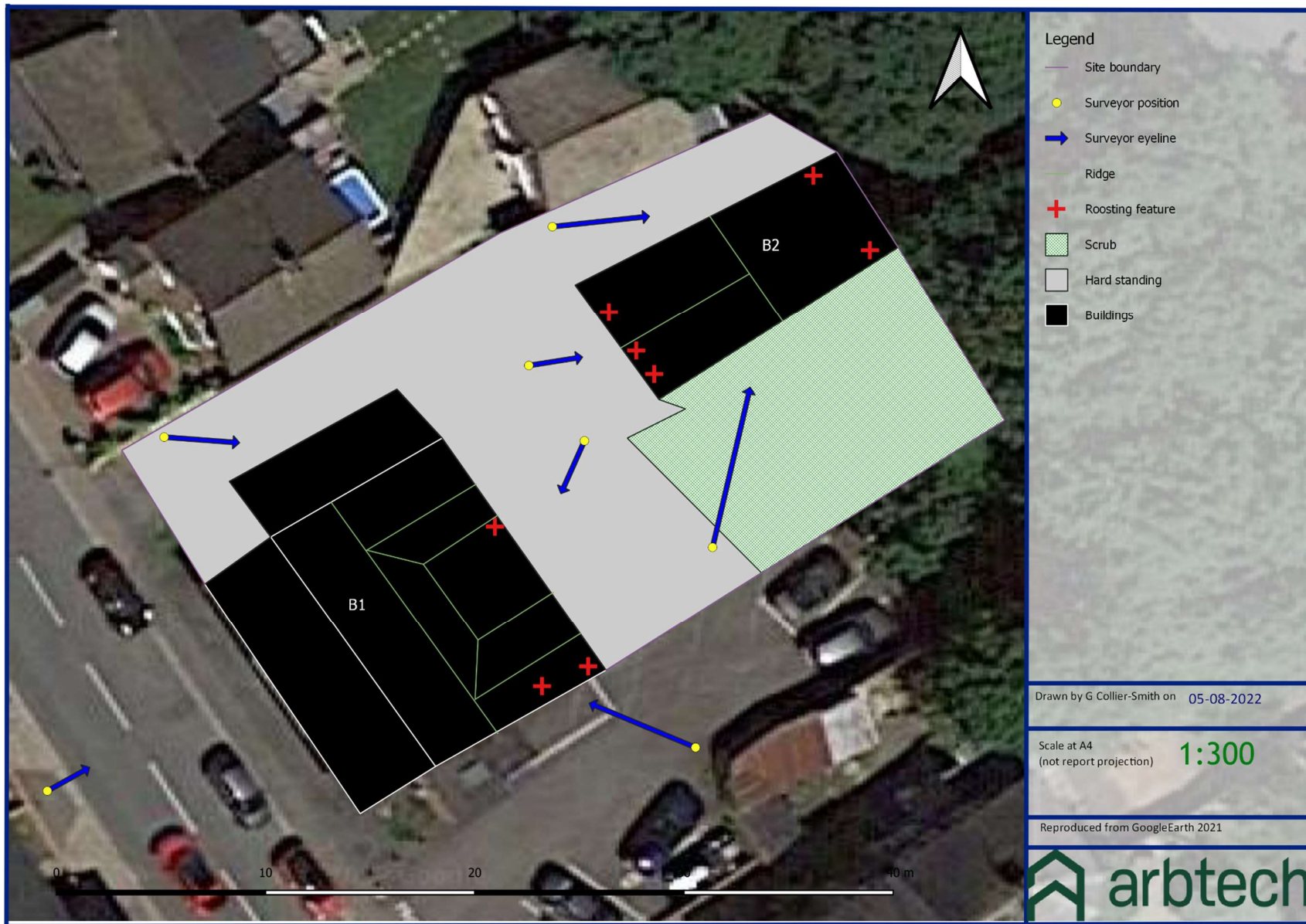




Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: Survey Plan



Appendix 4: Legislation and Planning Policy

LEGAL PROTECTION

National and European Legislation Afforded to Habitats

International Statutory Designations

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are sites of European importance and are designated under the EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) and the EC Birds Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Wild Birds Directive) respectively. Both form part of the wider Natura 2000 network across Europe.

Under the Habitats Directive Article 3 requires the establishment of a network of important conservation sites (SACs) across Europe. Over 1000 animal and plant species, as well as 200 habitat types, listed in the directive's annexes are protected in various ways:

Annex II species (about 900): core areas of their habitat are designated as Sites of Community importance (SCIs) and included in the Natura 2000 network. These sites must be managed in accordance with the ecological needs of the species.

Annex IV species (over 400, including many Annex II species): a strict protection regime must be applied across their entire natural range, both within and outside Natura 2000 sites.

Annex V species (over 90): their exploitation and taking in the wild is compatible with maintaining them in a favourable conservation status.

SPAs are classified under Article 2 of the Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds both for rare bird species (as listed on Annex I) and for important migratory species.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) form the legal basis for the implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directives in terrestrial areas and territorial waters out to 12 nautical miles in England and Wales (including the inshore marine area) and to a limited extent in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Ramsar sites are designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, agreed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. The Convention covers all aspects of wetland conservation and recognises the importance of wetland ecosystems in relation to global biodiversity conservation. The Convention refers to wetlands as “*areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres*”.

However, they may also include riparian and coastal zones. Ramsar sites are statutorily protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended 01.04.1996) with further protection provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. Policy statements have been issued by the Government in England and Wales highlighting the special status of Ramsar sites.

The Government in England and Wales has issued policy statements which ensure that Ramsar sites are afforded the same protection as areas designated under the EC Birds and Habitats Directives as part of the Natura 2000 network (e.g. SACs & SPAs). Further provisions for the protection and management of SSSIs have been introduced by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

National Statutory Designations

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are designated by nature conservation agencies in order to conserve key flora, fauna, geological or physio-geographical features within the UK. The original designations were under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 but SSSIs were then re-designated under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). As well as reinforcing other national designations (including National Nature Reserves), the system also provides statutory protection for terrestrial and coastal sites which are important within the European Natura 2000 network and globally.

Local Statutory Designations

Local authorities in consultation with the relevant nature conservation agency can declare Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. LNRs are designated for flora, fauna or geological interest and are managed locally to retain these features and provide research, education and recreational opportunities.

Non- Statutory Designations

All non-statutorily designated sites are referred to as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and can be designated by the local authority for supporting local conservation interest. Combined with statutory designation, these sites are considered within Local Development Frameworks under the Town and Country Planning system and are a material consideration during the determination of planning applications. The protection afforded to these sites varies depending on the local authority involved.

Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGs) are the most important geological and geomorphological areas outside of statutory designations. These sites are also a material consideration during the determination of planning applications.

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 are designed to protect 'important' countryside hedgerows. Importance is defined by whether the hedgerow (a) has existed for 30 years or more; or (b) satisfies at least one of the criteria listed in Part II of Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

Under the Regulations, it is against the law to remove or destroy hedgerows on or adjacent to common land, village greens, SSSIs (including all terrestrial SACs, NNRs and SPAs), LNRs, land used for agriculture or forestry and land used for the keeping or breeding of horses, ponies or donkeys without the permission of the local authority. Hedgerows 'within or marking the boundary of the curtilage of a dwelling-house' are excluded.

National and European Legislation Afforded to Species***The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)***

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring the Secretary of State to take measures to maintain or restore wild species listed within the Regulations at a favourable conservation status.

The Regulations make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade in the animals listed in Schedule 2, or pick, collect, cut, uproot, destroy, or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 4. However, these actions can be made lawful through the granting of licenses by the appropriate authorities. Licenses may be granted for a number of purposes (such as science and education, conservation, preserving public health and safety), but only after the appropriate authority is satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternatives and that such actions will have no detrimental effect on wild population of the species concerned.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended) implements the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979, implemented 1982) and implements the species protection requirements of EC Birds Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds in Great Britain (the birds Directive). The WCA 1981 has been subject to a number of amendments, the most important of which are through the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act (2000).

Other legislative Acts affording protection to wildlife and their habitats include:

- Deer Act 1991
- Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

Badgers

Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 which makes it an offence to:

- Wilfully kill, injure, take, or attempt to kill, injure or take a badger
- Cruelly ill-treat a badger, including use of tongs and digging
- Possess or control a dead badger or any part thereof
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett or any part thereof
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a badger when it is occupying a badger sett
- Intentionally or recklessly cause a dog to enter a badger sett
- Sell or offers for sale, possesses or has under his control, a live badger

Effects on development works:

A development licence will be required from the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) for any development works likely to affect an active badger sett, or to disturb badgers whilst they occupy a sett. Guidance has been issued by the countryside agencies to define what would constitute a licensable activity. It is no possible to obtain a licence to translocate badgers.

Birds

With certain exceptions, all birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Sections 1-8 of the WCA. Among other things, this makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally (or recklessly in Scotland) kill, injure or take any wild bird
- Intentionally (or recklessly in Scotland) take, damage or destroy (or, in Scotland, otherwise interfere with) the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built
- Intentionally take or destroy an egg of any wild bird
- Sell, offer or expose for sale, have in his possession or transport for the purpose of sale any wild bird (dead or alive) or bird egg or part thereof.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct or prevent any wild bird from using its nest (Scotland only)

Certain species of bird, for example the barn owl, bittern and kingfisher receive additional protection under Schedule 1 of the WCA and are commonly referred to as “Schedule 1” birds.

This affords them protection against:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young
- Intentional or reckless disturbance of dependent young of such a bird
- In Scotland only, intentional or reckless disturbance whilst lekking
- In Scotland only, intentional or reckless harassment

Effects on development works:

Works should be planned to avoid the possibility of killing or injuring any wild bird or damaging or destroying their nests. The most effective way to reduce the likelihood of nest destruction in particular is to undertake work outside the main bird nesting season which typically runs from March to August. Where this is not feasible, it will be necessary to have any areas of suitable habitat thoroughly checked for nests prior to vegetation clearance.

Schedule 1 birds are additionally protected against disturbance during the nesting season. Thus, it will be necessary to ensure that no potentially disturbing works are undertaken in the vicinity of the nest. The most effective way to avoid disturbance is to postpone works until the young have fledged. If this is not feasible, it may be possible to maintain an appropriate buffer zone or standoff around the nest.

Amphibians and Reptiles

The sand lizard *Lacerta agilis*, smooth snake *Coronella austriaca*, natterjack toad *Epidalea calamita*, pool frog *Pelophylax lessonae* and great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* receive full protection under Habitats Regulations through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species
- Deliberate disturbance of species in such a way as:

- To impair their ability to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young;
- To impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
- To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place

With the exception of the pool frog, these species are also listed on Schedule 5 of the WCA and they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection
- Selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale.

Other native species of reptiles are protected solely under Schedule 5, Section 9(1) & (5) of the WCA, i.e. the adder *Vipera berus*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* and slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*. It is prohibited to:

- Intentionally or recklessly kill or injure these species.

Effects on development works:

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) will be required for works likely to affect the breeding sites or resting places amphibian and reptile species protected under Habitats Regulations. A licence will also be required for operations liable to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above (e.g. survive, breed, rear young and hibernate). The licences are to allow derogation from the relevant legislation, but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficacy to be monitored.

Although not licensable, appropriate mitigation measures may also be required to prevent the intentional killing or injury of adder, grass snake, common lizard and slow worm, thus avoiding contravention of the WCA.

Water Voles

The water vole *Arvicola terrestris* is fully protected under Schedule 5 of the WCA. This makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take (capture) water voles
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb water voles while they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection

Effects on development works:

If development works are likely to affect habitats known to support water voles, the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) must be consulted. It must be shown that means by which the proposal can be re-designed to avoid contravening the legislation have been fully explored e.g. the use of alternative sites, appropriate timing of works to avoid times of the year in which water voles are most vulnerable, and measures to ensure minimal habitat loss. Conservation licences for the capture and

translocation of water voles may be issued by the relevant countryside agency for the purpose of development activities if it can be shown that the activity has been properly planned and executed and thereby contributes to the conservation of the population. The licence will then only be granted to a suitably experienced person if it can be shown that adequate surveys have been undertaken to inform appropriate mitigation measures. Identification and preparation of a suitable receptor site will be necessary prior to the commencement of works.

Otters

Otters *Lutra lutra* are fully protected under the Conservation Regulations through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species
- Deliberate disturbance of species in such a way as:
 - To impair their ability to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young;
 - To impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
 - To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place

Otters are also currently protected under the WCA through their inclusion on Schedule 5. Under this Act, they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection

Effects on development works:

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) will be required for works likely to affect otter breeding or resting places (often referred to as holts, couches or dens) or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above (e.g. survive, breed, and rear young). The licence is to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficacy to be monitored

Bats

All species are fully protected by Habitats Regulations 2010 as they are listed on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species (e.g. All bats)
- Deliberate disturbance of bat species in such a way as:
 - To impair their ability to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young;
 - To impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
 - To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place

Bats are afforded the following additional protection through the WCA as they are included on Schedule 5:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection

Effects on development works:

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) will be required for works are likely to affect a bat roost or an operation which are likely to result in an illegal level of disturbance to the species will require an EPSM licence. The licence is to allow derogation from the legislation through the application of appropriate mitigation measures and monitoring.

Hazel Dormice

Hazel dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius* are fully protected under Habitats Regulations through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species
- Deliberate disturbance of species in such a way as:
 - To impair their ability to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young;
 - To impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
 - To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place

Dormice are also protected under the WCA through their inclusion on Schedule 5. Under this Act, they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection

Effects on development works:

Works which are liable to affect a dormice habitat or an operation which are likely to result in an illegal level of disturbance to the species will require a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales (NB: Hazel Dormouse are entirely absent from Scotland)). The licence is to allow derogation from the legislation through the application of appropriate mitigation measures and monitoring.

White Clawed Crayfish

There is a considerable amount of legislation in place in an attempt to protect the White-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*. This species is listed under the European Union's (EU) Habitat and Species Directive and is listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). This makes it an offence to:

- Protected against intentional or reckless taking

- Protected against selling, offering or advertising for sale, possessing or transporting for the purpose of sale

It is also classified as Endangered in the IUCN Red List of Endangered Species. As a result of this and other relevant crayfish legislation such as the Prohibition of Keeping of Live Fish (Crayfish)

Order 1996, a series of licences are needed for working with White-clawed and non-native crayfish. These are:

- A licence to handle crayfish (therefore survey work) in England
- A licence for the keeping of crayfish in England and Wales with an exemption for Signal crayfish (England).
- People in the post-code areas listed with crayfish present prior to 1996 do not need to apply for consent for crayfish already established. It does not, however, allow any new stocking of non-native crayfish into waterbodies. Consent for trapping of non-native crayfish for control or consumption is most likely to be granted in Thames and Anglian regions in the areas with "go area" postcodes.
- Harvesting of crayfish is prohibited in much of England and in any part of Scotland and Wales.

Effects on development works:

The relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) will need to be consulted about development which could impact on a watercourse or wetland known to support white clawed crayfish. Conservation licences for the capture and translocation of crayfish can be issued if it can be shown that the activity has been properly planned and executed and thereby contributes to the conservation of the population. The licence will only be granted to a suitably experienced person if it can be shown that adequate surveys have been undertaken to inform appropriate mitigation measures. Identification and preparation of a suitable receptor site will be necessary prior to the commencement of the works.

Wild Mammals (Protection Act) 1996

All wild mammals are protected against intentional acts of cruelty under the above legislation. This makes it an offence to mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

To avoid possible contravention, due care and attention should be taken when carrying out works (for example operations near burrows or nests) with the potential to affect any wild mammal in this way, regardless of whether they are legally protected through other conservation legislation or not.

Legislation Afforded to Plants

With certain exceptions, all wild plants are protected under the WCA. This makes it an offence for an 'unauthorised' person to intentionally (or recklessly in Scotland) uproot wild plants. An authorised person can be the owner of the land on which the action is taken, or anybody authorised by them.

Certain rare species of plant, for example some species of orchid, are also fully protected under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This prohibits any person from:

- Intentionally (or recklessly in Scotland) picking, uprooting or destruction of any wild Schedule 8 species (or seed or spore attached to any such wild plant in Scotland only)
- Selling, offering or exposing for sale, or possessing or transporting for the purpose of sale, any wild live or dead Schedule 8 plant species or part thereof

- In addition to the UK legislation outlined above, several plant species are fully protected under Schedule 5 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. These are species of European importance. Regulation 45 makes it an offence to:
- Deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy a wild Schedule 5 species
- Be in possession of, or control, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any wild live or dead Schedule 5 species or anything derived from such a plant.

Effects on development works:

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) will be required from the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) for works which are likely to affect species of planted listed on Schedule 5 of the Conservation or Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. The licence is to allow derogation from the legislation through the application of appropriate mitigation measures and monitoring.

Invasive Species

Part II of Schedule 9 of the WCA lists non-native invasive plant species for which it is a criminal offence in England and Wales to plant or cause to grow in the wild due to their impact on native wildlife. Species included (but not limited to):

- Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*
- Giant hogweed *Heraclium mantegazzianum*
- Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*

Effects on development works:

It is not an offence for plants listed in Part II of Schedule 9 of the WCA 1981 to be present on the development site, however, it is an offence to cause them to spread. Therefore, if any of the species are present on site and construction activities may result in further spread (e.g. earthworks, vehicle movements) then it will be necessary to design and implement appropriate mitigation prior to construction commencing.

Injurious weeds

Under the Weeds Act 1959 any landowner or occupier may be required prevent the spread of certain 'injurious weeds' including (but not limited to):

- Spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*
- Creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*
- Curled dock *Rumex crispus*
- Broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*
- Common ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*

Effects on development works:

It is a criminal offence to fail to comply with a notice requiring such action to be taken. The Ragwort Control Act 2003 establishes a ragwort control code of practice as common ragwort is poisonous to horses and other livestock. This code provides best practice guidelines and is not legally binding.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY (ENGLAND)

Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act 2021 (EA 2021) received Royal Assent on 9 November 2021 and is expected to become fully mandated within the next couple of years. The Act principally creates a post Brexit framework to protect and enhance the natural environment. Through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Act will require all planning permissions in England (subject to exemptions which is likely to include householder applications) to be granted subject to a new general pre-commencement condition that requires approval of a biodiversity net gain plan. This will ensure the delivery of a minimum of 10% measurable biodiversity net gain. The principal tool to calculate this will be the Defra Biodiversity 3.0 Metric. Works to enhance habitats can be carried out either onsite or offsite or through the purchase of 'biodiversity credits' from the Secretary of State. However, this flexibility may be removed (subject to regulations) if the onsite habitat is 'irreplaceable'. Both onsite and offsite enhancements must be maintained for at least 30 years after completion of a development (which period may be amended).

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development. The Framework specifies the need for protection of designated sites and priority habitats and species. An emphasis is also made on the need for ecological infrastructure through protection, restoration and re-creation. The protection and recovery of priority species (considered likely to be those listed as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006) is also listed as a requirement of planning policy.

In determining a planning application, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by ensuring that: designated sites are protected from harm; there is appropriate mitigation or compensation where significant harm cannot be avoided; measurable gains in biodiversity in and around developments are incorporated; and planning permission is refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including aged or veteran trees and also ancient woodland.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Biodiversity Duty

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'.

Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of 'principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity'. This list is intended to assist decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications. A developer must show that their protection has been adequately addressed within a development proposal.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY***Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan***

The Hertfordshire BAP can be viewed here: [Hertfordshire Environmental Forum - Nature Conservation - www.hef.org.uk](http://www.hef.org.uk)

There are no policies included within the BAP which will have implications on the proposed development.

Hertfordshire BAP – Natterers Bat Action Plan

The Natterers Bat AP can be viewed here: [Hertfordshire Environmental Forum - Nature Conservation - www.hef.org.uk](http://www.hef.org.uk)

This species is known to be present in the Hertfordshire area. And the current actions include:

- The Hertfordshire and Middlesex Bat Group are carrying out ongoing investigations into the County status, habits and requirements of the Natterer's Bat. Key sites are being identified and entered onto a Geographical Information Alert System by the Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre. Some sites have been designated important Wildlife Sites and incorporated into District Local Plans.
- Some planning applications are being checked for barn conversions. Planning lists are provided direct to the Bat Group by North Hertfordshire District Council, East Hertfordshire Council and Hertsmere Borough Council.
- The Bat Group continues to provide support to English Nature in its advisory capacity, and in survey, monitoring and education activities. Practical conservation management is carried out such as the protection of underground sites and creation of suitable roosting and hibernation sites.

EUROPEAN PROTECTED SPECIES POLICIES

In December 2016 Natural England officially introduced the four licensing policies throughout England. The four policies seek to achieve better outcomes for European Protected Species (EPS) and reduce unnecessary costs, delays and uncertainty that can be inherent in the current standard EPS licensing system. The policies are summarised as follows:

- Policy 1; provides greater flexibility in exclusion and relocation activities, where there is investment in habitat provision;
- Policy 2; provides greater flexibility in the location of compensatory habitat;
- Policy 3; provides greater flexibility on exclusion measures where this will allow EPS to use temporary habitat; and,
- Policy 4; provides a reduced survey effort in circumstances where the impacts of development can be confidently predicted.

The four policies have been designed to have a net benefit for EPS by improving populations overall and not just protecting individuals within development sites. Most notably Natural England now recognises that the Habitats Regulations legal framework now applies to 'local populations' of EPS and not individuals/site populations.