



ecosupport



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Report	Preliminary Roost Assessment
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Table of Contents

Executive Summary..... 4

1.0 INTRODUCTION 5

1.1 Brief 5

1.2 Site Description & Location 5

1.3 Proposed Development 6

2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY 7

2.1 Legislation 7

 2.1.1 *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit) 7*

 2.1.2 *The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) 7*

 2.1.3 *The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) 7*

 2.1.4 *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) 8*

 2.1.5 *Protection of Badgers Act 8*

 2.1.6 *The Environment Act (2021) 8*

2.2 Planning Policy 9

 2.2.1 *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023..... 9*

 2.2.2 *Local – Chichester District Council (Local Plan 2014 – 2029) 10*

3.0 METHODOLOGY 12

3.1 Desk Study 12

 3.1.1 *Waterbodies 12*

 3.1.2 *Protected species / designated sites..... 12*

3.2 Field Survey 12

 3.2.1 *Habitats 12*

 3.2.2 *Bats- Daytime Bat Walkover Survey..... 12*

3.3 Assessment Methodology 13

 3.3.1 *Introduction 13*

 3.3.2 *Valuation 13*

3.4 Limitations 13

4.0 ECOLOGICAL BASELINE..... 14

4.1 Desk Study 14

 4.1.1 *Waterbodies 14*

 4.1.2 *Designated sites..... 14*

4.2 Vegetation Survey Results..... 14

 4.2.1 *Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)..... 15*

 4.2.2 *Buildings 15*

4.3 Bat Survey Results 15

 4.3.1 *Preliminary Roost Assessment (Buildings)..... 15*

5.0 LIKELY ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS IN ABSENCE OF MITIGATION..... 20

5.1 Introduction 20

5.2 Site Preparation and Construction..... 20

 5.2.1 *Impacts to Habitats* 20

 5.2.2 *Impacts to Wildlife*..... 20

 5.2.3 *Impacts to Designated Sites* 20

5.3 Operational 20

6.0 MITIGATION & RECOMMENDATIONS..... 21

6.1 Introduction 21

6.2 Roosting Bats..... 21

6.3 Badgers 21

6.4 Enhancements 21

 6.4.1 *Bats* 21

 6.4.2 *Birds* 22

7.0 CONCLUSION..... 23

8.0 REFERENCES..... 24

Executive Summary

Ecosupport Ltd was instructed by Mr Fryer to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of West Wadlington, Lickfold, Petworth to identify any potentially important ecological features that may be affected by the proposed development. As part of this assessment, the following surveys were undertaken:

- Preliminary Roost Assessment (November 2023)

The following important ecological features were identified on site following the conclusion of the above survey work and may be subject to adverse impacts in the absence of suitable mitigation/compensation:

- Moderate potential for roosting bats

In the absence of any mitigation measures, the proposed development is anticipated to result in **potential adverse effects** (significance level to be determined following additional survey work).

Suitable mitigation measures will be outlined within reports that will accompany this document following the conclusion of the additional survey work recommended.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief

Ecosupport Ltd was instructed by Mr Fryer to conduct a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of West Wadlington, Lickfold, Petworth (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The purpose of this survey was to assess any ecological impacts that may arise as a result of the proposed development. The objectives of the survey were as follows:

- Identify any signs of roosting bats and potential features that may support them;
- Identify any signs of nesting and breeding birds;
- Make recommendations for further survey work as necessary;
- Make recommendations for any necessary ecological avoidance, mitigation and compensation;
- Make recommendations for site ecological enhancements as per planning policy.

NB: If the development does not take place within 18 months of this report ¹ then the findings of this survey will no longer be considered valid and may require updating.

1.2 Site Description & Location

The site comprises of the main dwelling, outdoor office and associated garden and patio area at West Wadlington, Lickfold, Petworth GU28 9DU (centred on OS grid reference SU 92372 25117) (Fig 1). The site is bound by another dwelling to the north and east, and by woodland to the west and south. The site is set within a rural area in Lickfold, consisting of a few residential dwellings with associated gardens, arable fields and woodland.

¹ <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>

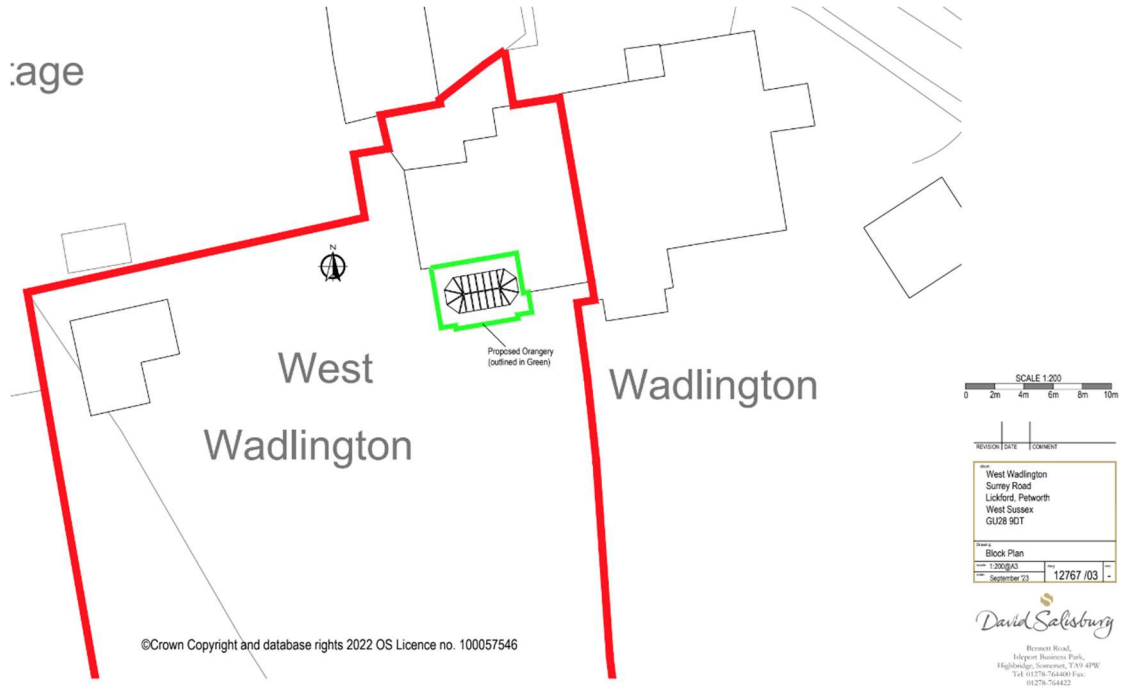
Figure 1. Approximate redline boundary of the impacted area. The wider property boundary is indicated in blue. (Google maps, 2023)



1.3 Proposed Development

The proposals entail the demolition of the southern wall of the kitchen and building an orangery as an extension on the existing porch.

Figure 2. Proposed plans for the orangery to the main dwelling (David Salisbury, 2023).



2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit)*

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transposes the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) into UK domestic law. It provides protection for sites and species deemed to be of conservation importance across Europe. It is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or injure species listed in Schedule 2 or to damage or destroy their breeding sites or shelter. It is also illegal to deliberately disturb these species in such a way that is likely to significantly impact on the local distribution or abundance or affect their ability to survive, breed and rear or nurture their young.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit) makes changes to the three existing instruments which transpose the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives so that they continue to work (are operable) upon the UK's exit from the European Union (EU). These include The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This instrument also amends section 27 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to ensure existing protections continue. The intention is to ensure habitat and species protection and standards as set out under the Nature Directives are implemented in the same way or an equivalent way when the UK exits the EU.

In order for activities that would be likely to result in a breach of species protection under the regulations to legally take place, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence must first be obtained from Natural England.

2.1.2 *The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)*

This is the primary piece of legislation by which biodiversity is protected within the UK. Protected fauna and flora are listed under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. They include all species of bats, making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a roost or to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost. Similarly, this Act makes it an offence to kill or injure any species of British reptiles and also makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to take, damage or destroy their eggs and nests (whilst in use or being built).

The Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) states that it is an offence to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild' any plant listed in Schedule 9 art II of the Act. This list over 30 plants including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and Parrots Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*).

2.1.3 *The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)*

This Act strengthens the Wildlife & Countryside Act by the addition of "reckless" offences in certain circumstances, such as where there is the likelihood of protected species being present. The Act places a duty on Government Ministers and Departments to conserve biological diversity and provides police with stronger powers relating to wildlife crimes.

2.1.4 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 requires that public bodies have due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. This means that Planning authorities must consider biodiversity when planning or undertaking activities. Section 41 of the Act lists species found in England which were identified as requiring action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the *UK Post – 2010 Biodiversity Framework*.

2.1.5 Protection of Badgers Act

The Protection of Badgers Act (1992) relates to the welfare of Badgers (*Meles meles*) as opposed to nature conservation considerations. The Act prevents:

- The wilful killing, injury, ill treatment or taking of Badgers and / or
- Interference with a Badger sett
- Damaging or destroying all or part of a sett
- Causing a dog to enter a set and
- Disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett

Provisions are included within the Act to allow for the lawful licensing of certain activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under the Act.

2.1.6 The Environment Act (2021)

The Environment Act 2021 is the UK's new legislation for environmental protection in the UK, which includes protection of water quality, clean air, and biodiversity among other key protections. This Act provides the government power to set targets to reach long-term aims relating to the environment, which will be periodically reviewed and updated. This legislation also establishes a new environmental watchdog organisation, the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP), which will hold the government accountable on environmental issues.

Part 6 of The Environment Act relates to nature and biodiversity. This section makes provision for biodiversity net gain to be a condition of planning permission in England and a requirement for nationally significant infrastructure projects. Biodiversity net gain will require maintenance for a period of at least 30 years after the completion of enhancement works to be achieved.

The legislation also includes updates to existing environmental legislation, such as the NERC Act 2006, to strengthen biodiversity enhancement rather than just conservation and includes a requirement for local, or relevant, authorities to publish biodiversity reports. Further, The Environment Act places a requirement on responsible authorities to prepare local nature recovery strategies, which will outline nature conservation sites and priorities and opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity within the local area. Within England, the legislation also provides Natural England with the power to publish 'species conservation strategies' and 'protected site strategies' to identify activities that may affect a species or site's status and outline their opinions on measures that would be appropriate to avoid, mitigate or compensate any adverse impacts.

2.2 Planning Policy

2.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

Chapter 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity, the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

The NPPF states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and that the scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

To protect and enhance biodiversity plans should:

- identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation;
- and promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

The NPPF states determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a SSSI, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSI;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists;

- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

2.2.2 Local – Chichester District Council (Local Plan 2014 – 2029)

Chichester's Local Plan recognises that the natural environment is a key factor in terms of attracting residents, investment and tourism to the area and that one of these key environmental assets is biodiversity. The Plan seeks to protect and enhance the environmental assets, whilst allowing development in areas where potential environmental harm is minimal or can be adequately mitigated.

Countryside protection policies and the development of green infrastructure will provide links both for wildlife and for residents and help to protect the separate identity and distinct character of individual settlements.

The Plan emphasises that both Chichester and Pagham Harbour are internationally recognised sites of nature conservation importance, subject to a high level of environmental protection under European Union and UK legislation. Along with the Medmerry Realignment which is subject to the same protection as designated European sites.

All new developments are encouraged to take account of and incorporate biodiversity into their features at the design stage. Policy 49 protects sites of biodiversity importance, which contain wildlife features that are of special interest. Exceptions will only be made where no reasonable alternatives are available and the benefits of development clearly outweigh the negative impacts. Where a development proposal would result in any significant harm to biodiversity and geological interests that cannot be prevented or mitigated, appropriate compensation will be sought.

The Local Plan states that "Conserving biodiversity is not just about protecting rare species and designated nature conservation sites". It also encompasses the more common and widespread species and habitats. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the biodiversity diversity of the district.

Policy 49 'Biodiversity' states that planning permission will be granted for development where it can be demonstrated that:

- The biodiversity value of the site is safeguarded;
- Demonstrable harm to habitats or species which are protected or which are of importance to biodiversity is avoided or mitigated;
- The proposal has incorporated features that enhance biodiversity as part of good design and sustainable development;
- The proposal protects, manages and enhances the District's network of ecology, biodiversity and geological sites, including the international, national and local designated sites (statutory and non-statutory), priority habitats, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them;

- Any individual or cumulative adverse impacts on sites are avoided;
- The benefits of development outweigh any adverse impact on the biodiversity on the site. Exceptions will only be made where no reasonable alternatives are available; and planning conditions and/or planning obligations may be imposed to mitigate or compensate for the harmful effects of the development.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Waterbodies

Any ponds located within 250m of the proposed development were searched for using Ordnance Survey maps and available aerial images.

3.1.2 Protected species / designated sites

A desktop study searching for records of relevant protected species and designated site within 1km of the site was undertaken using freely available online resources.

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 Habitats

The field survey work which forms the basis of the findings of this report was carried out by Katalin Balazs BSc (Hons) MSc and Amy Johnston BSc (Hons), ecologists with Ecosupport, on the 3rd November 2023. Weather conditions during the survey comprised temperatures of 16°C and sunny.

Habitats on site pre-development were identified in accordance with the categories specified for a UK Habitats survey, using Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023). This was chosen as an appropriate habitat categorisation system as it fits within the Biodiversity Metric 4.0. Where appropriate primary habitat codes were used although for some habitat types, the use of secondary habitat codes was necessary as well.

3.2.2 Bats- Daytime Bat Walkover Survey

An assessment was made of the suitability of the building to support roosting bats based on the presence of any Potential Roost Features. This involved the use of 8 x 42 close focus binoculars and a high-powered torch (where required) for a more detailed inspection of any features. The survey conformed to current best practice guidance as described *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th Edition, Collins, J. (ed) 2023) and was carried out by Katalin Balazs BSc (Hons) MSc, Assistant Ecologist with Ecosupport Ltd., on the 3rd November 2023.

Table 1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of a built structure for roosting bats (reproduced from BCT (Collins, J. (ed) 2023)).

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ² and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a large number of

² For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

	bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A structure 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. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.

3.3 Assessment Methodology

3.3.1 Introduction

The methodology for the assessment of the likely ecological effects of the proposed development is based on CIEEM's *Guidelines for Ecological Assessment in the UK* (CIEEM 2018). Although this assessment does not constitute a formal Ecological/ Environmental Impact Assessment, the CIEEM guidelines provide a useful framework for assessing ecological impacts at any level.

3.3.2 Valuation

Features of ecological interest are valued on a geographic scale. Value is assigned on the basis of legal protection, national and local biodiversity policy and cultural and/or social significance.

3.4 Limitations

There were not considered to be any limitations during the preliminary roost assessment (PRA) as all areas of the site to be impacted upon were accessible.

4.0 ECOLOGICAL BASELINE

4.1 Desk Study

4.1.1 Waterbodies

Given the habitats on site are not considered suitable for GCN no further assessment was considered necessary. Additionally, works are proposed to take place on only hard standing, therefore it is considered unlikely GCN will be impacted by the development.

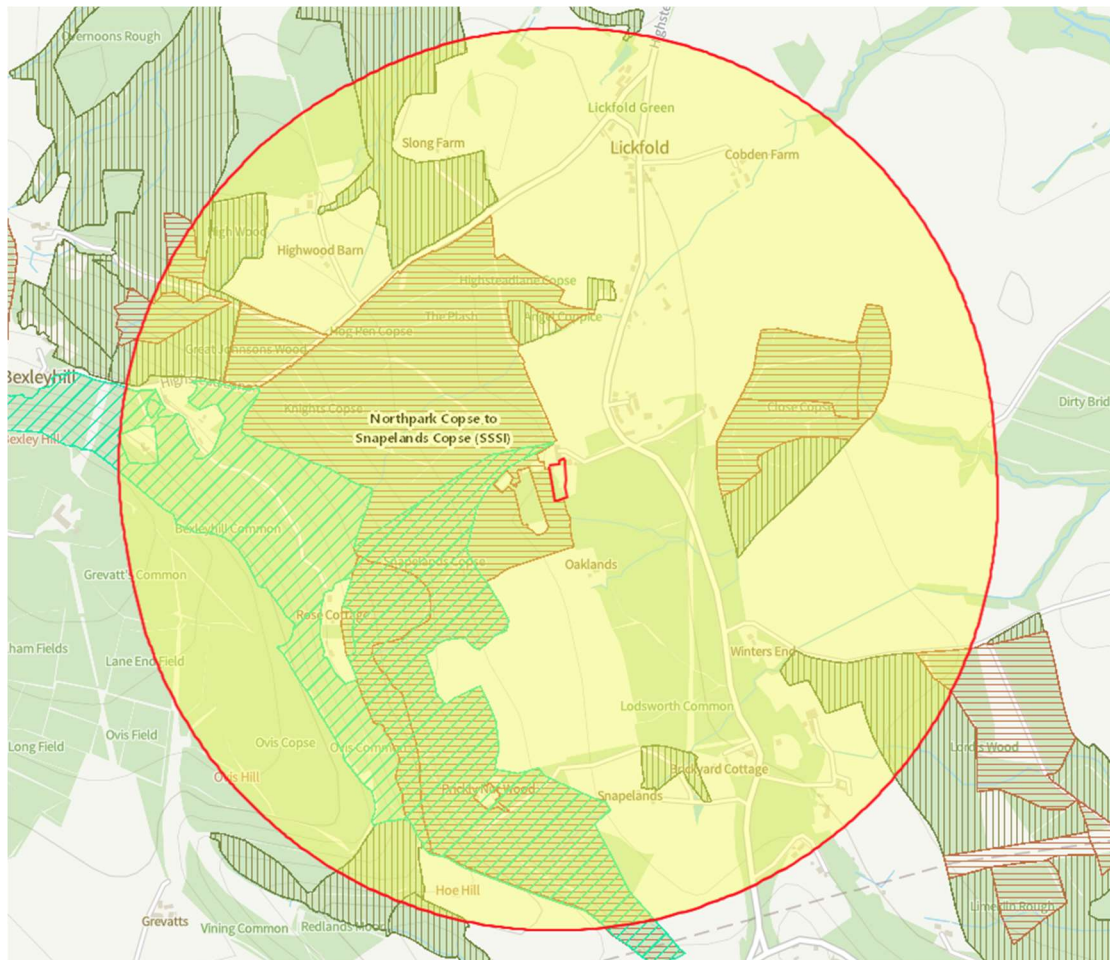
4.1.2 Designated sites

Using freely available online resources, the following statutory designated site was found within 1km of the site (**Fig 3**):

- Northpark Copse to Snapelands Copse SSSI at 0.05km north-west

Additionally, ancient woodland was found at 0.3km north and ancient replanted woodland was found at 0.03km west from the impacted area of the site.

Figure 3. Location of the statutory designated site and ancient (green hash) / ancient replanted (brown hash) woodland found within 1km of the site (Magic Maps, 2023).



4.2 Vegetation Survey Results

The vegetation within the site has been described below using the UK Habs Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023). The below species noted should not be considered an

exhaustive list and instead refer to dominant, characteristic and other noteworthy species associated with each community within the survey area. The habitat types on site comprise:

- Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)
- Buildings (u1b5)

4.2.1 Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)

Developed land; sealed surface was present as a porch to the south formed of paving slabs that will be affected by the proposal (**Fig 4**).

Figure 4. View of the developed land; sealed surface at the southern side (November 2023).



4.2.2 Buildings

The final habitat type on site was the main dwelling with further descriptions provided in **Table 2** below.

4.3 Bat Survey Results

4.3.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment (Buildings)

The findings of the Preliminary Roost Assessment of the main building is outlined in **Table 2** below.

Table 2. Results of the preliminary roost assessment undertaken of the dwelling on site.


Building	Fig	Description of Construction	PRFs / Evidence of Occupation	Assessed Roost Potential
<p>West Wadlington Dwelling</p>	<p>Figure 5. External view of the southern elevation of the dwelling which will be affected by the proposal (November 2023).</p> 	<p>Semi-detached, two-storey property of red-brick wall construction with clay tiles.</p> <p>The area affected is at the southern elevation of a one storey kitchen of red-brick wall and clay tiles (Fig 5), with a flat roof section to the northern elevation.</p> <p>Wooden soffits were located around the building. There was one chimney surrounded by lead flashing.</p> <p>Internally, the roof void was supported by wooden beams with well-sealed roof lining and cobwebbed (Fig 6).</p>	<p>Several lifted tiles on the southern elevation were noted and lifted lead flashing at the chimney (Fig 7).</p> <p>Some gaps were present between the soffit and the wall at the southern elevation (Fig 8).</p> <p>A direct gap was present in the loft under the eaves (Fig 9).</p> <p>No evidence or signs of roosting bats was identified internally.</p> <p>NB: While the proposals entail a small connection between the new construction into the old dwelling, a day roost of <i>Pipistrelles sp.</i> was found based on the Phase II Bat Mitigation Strategy from SDNP/22/03127/LIS Planning Application at</p>	<p>Moderate</p>

Figure 6. Internal view of the loft space within West Wadlington’s kitchen (November 2023).



the neighbouring dwelling.

Figure 7. Several lifted concrete roof tiles on the southern elevation (November 2023).



Figure 8. Gaps under the soffit at the southern elevation (November 2023).



Figure 9. Internal gap under the eaves (November 2023).



5.0 LIKELY ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS IN ABSENCE OF MITIGATION

5.1 Introduction

The CIEEM guidelines (CIEEM 2018) require that the potential impacts of the proposals should be considered in absence of mitigation. In order for a significant adverse effect to occur, the feature being affected must be at least of local value. However, in some cases, features of less than local value may be protected by legislation and/or policy and these are also considered within the assessment. Although significant effects may be identified at this stage of the assessment, it is often possible to provide appropriate mitigation.

5.2 Site Preparation and Construction

5.2.1 Impacts to Habitats

There are no habitats of significant ecological value that will be lost as a result of the works, with the majority of the extension's footprint being over already existing building habitat and paving slabs.

5.2.2 Impacts to Wildlife

The dwelling has been identified as supporting potential for roosting bats. If Phase II Bat Surveys reveal that bats are utilising the dwelling as a roost, the works to this building would lead to the potential loss or modification of a bat roost as well as the potential disturbance, harm or even death of bats. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation an **adverse impact is possible** (with the level of impact to be determined following the results of the bat surveys).

An increase in people and noise will occur on site during the works, however, these will mainly occur during the daytime, so the impact on foraging and commuting bats is expected to be negligible.

The proposed works may require the creation of some excavations. This may lead to Badgers and other mammals becoming trapped or injured during the works. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation an **adverse impact is possible** at the **site level**.

5.2.3 Impacts to Designated Sites

The site is bounded on the west by an ancient replanted woodland and the north-western boundary is located approximately 0.05km from Northpark Copse to Snapelands Copse SSSI. The proposals will only impact an already existing footprint of the porch to the south formed of paving slabs. Taking this in consideration, there will be **negligible** potential impacts to the designated sites as a result of the development.

5.3 Operational

It is considered the impacts associated with the operational phase will be minimal as the site will be occupied by the same number of residents (i.e. no net increase in residential development). However, any increase in artificial lighting resulting from windows would likely reduce the suitability of the site to support nocturnal wildlife, particularly foraging. Therefore, an **minor impact is possible** on nocturnal species.

6.0 MITIGATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The below sections outline a number of recommendations for further survey work required to fully assess the potential ecological impacts of the development and ensure proposed mitigation and compensation are appropriate and proportionate. In addition to this, measures are outlined to protect the existing features of value and provide enhancements post development.

6.2 Roosting Bats

The main dwelling has been identified as having **moderate potential** for roosting bats, therefore two surveys will be required in line with best practice guidance (**Table 3**), to characterise any roost(s) that may be present. The survey can only be undertaken **between May – September, with at least two of them between May - August** and will help to inform a more detailed mitigation and compensation strategy to minimise the potential impacts of this development scheme upon bats.

Table 3. Recommend minimum number of survey visits (from Table 7.2 (BCT, 2023)).³

Low roost suitability	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability / known roost
One dusk emergence survey.	Two separate dusk emergence survey visits.	Three separate dusk emergence survey visits.

Should bats be found to be roosting in the building, an additional survey will be needed and mitigation measures will be required to reduce potential impacts. It may be necessary to apply for a European Protected Species licence for works to proceed if bats are using the building. Any necessary mitigation/compensation will be determined following the completion of the phase II bat activity surveys.

6.3 Badgers

During the construction phase, any open excavations left overnight should either be covered to prevent commuting Badgers falling in or escape ladders should be used to prevent them from becoming trapped. Any open pipework should be checked and then capped nightly.

6.4 Enhancements

6.4.1 Bats

To act as biodiversity enhancement, one Schwegler 2F Bat Box (with double front panel) or CJ Wildlife Large Multi-Chamber Woodstone Bat Box, will be erected on a suitable tree on the site to provide roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats (**Fig 10**).

³ Please note, all surveys must be spread at minimum 3 weeks apart.

Figure 10. The Schwegler 2F Bat Box (left) or CJ Wildlife Large Multi-Chamber Woodstone Bat Box (right) to be erected on a suitable location of on site.



6.4.2 Birds

As a general enhancement, 1 No. Vivara Pro Seville 32mm bird boxes will be erected on a suitable location within the wider ownership (**Fig 11**). This nest box caters to Blue tits, Tree Sparrows, House Sparrows, Great Tits, Crested Tits, Nuthatches, Coal Tits and Pied Flycatchers. The box will be erected between 1.5m and 3m high.

Figure 11. Vivara Pro Seville 32mm bird box (NHBS, 2023).



7.0 CONCLUSION

A Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW) survey was undertaken of the dwelling otherwise known as 'West Wadlington' in relation to the proposed extension of the site. It is considered the property has moderate potential to support roosting bats, as a result two Phase II bat surveys are required to establish the presence/likely absence of roosting bats. If bats are recorded roosting, one more survey will be needed to support the production of an appropriate mitigation strategy. If no bats are recorded during the two surveys, it will be considered likely roosting bats are not present.

Finally, a number of ecological features have been recommended to enhance the site's value for wildlife and increase biodiversity in the local area.

8.0 REFERENCES

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