



Preliminary Roost Assessment

3 Vinnetrow Cottages, Vinnetrow Road, Runcton, Chichester, PO20 1QH

Sam Henshaw

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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.

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 Sam Henshaw to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 3 Vinnetrow Cottages, Vinnetrow Road, Runcton, Chichester, PO20 1QH (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for a two story extension to the side of existing building and a single store extension to rear of property (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”).

The following is work you will need to commission to comply with planning policy and legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Table 6 of this report.

Feature	Survey Results Summary	Impact Assessment	Recommendations
Roosting bats B1	<p>B1 has low value for roosting bats.</p> <p>There are lifted tiles and missing areas of mortar on the single storey extension that could provide roosting opportunities, however this elevation will not be impacted.</p> <p>The gaps within the wooden board on the northern porch could be used by crevice dwelling bats to roost. However, the feature was fully inspected during the survey and no evidence was found.</p>	<p>The two-storey extension will join on to the northern gable end, which will include the demolition of the existing porch. This may destroy any roosts located within the wooden board located at the end of the porch, however due to the clear visibility through the wooden board, any roosting bats, or evidence would be seen.</p> <p>The single storey extension will be erected on the eastern elevation, however due to the location and the height of the extension, no impacts to bats are anticipated.</p> <p>The proposed works could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats.</p>	<p>As stipulated in professional survey guidance, low value buildings typically require one bat emergence or re-entry survey to be completed during the active bat season (optimal May to August, suboptimal September) to confirm presence or likely-absence of a bat roost. However, a single bat emergence or re-entry survey has a low detection rate for bat roosts and is often an unreliable way of identifying the presence of bat roosts. Given the limited suitable bat habitat on the site it is considered unlikely that bat roosts would be present and that further bat surveys would be disproportional to the anticipated risk posed to bats as a result of the proposed development. It is anticipated that any risk to bats can be reduced to an acceptably low level though the implementation of a Bat Mitigation Plan.</p> <p>Acceptance of this approach would be at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority, given that this would be a deviation from standard survey guidance.</p>
Foraging and commuting bats	<p>Hedgerows and scattered trees could be used by local bat populations for foraging and commuting. These could also be used by bats dispersing from nearby roosts outside of the site.</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. See table 6 for full details.</p>

Contents

1.0 Introduction and Context 6

 1.1 Background 6

 1.2 Site Location and Landscape Context 6

 1.3 Scope of the Report 6

2.0 Methodology 7

 2.1 Desk Study 7

 2.2 Field Survey 7

 2.3 Breeding Birds and Other Incidental Observations 7

 2.4 Suitability Assessment 7

 2.5 Limitations 8

3.0 Results and Evaluation 9

 3.1 Designated Sites 9

 3.2 Historical Records 9

 3.3 Field Survey Results 9

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations 16

5.0 Bibliography 19

 Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan 20

 Appendix 2: Site Location Plan 21

 Appendix 3a: PRA Plan 22

 Appendix 3b: Proposed BERS Plan 22

 Appendix 4: Legislation and Planning Policy Related to Bats 23

1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Sam Henshaw to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 3 Vinnetrow Cottages, Vinnetrow Road, Runcton, Chichester, PO20 1QH (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for a two story extension to the side of existing building and a single store extension to rear of property (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). A plan showing the proposed development is provided in Appendix 1.

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. This has been undertaken with due consideration to the “Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines” publication (Collins, 2016). 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 Location and Landscape Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference SU 88085 03318 and has an area of approximately 0.1ha comprising a residential dwelling, a timber outbuilding and front and back gardens. It is surrounded by urban infrastructure such as Vinnetrow Business Park to the north and fields to the east. The wider landscape comprises deciduous woodland 30m to the southeast and Vinnetrow Lake to the west, these are likely to provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats. A site location plan is provided in Appendix 2.

1.3 Scope of the Report

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, including an inspection of built structures to determine the presence or the suitability of any features which bats could use for roosting and to assess the suitability of the site’s bat foraging and commuting habitat.
- An outline of potential impacts on any confirmed or unidentified roosts has been provided, based on the proposed development.
- Recommendations for further surveys and mitigation have been made, along with advice on the requirements for a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) application if appropriate.
- Opportunities for the enhancement of the site for roosting, foraging and commuting bats have been set out.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

The desk study included a 2km radius review of statutory designated sites with bat qualifying interests and granted EPSL records for bats held on magic.gov.uk database. An assessment of the surrounding landscape structure was also completed using aerial images from Google Earth and OS maps.

2.2 Field Survey

The survey was undertaken by Romany Poole (Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2018-37888-CLS-CLS) on 24/10/2023.

The PRA focussed on one built structure 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 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. An internal inspection of the building was also made, including the living areas and any accessible roof spaces, using a torch and ladders. The surveyor paid particular attention to the floor and flat surfaces, window shutters and frames, lintels above doors and windows, and carried out a detailed search of numerous features within the roof space.

2.3 Breeding Birds and Other Incidental Observations

The surveyor also made note of any other ecological constraints observed during the survey, notably the likelihood of presence or signs of breeding birds, and the suitability of the site for barn owls.

2.4 Suitability Assessment

Built structures 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 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.

2.5 Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the features on site in the context of their suitability for roosting bats, this does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This survey provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of bats being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on site and in the local area, the ecology and biology of bats as currently understood, and the known distribution of bats as recovered during the desk study. Bats are highly mobile creatures that switch roosts regularly and therefore the usage of a site by bats can change over a short period of time.

There were no specific limitations to the survey.

3.0 Results and Evaluation

3.1 Designated Sites

No statutory designated sites with bat qualifying interests were identified within 2km of the site.

3.2 Historical Records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. EPSL records for bats are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Granted EPSLs for bats within 2km of the site.

EPSL reference	Distance from site	Bat species affected	Impacts allowed by licence
2016-26536-EPS-MIT	1.3km to the west of site.	Brown long-eared bat	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2011-3542	1.8km to the north-west of site.	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place
2014-4070-EPS-MIT	1.8km to the north of site.	Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place



3.3 Field Survey Results

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

Table 3: Weather conditions during the survey

Date:	24/10/2023
Temperature	13°C
Humidity	74%
Cloud Cover	20%
Wind	6mph
Rain	None

Table 4: PRA Results

Feature	Description	Photographs
Bat foraging and commuting habitat	<p>Habitat onsite consists of, hedgerows, scattered trees, shrubs and grassland. There is direct connectivity to pockets of deciduous woodland located 30m to the north-west of the site. It is highly likely that bats will forage and commute here.</p>	
B1 - overview	<p>B1 is a semi-detached stone and brick built house with two single storey sections on the eastern elevation. The flat roof section has a bitumen felt roof, while the end section has a gable roof clad in slate tiles. The main building has a gable roof clad in slate tiles with one chimney located on the east side of the roof. The brickwork on the chimney appears in good condition. There is lead flashing around the base of the chimney which is flat and without gaps. The doors and windows are UPVC framed. The brick and stonework around the building is part rendered and appears in excellent condition throughout.</p>	

B1 – eastern elevation

The roof tiles of the main house appear in good condition with no gaps that could provide roosting opportunities for bats. The lead flashing around the base of the chimney appears flat with no gaps.

The bitumen felt roof of the flat roof section appears to be in good condition with no gaps that could allow a bat access. **The proposed plans include a re-roof for this section.**

The tiles on the single storey extension are raised in places and could provide roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats (circled in red). There is an area of missing mortar along the ridge tiles of the single storey section (circled in yellow). **The proposed works will not impact these features.**



B1 – northern elevation

The gable end appears in good condition with no obvious gaps. The mortar between the slate tiles and the brickwork appears in good condition with no access points into the loft space. There are gaps within the wooden boards (circled in red) located on the end of the porch that provide roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats. The wooden board was fully inspected during the survey and no evidence of bats was found.


The northern elevation will be directly impacted by the proposed works.



B1 – western elevation

The roof tiles on the western elevation appear in good condition throughout. There are no gaps within the brick or stonework that could provide roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats. **No obvious roosting features were observed on the western elevation.**



B1 – interior	<p>Due to the conversion of the loft into a bedroom, there are two separate loft spaces within the eaves on the east and west elevations.</p> <p><u>Eastern elevation</u></p> <p>The roof structure is built from timber beams. The roof is lined with mineral wool insulation which is held in place by plastic sheets. The sheets appear to be in good condition with no gaps or tears. The floor of the loft space is not lined and there are timber boards on show throughout.</p> <p>No daylight enters the loft space which indicates that it is well sealed.</p> <p><u>Western elevation</u></p> <p>The roof structure is built from timber beams. The roof is lined with a breathable roofing membrane which appears to be in good condition with no gaps or tears. The floor of the loft space is not lined and there are timber boards on show throughout.</p> <p>No daylight enters the loft space which indicates that it is well sealed.</p> <p>Approximate internal dimensions for both loft spaces: 5m long x 1.5m wide x 1.2m high (floor to ridge height).</p> <p><u>Bat evidence</u></p> <p>Approximately 30 droppings (circled in red) were found within the mineral wool insulation on the southern side of the eastern elevation. The droppings are similar in morphology to bat droppings and pass the crumble test, however DNA analysis shows that the droppings were from a pygmy shrew. No evidence of bats was found internally during the survey.</p>	
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<p>B1 – suitability assessment</p>	<p>In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J. (Ed) 2016) B1 is assessed to have ‘low’ habitat value for roosting bats due to the presence of suitable roost features. There is a gap located in the wooden board along the bottom of the porch on the northern elevation, alongside site gaps within the mortar and slate tiles on the single storey section. No evidence of bats was found internally or externally during the survey.</p>
<p>B1 - breeding birds and other incidental observations</p>	<p>No evidence of breeding birds was found internally or externally during the survey.</p>

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations

Taking the desk study and field survey results into account, Table 6 presents an evaluation of the value of the site for bats and also details any other ecological constraints identified such as nesting birds in relation to the proposed development which will comprise a two story extension to the side of existing building and a single store extension to rear of property.

Table 6: Evaluation of the site for bats and any other ecological constraints

Building	Survey Results Summary	Impact Assessment	Recommendations	Biodiversity Enhancement Opportunities ¹
Roosting bats B1	<p>B1 has low value for roosting bats.</p> <p>There are lifted tiles and missing areas of mortar on the single storey extension that could provide roosting opportunities, however this elevation will not be impacted.</p> <p>The gaps within the wooden board on the northern porch could be used by crevice dwelling bats to roost. However, the feature was fully inspected during the survey and no evidence was found.</p>	<p>The two-storey extension will join on to the northern gable end, which will include the demolition of the existing porch. This may destroy any roosts located within the wooden board located at the end of the porch, however due to the clear visibility through the wooden board, any roosting bats, or evidence would be seen.</p> <p>The single storey extension will be erected on the eastern elevation, however due to the location and the height of the extension, no impacts to bats are anticipated.</p> <p>The proposed works could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats.</p>	<p>As stipulated in professional survey guidance, low value buildings typically require one bat emergence or re-entry survey to be completed during the active bat season (optimal May to August, suboptimal September) to confirm presence or likely-absence of a bat roost. However, a single bat emergence or re-entry survey has a low detection rate for bat roosts and is often an unreliable way of identifying the presence of bat roosts. Given the limited suitable bat habitat on the site it is considered unlikely that bat roosts would be present and that further bat surveys would be disproportional to the anticipated risk posed to bats as a result of the proposed development. It is anticipated that any risk to bats can be reduced to an acceptably low level through the implementation of a Bat Mitigation Plan.</p> <p>Acceptance of this approach would be at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority, given that this would be a deviation from standard survey guidance.</p>	<p>The installation of 1No. bat box at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat boxes will be installed on unaffected areas of the retained building. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light. The bat boxes will be a specification suitable for crevice dwelling species such as Beaumaris Bat Box or a similar alternative brand.</p>
Foraging and commuting bats	<p>Hedgerows and scattered trees could be used by local bat populations for foraging and commuting. These could also be used by bats dispersing from nearby roosts outside of the site.</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,</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"> • Light spill on to hedgerows and scattered trees should be avoided. • Use narrow spectrum light sources to lower the range of species affected by lighting. 	<p>None.</p>

¹ The Local Planning Authority has a duty to ask for enhancements under the NPPF (2021).

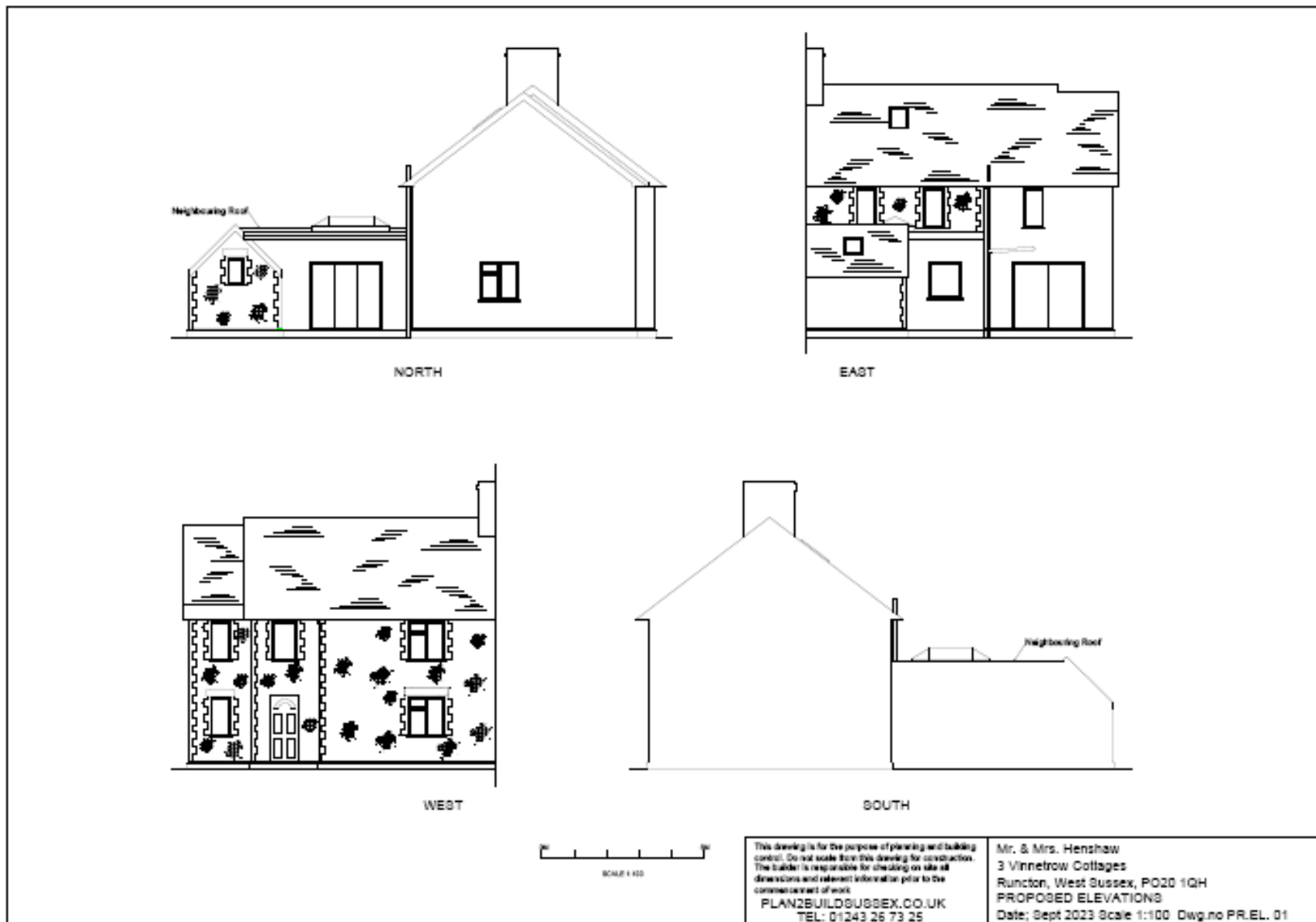
		<p>foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use light sources that emit minimal ultra-violet light. • Avoid white and blue wavelengths of the light spectrum to reduce insect attraction and where white light sources are required in order 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. • 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. • 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. • 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. 	
<p>Nesting birds B1</p>	<p>The building offers no opportunities for nesting birds.</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>The installation of two bird boxes at the site will provide additional The installation of two integrated swift bricks (e.g. Ibstock Swift Eco Habitat or similar alternative brand) at the site will provide additional nesting habitat for birds in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard "</p>

				<p>Integral nest boxes. Selection and installation for new developments. Specification" (BS 42021:2022). Swift bricks should be integrated into the fabric of the building during construction. Boxes should be positioned close together (0.6-1.0m between bricks) as swifts prefer to nest gregariously. The bricks should be placed at least 5m above ground level under the eaves of a building, on a north or east elevation, where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. To be suitable for swifts, the bricks require an open aspect with no trees or large shrubs potentially obstructing the birds' flight path up to 5m from the brick. Swift bricks are a universal nest brick for small bird species, including red-listed species such as common swift, house sparrow, house martin, and starling nesting habitat for birds. The bird boxes will be installed on mature trees within the eastern side of the garden. General purpose bird boxes should be positioned 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Species-specific bird boxes should be installed in line with manufacturers specifications.</p>
Other ecological constraints	None identified.	N/A	N/A	N/A

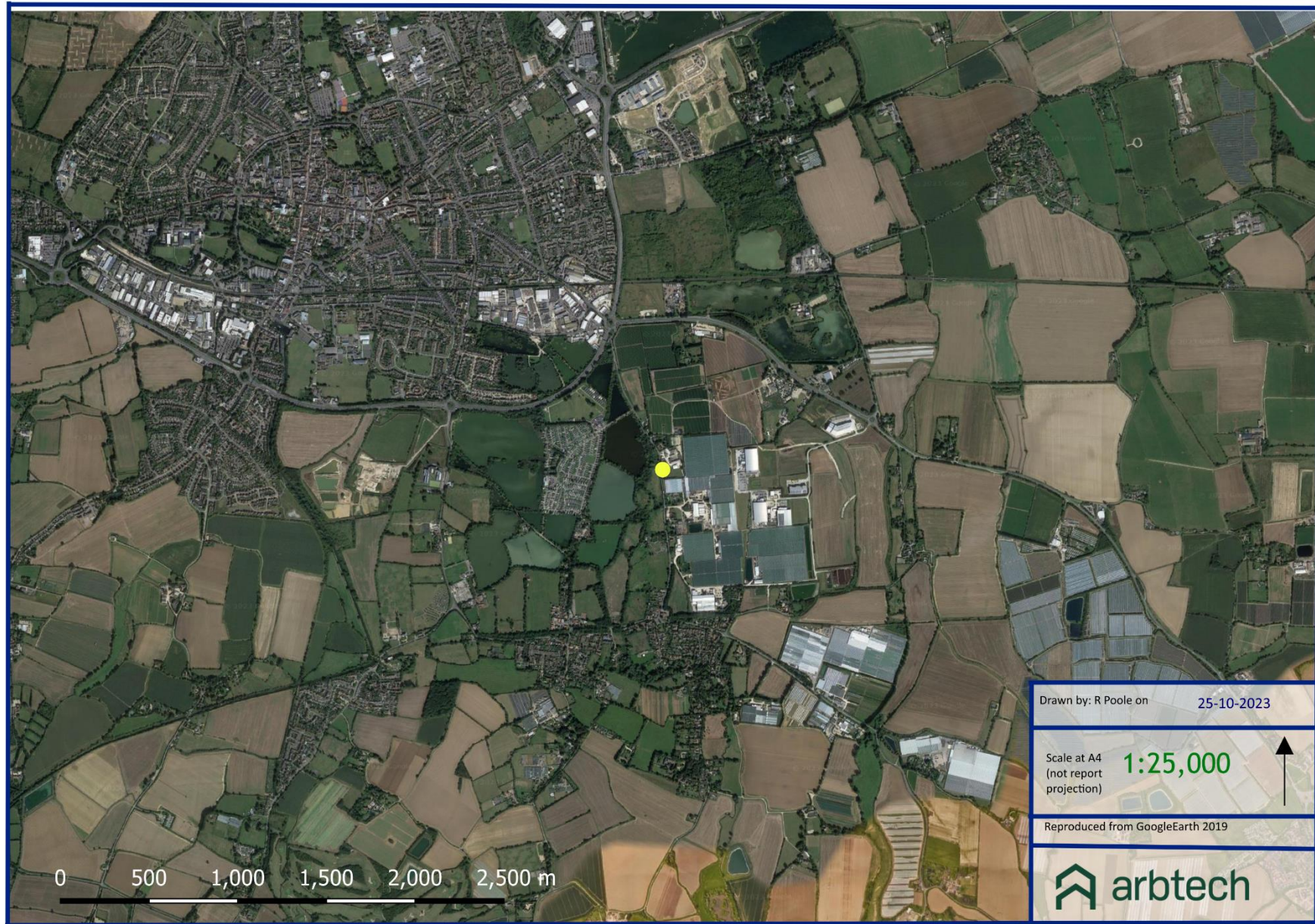
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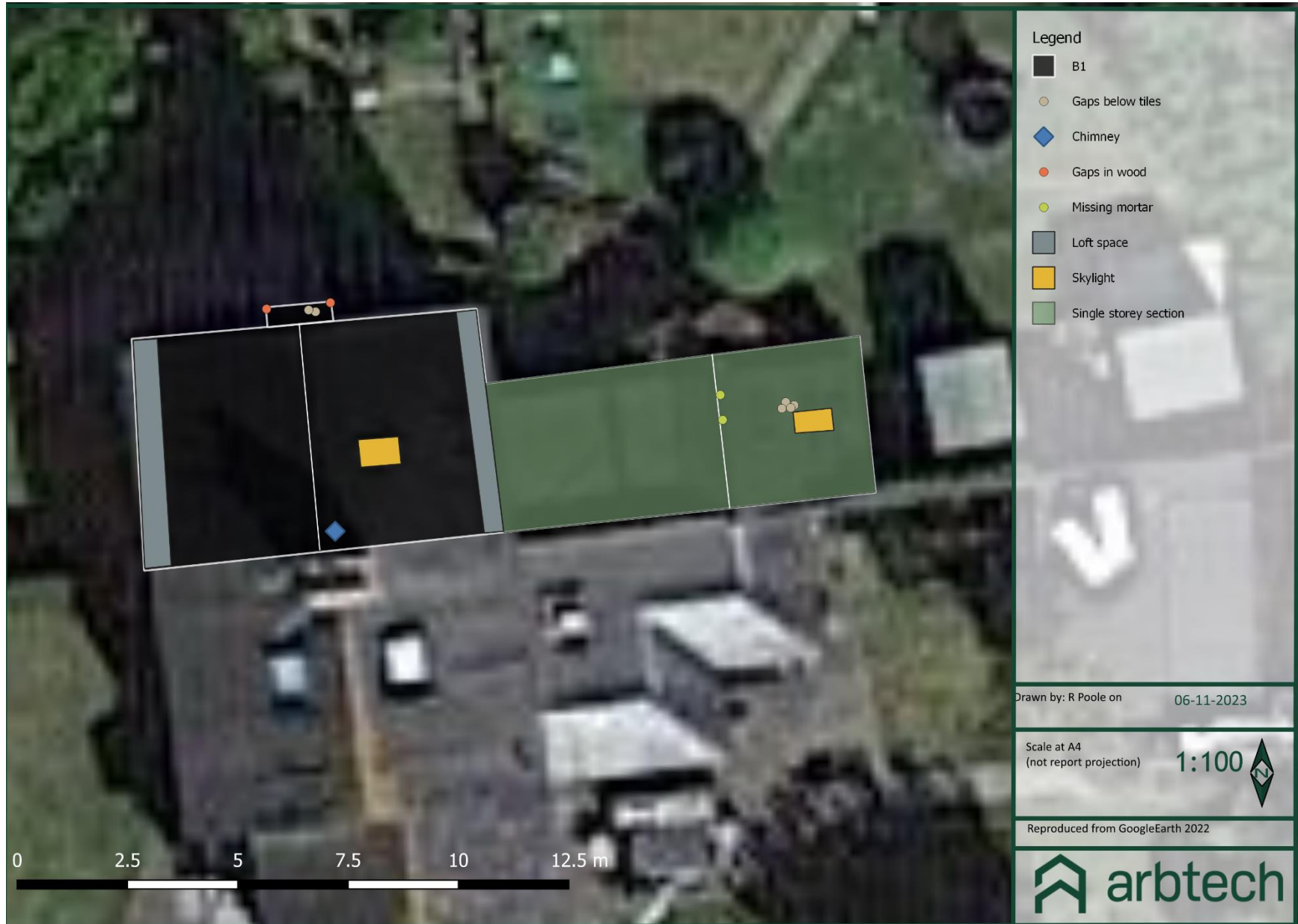
Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3a: PRA Plan



Appendix 4: Legislation and Planning Policy Related to Bats

LEGAL PROTECTION

All species of bat are fully protected under *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 2.

Regulation 43: Protection of certain wild animals - offences

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if they:

- (a) Deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species,
- (b) Deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species,
- (c) Deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or
- (d) Damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1) (b), disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely—

- (a) To impair their ability:
 - (i) To survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - (ii) In the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
- (b) To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Bats are also protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) 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
- Selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

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

Adopted Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029

The Chichester Local Plan can be viewed here: https://www.chichester.gov.uk/media/24759/Chichester-Local-Plan---Key-Policies-2014---2029/pdf/printed_version.pdf

The following planning policies have implications for developers in relation to bats:

- A.20 - protected species networks. Further consideration is required for the commuting routes of bats, mainly hedgerows and treelines along field margins and connecting to the harbour.

Chichester Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

The Chichester Biodiversity Action Plan can be viewed here: https://www.chichester.gov.uk/media/23393/Local-Biodiversity-Action-Plan-2020---2024/pdf/LBAP20120_2024_mastercopy.pdf

All bat species are included in the plan.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by Natural England will be required for works likely to affect a bat roost 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, rear young and hibernate). The licence is to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficiency/success to be monitored. The legislation may also be interpreted such that, in certain circumstances, important foraging areas and/or commuting routes can be regarded as being afforded *de facto* protection, for example, where it can be proven that the continued usage of such areas is crucial to maintaining the integrity and long-term viability of a bat roost (Garland & Markham, 2008).

There are 17 species of bat breeding in England and Natural England issues licences under Regulation 55 of the Habitats Regulations to allow you to work within the law.

Licences are issued for specific purposes stated in the Regulations, if the following three tests are met:

- The purpose of the work meets one of those listed in the Habitats Regulations (see below);
- That there is no satisfactory alternative;
- That the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status (FCS) in their natural range

The Habitats Regulations permits licences to be issued for a specific set of purposes including:

1. include preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of over-riding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;
2. scientific and educational purposes;
3. ringing or marking; and,
4. conserving wild animals.

Development works fall under the first purpose and Natural England issues bat mitigation licences for developments.

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.