

LHB Ecology

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Site: 14 Oving Terrace, Oving Road, Chichester, West

Sussex PO19 7ES

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Limitations

This report has been prepared exclusively for the use of the above-named client or their agents. Site assessment and reports have been carried out for the client in accordance with written agreement and with the diligence and skills that are typical of an ecological consultant.

The conclusions and subsequent recommendations contained in this report are partly based upon information provided by third parties. Information obtained from third parties has not been independently verified by LHB Ecology.

Any third-party usage of the report will require prior written agreement from LHB Ecology.

Any assessments made are based upon current site condition with the assumption that the site will continue to be used for the current purpose without significant change prior to any development.

Guidelines

This assessment has been designed to meet:

- Bat Conservation Trust (2016): Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists — Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edition; and
- British Standard 42020 (2013) 'Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development'.

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1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Summary

- 1.1.1 LHB Ecology undertook a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 14 Oving Terrace, Oving Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 7ES (hereinafter referred to as 'the site') on 19th July 2023.
- 1.1.2 The site comprises an end of terrace dwelling and a garden bounded by residential properties and gardens and a road.
- 1.1.3 The PRA concludes that building B1 has external roosting features that could support bat roosts consisting of gaps between the eaves and masonry on the southwestern side of the building and gaps beneath roof tiles. In addition, a vent is present in the southeastern gable wall that bats could use to enter the building.
- 1.1.4 **As the proposals involve the two-storey extension of the building, the noted external roosting features will be impacted and roosting bats could be injured, killed or disturbed.**
- 1.1.5 **One dusk emergence survey should be undertaken to suggest the presence or likely absence of roosting bats. The survey should be undertaken during the optimal bat survey season (May to August). Two surveyors should be utilised, to provide sufficient coverage of all elevations of the building.**
- 1.1.6 **The active swift nest within the eaves on the southwestern side of B1 could be impacted by the proposed development. All in-use bird's nests and their contents are protected from damage or destruction, any building works and vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this time frame cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building and vegetation should be undertaken immediately prior to clearance.**

2.0 Introduction and Context

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 LHB Ecology undertook a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 14 Oving Terrace, Oving Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 7ES (hereinafter referred to as 'the site') on 19th July 2023.
- 2.1.2 The PRA is informed by the Bat Conservation Trust publication: *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins, J. 2016).
- 2.1.3 No previous bat surveys have been carried out at this site by LHB Ecology or by any third parties, to the author's knowledge.

2.2 Project Description

- 2.2.1 The proposed development involves two-storey rear and side extension of the existing dwelling.

2.3 Site Context

- 2.3.1 The site is centred on National Grid Reference SU 8735 0487 and has an area of approximately 0.03 ha. There is one end of terrace dwelling (B1) that is bounded by residential properties and gardens and a road. A site location plan is provided in section 4.3.
- 2.3.2 The site is situated within the city of Chichester, West Sussex. The local landscape is predominantly residential with nearby urban greenspaces. Small patches of deciduous woodland are located approximately 700 m to the north of the site. Residential areas surround the site and these consist of high density detached and semi-detached housing, with residential gardens containing scattered trees. Several large waterbodies can be found across the landscape; these include a cluster of lakes approximately 790 m to the northeast, with another cluster of lakes situated approximately 780 m to the south of the site. Limited connectivity to and from the site into the wider landscape is present; mostly in the form of the residential gardens surrounding the site, leading to urban greenspaces and habitats beyond.

2.4 Scope of the Report

- 2.4.1 This report provides a description of all features present on the building that are suitable for roosting bats and provides an evaluation of those features in the context of the site and surrounding environment. It further documents any physical evidence collected or recorded during the site survey that could indicate the presence of roosting bats. It provides information on constraints to the proposals as a result of roosting 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.
- 2.4.2 The aim of the assessment was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how they could use the building or structure. To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:
- A desk study has been carried out, including the use of freely available resources such as Google Earth and the MAGIC online database.

- A field survey has been undertaken, including an external and internal inspection of the building.
- An outline of likely impacts on any known roosts has been provided, based on current development proposals.
- Recommendations for further survey and assessment have been made, along with advice on European Protected Species Mitigation Licensing if appropriate.

2.4.3 A survey plan is presented in Appendix 1, the proposed Project Plan is included in Appendix 2 (where available), and a summary of relevant legislation can be found in Appendix 3.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Desk Study methodology

3.1.1 Existing bat records relating to the site and a surrounding 1 km radius (the study area) were not requested from the local bat group. This is primarily due to the relatively small scale of the proposed development.

3.1.2 A review of the following information sources has also been undertaken to inform the assessment:

- Landscape structure using aerial images from Google Earth
- Designated sites, habitat and species data held on magic.gov.uk
- Information on the surrounding area using OS Opendata 2022

3.2 Site Survey Methodology

3.2.1 The survey was undertaken by Joe Slade BSc (Hons) MRSB, Ecologist (Natural England bat licence number: 2017-32515-CLS-CLS). The survey was undertaken on 19th July 2023. All buildings that will be impacted by the project proposals (the survey area) were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. The surveyor searched for features suitable for roosting bats and signs of bat activity. A non-intrusive visual appraisal from the ground was carried out using binoculars, inspecting the external features of the buildings for suitable roosting gaps, and for signs of bat use. An internal inspection of the building was also made, including the living areas of derelict or abandoned buildings and the roof spaces of all buildings, using a torch and ladder. The internal inspection included searching the floor and flat surfaces, window and door frames and surrounding masonry, and a detailed search of numerous features within the roof space was completed.

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

3.3 Suitability Assessment

3.3.1 Buildings, structures or trees were categorised according to their potential suitability to support bat roosts, in line with best practice guidelines (Collins, J. 2016). Features and their likelihood to support roosting bats are summarised in Table 3.3. Roost suitability is classified as high, moderate, low and negligible and further

surveys may be required to determine a presence or likely absence of roosting bats or to characterise a confirmed roost prior to development works proceeding.

Table 3.3 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on habitat features present and their context within the landscape.

Likelihood of bats being present	Features present on the building and their context
High	<p>Buildings or structures with features which are frequently used by roosting bats e.g. tunnels, cellars and areas of hanging tiles. These may be used by large numbers of bats.</p> <p>Habitat on site and surrounding landscape of high quality for foraging bats e.g. woodland, ponds, rivers and species-rich grassland.</p> <p>There is good habitat connectivity between the site and nearby foraging and roosting resources, comprising mature hedgerows and tree lines.</p> <p>Historical data show roosting sites are present nearby.</p>
Moderate	<p>Buildings or structures with features which are occasionally used by roosting bats e.g. raised roof tiles, hanging tiles, cracks which lead to voids or cavities. These may be unlikely to support large numbers of bats.</p> <p>Habitat on site and surrounding landscape of moderate quality for foraging bats e.g. small areas of woodland and urban greenspaces.</p> <p>Historical data show roosting sites are present nearby.</p>
Low	<p>One or more suitable roost sites or features present, such as raised roof tiles.</p> <p>Limited or no connectivity between the site and proximate foraging or roosting habitat due to an absence of linear features between sites.</p> <p>Nearby artificial lighting which deters bats from roosting in the building, such as from street lighting or commercial signage.</p>
Negligible	Negligible habitat features present on site which are likely to be used by bats.

3.4 Limitations – evaluation of the methodology

3.4.1 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 the 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.

3.4.2 No specific limitations were recorded during the survey, with full access to all areas of the site.

4.0 Results and Evaluation

4.1 Desk Study Results

4.1.1 A summary of desk study results is provided below.

4.1.2 The desk study methodology as outlined in 3.1 has been carried out, and any relevant findings regarding sites, habitats or species are outlined below. The findings of the desk study are incorporated into the Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations section of this report (5.0).

4.2 Designated sites within 1 km of the site

4.2.1 There are no statutory designated sites located within 1km of the site.

4.3 Landscape

4.3.1 The MAGIC database search indicated the presence of habitats within 1km of the site which could support bat roosting, commuting and foraging. Deciduous woodland is located approximately 700 m to the north of the site. There is limited connectivity between the site and the woodland. Urban greenspaces with scattered trees could be used by bats to commute between the site and nearby foraging and roosting habitat.

Figure 1 (below) is the reviewed aerial imagery for the site showing the surrounding landscape and the context of the site within the landscape.

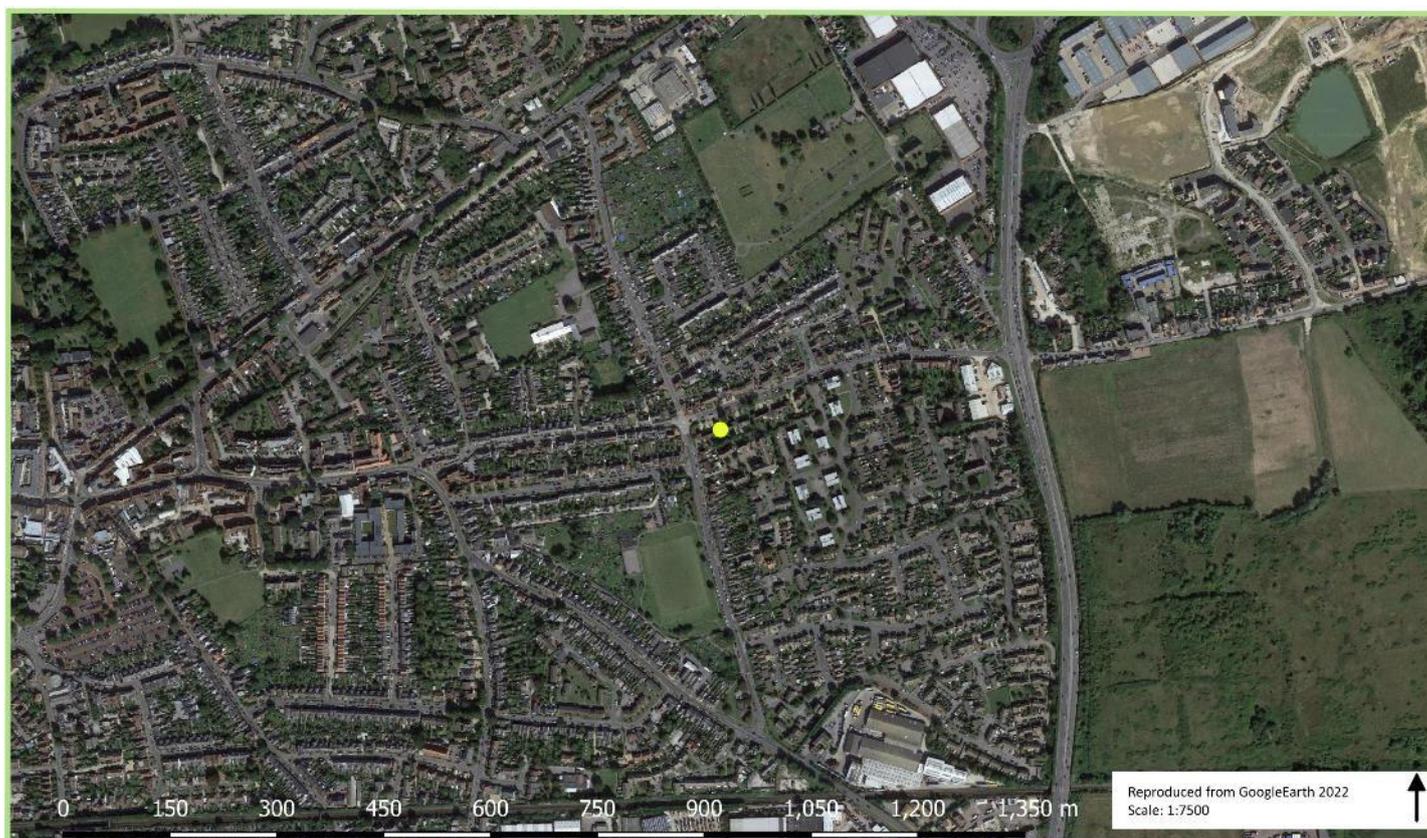


Figure 1: Landscape map

4.4 European Protected Species Licencing

4.4.1 The MAGIC database search revealed granted European protected species mitigation licences (EPSML) for bats are located within a 1 km radius of the development site. Table 4.4 provides the MAGIC database records.

Table 4.4: Granted EPSMLs within a 1 km radius of the site

Granted EPSML reference	Distance from site	Species listed	EPSML start date	EPSML end date	Licensed activity
2014-4070-EPS-MIT	~470 m north east	Common pipistrelle; soprano pipistrelle	28/11/2014	31/10/2019	Destruction of a roost
EPSM2011-3542	~600 m south west	Common pipistrelle	09/01/2012	31/08/2015	Destruction of a roost

4.5 Survey Results

4.5.1 The weather conditions recorded at the time of the survey are shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Weather conditions during the survey.

Date: 19/07/2023	
Temperature	19°C
Relative Humidity	55%
Cloud Cover	0%
Wind	2 mph
Precipitation	None

4.5.2 Building description

4.5.3 Building B1 (exterior)

B1 is an end of terrace two storey building with a pitched, hipped and gabled roof clad in concrete roof tiles. The concrete roof tiles are raised in places creating several suitable bat roost sites on the roof.

The eaves around the building are closed but gaps are present in places in which bats and birds could enter. There is a single storey brick-built section located at the rear of the building which has a pitched roof clad in concrete roof tiles. The roof tiles on the single storey section are in very good condition with no gaps that bats could roost in.

The brickwork around the building appears to be in very good condition with no gaps that bats could roost in. There is a gable vent in the southern gable which bats could use to enter the building or access the cavity wall.

The windows and doors are UPVC framed and appear to be in very good condition with no gaps around the sides.

B1 – northwestern elevation (pictured opposite).



B1 – southwestern and southeastern elevations (pictured opposite).



B1 – southeastern gable vent (pictured opposite).



B1 – eaves, northwestern corner (pictured opposite).



B1 – roof tiles viewed from the northwest of the site (pictured opposite).



B1 – roof tiles on single-storey section (pictured opposite).



4.5.4 Building B1 (interior)

The roof structure is built from modern timber beams including the ridge beam which provides suitable roosting perches for void dwelling bats such as brown long eared bats. The roof is lined with expanding foam insulation which is in good condition with no gaps. The presence of expanding foam inside the loft may prevent bats from roosting within gaps beneath the roof tiles where the foam has expanded to fill the gaps.

A significant amount of daylight enters the building through the skylight window. As such there are few dark areas that bats could roost in. There are cobwebs around the ridge beam which indicates a lack of internal flying activity from void dwelling bats. There are numerous stored items in the loft space which made it easier to search for evidence of bat activity because when present bat droppings can accumulate on the stored items.

A vent is present in the southeastern gable wall that bats could use to enter the building. The vent was closely inspected using a torch which revealed no signs of bat activity. In addition, there was cobweb around the vent which indicated a likely absence of bat use.

B1 – Interior (pictured opposite).



B1 – Interior (pictured opposite).



4.5.5 B1: Evidence of Bats

No live bats or evidence of bat activity was located internally or externally on the survey building.

4.5.6 Nesting Birds and Other Incidental Observations

An active swift nest is located within the eaves on the southwestern side of building B1.

5.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions and Impact Assessment

- 5.1.1 The PRA concludes that building B1 has external roosting features that could support bat roosts consisting of gaps between the eaves and masonry on the southwestern side of the building and gaps beneath roof tiles. In addition, a vent is present in the southeastern gable wall that bats could use to enter the building.
- 5.1.2 There is poor habitat connectivity between the site and nearby bat foraging resources which lowers the likelihood of bats roosting in the noted features on B1.
- 5.1.3 As the proposals involve the two storey extension of the building, the noted external roosting features will be impacted and roosting bats could be injured, killed or disturbed. Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and Conservation Regulations; see Appendix 3 for a summary of legislation protecting bats in the UK.
- 5.1.4 No evidence of bird nesting activity was found. Nesting birds are unlikely to be impacted by the proposed development.

5.2 Recommendations

- 5.2.1 Best practice survey guidelines (Collins, J. 2016) recommend additional surveys for all buildings assessed as having low to high suitability for roosting bats. Buildings assessed as comprising negligible suitability for roosting bats do not normally require further surveys. Appropriate justification for this assessment is provided below and in Table 3.3 of this report. Those known to support roosting bats may require further survey to inform a EPSML application, depending on the proposed works and assessment of impacts, and the species present/likely to be present.

Ecological Receptor	Recommendations
Bats	<p>The building B1 has “low habitat value” (Collins, 2016) for supporting roosting bats. This is due to gaps being present around the eaves, beneath raised roof tiles and a vent in the southeastern gable. In addition, there is poor habitat connectivity between the site and nearby bat foraging habitat which reduces the likelihood of bat roosts being present in the noted external features.</p> <p>One dusk emergence survey should be undertaken to suggest the presence or likely absence of roosting bats. The survey should be undertaken during the optimal bat survey season (May to August). Two surveyors should be utilised, to provide sufficient coverage of all elevations of the building.</p>
Nesting birds	<p>The active swift nest within the eaves on the southwestern side of B1 could be impacted by the proposed development. All in-use bird’s nests and their contents are protected from damage or destruction, any building works and vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this time frame cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building and vegetation should be undertaken immediately prior to clearance. Work should not be carried out within 5 m of any in-use nest and with an Ecological Clerk of Works present. Standard planning conditions can be applied to ensure this.</p>

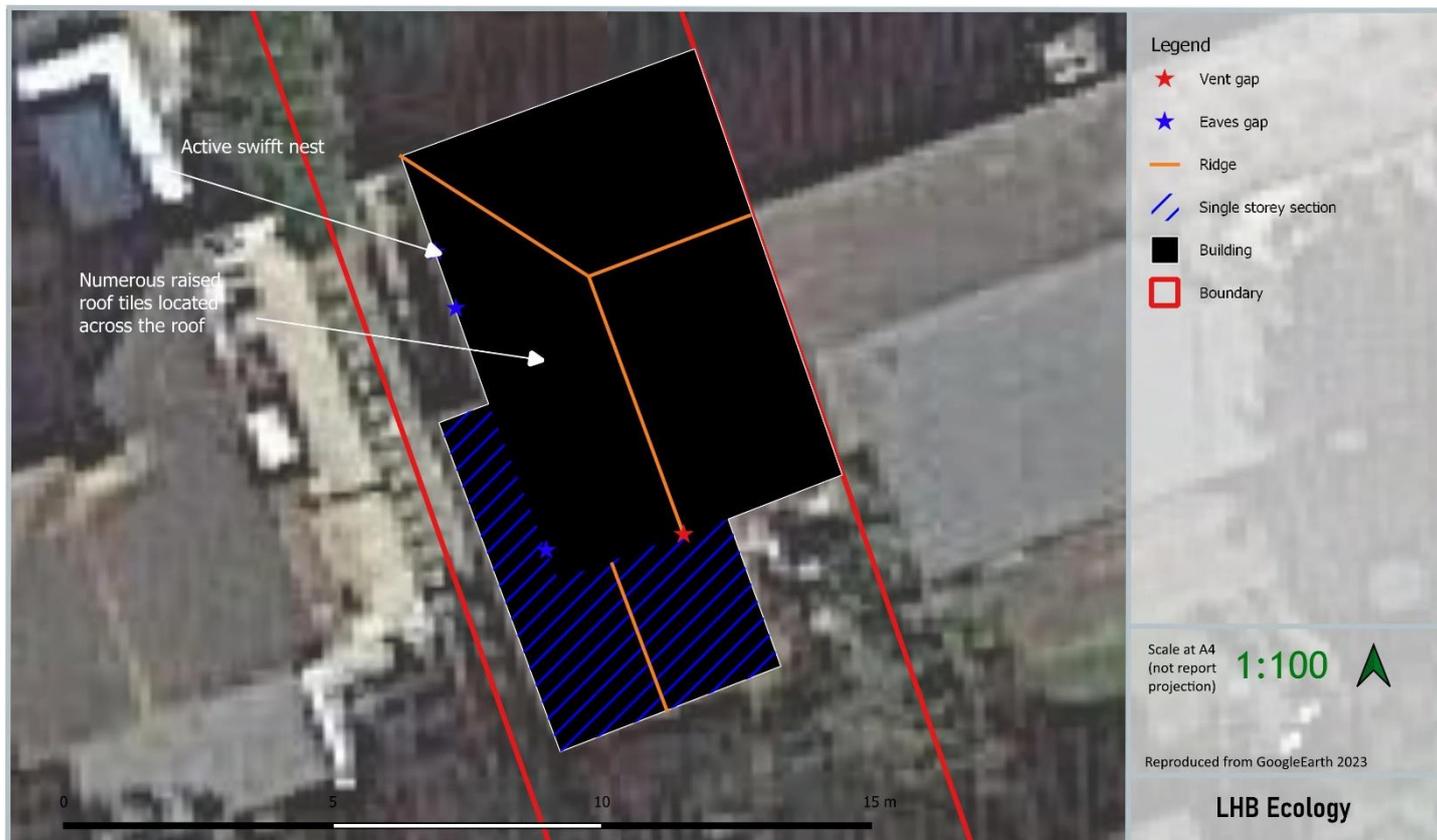
Enhancements

To be confirmed following further survey.

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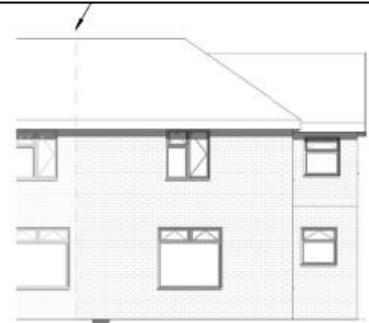
Appendix 1 – Preliminary Roost Assessment Survey Map



Appendix 2 – Proposed plan



Existing Elevation-Front



Proposed Elevation-Front



Existing Elevation-Rear



Proposed Elevation-Rear

Appendix 3 – Legislation

Legal protection

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) 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) and Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

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

Significance for developments:

Works which are liable to affect a bat roost or an operation which are likely to result in an illegal level of disturbance to the species will require a European protected species mitigation licence. The licence is to allow derogation from the legislation through the application of appropriate mitigation measures.

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 Annex 1 of the European Community Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (2009/147/EC) 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

Significance for developments:

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.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY (ENGLAND)

National Planning Policy Framework

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 UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species) 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; opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments are encouraged; 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 (Section 42 in Wales) 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.

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