

Checklist - Devon Householder / Building Applications with only bat roost / bird nesting issues (please note that the Devon Wildlife Trigger Table must also be filled in a submitted)

To speed up assessment by the LPA, this form should be completed by the Ecological Consultant and submitted at the beginning of the Ecology Report.

Ecological consultant: **Lakeway Ecological Consultancy Ltd – Chris Turner MCIEEM**

Date: 05/03/2024

1. Impact assessment / survey effort

Have all required impact assessments / surveys been done within the last 12 months, and does it meet national guidance requirements? If there have been any deviations from national guidance, please select No in the right-hand column.

Yes

No

Dates:

23/02/2024

2. Ecological impacts

2a. Proposal impacts on bats / birds and mitigation measures are specified.

Yes (conditions needed)

No (no conditions needed)

2b. Proposal has other ecological impacts which the LPA needs to consider (inc. potential impacts from internal or external lighting)

No

Yes

2c. Is the proposal likely to result in an offence under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations?

Yes (go to 2.d)

No (go to 2.e)

2d. If YES (an offence IS likely)

Does the roost meet any of the following criteria*:

- Three or fewer roosts are impacted by the proposals, and
- The proposal will have a low or temporary impact, and
- The proposal only affects:
 - Low conservation status roosts for low numbers of: common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared, whiskered, Brandt's, Daubenton's Natterer's and/or
 - Feeding, day, night and/or transitional roosts for low numbers of serotine and/or
 - Day and/or transitional roosts for low numbers of lesser horseshoe.

Yes

No

*note that these criteria are used by Natural England for the Low Impact Bat Class Licence CL21

2e. If NO (an offence is NOT likely)

Does the roost meet any of the following criteria:

- maternity or hibernation roost
 - greater horseshoe bat roost
 - grey long-eared bat roost
 - more than three species of bat found in small numbers

No (none are met)

Yes (one or more are met)

2f. Does the proposal potentially impact on barn owls?

No

Yes

3. Expertise

Are you, the ecological consultant, registered under either the Level 1 or the Level 2 Bat Survey Class Licence?

If 'Yes', please enter your licence number below

Yes

No

Level 2 Class Licence: 2015-12878-CLS-CLS

Bat Low Impact: WML-CL21 RC150 Annex B, C, D

Barn Owl Class Licence CL29/00578

Are you a member of CIEEM or a Registered Consultant under Annex B of the Low Impact Class Licence for bats (or under Annex C or D for a serotine or lesser horseshoe roost where relevant)?

Yes

No

Chains Cottage, Sampford Peverell, Devon

Ecological Impact Assessment

A report on behalf of

Mr Townley

Type of document (Version)	-
Revisions	
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Site Details

Site name	Chains Cottage
Site location	Sampford Peverell, Devon
Central OS grid reference	ST0298414136
Client	Mr Townley
Report title	Ecological Impact Assessment



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1 INTRODUCTION

This document has been produced by Chris Turner BSc MCIEEM of Lakeway Ecological Consultancy Ltd. It presents an Ecological Impact Assessment for Chains Cottage, Sampford Peverell, Devon (central OS grid reference: ST0298414136). The works were commissioned by Mr Townley.

The area within the application boundary is hereafter referred to as the 'Site'.

1.1 Context

Proposals include the demolition of a rear conservatory and creation of a single storey extension along the rear of the property. This will affect the conservatory, and will include the adjacent outbuilding and demolition of a timber framed dormer over. Plans are shown on the accompanying drawings issued by Bristol Desing & Architecture.

Previous survey work was carried out in 2022 by Quantock Ecology (Quantock, 2022), which comprised a preliminary roost assessment. This survey work found some limited evidence of bats (possible bat droppings) in the loft of the main house (not to be affected by proposals) and there was some uncertainty as to whether bat roosts could be present in the remainder of the development area. As a result, evening surveys were recommended, which were never carried out.

Lakeway Ecology were commissioned to reassess the Site.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

1.2.1 Field Survey Aims

The survey information contained within this report aims to:

- Establish whether the works will impact protected species, primarily bats and nesting birds.
- Identify and provide context for any other protected species which may be impacted by the proposals.
- Identify opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.

1.2.2 Report Objectives

The objectives of this report are to:

- Provide the client with sufficient information to fully inform them of their obligations.
- Present an assessment of the likely (significant) effects of the proposed development on ecological features.
- Allow the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to ascertain whether the proposal accords with relevant planning policy and legislation; and,
- Allow the LPA to write planning conditions (where necessary) to secure mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures.

Recommendations have been detailed following the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy in accordance with NPPF paragraph 175 (a) which states:



“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.”

This report sets out additional measures which provide enhancements on the Site with the aim of providing a net-gain for biodiversity, in line with National and Local planning policy.

Relevant wildlife legislation is provided in **Appendix 1**.

1.3 Personnel

All written and survey work was carried out by Principal Ecologist Chris Turner. Chris has been an ecological consultant for 12 years and has a specialism in bat mitigation and conservation. Chris is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and is bound by their professional Code of Conduct. Chris is registered to use a Level 2 class licence to survey for bats since 2013 (Natural England ref: 2015-12878-CLS-CLS), is a registered consultant on Natural England’s Bat Mitigation Class Licence (WML-CL21 – ref: RC150) and is a registered consultant on Natural England’s Bat Earned Recognition Pilot Scheme WML-CL47 – AL2 Ref: BER0046.

This report has been peer reviewed by Senior Ecologist Ruth Testa MCIEEM. Ruth has 16 years professional experience of ecology and wildlife conservation in both the voluntary and private sectors. Ruth is a full member of CIEEM and is bound by their professional Code of Conduct She has extensive experience of carrying out quantitative and qualitative ecological surveys, and both writing and peer reviewing ecological reports. Ruth is registered to use a Level 1 class licence to survey for bats (2023-11531-CL17-BAT).

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 General

The Site comprises a semi-detached dwelling in the small village of Sampford Peverell in Mid-Devon. The Site lies c.10m to the east of the Grand Western Canal and the wider garden (to the south) backs on to open fields. A location plan is provided as **Diagram 1** below. Photographs are included in the text.

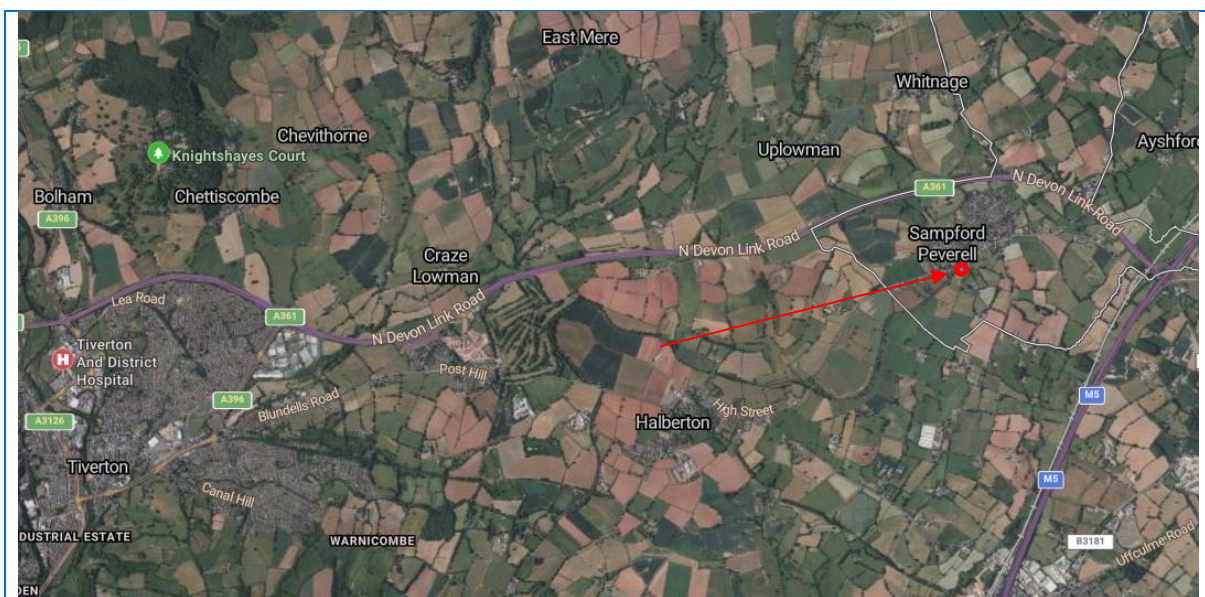
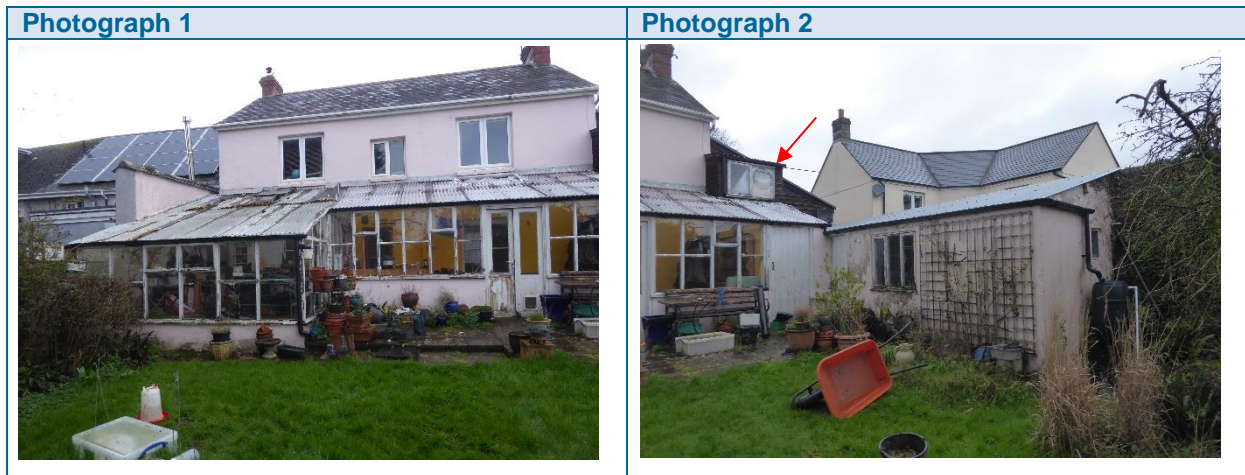


Diagram 1: Site Location (© Bing Maps)

2.2 Building Description

The main house is a two-storey, rendered masonry property under a pitched slate covered roof. The area to be directly affected by proposals concerns a single storey glazed conservatory, which extends the full width of the rear elevation of the property (**Photograph 1**). Adjoining the eastern side of the conservatory is a single storey rendered stone 'lean-to' with corrugated metal sheet roof. This extends along the boundary into the rear garden (**Photograph 2**). Where the lean-to and conservatory join the main house, there is a timber framed, timber clad dormer (red arrow, Photograph 2), with a timber framed, timber clad gable end which forms the rear wall of the side garage, protruding from the north-east elevation of the main property. The garage has a slate roof and plastic fascias along the remainder of the eaves.



3 METHODS

3.1 Desk Study

The following sources were searched on 26th February 2024 to provide geographical context and to assess whether the proposals have the potential to impact other protected species or sites:

- The Government's mapping website MAGIC (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>) was used to search for internationally designated sites within 10km, and for European Protected Species licences issued by Natural England in the surrounding area since 2008, over a 2km radius.
- MAGIC was also searched for priority habitats and statutory sites designated for nature conservation within 2km.
- The Devon Environment Viewer (<http://map.devon.gov.uk/DCCViewer>) was used to search for priority habitats and statutory sites designated for nature conservation within 2km.
- Aerial photography (<https://wtp2.appspot.com/wheresthepath.htm>) was reviewed to assess connectivity between the Site and areas in the local landscape which may be of importance for protected species (wildlife corridors).

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment

The structure was assessed for its potential to support roosting bats on the 23rd February 2024. The survey was carried out by Principal Ecologist Chris Turner BSc MCIEEM. Chris is registered to use a Level 2 class licence to survey for bats (Natural England ref: 2015-12878-CLS-CLS).



The structure was assessed externally for signs of bats and points where bats could gain access. Close focusing binoculars, a Rigid CA300 Endoscope and high-powered torch were used where appropriate. A search was made for features which could provide suitable roosting spaces for bats, such as gaps beneath roof coverings, gaps around windows and door frames. Any direct signs (such as droppings stuck to walls) as well as features of potential value to bats were noted on hand drawn maps.

A systematic search was made of all internal areas for the presence of bats, potential roosting sites and evidence such as bat droppings, carcasses and feeding remains (insect fragments).

In line with best practice guidance (Collins, 2023), the structure was prescribed a category based on its potential to support roosting bats as detailed in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Bat Roost Potential (as detailed in Collins, 2023)

Potential Suitability	Description
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
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 opportunistically at any time of year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/ or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of 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.
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 potential to support high conservation status roosts e.g. maternity or classic cool/ stable hibernation sites.
Roost	Bats and/or evidence of bats found

3.3 Nesting Bird Survey/ Other Protected or Notable Species

The structure was inspected for evidence of and potential for nesting birds.

The Site and immediate surroundings were assessed for the presence of and potential for other protected, notable, or invasive species which could be impacted by proposals.

4 LIMITATIONS

Care has been taken to ensure that balanced advice is provided on the information available and collected during the study periods, and within the resources available for the project. However, the possibility of important ecological features being missed due to survey timings, absence during surveys or the year of survey cannot be ruled out. In addition, the lack of evidence or records of protected species on Site does not preclude their presence from Site.

No inspection was made of the main loft, but as this area is not to be affected, this was not considered to be a significant limitation.



5 RESULTS

5.1 Desk Study

The search of <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/> returned two records of EPS (Bats) licences granted within 2km of the Site since 2008. These relate to impacts to resting places of brown long-eared, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bats, with the closest record less than 200m from the Site.

No internationally designated sites lie within 10km and no nationally designated sites lie within 2km.

The Grand Western Canal Country Park and Local Nature Reserve follows the canal which runs c.20m to the west of the property.

The Site does not lie within any consultation zones for protected species and no Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI under the NERC Act 2006) are present within the development boundary.

Owing to the small scale of the proposals, and limited impacts, it is considered that consultation with the Local Biological Records Centre would add little value to the assessment.

5.2 Field Survey

The habitats within the curtilage of the Site and where potential impacts are predicted are of **negligible** conservation importance, comprising hardstanding/ building.

5.2.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment

Overall, the area to be affected by proposals presented **negligible** bat roosting potential, with **no** bat roosting potential noted in/ on the conservatory (**Photograph 3**), the adjoining metal roofed 'lean-to' (**Photograph 4**) and no bat roosting potential in/ around the timber dormer and timber clad section (**Photograph 5 & 6**).

The conservatory lacked dark, sheltered areas sought out by roosting bats, being constructed mostly from timber framed, glazed panels, with a degrading, clear corrugated plastic roof. There were no crevices where the conservatory met the main house wall, and no open timber junctions which could provide close cover for roosting bats.

Similarly, the adjoining 'lean-to' in the rear garden presented negligible potential for roosting bats, with the building being in regular use as a utility/ store/ WC, thus suffering high levels of disturbance. There were no suitable crevices at wall tops, with the unlined metal roof straight onto block/ stonework. No evidence of bats was found and these two buildings presented no bat roosting potential.

Photograph 3



Photograph 4



Photograph 5



Photograph 6



It was possible to get a close view of the dormer structure internally and externally, both using close-focussing binoculars and by leaning out of the window in the dormer, to inspect the roof covering (**Photograph 7**), timber cladding and the areas where the dormer met the main house and adjacent timber clad wall (**Photograph 8**). The roof structure presented no potential for roosting bats, with corrugations blocked, preventing ingress (checked with an endoscope). Timber cladding on the dormer cheeks, and adjacent wall is tongue-and-groove, with no degraded areas and thus no gaps larger than 3mm; insufficient for a bat to gain access. Timber fascias at the roof verges were tight to the cladding below and slates were enclosed with a plastic trim, with no suitable gaps in which a bat could shelter (**Photograph 8, 9 & 10**) and therefore this section of the building presented negligible bat roosting potential.

Photograph 7



Photograph 8



Photograph 9



Photograph 10



The remainder of the garage on the north-eastern, side elevation of the property, beyond the timber cladding shown above presented negligible bat roosting potential. This had previously been assessed as having moderate potential for bats. The garage is in regular use, with minimal potential for bats to be present inside the building; gaps around the garage doors were considered unsuitable for bat access.

Externally, the slate is in sound condition, with no lifted areas where bats could access the roof structure. Minor gaps do occur along the northern fascia, where it does not sit flush to the stonework (**Photograph 11 & 12**), but close inspection with an endoscope revealed that the wall-plate overhangs the wall, with fascia attached directly to the wall-plate, thus blocking access to the roof structure. All of the gaps behind the fascia were heavily cobwebbed, indicating that this area has been undisturbed for some time and whilst the narrow void behind the fascia did extend approximately 10cm; sufficient depth for a bat to shelter, there was no evidence of roosting bats.

In any case, this part of the building will not be affected by proposals.

Photograph 11



Photograph 12



5.2.2 Nesting Bird Survey

An old bird's nest was noted on the wall top of the rear lean-to, where it faces the neighbours garden. The mature shrub borders in the rear garden presented good bird nesting opportunities, but the garden will remain unaffected by proposals.



5.3 Other Protected/ Notable Species

The presence of badger, dormice, reptiles or other protected species in the working area is considered extremely unlikely owing to the limited extent of the proposals and the nature of the habitats present. It is probable that hedgehogs and common reptiles are present in the rear garden, but as there will be no impacts to the garden, other protected species are not considered further.

6 FURTHER SURVEY WORK

It is considered that the survey effort reported above is sufficient to provide an assessment of the likely significant effects of the development proposals on ecological features and to inform the mitigation strategy detailed below. No further ecological survey work is considered necessary in order to determine the current planning application and the results are considered valid for one year.

If there are any changes to the proposals or if any significant amount of time has passed since the date of this report, a re-appraisal may be required.

7 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION

7.1 Designated Sites

No impacts are predicted to designated sites owing to the small scale of the proposals and the distance of the Site from any designated sites. Whilst the Grand Western Canal lies a short distance to the north-west of the property, the proposed extension is on the south-east of the property and as such no adverse effects are predicted, as long as best construction practices are adhered to, to minimise fugitive dust and pollution from entering the watercourse/ Nature Reserve.

7.2 Bats

It is possible that a bat roost is present in the loft of the main house, but as the proposals relate to a single storey extension, with no impacts to main house roof covering, eaves or gable ends, no impacts are predicted and bats will continue to have access to their roost (if present) in the main house loft.

It is considered that no bat roosts are present within the area to be affected by proposals and no adverse effects are predicted. The timber dormer, conservatory, rear lean-to and timber gable of the garage presented no bat roosting potential. Whilst the fascia on the north-eastern elevation of the garage lean to provided some limited potential for individual crevice dwelling bats, between fascia and stonework, no evidence of bats was found and this area will remain unaffected. As such, bats would be able to roost, should they find the feature in future. No further survey is needed and a licence from Natural England **will not** be required prior to commencement of works.

In the extremely unlikely event that a bat is discovered or suspected, work must pause and the procedure outlined in **Appendix 2** must be followed.

It is highly likely that local bat populations forage and commute around the Site and particularly along the riparian corridor of the Grand Western Canal to the west of the property. Whilst the new extension will have skylights and glazing, there will be an overall reduction in transparent surfaces when compared to the current situation as the existing conservatory has a clear plastic roof and is fully glazed. With a reduction in potential for light-spill, no adverse effects are predicted from lighting within the proposed extension.

Additional exterior lighting, which is much brighter and more directional does have the potential to cause a barrier to foraging and commuting bats. Therefore, best practice guidance detailed in Guidance Note 08/23 - Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (BCT, ILP, 2023) should be followed when siting lights and



security lighting will point downwards and be set on motion sensors with short duration (30s or less). This will ensure that no light barriers are introduced to foraging and commuting bats.

7.3 Nesting Birds

An old bird nest was found at the wall top of the north elevation of the rear lean to. Works therefore have the potential to kill/ injure nesting birds and to destroy active nests, which would be an offence under current legislation. Demolition works should be timed to avoid the bird breeding season (**March – August inclusive**). Alternatively, if this cannot be achieved, a check for active birds' nests must be undertaken immediately prior to commencement of works. Any active nests and access points will need to be retained and buffered until all chicks have fledged.

To compensate for the loss of nesting opportunities, a sparrow terrace should be installed within the north-eastern wall, as close to the location of the existing nesting site as possible.

8 ENHANCEMENTS

In order to enhance the Site for nesting birds and roosting bats, it is recommended that:

- One additional sparrow terrace is installed in the north-eastern wall of the new extension.
- Two crevice bat boxes are built behind cladding on the east facing wall (near where the dormer is to be removed)

Boxes should not be sited directly above windows or doors, where droppings may cause a nuisance. Suitable boxes are available from websites such as www.nhbs.com. If any new landscaping is proposed, plants should be selected from the RHS Plants for Pollinators list¹.

9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey data reported above is considered sufficient to assess the potential impacts from proposed works and steps have been recommended taking the mitigation hierarchy into account. The Site is considered to be of low ecological interest with no impacts predicted on roosting bats. No EPS licence or additional mitigation is required for roosting bats. Timing the works to avoid bird nesting season, or preceding works with a check for nesting birds will ensure that no wildlife offences are committed.

Enhancement measures have been recommended with the aim of providing a net biodiversity gain, contributing to the aims of National Planning Policy Framework and local policy. As there will be no impacts to semi-natural habitats, a formal Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment is not required.

¹ <https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators>



10 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust/ Institute of Lighting Professional (2023) *Guidance Note 08/23 - Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*. Bats and the Built Environment Series.

BSI (2013) BS42020: 2013 *Biodiversity. Code of practice for planning and development*. British Standards Institution, London, UK.

CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal (3rd Edition)*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Survey for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

DEFRA (2011) *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services*.

Quantock Ecology (2022): *Bat Survey – Preliminary Roost Assessment – Chains Cottage, 8 Chains Road, Sampford Peverell*.



Appendix 1 – Protected Species Legislation

Bats

All species of bat and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are protected under Regulation 41 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Section 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence for anyone to:

- Deliberately capture, kill or injure a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly to disturb a bat or group of bats in a roost;
- Damage or destroy any place used by bats for shelter, (whether they are present or not);
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost;
- Possess, or offer a bat (dead or alive) or part of a bat for sale or exchange.

Licences to permit illegal activities relating to bats and their roost sites can be issued for specific purposes. These are sometimes called 'derogation licences' or 'European Protected Species EPS' licences. These are issued by the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (SNCO) under the Habitats Regulations e.g. Natural England (NE) in England.

Habitat and Species Legislation

Species and habitats receive legal protection in the UK under various legislation, including:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended);
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2019 (EU Exit);
- The Countryside Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000;
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997;
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992; and
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.




Where relevant, this report takes account of the legislative protection afforded to specific habitats and species.



Appendix 2 – Procedure to Follow if Bats are Discovered During Works

- If at any point during the works bats are discovered, contractors should stop work immediately and telephone Lakeway Ecology on 01837 218 016;
- Lakeway Ecology will either provide a licensed bat worker to the site or provide a member of staff who will liaise directly with Natural England. Actions will then be taken following advice given by Natural England. This may include removal of bats, but only where direct written or verbal permission is gained from Natural England;
- Only when Natural England is satisfied that the risk to bats is ceased will works recommence.
- Should it transpire that the operation being carried out is of more risk to bats than was originally thought, then it is likely that works will only be able to proceed under a development licence from Natural England;
- If a bat is found under a tile or any other aperture, works will stop immediately (as above). If the bat does not voluntarily fly out, then the aperture will be carefully covered over to protect the bat(s) from the elements, leaving a small gap for the bat to escape voluntarily. Further advice will then be sought from Natural England (as above). Any covering should be free from grease or other contaminants, and should not be fibreglass-based materials;
- Avoid handling bats. Bats should not be handled with bare hands. If a decision is made to handle a bat (e.g. for good reason in the case of an injured bat or a bat in 'harm's way') then gloves must be worn to avoid being bitten. Any injured bats could be placed in a secure ventilated box (e.g. cardboard box) by the contractor for the bat's protection whilst awaiting the arrival of the bat worker;
- If during the course of works anyone is bitten by a bat then the area of the bite should be washed immediately with soap and water and medical advice must be immediately sought.

Appendix 3 – Examples of Suitable Enhancement Features

Type (examples – other manufacturers may have slightly different designs)	Location and description
<p>House Sparrow terrace</p> 	<p>Installed as high as possible above ground (ideally at least 4m), ensuring that there is unobstructed access for birds entering and leaving.</p> <p>Boxes should be sited under the shelter of eaves or overhanging roofs.</p> <p>Entrance out of direct sun, preferably north or east-facing.</p>
<p>Vivarapro Woodstone bat box</p> 	<p>Installed as high as possible, directly beneath the eaves, away from exterior lighting and windows.</p> <p>Boxes can be built into masonry, or installed behind cladding, with only the access slot exposed.</p> <p>Bat boxes should ideally face a range of directions to allow bats to select their environmental conditions depending upon the time of year/ amount of thermal gain from the sun.</p>
<p>Beaumaris woodstone bat box</p> 	<p>If it is not possible to build in bat boxes, a suitable alternative is to surface mount a box.</p> <p>Installed as high as possible, directly beneath the eaves, away from exterior lighting and windows.</p> <p>Bat boxes should ideally face a range of directions to allow bats to select their environmental conditions depending upon the time of year/ amount of thermal gain from the sun.</p>

