

Ecological checklist



Adopted December 2023

How to use this checklist

A completed copy of this checklist must be submitted with planning applications as required by our adopted local list of planning application requirements. Any incorrect information provided is likely to cause delays to your planning application.

Where this checklist indicates that further documentation is required, the identified documents must be prepared by a qualified ecologist and submitted in order for the application to be valid.

If a qualified ecologist confirms that having visited the site within the last two years, they consider that no further survey or documentation is required for the development you are proposing, then you should submit a statement from them with your application which we will then consider.

Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA)

Where stated by this checklist an EcIA, to be informed by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), in line with CIEEM guidelines¹ is required prior to validation and determination. For smaller householder applications or barn conversions (if the development has a small footprint), the applicant's ecologist must adapt the EcIA/PEA methodology, so the assessment and reporting are proportional to the size of the project.

If an EcIA/PEA recommends that further survey or investigation is required, a report prepared by a qualified ecologist setting out the findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from the required surveys or investigation will be required for any planning application to be considered valid.

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) also referred to as a Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW)², in line with BCT guidelines² is normally the first assessment undertaken on a structure to determine if bats and their roosts are 'reasonably likely' to be impacted by a proposed development. If a PBRA recommends that further survey or investigation is required, a report prepared by a qualified ecologist setting out the findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from the required surveys or investigation will be required for any planning application to be considered valid.

¹ <https://cieem.net/resource/guidelines-for-ecological-impact-assessment-ecia/>

² Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition – Guidance for professionals – Bat Conservation Trust

1. Bat Consultation Zones

Will the proposed development (including demolition) be located within the Juvenile Sustenance Zone, Consultation Zone A or Consultation Zone B, as set out within the North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development: Supplementary Planning Document (adopted January 2018) and:

a. the proposed works would impact upon any of the following features ('proposed works' includes the storage of construction materials and removal of trees and hedgerows):

	Information required	
• Agricultural land, pasture/hay meadow, fields	Yes	No
• Hedgerows	Yes	No
• Trees that are within or adjacent to a hedge or form part of a line of three or more trees	Yes	No
• Woodland, parkland, woodland edge	Yes	No
• Wetland habitat (watercourses, ponds, marsh, reedbed, rivers, streams, rhynes)	Yes	No
• Stone walls	Yes	No
• Railway cuttings	Yes	No
• Bridges	Yes	No
• Cellars, mines, ice houses, tunnels or other structures with voids which produce tunnel-like conditions	Yes	No

b. or where any of the following is proposed:

	Information required	
• New buildings outside of adopted settlement boundaries as shown on the planning map (except for new single storey outbuildings serving existing dwellings)	Yes	No
• New or altered external lighting	Yes	No

2. Other habitats

Irrespective being either within or outside any of the Bat Consultations Zones (see above), will the proposed development (including demolition) includes:

	Information required	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Floodlighting (including external lighting) within 50m of woodland, fresh water (including water courses), field hedgerows or tree lines with connectivity to woodland and fresh water. 	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Felling or removal of trees that are 20cm or more in diameter at 1.5 metres and which have a significant amount of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complex growth form natural cavities (often present in beech, oak, ash) loose bark ivy cover damaged caused by rot/lighting/wind/woodpeckers 	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of hedgerows or tree lines connected to woodland or a body of fresh water (including water courses). 	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of 5 metres or more of native hedgerow that is at least 1m tall and 0.5m thick. 	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derelict land, brownfield, railway sidings, allotments 	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposals are adjacent to water bodies, quarries or natural cliff faces (except for change of use only or householder development) 	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wind turbines of more than 250 kilowatts. 	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development other than householder development within 100m of an Ancient Semi Natural Woodland. 	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development other than householder development within 10m of a watercourse 	Yes	No

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- Development within 5 metres of a
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's)
 - Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) or Wildlife Site
 - Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
 - Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - RAMSAR site
 - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
(except for Bat Consultation Zones
SAC – see section 1 above)

Yes No

3. Buildings and structures

Irrespective being either within or outside any of the Bat Consultations Zones (see above), will the proposal affect, or require conversion, modification, demolition or removal of, any of the following features or structures?

Information required

-
- Building or structure where bat roosts are known be present.

Yes No

 - Development of existing agricultural buildings (e.g., farmhouse, barns and outbuildings) of traditional brick or stone construction and/or with exposed beams.

Yes No

 - Development that affects the following features on existing buildings:
 - weatherboarding on south, west and east facing walls
 - hanging tiles or timber cladding on south, west and east facing walls
 - cracks, crevices and small openings on south, west and east facing walls
 - roof voids (excluding roofs covered with prefabricated steel or sheet materials, or roof voids that have been converted to living space) that have uneven roof tiles or cracks, crevices and small openings and a large roof space for flying.

Yes No

 - Development affecting underground structures, brick or stone built industrial sites or bridge structures unless the structure:
 - is in a heavily urbanised area affected by artificial light
 - is heavily disturbed, for example if people use it regularly
 - is small and draughty
 - has smooth surfaces

Yes No

Declaration

I confirm that I am the applicant or appointed agent for the planning application and have completed this checklist in full and the information I have provided above is accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

I understand that if any part of this form is not completed correctly, the application could be found invalid, refused permission or result in significant delays.

Site Address

Name

Signature

Date

Notwithstanding the above, ecological surveys are not required for validation purposes, if a suitably qualified ecologist confirms in writing that a survey is not required, together with an explanation of the reasons why.

All surveys and report must be undertaken by a qualified ecologist and carried out within the previous two years. Applications submitted with surveys which are out of date will not normally be considered valid.

If an ecological report of any kind submitted with the application confirms that further surveys are required, the application will not be valid unless the required survey is carried out in full, and a report of the findings are submitted with the application.

Once an application is received and registered, if it becomes apparent that there is a reasonable likelihood of protected species or habitats being present, surveys may be required – if a suitable survey is not submitted when requested then it is likely the permission will be refused.