

**Ecological Impact
Assessment**

**3 Tangmere Road,
Tangmere**

**South
Downs
Ecology**

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MCIEEM MARBORA

Ecological Impact Assessment

3 Tangmere Road, Tangmere

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Summary

Smith Simmons and Partners have commissioned a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Ecological Impact Assessment of proposals for a new dwelling in the garden of 3 Tangmere Road, Tangmere, Chichester (SU 90520 06684, *hereafter referred to as 'the site'*). A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site was carried out on the 16th January 2024.

The proposal area consists of existing building and sealed surfaces, of negligible ecological value, surrounded by garden habitats of low value.

The proposals are for demolition of an existing garage and construction of a new dwelling in the garden of the existing dwelling.

The proposals are not anticipated to have any significant impact upon ecology; the habitats proposed for removal offer no significant potential for protected species. The garage and area of building affected offer 'negligible' bat roost potential and the proposals offer negligible risk of disturbing or harming bats.

When mitigation and enhancements have been taken into account, the proposals are not considered to have a negative impact upon designated sites, habitats or protected species in accordance with planning policy and once enhancements are considered, would result in a minor net gain. The proposals would therefore accord with the relevant Chichester Local Plan Policies.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Smith Simmons and Partners have commissioned a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Ecological Impact Assessment of proposals for a new dwelling in the garden of 3 Tangmere Road, Tangmere, Chichester (SU 90520 06684, hereafter referred to as 'the site'). A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site was carried out on the 16th January 2024.
- 1.2 The following ecological impact assessment report has been completed by George Sayer (*BSc (Hons) Environmental Sciences, PgDip Endangered Species Recovery, MA ArborA, MCIEEM, NE Licence Holder – Bats Level 2 and GCN - Ecologist*). This appraisal consisted of a site visit to identify existing habitats on site; the habitats have been categorised broadly following the UK Habitats Classification Guidance V2.01 (*UKHabs Ltd 2023*). In addition, an assessment of habitats and structures on the site was made to determine their potential for protected species. Following this an on-site and desktop assessment was undertaken, of the likelihood of National or European Protected Species being present on or near site, and the constraints these may pose on the development proposals.
- 1.3 Based on the results of the appraisal, recommendations for potential ecological enhancements have been provided.

Site Description and Surrounding Area

- 1.4 The site consists of a triangular site, containing detached dwelling and garage, with driveway and gardens, surrounded by other detached residential dwellings and gardens to all aspects, with Tangmere Road to the west. The site is within the Tangmere Conservation Area with a single lime tree protected under TPO 91/01021/TPO T59.
- 1.5 The site is fairly central within the residential area of Tangmere. The surroundings are suburban with largely arable farmland, glasshouses, pastures and parkland surrounding. Local areas of woodland are generally small. The A27 lies 250.0 m north.

Proposals

- 1.6 The proposals are for the removal of an existing attached garage and store forming part of No. 03 and its replacement with a single storey extension to the rear and garage to the side under a householder application. A separate application is also proposed for construction of a new dwelling in the garden. The garden would be divided in two, Access would come from the existing driveway to No. 03.

2.0 Scope of Appraisal

1. *Identify habitats or features which may have potential for protected species;*
2. *Identify whether any signs of protected species are present on-site;*
3. *Recommend whether further surveys are required, or whether there are any relevant constraints with regards to protected species;*
4. *Identify impacts of the proposed development and set out appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures;*
5. *Provide suggestions as to how the site and proposals could be enhanced with regards to protected species and habitats.*

- 2.1 This appraisal and assessment is deemed to be relevant for a maximum of 18 months due to the possibility of changes in the habitats on-site. Should the site or proposals alter, the ecologist should be consulted to confirm that the appraisal is still valid.

3.0 Planning Policy and Legislation

National Planning Policy

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 sets out the government planning policies for England and how they should be applied. 'Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' states that development should be 'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'
- 3.2 The Government Circular 06/2005, which is referred to by the NPPF, provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.3 The site is within the Chichester District; the Chichester Local Plan 2021 – 2039 is currently at Regulation 19 and as such, proposals shall be assessed against the currently adopted *Chichester District Local Plan – Key Policies 2014-2029*.
- 3.4 Policy 49 covers Biodiversity; the following criteria must be met for planning applications to be supported:
1. *The biodiversity value of the site is safeguarded;*
 2. *Demonstrable harm to habitats or species which are protected or which are of importance to biodiversity is avoided or mitigated;*
 3. *The proposal has incorporated features that enhance biodiversity as part of good design and sustainable development;*
 4. *The proposal protects, manages and enhances the District's network of ecology, biodiversity and geological sites, including the international, national and local designated sites (statutory and non-statutory), priority habitats, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them;*
 5. *Any individual or cumulative adverse impacts on sites are avoided;*
 6. *The benefits of development outweigh any adverse impact on the biodiversity on the site. Exceptions will only be made where no reasonable alternatives are available; and planning conditions and/or planning obligations may be imposed to mitigate or compensate for the harmful effects of the development.*

- 3.5 Policy 50 covers Development and Disturbance of Birds in Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Areas. It states that “It is Natural England’s advice that all net increases in residential development within the 5.6km ‘Zone of Influence’ are likely to have a significant effect on the Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA either alone or in-combination with other developments and will need to be subject to the provisions of Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. In the absence of appropriate avoidance and/or mitigation measures that will enable the planning authority to ascertain that the development would not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA, planning permission will not be granted because the tests for derogations in Regulation 62 are unlikely to be met. Furthermore, such development would not have the benefit of the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 3.6 Net increases in residential development, which incorporates appropriate avoidance/mitigation measures, which would avoid any likelihood of a significant effect on the SPA, will not require an ‘appropriate assessment’. Appropriate avoidance/mitigation measures will comprise:
- a) A contribution in accordance with the joint mitigation strategy outlined in Phase III of the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project; or
 - b) A developer provided package of measures associated with the proposed development designed to avoid any significant effect on the SPA; or
 - c) A combination of measures in (a) and (b) above.
- 3.7 Avoidance/mitigation measures will need to be phased with development and shall be maintained in perpetuity. All mitigation measures in (a), (b) and (c) above must be agreed to be appropriate by Natural England. They should also have regard to the Chichester Harbour AONB Management Plan. The provisions of this policy do not exclude the possibility that some residential schemes either within or outside the Zone of Influence might require further assessment under the Habitats Regulations. For example, large schemes, schemes proposing bespoke avoidance/mitigation measures, or schemes proposing an alternative approach to the protection of the SPAs. Such schemes will be assessed on their own merits, and subject to advice from Natural England.”
- 3.8 The emerging Chichester Local Plan 2021-2039: Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) includes the following policies; these should be given appropriate weight.
- *Policy NE4 Strategic Wildlife Corridors*
 - *Policy NE5 Biodiversity and Biodiversity Net Gain*
 - *Policy NE6 Chichester’s Internationally and Nationally Designated Habitats*
 - *Policy NE7 Development and Disturbance of Birds in Chichester and Langstone Harbours, Paghams Harbour, Solent and Dorset Coast Special Protection Areas and Medmerry Compensatory Habitat*
 - *Policy NE8 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands*

Legislation

3.9 Legislation relating to wildlife and biodiversity of particular relevance to this EclA includes:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017;
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- The Protection of Mammals Act 1996;
- The Environment Act (2021).

3.10 All species of bat and their roosts are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or handle a bat, to possess a bat (live or dead), disturb a roosting bat, or sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not.

3.11 All UK bird species are protected against disturbance whilst occupying a nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Developments that could predictably disturb, kill or injure nesting birds could result in an offence. Furthermore, a number of bird species are targets of UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plans and listed as Species of Principle Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. This obligates local authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity with particular emphasis on targeted species.

3.12 All widespread reptiles are protected against killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, with rarer reptiles receiving further protection under EU regulation. Reptiles must also be given consideration under the NERC Act 2006 as part of the planning process.

3.13 Great crested newts (GCN) are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill, injure or disturb a GCN or to damage, destroy or block access to areas of suitable habitat.

3.14 Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is an offence to harm badgers or disturb badgers and their setts.

3.15 Water voles are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and is a priority conservation species. It is an offence to intentionally capture, kill or injure water voles, damage, destroy or block access to their places of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care), disturb them in a place of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care), possess, sell, control or transport live or dead water voles or parts of them (not water voles bred in captivity).

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or sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not.

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- 3.18 All widespread reptiles are protected against killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, with rarer reptiles receiving further protection under EU regulation. Reptiles must also be given consideration under the NERC Act 2006 as part of the planning process.
- 3.19 Great crested newts (GCN) are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill, injure or disturb a GCN or to damage, destroy or block access to areas of suitable habitat.
- 3.20 Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is an offence to harm badgers or disturb badgers and their setts.
- 3.21 Water voles are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and is a priority conservation species. It is an offence to intentionally capture, kill or injure water voles, damage, destroy or block access to their places of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care), disturb them in a place of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care), possess, sell, control or transport live or dead water voles or parts of them (not water voles bred in captivity).
- 3.22 In the UK, dormice are legally protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and have significant further protection as a European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Dormice are also a 'Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity' listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC). It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill, injure or disturb a dormouse or to damage, destroy or block access to areas of suitable habitat.
- 3.23 All other mammals receive general protection against cruelty, inhumane killing or injuring under the Protection of Mammals Act 1996.
- 3.24 In the UK, dormice are legally protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and have significant further protection as a European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Dormice are also a 'Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity' listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC). It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill, injure or disturb a dormouse or to damage, destroy or block access to areas of suitable habitat.

- 3.25 All other mammals receive general protection against cruelty, inhumane killing or injuring under the Protection of Mammals Act 1996.
- 3.26 In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory from 12 February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. There are a number of exemptions such as for small sites (exempt until 2nd April 2024). This site is considered to fall under the small sites exemption.

4.0 Methodology

Desktop Study

- 4.1 A desktop study was conducted using the government 'MAGIC' Map GIS tool; a search was carried out for all international statutory designated sites (Ramsar, SAC, SPA) within 12.0 km of the site; national statutory designated sites (SSSI, NNR, LNR) within 2.0 km of the site; and non-statutory designated sites (SNCI) and priority habitats within 1.0 km of the site. These have been summarized below and their significance considered in the context of the development proposals. A search was also carried out to identify features of ecological interest in the area, such as water bodies and ancient woodland. Given the overall scale and nature of the site and the proposals, a full data search from SxBRC was not considered appropriate. This is in accordance with CIEEM current guidance for such projects.

Site Visit

- 4.2 A site visit was conducted on 16th January, during cold but suitable weather (3 degrees, wind force 1; 0/8 cloud, dry). Habitats were recorded according to the UK-Habs Classification System as described within the UK Habitats Manual, V2.01 (UKHabs Ltd. 2023).
- 4.3 During the survey any constraints with regard to protected species were considered; the site was considered for their potential for protected species even when signs of these species were not noted at the time of survey.
- 4.4 The garage was assessed internally and externally by an experienced, licenced bat surveyor (George Sayer 2018-34434-CLS) for its potential to hold roosting bats; roof voids were assessed where relevant, and access points identified. The section of dwelling proposed for alteration was likewise assessed. Any evidence of bats such as grease marks, bat droppings, urine splashes were noted. Trees were inspected for features conducive to bat and bird roosting, including knot holes, limb failures, cavities and heavy ivy cover; any identified bird nests have been recorded. The bat roost assessment was conducted following the recent Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (2023).
- 4.5 Due to the site visit being carried out over one day, it is possible that some signs of protected species may not be apparent within this short timeframe. This is a constraint recognised within best practice guidelines and all reasonable effort has been made to identify evidence of protected species.

Ecological Impact Assessment

- 4.6 The methodology for Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) follows best practice guidelines set by the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM): 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment' (CIEEM, 2022). This includes identifying the baseline conditions on the site and subsequently rating the potential effects of the development based on the sensitivity and value of the resource affected, combined with the magnitude, duration and scale of the impact (or change). This is initially assessed without mitigation measures, and then assessed again after allowing for the proposed mitigation measures; this provides the residual effects. The assessment is divided into construction effects and longer-term operational effects.
- 4.7 Each ecological feature within the site has been considered within a defined Geographic context such as:
- International and European;
 - National;
 - Regional;
 - County;
 - District;
 - Local;
 - Site Level;
 - Negligible.
- 4.8 Based upon CIEEM guidance, value was determined with reference to the following factors:
- Its inclusion as a Designated Site or other protected area;
 - The presence of habitat types of conservation significance, e.g. Habitats of Principal Importance (NERC 2006);
 - The presence (or potential presence) of species of conservation significance e.g. Species of Principal Importance (NERC 2006);
 - The presence of other protected species e.g. those protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
 - The sites social and economic value.
- 4.9 Specifically in the case of bats, the impact assessment has been conducted in accordance with the recently published Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray 2023).

5.0 Baseline Ecological Conditions and Protected Species Assessment

Desktop Study

Designated Sites and Habitats

- 5.1 The following is a summary of all protected and notable wildlife sites, with sites of local and national importance recorded within 2.0km of the site and sites of international importance within 12.0 km. These are divided into statutory and non-statutory; those with full legal protection and those without, but which the Local Planning Authority should still consider when deciding on planning policy and applications. These sites are summarized in tables 1 and 2 below. A description of locally designated sites is also made below.
- 5.2 This information is included so that the site can be considered within the ecological context of the surrounding area, guiding decisions related to habitat change and protected species; these sites are not necessarily representative of the habitat on or surrounding the site and may not be influenced by the proposals.
- 5.3 The site is outside the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) of Solent Suite of Sites, but outside the recreation impact zone. Proposals do not need to contribute to the Bird Aware Scheme to offset recreational impacts on the Solent Suite of Sites. The MAGIC Mapping shows the site to be outside the Nutrient Impact Zone, and as wastewater would drain to Tangmere WwTW which does not discharge to the Solent, proposals do not have to demonstrate nitrate neutrality.
- 5.4 The site is not within 6.5 km of the 'South Downs Bat SACs' (*namely Singleton and Cocking Tunnels SAC*) but is within 12.0 km, and is therefore within its wider conservation area. Within this area significant impacts upon bats and severance of flightlines must be considered within the context of potential impacts to the SACs.

Table 1: Statutory Protected Designated Sites

Site Name	Reason for designation	Distance from site
<i>Solent Suite of Sites (Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA / Ramsar / Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC / Chichester Harbour SSSI)</i>	<i>Chichester Harbour is a large estuarine basin in which at low water extensive mud and sandflats are exposed, drained by channels which unite to make a common exit to the sea. The site is of particular significance for wintering wildfowl and waders and also breeding birds both within the Harbour and in the surrounding permanent pasture fields and woodlands. There is a wide range of habitats which have important plant communities.</i>	<i>7.0 km SW</i>
<i>Pagham Harbour RAMSAR, SPA, SSSI</i>	<i>A site of intertidal mudflats, saltmarsh, saline lagoons and vegetated shingle supporting high numbers of wintering waders and wildfowl including darkbellied brent geese <i>Bernicla bernicla</i> and breeding populations of little tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i>. Other wildlife includes purple hairstreak butterfly, water voles and numerous invertebrates.</i>	<i>7.55km SW</i>
<i>Singleton and Cocking Tunnels SAC</i>	<i>Disused railway tunnels providing significant roost and hibernation features, particularly for <i>Barbastelle</i> and <i>Bechstein's Bats</i>.</i>	<i>8.0 km N</i>
<i>Kingley Vale SSSI, NNR, SAC</i>	<i>The largest area of yew woodland in Britain, with areas of chalk grassland also present.</i>	<i>8.7 km NW</i>
<i>Duncton to Bignor Escarpment SAC</i>	<i>An example of mature beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> woodland located on the steep scarp face of the South Downs. All stages in the ecological succession from chalk grassland through scrub to woodland are represented here and this range of habitats accounts for the interest of the site.</i>	<i>9.0 km NE</i>

- 5.5 There are no non-statutory designated sites within 1.0 km of the proposal site. The nearest is listed below alongside the nearest part of the Chichester District Council Bat Movement Network:

Table 2: Non-statutory Protected Designated Sites

<i>Site Name</i>	<i>Reason for designation</i>	<i>Distance from site</i>
<i>Chichester District Council Bat Movement Network</i>	<i>Areas designated as significant for foraging and commuting bats within the district</i>	<i>430.0 m NE a closest point</i>
<i>The Valdoe SNCI</i>	<i>Area of Ancient Woodland</i>	<i>3.1 km NW</i>

Habitats

Desk Study

- 5.6 There are no UK Priority Habitats recorded within 1.0 km of the site, other than hedges and priority ponds.

Site Assessment

- 5.7 The site is given over to the habitats discussed further below.

u1b5 - Buildings

- 5.8 The site contains a detached house, with a connected single detached garage/store wrapping round the side and rear, a small dilapidated shed and a small dilapidated greenhouse. The buildings are in good overall condition and offers **negligible ecological value** in a broader sense. The potential for the building to support protected species is discussed in the preliminary bat roost assessment and protected species assessment below.

U1b - Developed Land; Sealed Surface

- 5.9 The driveway into the site is tarmac and well-sealed. There is a paved rear patio to the garden. This appears to have once contained a small pond which is long dry. The habitat is of **negligible ecological value**.

U1d 32 828 – Suburban Mosaic of Developed and Natural Surface – Vegetated Garden with Scattered Trees

- 5.10 The gardens contain a main rear lawn and two small front lawns, all well maintained. There are a number of boundary shrubs including ornamental rhododendron *Rhododendron sp.* A fruit cage is present in the garden and is now scrubby. A number of small trees including apples *Malus domestica* and walnut *Juglans regia* are present in the garden. The trees in the frontage are largely coniferous including a large dominant spruce *Picea sp.* The habitats are of **site ecological value**.

U1f 829 33 – Sparsely Vegetated Land - Unvegetated Garden with Line of Trees

- 5.11 The rear garden is lined with a dense tall hedge formed of leylandii *Cupressus x. leylandii*. Several native trees are interspersed. A smaller, shaded line of trees is present on the rear fenceline. The ground beneath is shaded and bare with only very small sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* seedlings and ivy *Hedera helix* noted. A patch of three-cornered garlic *Allium triquetrum* was noted covering c.2sqm was noted; this is a Schedule 9 invasive species. The habitat is of **negligible ecological value**.

6.0 Protected Species Assessment

Bats

Desk Study

- 6.1 3no. EPSML licences are recorded within 2.0 km of site, with the nearest c.560.0 m south-east for common and soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared bat in 2016. West Sussex contains at least 15 native bat species. Many of these such as serotine, brown long-eared and Daubenton's are recorded within and around Chichester itself. The site is not on or adjacent the Chichester District Council Bat Movement Network with the nearest part being 430.0 m away. Whilst barbastelle are known to commute south from Goodwood and Slindon past Tangmere, they do not appear to fly over the residential areas themselves.

Site Assessment

- 6.2 The dwelling (B1) consists of a semi-detached house of rendered brick or block construction with a part-gabled, part-hipped slate roof. Several chimneys are present on the ridge. The roof appears generally in good condition and tightly sealed. The roof was not investigated in detail as it will not be impacted. The areas impacted consist of the building B2 and areas of bare wall, offering no potential for roosting bats. The proposed alterations are sufficiently isolated from the main roof that no impact would occur to roosting or emerging bats.
- 6.3 The garage and store (B2) consists of a single-storey flat roof extension with no void. The building wraps around the south side and rear of the dwelling and appears to have been constructed fairly simply. The roof is formed of varying modern timbers holding up flat felt roof, corrugated fibre panels and clear poly panels. There is a small area of chipboard under the flat roof but this is open and would not support bats. The building is heavily glazed allowing light in. Several gaps which would allow a bat into the building are present but no external or internal evidence of bats was noted which would suggest occupation, and the building is generally not suitable. Overall, B2 is considered to offer 'negligible' bat roost potential. Should the main roof require works this should be assessed in more detail.
- 6.4 B3 consists of a small timber shed. The shed is in poor condition with the doors open and windows broken making it bright inside. The roof is a single corrugated metal sheet with no roost features present. The building offers 'negligible' bat roost potential.
- 6.5 B4 consists of a glasshouse with several broken panes and small patch of scrub inside. The building is completely unsuitable for bats and offers 'negligible' bat roost potential.
- 6.6 There is limited vegetation of note on the site and no trees which might support bats, with all being conifers or semi-mature specimens. The site itself is considered to offer **negligible-low** foraging or commuting potential. The site is central within the residential area and is 430.0 m from the nearest recorded bat movement network. The trees to the rear do connect somewhat to other (mostly ornamental coniferous) trees but these do not form part of any larger network.

Birds

Desk Study

- 6.7 Numerous bird species are present in the local area, including a number of woodland, wetland and farmland species. Birds relevant to the proposals which are present locally include swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) and house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).

Site Assessment

- 6.8 No evidence of active nesting birds was noted; there is some potential for birds to nest in the shed and garage due to the openings and some old nesting material was noted in the shed. The buildings are of **low value** to birds. Birds could nest in the ornamental shrubs and trees which are of **site value**.

Other Species

- 6.9 The site has good potential for hedgehogs given the garden is relatively large. The site is too well-maintained and isolated to support reptiles, GCN and no suitable habitat for water voles or dormice is present. No potential for or evidence of any other protected species was recorded. No impacts upon other protected species are considered likely and have not been assessed further.

7.0 Evaluation of Impacts and Mitigation

Designated Sites

Potential Impacts

- 7.1 Given the intervening distances, and the nature of the proposals, any impacts upon local designated sites would be of minor magnitude and highly unlikely to occur. The site is within the Wider Conservation Area of Singleton and Cocking Tunnels SAC; no impacts upon bats or flightlines would occur, meaning no impact would occur to SAC qualifying features. The proposals do not have to demonstrate nitrate neutrality nor contribute to the Bird Aware Scheme given their location.
- 7.2 The site is not in close proximity to any SNCI; given the scale and nature of proposals, no direct impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 7.3 None required.

Residual Impacts

- 7.4 The impacts will be negligible and non-significant.

Habitats

Potential Impacts

- 7.5 The proposals would impact only the building and developed land, and common garden habitats. It is understood a separate tree works application has been submitted to remove the leylandii and replace with native planting. This would represent a positive impact in the long term for bats. In the absence of mitigation, the proposals would include dust, noise and light pollution of adjacent garden habitats and trees. In the absence of mitigation, three-cornered garlic might be spread to other sites. Given the proposals' nature and scale, impacts are of **very minor magnitude** at no more than **site level**.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 7.6 All construction will be undertaken in accordance with best practice advice with regards to control of dust, noise and emissions. Any chemicals or fuel shall be stored appropriately and on existing surfaces. Trees shall be retained as far as possible as part of proposals. New native hedge planting to the boundaries and tree planting to frontages shall replace any trees lost to development.
- 7.7 The three cornered garlic shall be removed by hand, double-bagged and taken under waste transfer licence to an appropriate green recycling facility. The ecologist shall inspect to confirm all flowers and bulbs are removed.

Residual Impacts

- 7.8 Once mitigation is taken into account, the impacts will be negligible and non-significant.

Bats

Potential Impacts

- 7.9 The buildings offer 'negligible' bat roost potential and the side of the dwelling proposed for works also offers 'negligible' potential; there is therefore no significant risk of disturbing a bat roost. Construction noise, dust, lighting and vibration and loss of trees may temporarily make the adjacent off-site garden slightly less suitable for foraging bats, and bats commuting along the adjacent gardens. Given the overall size and nature of the site, the potential impacts to foraging bats is very low.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 7.10 As a matter of course, due care shall be taken when demolishing buildings. Any works shall be undertaken with due consideration and measures to minimise dust and noise. No works shall take place externally between 30 minutes before sunset until 30 minutes after sunrise. No external works lighting shall be used. All new lighting shall accord with the principles of the BCT/ILP Guidance Note 08/23. Only warm white downlighters would be permitted and only where necessary. Vegetation lost as part of proposals shall be replaced with new vegetation of better value for bats.
- 7.11 The main dwelling roof is not proposed for alteration and has not been inspected in detail; should this change then a full assessment of the roof and loft would be necessary.

Residual Impacts

- 7.12 The overall impact of the scheme will be negligible. New roosting features and enhancement of the garden would result in a minor gain for bats in the long term.

Nesting Birds

Potential Impacts

- 7.13 No recent evidence of nesting birds was noted within the buildings; bird nests might be disturbed within vegetation proposed for removal.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 7.14 All trees and shrubs proposed for removal shall either be removed outside of the nesting season (*March-August inclusive*) or following a thorough inspection by an ecologist or other suitable person to ensure no active nests are present. It should be noted that active nests (e.g. of pigeons) can occur outside of the nesting season. Should any active nests be found they must be retained and protected with a minimum 3.0m buffer until fledged.
- 7.15 New tree and hedge planting would more than compensate for loss of trees, most of which are coniferous and not of high suitability for nesting and foraging birds.

Residual Impacts

- 7.16 The overall impact of the scheme will be negligible. Replacement of conifers with native deciduous trees might improve the foraging and nesting potential for birds.

Hedgehogs

Potential Impacts

- 7.17 No significant risk of harm exists. A minor risk of harm exists in the form of hedgehogs falling into excavations, hiding under pallets or debris, or being harmed during clearance. New fences might reduce connectivity for hedgehogs or force them to commute along roads.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 7.18 All piles of debris or logs shall be manually removed, making sure to check for wildlife beneath. Log piles of native wood shall be made in corners to re-provide shelter. Any excavations or large pipes shall be capped, or fitted with rough timber ramps at no more than 30 degree incline to allow animals to escape. Such ramps and excavations must be checked daily for any wildlife.
- 7.19 Any new fencing shall be fitted with 12cm x 12cm hedgehog highway holes with a sign attached to the effect of 'Hedgehog Highway – Do Not Block'.

Residual Impacts

- 7.20 The overall impact of the scheme will be negligible.

8.0 Ecological Enhancements

8.1 As the proposals only affect the building and immediate surroundings, development proposals will be expected to demonstrate an overall positive impact on the natural environment as set out in Local Policy. The site is exempt from Mandatory BNG until 2nd April 2024 when it would be expected to demonstrate a 10% gain.

8.2 The following ecological enhancements have been proposed as suited to the location and the proposals and would result in a Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with Local and National Policy.

- Incorporation of bird boxes into the new extensions and the new dwelling at appropriate height and orientation, such as a house sparrow terrace installed to north or east elevations and a swift box under the eaves of the north elevations of both buildings.
- Integration of a bat box into the proposed dwelling and onto the existing; at least one small crevice-style box and one cavity-style. This should be sited on the southern aspects away from lights and windows.
- Addition of an insect box or similar feature to each garden, or a bee brick on the southern elevation of each building.
- Addition of a hedgehog box to each garden.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 Overall, the proposals are considered to represent a 'negligible' impact upon ecology and no further surveys are recommended. The proposal area consists of existing building and developed land, and vegetated gardens of negligible-low ecological value.
- 9.2 The proposals are not anticipated to have any significant impact upon ecology; the proposals stand a 'negligible' chance of disturbing bats or their roosts as they stand. No further surveys are recommended at the site for these proposals.
- 9.3 No significant effects are anticipated upon any designated sites or priority habitats.
- 9.4 When mitigation and enhancements have been taken into account, the proposals are not considered to have a negative impact upon habitats or protected species in accordance with planning policy and once enhancements are considered, would result in a net gain.
- 9.5 The proposals include for new proportionate ecological enhancements. The proposals would therefore accord with the relevant Local Plan Policies.

10.0 References

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11.0 Appendix 1 – Site Photos

Photo 1 – View of the dwelling from the rear (east).



Photo 2 – View of the garage and store from the south.



Photo 3 – View of the garage from the front (west).



Photo 4 – View inside B2.



Photo 5 – View of the front gardens.



Photo 6 – View of the rear garden from the south.



Photo7– View of the coniferous treeline.



Photo 8 – View of B3.



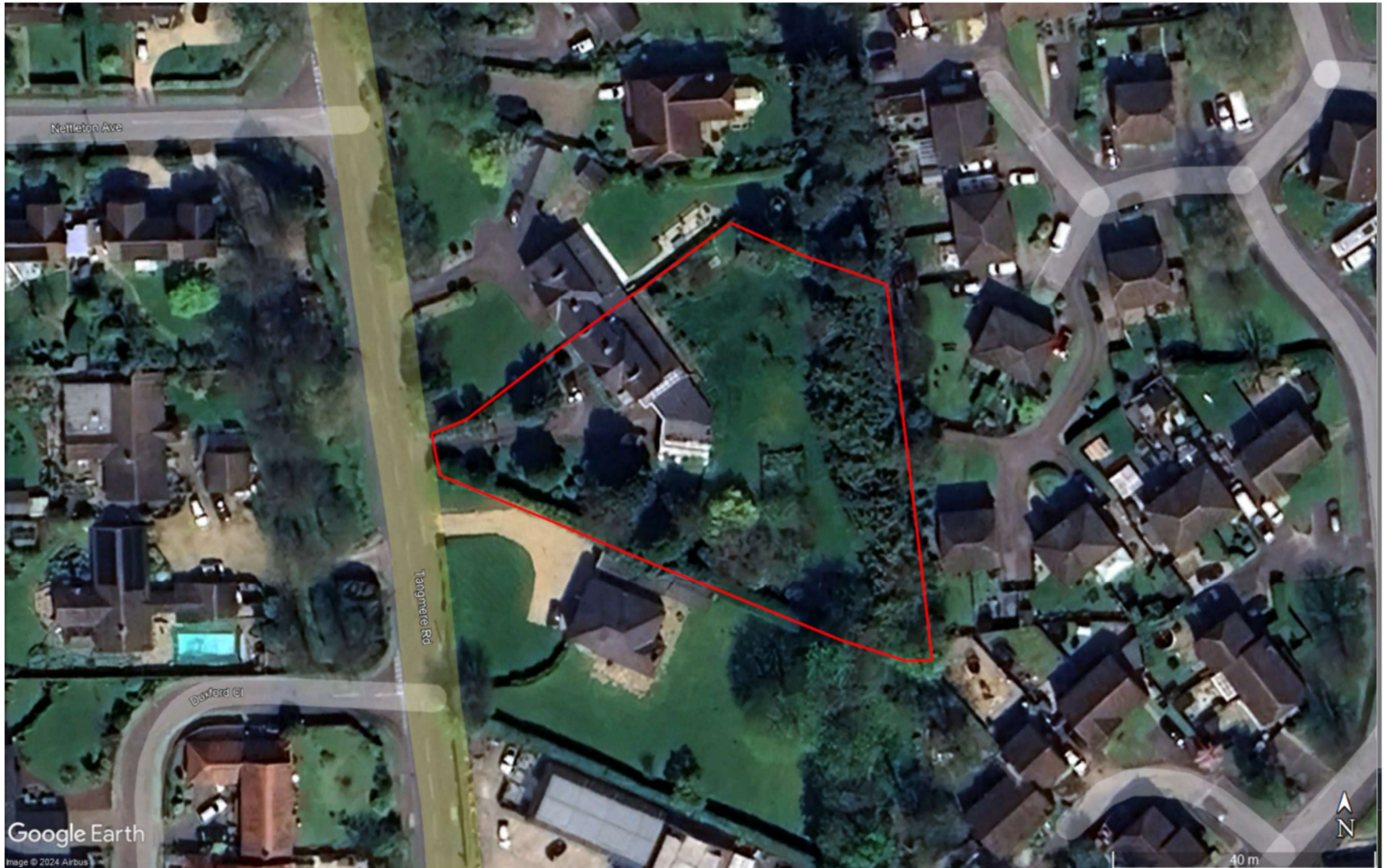
Photo 9 – View of B4.



Photo 10 – View of the front driveway as you enter site.



12.0 Site Aerial



13.0 Site Habitat Plan

