

Ecological Impact Assessment with Phase 2 Bat Survey Work

Former BMW Garage, Water Lane, Angmering,
Littlehampton BN16 4EH

For:

Karen Henry

August 2021

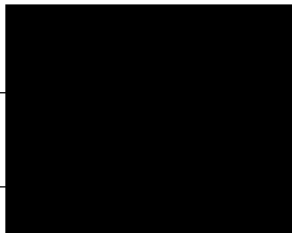
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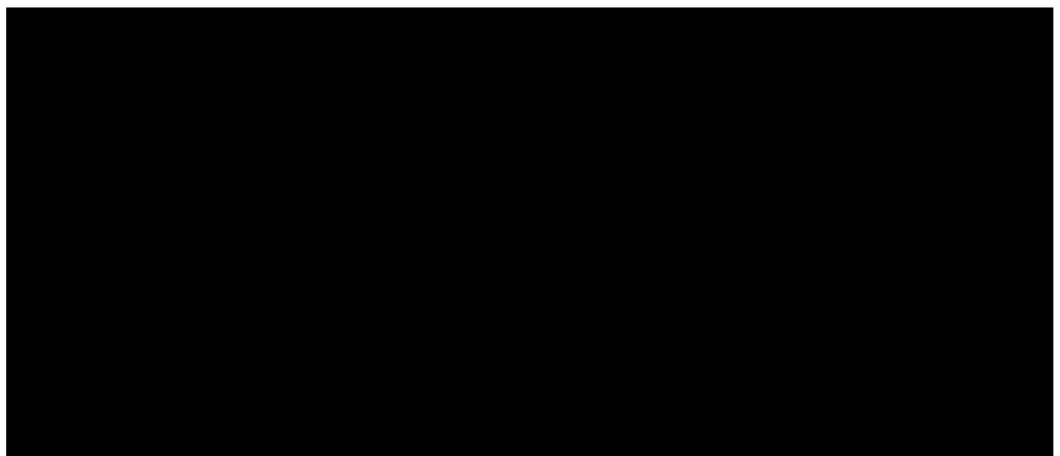
01 KAREN HENRY – MCCARTHY AND STONE

02 ABBAS ECOLOGY

This report is the responsibility of Abbas Ecology,
It should be noted, that whilst every effort is made to meet the client's brief,
no site investigation can ensure complete assessment
or prediction of the natural environment

	Name	Date	Signature
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Executive Summary

Survey date: 11/11/2020 and 23/12/2020
Dusk survey date: 06/05/2021
Dawn survey date: 11/06/2021
Location: Former BMW Garage, Water Lane, Angmering, Littlehampton BN16 4EH
Grid Reference: TQ 06925 04447

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was conducted on the 11th November 2020 and 23rd December 2020 which found medium habitat potential for breeding birds within the trees, shrubs, scrub and outbuilding. The large slate roofed carport and cottage within the site had potential bat roosting features on their external structures. There were no bat roosting features on the other buildings within the site and there was no potential or evidence of bats roosting internally. The trees within the site were noted as having no suitable bat roosting features. The site had the occasional scattered tree, shrubs and scrub but these features had no connectivity and were unlikely to be used by foraging and commuting bats. This outcome initiated further survey work recommendations on the main property and annexe building. This will involve two bat activity surveys which must be completed prior to planning permission.

The dusk bat activity survey was undertaken on the carport and cottage on 6th May 2021. No bats were seen emerging from either the carport roof or the cottage. There was a very low level of common pipistrelles heard commuting within the surrounding area.

The dawn bat activity survey was undertaken on the carport and cottage on 11th June 2021. No bats were seen emerging from either the carport roof or the cottage. There were slightly higher levels of bat activity but it was still overall low with just commuting and foraging common pipistrelle and one commuting noctule.

No further survey work is required before the development proceeds. However, mitigation is required for breeding birds and on-site enhancements and measurable biodiversity net gain appropriate to the site and wider area will be provided.

I. Introduction

I.1 Site

The site is approximately 0.44 hectares and is located within the centre of Angmering. The site is surrounded by residential buildings. The derelict site consists of motor vehicle showrooms, workshops, offices, an outbuilding, a courtyard with a large carport with brick pillars and a small derelict cottage (figure 1).



Figure 1. Aerial view of the site, the approximate site area outlined in red (aerial image Copyright Google Earth).

1.3 Plan

The current proposal involves demolishing all the buildings/structures on the site to develop 33 retirement living apartments and associated parking (figure 2).



Figure 2. Proposed development plan (Copyright KSA Architects Limited).

2. Biological Records

Mapping information was looked at on the MAGIC Defra website. The following was determined:

- The closest designated sites are Climping Beach (SSSI) and West Beach (LNR) which are 5.3km Southwest of the site.
- The next nearest designated sites include Arundel Park (SSSI) (5.9km), Cissbury Ring (SSSI) (7.5km) and Lancing Ring (LNR) (10.9km).
- Pagham Harbour (Ramsar/SSSI/SPA/LNR), Arun Valley, Solent & Dorset Coast (SPA), Bognor Reef (SSSI), Felpham (SSSI) are all over 5km away from the site.
- The site does not line within the South Downs National Park, but the boundary of the park is 750 metre east of the site.
- Ferring Rife & Meadows is within 5km of the site.
- The site is a Countryside Stewardship priority area for Lapwing.
- The site is within an SSSI Impact Zone but the proposal does not fall under any of the potential categories stated.

Bat records within 2km of the site were requested from the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre. The following records were found:

- There were a total of 39 bat records from 1992 to 2017 and included common pipistrelles, soprano pipistrelles, serotines, noctules, natterer's and long-eared bats.
- 13 bat roosts including a pipistrelle maternity roost, common pipistrelle day roosts and long-eared bat roosts.

3. Methodology – Preliminary Field Survey

3.1 Survey

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was carried out. This looks at the area to assess its likely value for protected species and other wildlife. It is not a specific survey for any one species and looks for general habitat types, but it will identify the need for further survey work if required. Once the appraisal is carried out and it is concluded that no further work is required an Ecological Impact Assessment of the proposal can be carried out.

The entire site was surveyed for protected species, and for the potential for protected species; the methodology for all protected species surveys followed guidance from Natural England's Standing Advice Sheets for the relevant species. Habitat features of interest were also noted. Species looked for included:

3.2 Bats

A consistent search effort for evidence of bats was applied to all parts of the site that are due to be impacted by the proposed works. The methodology used to search this site is consistent with the guidelines provided in the Bat Conservation Trusts Bat Survey Guidelines (2016).

Any buildings due to be demolished or converted as part of this development were surveyed for bats and their potential for bats. The features which were identified were assessed following the information in table I below. Any trees due to be removed were also assessed for potential roost features as outlined in the Bat Tree Habitat Key (2018). The features are outlined in Table I below.

Table I: Roosting potential for bats in buildings and trees

Type of habitat	Negligible	Low	Moderate	High
Building	No features on the site likely to be used by roosting bats.	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. The structure is unlikely to be regularly used.	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be regularly used by bats but is unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a regular basis, for longer periods of time.
Tree	No features on the site likely to be	A tree of sufficient size and age to contain Potential	A tree with multiple PRFs that could be regularly	A tree with multiple PRFs that are likely to be

	used by roosting bats.	Roosting Features (PRFs) but with none seen from the ground or features with only very limited roosting potential	used by common species of bats. The tree is unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	regularly used by larger numbers of bats, for a longer period of time.
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The habitat surrounding the site was assessed for its suitability for use by bats, identifying features such as possible commuting corridors and foraging areas. These features assist bats with orientation in the dark, allowing bats to successfully navigate between roosts and foraging areas. Areas like these provide important corridors for use by bats.

3.3 Breeding Birds

Any habitat features, for example, scrub and trees, which could potentially be used by nesting birds, were surveyed and any nesting activity within the buildings was noted. Ground nesting bird potential was also considered.

3.4 Reptiles

Habitat features that could be suitable as hibernacula or feeding/resting areas were noted.

3.5 Badger

Any area that could be used for feeding or could potentially contain a badger sett was surveyed and any signs noted.

3.6 Otter and Water Vole

Any areas with potential for use by either of these species were surveyed and any signs, such as spraint, footprints, droppings and piles of nibbled grass, were noted.

3.7 Dormouse

Any habitat features that could potentially provide feeding or nesting habitat for dormice were checked for signs of this species and areas with potential for use by dormice were noted. Visual surveys for nests and opened nuts were undertaken where the proposed work only impacts a small amount of habitat (for example access gaps in hedgerows).

3.8 Great Crested Newt

Any habitat features that could be used by this species was noted. This included both terrestrial and aquatic features. Any ponds within 500m of the site must be assessed for suitability for great crested

newts (providing that the landowner has granted access) using the standard Habitat Suitability Index form and method.

3.9 Protected Invertebrates

Potential for protected invertebrates was considered, including white-clawed crayfish, stag beetles, southern damselfly, brown and white-letter hairstreak butterflies.

3.10 Habitat

All areas of semi-natural habitat were also surveyed, and any features of interest noted. Consideration was also given to the potential of this area to act as a wildlife corridor.

Invertebrate habitat was considered during this assessment including potential for butterflies, moths and dragonflies. Micro features that are particularly important to invertebrates were also highlighted such as deadwood, edge of scrub, damp areas and grassland structure. The surveyor aimed to establish if further survey from a specialist entomologist would be required.

If there are any areas of semi-natural habitat present that maybe considered as species-rich a plant species list was made of plants apparent at the time of the survey and a 'DAFOR' scale applied to indicate relative abundance. A phase I map showing broad-based habitat types will be produced if there are a mosaic of semi-natural (not landscaped) habitats present.

3.11 Legislation

Legislation relating to these species can be found in Appendix I of this report.

4. Baseline Ecological Conditions

4.1 Bats

After having carried out the bat check; the surveyor concluded that the carport and cottage had external bat roosting potential but there was no other roosting potential on the other buildings. This conclusion was reached after having found the following;

- All the buildings within the site were assessed for any bat roosting potential. The showroom, offices and workshop buildings were very unfavourable for roosting bats and had a complete absence of potential bat roosting points, as there were no loft spaces, no roof tiles and no holes noted on the soffits. However, the large carport had slate roof tiles which were loose or missing in areas and the ridge tiles had areas of mortar missing, these features created potential roosts for crevice dwelling bats (photo 1, 2 & 3). The cottage was in poor condition and has been unoccupied for some time. The loft space within the cottage had no evidence of bat activity but loose areas of bituminous lining were noted. This had the potential to allow access from outside. There were several gaps present under the clay roof tiles and hanging tiles on the rear dormer window of the cottage, that had bat roosting potential (photo 4, 5 & 6).
- The site had the occasional scattered tree, shrubs and a scrub area at the rear of the cottage. Due to these features being isolated across the site and having no connection with the wider environment, it is unlikely that bats would use the site for foraging and commuting.

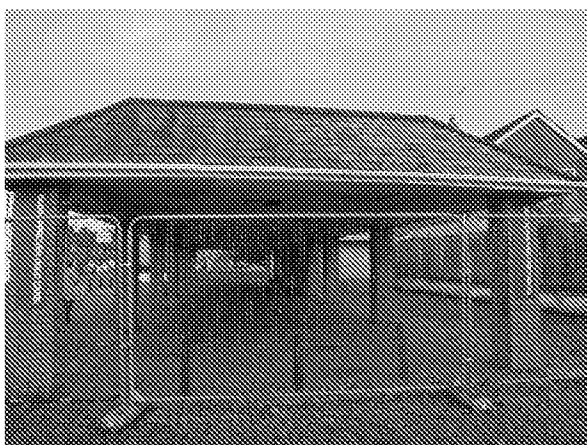


Photo 1: The carport within the courtyard area.



Photo 2: The missing roof tiles on the carport.

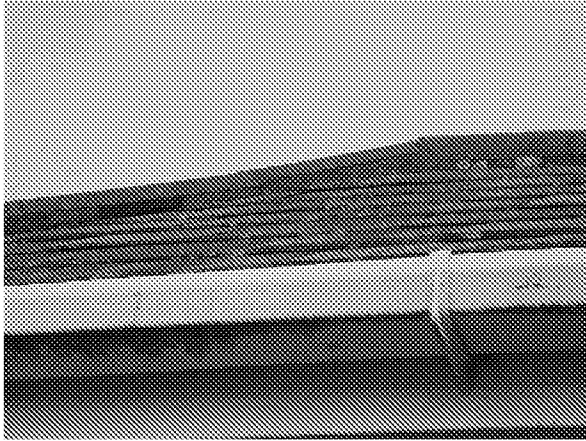


Photo 3: The missing mortar under the ridge tiles on the carport.



Photo 4: The loose bituminous lining in the loft of the cottage.



Photo 5: The cottage with gaps under the tiles.



Photo 6: The dormer window on the cottage with loose hanging tiles.

4.2 Breeding birds

The proposed site was surveyed for breeding birds. The surveyors concluded that there was a medium potential for breeding birds. This conclusion was based on the following:

- The buildings were assessed for breeding birds and no nests were found within the buildings or on the external structures on the day of the survey. However, there was future potential for breeding birds to nest in the outbuilding (photo 7).
- The trees and shrubs scattered along the boundary of the site and the scrub at the rear of the cottage had the potential for breeding birds (photo 7 & 8).

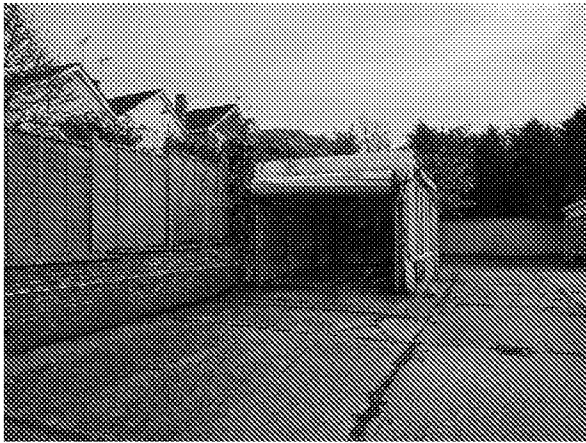


Photo 7: The outbuilding with shrubs growing on top and row of Leyland cypress along the boundary.

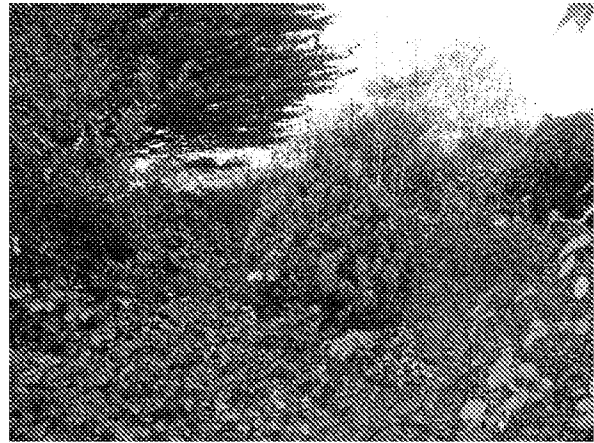


Photo 8: The scrub at the rear of the cottage.

4.3 Reptiles

The proposed site was surveyed for its potential for reptiles. The surveyor concluded that the site had no habitat to support reptiles. This conclusion was based on the following:

- The site was predominantly buildings and hardstanding and contained no grassland habitat for reptiles.

4.4 Badgers

The proposed site was surveyed for its potential for badgers. The surveyor concluded that there was no suitable habitat for badgers. This conclusion was based on the following:

- The site consisted of predominantly buildings and hardstanding, offering no habitat for badgers.

4.5 Otter and Water Vole

The proposed site was surveyed for its potential for otters and water voles. The surveyor concluded that the site had no potential habitat. This conclusion was based on the following:

- There was no habitat suitability within the site, due to the site consisting of only buildings and hardstanding.

4.6 Dormouse

The proposed site was surveyed for its potential for dormouse. The surveyor concluded that the site had no potential habitat. This conclusion was based on the following:

- There was no habitat suitability within the site, as there were only isolated single species hedgerows surrounded by buildings and hardstanding, with no connectivity to the wider environment.

4.7 Great Crested Newts

The proposed site was surveyed for its potential for Great crested newts. The surveyor concluded that the site had no potential habitat. This conclusion was based on the following:

- There is one pond on the edge of a 500m radius of the site. However, this pond is used regularly for fishing, has poor to moderate water quality and was surrounded by poor terrestrial habitat. Therefore, it is unlikely that great crested newts are present.
- There was no habitat suitability within the site, due to the site being predominantly buildings and hardstanding.

4.8 Protected Invertebrates

The proposed site was had no suitable habitat for protected invertebrates.

4.9 Habitats

The site consisted of buildings and hardstanding with occasional tree and shrubs along the boundaries and scrub habitat at the rear of the cottage.

An ash tree and Scots pine were growing within the residential property to the north of the access area to the site. Along the southwest boundary, there was a Monterey cypress tree and two sycamore tree. A group of English elm and a row of Leyland cypress were growing on top of the two retaining walls along the southeast boundary of the site.

Along the east boundary, there were sycamore saplings, goat willow sapling, pittosporum sapling, cordyline, bamboo, rowan sapling and a small cherry laurel hedgerow.

The area at the rear of the cottage had been left unmanaged allowing scrub to grow such as brambles, ivy, blackthorn saplings, sycamore saplings, an ash sapling, an elder tree and a dead fruit tree.

All trees and shrubs are to be retained except for the Monterey cypress tree and the scrub that has grown at the rear of the cottage.

5. Constraints.

There were no significant constraints.

6. Further Survey work

6.1 Bat activity survey

6.1.1 Methodology

The methodology used to survey this site is consistent with the guidelines provided in the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Survey Guidelines (2016). This involves an ecologist visiting at dusk and dawn to listen/record (using a bat detector) and watch for bats emerging/re-enter from roosts and compile information on the species, numbers, access points and roosting locations. Four surveyors and two infrared cameras were used to survey the main property and annexe building in order to conduct one emergence survey at dusk.

Dusk Survey on the carport and cottage

Date of Survey Visit	Start and end times and time of sunset	Structure reference/ location	Equipment used	Weather
06/05/2021	Start – 20:17 Sunset – 20:32 Finish – 22:02	Former BMW garage and cottage, Water Lane, Angmering	Baton XD, Eleckon and Echo Meter Touch 2 Pro plus recording equipment, one sony night shot camcorder and one Canon video camera both with one infrared light	Start – 9°C Finish – 7°C 5/8 cloud 1/12 wind
Comments:	The position of the four surveyors and camcorder/cameras are in Figure 3 & 4, four surveyors and two camcorder/cameras were used – Jennifer Chamblor (2020-45160-CLS-CLS, ACIEEM), David King, Kate Chadwick and Laura Cowley.			

Dawn Survey on the carport and cottage

Date of Survey Visit	Start and end times and time of sunset	Structure reference/ location	Equipment used	Weather
11/06/2021	Start – 03:18 Sunset – 04:50 Finish – 05:00	Former BMW garage and cottage, Water Lane, Angmering	Baton XD, Eleckon, Pettersson and Echo Meter Touch 2 Pro plus recording equipment, one sony night shot camcorder and one Canon video camera both with one infrared light	Start – 15°C Finish – 15°C 8/8 cloud 0/12 wind A little foggy at the start of the survey
Comments:	The position of the four surveyors and camcorder/cameras are in Figure 3 & 4, four surveyors and two camcorder/cameras were used – Jennifer Chambler (2020-45160-CLS-CLS, ACIEEM), Jonathan Crewe (2016-19524-CLS-CLS, ACIEEM), Kate Chadwick and Laura Cowley.			



Figure 3. Aerial view of the carport being surveyed with red stars showing where the surveyors were positioned and the blue star was where the camcorder was positioned during the dusk and dawn survey (aerial image Copyright Google Earth).



Figure 4. Aerial view of the cottage being surveyed with red stars showing where the surveyors were positioned and the blue star was where the camcorder/camera was positioned during the dusk and dawn survey (aerial image Copyright Google Earth).

6.1.2 Results

The bat species were identified from sonograms from the recordings collected on the surveys. These were analysed using the software Kaleidoscope.

Dusk Survey

Date	Start and end time	Species	Roost type	Structure reference	Roost location	Access point	Explanation of where the roost is
06/05/2021	Start – 20:17 Finish – 22:02	N/A	N/A	Former BMW garage and cottage, Water Lane, Angmering	N/A	N/A	N/A
Comments:		There were very low levels of bat activity throughout the survey. Only common pipistrelles were heard commuting across the site.					

Dawn Survey

Date	Start and end time	Species	Roost type	Structure reference	Roost location	Access point	Explanation of where the roost is

11/06/2021	Start – 03:18 Finish – 05:00	N/A	N/A	Former BMW garage and cottage, Water Lane, Angmering	N/A	N/A	N/A
Comments:		There were low levels of bat activity throughout the survey with common pipistrelles and a noctule heard commuting across the site and common pipistrelles occasional foraging in the garden of the cottage.					

6.1.3 Conclusion

The conclusion of these surveys means that bats were not found to be using the carport and cottage as a roost. Therefore, no further survey work is required prior to demolition.

7. Ecological Impact Assessment

7.1 Bats

All bat species and their roosts are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017). Roosting potential was noted on the external structure of both the carport and the cottage during the preliminary assessment. This was further investigated through two bat activity surveys with no bats emerging or re-entering the buildings. It was found that the buildings were not used as a roost by bats. Therefore, the development will have no impact on roosting bats.

The scattered trees, shrubs and scrub habitat within the site are unlikely to be used by foraging and commuting bats due to being isolated from the wider environment. However, as a precaution, the external lighting used on the site during construction and post-construction should follow a suitable lighting scheme and regime in accordance with Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK. This will avoid any short or long term impact on foraging and commuting bats.

7.2 Breeding Birds

There was future potential for breeding birds to nest within the outbuilding, trees, shrubs, hedgerows and scrub on the site. If nesting birds are disturbed this will cause an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). All the trees and shrubs are due to be retained as part of the development. However, as a precaution, any works on the outbuilding and scrub must start before the bird breeding season between October to the end of February; at other times of the year an ecologist must check for nests immediately before works start. Should any active nests be found, the ecologist will recommend exclusion zones within which works will be restricted until the birds have fledged. Works can only proceed once the ecologist has checked again and gives the all clear. This will ensure that no nesting birds are disturbed. Mitigation must be included in the proposed development, such as incorporating bird nest bricks within the external wall. This will allow the continuation of breeding birds in the area and avoid any long-term impact.

8. Mitigation

- No further ecological survey work is required on the site prior to development.
- The carport and cottage have been investigated further for bat roosting potential and they have been found not to be used by bats for roosting.
- The removal of the outbuilding and scrub habitat must be undertaken between October to the end of February, at other times of the year an ecologist must check for nests immediately (within 24 hours) before works start. Should any active nests be found, the ecologist will recommend exclusion zones within which works will be restricted until the birds have fledged. Works can only proceed once the ecologist has checked again and gives the all clear. This will ensure that no nesting birds are disturbed.
- As the site will lose some potential breeding bird habitat mitigation must be put in place. Five type 24 Schwegler brick bird nest boxes with a 32mm entrance hole will be built into the external wall of each of the new building. They will be placed two to four meters above the ground. This would allow the continuation of breeding birds in the area, therefore avoiding any long-term impact.
- All the trees are to be retained within the site and must be protected during the construction phase of the development and post-development. A Root Protection Area must be calculated for each tree, in accordance with British Standard BS. 5837:2012. This protection area will be highlighted by a high-visibility tape on a temporary fence. Contractors must be briefed not to drive into these areas or dump any material inside the tree protection area.
- The site must adopt the following suitable external lighting schemes and regimes in accordance with Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK. Bats and the built environment series, Bat Conservation Trust (London) & Institution of Lighting Professionals (Rugby) (2018) during and post-development. With no external lighting pointed directly towards new bat roosting features and newly planted hedgerows, this should reduce any impact on bat foraging and commuting activity.
- Any brush piles, compost and debris piles on site could provide shelter areas and hibernation potential for hedgehogs. These piles must be removed outside of the hibernation period mid-October to mid-March inclusive. The piles must undergo soft demolition.

- As a precaution any trenches should be covered overnight, or a means of escape made available and any hazardous chemicals need to be suitably stored away so animals cannot access them.

9. Enhancements

- Five IFR Schwegler bat tubes or equivalent agreed with the ecologist must be built into the external wall of each of the new building. These will be placed on Southeast or Southwest elevation at least three meters but no more than six meters from ground level. The tubes must be clear of vegetation and other obstructions. These will create new crevice roosts.
- Five bee bricks will be incorporated into the external wall of each of the new buildings. They must be placed in a warm sunny spot on a south-facing wall at a minimum height of 1m, with no vegetation obstructing the holes.
- A corridor of connectivity will be created between the gardens of the new building and the surrounding area for hedgehogs. This will be done by cutting a hole (13cm x 13cm) in each of the garden fences.
- Seven new trees will be planted within the site. The new tree planting will include a combination of at least 75% British native including smaller canopy trees such as hawthorn, field maple, rowan, whitebeam, silver birch, crap apple, willow and 25% non-native such as fruit trees and sycamore to ensure ecological value and resilience.
- 45metres of new native hedgerow will be planted along the southwestern boundary. The hedgerow must be planted with the following proportions:

○ Hawthorn	(Crataegus monogyna)	40%
○ Honeysuckle	(Lonicera periclymenum)	10%
○ Blackthorn	(Prunus spinosa)	10%
○ Field Maple	(Acer campestre)	10%
○ Hazel	(Corylus avellane)	10%
○ Dogwood	(Cornus sanguinea)	8%
○ Guelder Rose	(Viburnum opulus)	5%
○ Spindle	(Euonymus europaeus)	5%
○ Holly	(Ilex aquifolium)	2%
Total		100%
- Two hedgehog nesting boxes will be included on the site.
- At least three log piles will be created within the site,

10. Conclusion

The site was assessed as having very little conservation value as the site had negligible significant habitat due to the site consisting of mostly buildings and hardstanding and a small scattering of trees and shrubs. If the mitigation measures are followed to prevent disturbance to breeding birds and foraging/commuting bats, it is thought that this proposal is unlikely to have a big impact on the biodiversity within the local area. The development proposal will include enhancement measures so that the overall outcome will be a net gain in biodiversity.

II. References

Collins, J.(ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition).
The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Appendix I

Legislation (summary)

I. Wildlife Protection legislation

Mammals:

Otters, dormice, water voles, and **all bat species** are fully protected under section 9 (5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). According to this act it is an offence to:

- Intentionally capture, kill or injure one of these animals
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used by one of these animals for shelter or protection
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb an animal whilst it is using this place
- sell, offer for sale or advertise for one of these animals live or dead

Designated as European Protected Species' **otters, dormice** and **all bat species** receive additional protection from the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, under Schedule 2 which implements the EC Directive 92/43/EEC in the United Kingdom. In accordance with this act, it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture or kill a European Protected Species
- Deliberately disturb a European Protected Species
- Damage or destroy the breeding site or resting place of a European Protected Species

The **greater and lesser horseshoe bats, barbastelle** and **bechstein's bats**, are also listed under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations. Areas which support populations of these species can therefore be considered for designation as a Special Areas of Conservation (**SACs**).

Badgers receive protection from the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. According to this act, it is an offence to:

- to willfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger;

- to attempt to do so; or
- to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett.

Reptiles and Amphibians:

Slow worms, adders, grass snake, viviparous lizard, are protected against intentional killing, injuring or sale under section 9 (1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Great crested newt, natterjack toad, sand lizard and smooth snake are fully protected under section 9 (5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These species also receive additional protection as **European Protected Species** under schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, which implements the EC Directive 92/43/EEC in the United Kingdom.

Birds:

Please Note: All breeding birds and their nests are protected under the general protection of Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 as amended. This makes it an offence to disturb breeding birds.

2. Conserving and enhancing the Natural Environment. Section 15, NPPF updated February 2019

The National Planning Framework was re-issued in July 2018 and updated in February 2019. Key points relevant to the Natural Environment are given below.

8. Re: Sustainable development. The NPPF recognizes “that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives).

These are the **economic objective**, the **social objective**, and the **environmental objective**; the full text of paragraph c) relating to this third objective reads as follows:

“to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently,

minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

175. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) 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;
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

176. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
- c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

177. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), **unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.”**

Footnote 56 also notes that Circular 06/2005 (**Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system, Part IV Conservation**)
