

Ecological Impact Assessment

4 South Drive,
Ferring

South
Downs
Ecology

George Sayer
MCIEEM MARBORA

Ecological Impact Assessment

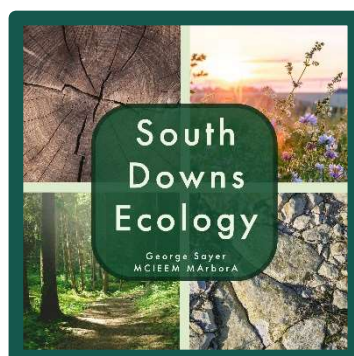
4 South Drive, Ferring

Quality Assurance:

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Site	4 South Drive, Ferring, Worthing BN12 5QS
Client	Mr and Mrs Smith
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Report conditions	The methods and recommendations in this report are based on the following: • CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing 2017 (CIEEM, 2017) • CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2024) • Surveys have been carried out following the guidance sources set out in CIEEM's Good Practice Guidance for Habitats and Species (CIEEM, 2021), which include: ○ CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Second Edition (CIEEM, 2017) ○ CIEEM Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. Second Edition (CIEEM, 2017) ○ Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (BCT, 2023)

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Summary

Mr and Mrs Smith have commissioned a Bat Roost Assessment, Bat Emergence Survey and Ecological Impact Assessment for proposals at the existing property; 4 South Drive, Ferring, Worthing BN12 5QS (TQ 09408 01631, hereafter referred to as 'the site').

An Ecological Impact Assessment including a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment was carried out on the 30th May 2025 by Aidan Bird (BSc Ecology, Conservation, and Environmental *Science - Ecologist*). Resultant of which a bat emergence survey was carried out on 6th June 2025. The following Ecological Impact Assessment has been completed by Aidan and reviewed by George Sayer (BSc(Hons) PgDip MCIEEM MArborA – *Principle Ecologist*).

The site consists of a derelict building with a sparsely vegetated garden containing few species and ecological opportunities. The site has a scattering of construction material from the building.

The proposals are for a full demolition and rebuilding of a new dwelling with landscaping across the whole site.

The proposals are not anticipated to have any significant impact upon ecology; the building is considered to offer 'low' bat roost potential. The bat emergence survey indicates that a bat roost is highly unlikely to be present within the works area and that bat roosts would not be impacted by proposals. Some basic mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that bats are protected in the unlikely event that the building is subsequently occupied.

No significant effects are anticipated upon any designated site, provided basic avoidance measures are built into the proposals.

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 minor net gain. The proposals would therefore accord with the relevant local and national planning policies and the relevant legislation.

The proposals are exempt from mandatory BNG, due to impacting less than 25sqm of habitat.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Mr and Mrs Smith have commissioned a Bat Roost Assessment, Bat Emergence Survey and Ecological Impact Assessment for proposals at the existing property; 4 South Drive, Ferring, Worthing BN12 5QS (TQ 09408 01631, hereafter referred to as 'the site').
- 1.2 A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment was carried out on the 30th May 2025 by Aidan Bird (BSc Ecology, Conservation, and Environmental Science - Ecologist). A bat emergence survey was carried out on 6th June 2025.
- 1.3 The following Ecological Impact Assessment report has been completed by Aidan Bird and reviewed by George Sayer (*BSc(Hons) PgDip MCIEEM MArborA – Principle Ecologist*). The purpose of the assessment has been to identify whether any potential impacts upon protected species, habitats or designated sites might occur, and to propose mitigation or avoidance measures where necessary.
- 1.4 Based on the results of the appraisal, recommendations for potential ecological enhancements have been provided.

Site Description and Surrounding Area

- 1.5 The site consists of a small parcel of land with a centralised detached single-story derelict property. The property is of brick and breeze block construction with an external textured render finished with a timber joist and sarked cement tile roof. Overall condition of the property is poor with significant points of access across all aspects of the property. The surrounding land is mainly bare, with minimal grasses and few forbs.
- 1.6 The site is located on South Drive, less than 150m from England's southern coastline, nestled within the largely urban area of Ferring. The coastal village makes up part of the urban sprawl west of Worthing, south of the A259.

Proposals

- 1.7 The proposals are for full demolition of the property and rebuild using the existing footprint alongside significant new landscaping.

2.0 Scope of Assessment

1. *Categorise habitats present on the site;*
2. *Identify habitat which may have potential for protected species;*
3. *Identify whether any signs of protected species are present on-site;*
4. *Recommend whether further surveys are required, or whether there are any relevant constraints with regards to protected species;*
5. *Identify impacts of the proposed development and set out appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures;*
6. *Provide recommendations 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) was updated in December 2024 and 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 set in the Ferring ward within the Arun District; the current local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2018 and comprises a written statement and supporting Policies Maps 1-4 (Arun District Council, 2018). Alongside this plan future development decisions will also consider the Clymping neighbourhood plan (Arun District Council, 2023a) and National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2023). Issues of nitrate pollution, water quality and abstraction have generated environmental problems within neighbouring authorities, especially in relation to sensitive internationally designated sites. These have seen restrictions placed upon planning applications until nitrate and water neutrality can be demonstrated. Although "not currently an issue in Arun", the district is aided with guidance from statements of Southern water, Natural England and the Environment agency (Arun District Council, 2023b).
- 3.4 The local plan sets out Arun's future vision and guides developments; their objective for the natural environment is "to plan for climate change and work in harmony with the environment to conserve natural resources and increase biodiversity".

3.5 ENV SP1 Natural Environment

- Arun District Council will encourage and promote the preservation, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment through the development process and particularly through policies for the protection of both designated and non-designated sites. Where possible it shall also promote the creation of new areas for habitats and species. In relation to designated sites, development will be permitted where it protects sites listed in Tables 17.1-17.7 that are recognised for the species and habitats contained within them.

3.6 ENV DM1 Designated Sites of biodiversity or geological importance

- Proposed development likely to have an adverse effect on land with the designated features of any Site of Biodiversity or Geological Importance as listed in Tables 17.1 - 17.7 or any subsequently designated sites (either individually or in combination with other developments), will not normally be permitted.
- Consideration will be given to the exact designated features present on the site, their scarcity/rarity and recognition of the protection offered by their existing status. Development on wildlife sites with the highest value will only be permitted exceptionally where the following can be demonstrated:

- i. There is no alternative solution (which shall be adequately demonstrated by the developer).
- ii. There are reasons of public health or public safety or Adoption Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (July 2018) Arun District Council 209 17 Natural Environment
- iii. There are benefits of primary importance to the environment or
- iv. There are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.
 - Notwithstanding the above however, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where development requiring appropriate assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives is being considered, planned or determined.
 - In determining any planning application affecting Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance the Council will ensure that the intrinsic natural features of particular interest are safeguarded or enhanced having regard to;
 - i. The European, National or Local status and designation of the site;
 - ii. The nature and quality of the site's features, including its rarity value;
 - iii. The extent of any adverse impacts on the notified features of interest;
 - iv. The need for compensatory measures in order to re-create remaining features of habitats on or off the site.
 - Where appropriate the Council will ensure the effective management of designated sites through the imposition of planning conditions or Section 106 agreements as appropriate.

3.7 ENV DM2 Pagham Harbour

- Within Zone A (0-400m from the boundary) as identified on the Policies Maps, development will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the developer is able to demonstrate there will be no detrimental effects on Pagham Harbour, including non-native species and the water environment. Regard shall also be had to tests 1-4 as set out in Policy DM1 (Designated Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance).
- Within Zone B (0-5km) for all new residential development and development which is likely to have an impact on Pagham Harbour will be required to:
 - i. Make developer contributions towards the agreed strategic approach to access management at Pagham Harbour.
 - ii. create easily accessible new green spaces for recreation within or adjacent to the development site. These shall be capable of accommodating the predicted increases in demand for local walking, including dog walking. Good pedestrian links shall be provided between housing areas and new and existing green space in order to discourage car use. 212 Arun District Council Adoption Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (July 2018) 17 Natural Environment
- Major developments (as defined in the GDPO 1995 as amended(61)) taking place outside Zone B and close to its boundary will be considered on a case by case basis to determine any potential effects on Pagham Harbour, and the need for any avoidance or mitigation measures.

3.8 ENV DM3 Biodiversity Opportunity Areas

- Development shall:
 - a. Retain and sympathetically incorporate locally valued and important habitats, including wildlife corridors and stepping stones
 - b. Be designed in order to minimise disturbance to habitats
 - Development proposals that do not reasonably address opportunities for enhancing these through their design, layout and landscaping or access/management shall not be permitted. Where a development scheme would result in a habitat loss, mitigation measures will be proposed as part of the proposed scheme and such measures agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to the determination of any planning application. Within Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) identified on the Policies Maps or where likely to have an impact on species or habitats within the BOAs, any application for planning permission shall include a properly conducted survey of the presence of that species and habitat and impact(s) that development may have on the BOA.

3.9 ENV DM4 Protection of trees

- Development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order(s), (TPO) identified as Ancient Woodland, in a Conservation Area or contributing to local amenity, will not be damaged or destroyed now and as they reach maturity, unless development:
 - a. Would result in the removal of one or more trees in the interests of good arboricultural practice. This shall be demonstrated by the developer following the advice of a suitably qualified person which shall be guided by BS 5837 (2012). Details of any advice received having regard to BS 5837 (2012) shall be submitted, in writing, as part of a planning application; or
 - b. Would enhance the survival and growth prospects of other protected trees;
 - c. The benefits of the proposed development in a particular location outweigh the loss of trees or woodland, especially ancient woodland. 216 Arun District Council Adoption Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (July 2018) 17 Natural Environment
 - Where planning permission is granted in any of the above instances, conditions shall be used to ensure that, for any trees which are removed as part of a development, at least an equivalent number of a similar species and age (where practical) are planted on the proposed development site. Sufficient space for replacement trees to mature without causing future nuisance or damage shall be provided. The planting of new trees shall form an integral part of the design of any development scheme.
 - Proper provision must be made for the protection and management of trees or areas of woodland on-site when undertaking development. A management plan shall be provided as part of a planning application in accordance with BS 5837 (2012) in order to ensure that trees are adequately protected during development and appropriately maintained in the future. Conditions for the continued protection of trees on sites shall be included in any planning permission given.

- Where there are existing trees on or adjacent to a development site, developers shall be required to provide:
- d. Land and tree surveys
- e. A tree constraints plan
- f. An arboricultural impact assessment to include a tree protection plan and arboricultural method statement
- These will ensure that development is planned to take a comprehensive view of tree issues at an early stage in the design process and that development works do not have a negative impact on existing trees.

3.10 Policy ENV DM5 Development and biodiversity

- Development schemes shall, in the first instance, seek to achieve a net gain in biodiversity and protect existing habitats on site. They shall also however incorporate elements of biodiversity including green walls, roofs, bat and bird boxes as well as landscape features minimising adverse impacts on existing habitats (whether designated or not). Development schemes shall also be appropriately designed to facilitate the emergence of new habitats through the creation of links between habitat areas and open spaces. Together, these provide a network of green spaces which serve to reconnect isolated sites and facilitate species movement.
- Where there is evidence of a protected species on a proposed development site, planning applications shall include a detailed survey of the subject species, with details of measures to be incorporated into the development scheme to avoid loss of the species. This involves consideration of any impacts that will affect the species directly or indirectly, whether within the application site or in an area outside of the site, which may be indirectly affected by the proposals. All surveys shall be carried out at an appropriate time of year and shall be undertaken by a qualified and, where appropriate, suitably licensed person.
- All developments shall have regard to Natural England's standing advice for protected species.
- In general, the Council aim to assure long term survival of the most valuable and threatened species and habitats. All developments should therefore consider the preservation and enhancement of local biodiversity throughout the design process of development schemes. Proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) will not normally be permitted. Retention of trees and habitat is desired but in certain circumstances a new resource of at least equivalent value should be provided where there is loss of the original feature as a result of development. Any proposals should consider impacts on environmentally significant sites both within Arun and neighbouring planning authorities. Development plans should enhance the sites biodiversity by creating new, or improving existing, habitats.

Legislation

- 3.11 Legislation relating to wildlife and biodiversity of particular relevance to this PBRA 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 Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
 - The Protection of Badgers Act 1992;
 - The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996;
 - The Environment Act 2021.
- 3.12 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.
- 3.13 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.
- 3.14 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.
- 3.15 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.
- 3.16 Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is an offence to harm badgers or disturb badgers and their setts.
- 3.17 Water voles are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and are 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).
- 3.18 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.

- 3.19 All other mammals receive general protection against cruelty, inhumane killing or injuring under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996. This protection includes 'intentional' crushing and asphyxiation, for example that might occur when excavating mammal burrows.
- 3.20 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 custom and self-build applications. This development is exempt from Mandatory BNG under the householder 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 2.0 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. Any sites of relevance to the proposals are 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 30th May 2025. Habitats were recorded according to the UK-Habs Classification System as described within the UK Habitats Manual v.2.01 (UKHab Ltd 2023). During the surveys any constraints with regard to protected species were considered; the site was considered for its potential for protected species even when signs of these species were not noted at the time of the surveys. Other species have been considered where relevant.
- 4.3 The property was assessed by Aidan Bird, an ecologist with over 5 years' relevant experience, accredited agent under George Sayer's CL18 bat licence (2018-34434-CLS) for its suitability to hold roosting bats; roof voids were assessed where relevant, and access points identified using high power torch; endoscope and binoculars as appropriate. Any evidence of bats such as grease marks, bat droppings, urine splashes were noted. The bat roost assessment was conducted following the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines Fourth Edition (2023). Bat roost suitability is assigned to buildings ranging from 'negligible', to 'low', 'moderate' and 'high'.
- 4.4 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 the Survey Guidelines and all reasonable effort has been made to identify evidence of protected species.

Bat Emergence Survey

- 4.5 A single bat emergence surveys was undertaken on 6th June 2025 in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines Fourth (2023) Editions, and the Interim Guidance on the Use of Night Vision Aids (2022). Given the size of the buildings, and the relative potential for bats (with no evidence of any bat roost), a single survey with two surveyors and four night-vision aids was considered sufficient to undertake a detailed survey of the entire building.
- 4.6 The dusk emergence survey began c.20 minutes before sunset and continued until c.1.5 hours after.

Table 1 – Summary of Bat Surveys

Date	Sunset	Start	End	Weather Conditions – Start	Weather Conditions - End
6 th June 2025	21:11	20:51	22:41	15.5C, BF.3, Okt.3, RH71%	13.8°C, BF.3, Okt.8, RH85%, Moderate rain

- 4.7 The building was covered using two experienced surveyors and four external infrared cameras (Canon XA40, XA50 and XA60, with two illuminators per camera– Nightfox XB5 Pro 850nm torches and separate high powered Raytec infrared lights) to improve coverage, better vision later into the survey and the ability to review potential emergencies. When surveyors deemed light levels too low to identify features on the building, the use of external monitors (10 inch with 1024 x 600 resolution) displaying camera outputs were implemented. The surveyors and cameras thoroughly covered the survey area and the likelihood of bats being missed is very low.
- 4.8 All surveys were designed and led by Aidan Bird, with supervision from George Sayer MCIEEM (Level 2 Bat Licence 2018-34434-CLS) where required, using an assistant surveyor with at least 4 years of relevant experience. Surveyors and cameras thoroughly covered the survey area and the likelihood of bats being missed is very low.
- 4.9 Bat detection was carried out using Echo Meter Touch 2 Pro Full Spectrum Recording Bat Detectors enabling a sampling rate of 384kHz to capture sounds of up to 192kHz ensuring that all British bat species calls are detectable. Analysis of recordings were carried out where necessary on Sonobat software. Infrared camera footage was reviewed at between 0.8-1.5x speed on VLC media player where necessary.
- 4.10 The weather conditions were suitable at the start of the survey however declined to suboptimal in the final 15 minutes with moderate rainfall. The rainfall was not heavy enough to dissuade more resilient species from emerging and pipistrelle species were still noted to be flying during this time. The survey was conducted at an optimal time of year to detect bat presence. As such whilst this is noted as a constraint but not sufficiently to alter the outcome of the assessment.

Ecological Impact Assessment

- 4.11 The methodology for Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) follows best practice guidelines set by the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM): 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment' (CIEEM, 2018). 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.
- 4.12 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.
- 4.13 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.

- 4.14 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) to which detailed reference has been made.

Baseline Ecological Conditions and Protected Species Assessment

Desktop Study

Designated Sites and Habitats within 2.0km

- 4.15 The following 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.
- 4.16 There are no statutory designated sites within 2km of the site. The nearest SAC is the Arun Valley SAC c.13km NNE and is therefore within the 12.0 km Wider Conservation Area (SDNPA and NE 2018). Within this area significant impacts upon bats must be considered in the context of potential impacts upon the SAC.

Habitats

Desk Study

- 4.17 UK Priority Habitats within 1.0 km of the site include coastal floodplain and grazing marsh, reedbeds, coastal vegetated shingle, chalk streams/rivers, lowland fens, semi-improved grassland, traditional orchard and deciduous woodland. None of these habitats are on or within close proximity to the site.

Site Assessment

- 4.18 The site consists of a domestic dwelling with a surrounding garden of bare ground and some native forbs and grass species. These habitats of **negligible value** which are discussed further below.

U1b5 - Buildings and Structures

- 4.19 The main house is a single storey building with a hipped roof consisting of a tile and sarked roof in poor condition and offer **negligible ecological value** in a broader sense. The potential for the buildings to support protected species is discussed in the preliminary bat roost assessment below.

U1f 510 – Sparsely Vegetated Urban Land

- 4.20 The property consists of predominantly bare ground with various grass species including perennial ryegrass, Yorkshire fog, and annual meadowgrass. There are few common forbs. The habitat offers **negligible to site ecological value**.

5.0 Protected Species Assessment

Bats

Desk Study

- 5.1 There is 1no. European Protected Species Mitigation License *EPSML* return for bats within a 2.0km radius of the site which concerns common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, and brown long eared bat *Plecotus auritus*. The licence (case reference: 2020-48782-EPS-MIT) referenced sits c.840m NNE and runs from 2020 affecting non-breeding roosts for these species.
- 5.2 A review of planning applications along South Drive within the past 5 years was undertaken; a number of preliminary bat roost assessments, and several emergence surveys have been conducted, and no bat roosts have yet been recorded.

Site Assessment

- 5.3 The property is a rendered brick and breeze block construction completed with a timber sarked and flat concrete tile hipped roof. The house is in a state of disrepair with missing sections of tiles, damaged render, and absent bargeboards. It is also noted that there is material damage to the front of the house where a historic porch had previously stood.
- 5.4 The damage to the roof allows for access into the void providing potential roosting opportunities for bats. Furthermore, the gaps created through removed bargeboards and lifted tiles create crevice dwelling opportunities between the sarking and roof tiles. No evidence of bats such as droppings or live bats could be observed through torch inspection.
- 5.5 Internally, the property has been cleared for construction work with a small area of ceiling plasterboard removed creating a link between the loft and rooms. The loft space consists of cut rafters with timber sarking and fibreglass insulation atop the ceilings. The internal roofscape had significant ingress of natural light from the large areas of damage, predominantly from the east elevation however showed no evidence of bats. Overall, the house is considered to have **low** bat roost suitability upon consideration of the area. Whilst it is considered unlikely that bats are present, the number of suitable access points make it impossible to categorically rule bat presence out.
- 5.6 The surrounding garden has little to no suitability for foraging and commuting bats.

Bat Emergence Survey

- 5.7 The bat emergence survey was conducted during optimal conditions at the beginning however declined to suboptimal upon the conclusion of the survey (4.6 – Table 1). Bat activity in the area is known to be low, consisting of common species and the activity recorded on the site was consistent with these findings with activity very low. The only recorded bat echolocation during the survey was a soprano pipistrelle at 21:50 (39 minutes after sunset) commuting at height north of site.
- 5.8 No bats were observed emerge from or closely interact with the building. The low levels of activity suggest limited use of the surrounding gardens for foraging and commuting. Upon considering the significant access points and their recent creation in the building it is not possible to completely rule out the building's future use by bats as a temporary roosting location by single or few individuals. The continued deterioration of the building might allow for new roosting features or occasional use by bats.
- 5.9 The site is considered of **low value** to roosting bats and **negligible site value** to foraging and commuting bats.

Birds

Desk Study

- 5.10 Numerous bird species are present in the local area, including a number of hedgerow and garden species which would move between properties.

Site Assessment

- 5.11 No evidence of nesting birds was found within the building or in/on the roof. The property, in its derelict condition, has the potential to provide nesting opportunities for common species of birds found in the local area.
- 5.12 The wider site offers **negligible to low** value to a wide range of foraging and nesting birds but is not to be affected by works.

Reptile

Desktop Study

- 5.13 Records of a variety of reptiles exist within a 2km radius of the site such as slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* and grass snake *Natrix helvetica*.

Site Assessment

- 5.14 The lack of vegetation on site and connectivity means there is unlikely any foraging and commuting opportunities for reptiles. The site is scattered with various construction materials and a small mound of mixed ground materials which may hypothetically could provide shelter for reptiles despite its isolation. The site is of **negligible low** value to reptiles.

Hedgehog

Desktop Study

- 5.15 There are low numbers of records of hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* within a 2km radius of the site.

Site Assessment

- 5.16 No evidence of hedgehogs was noted during the survey, however there is a **low** potential for individuals to use the garden for foraging and commuting.

Others

Desktop Study

- 5.17 There are isolated records of badger *Meles meles* within a 2.0km radius of the site predominantly outside the Ferring urban area. There is a known great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* breeding pond within 250m of the site.

Site Assessment

- 5.18 The garden does not have the capacity to support badgers. Considering the close proximity to a known breeding pond the site is within a commutable distance and has a low potential to harbour hibernating individuals underneath the scattered construction materials across the site.

6.0 Evaluation of Impacts and Mitigation

Designated Sites

Potential Impacts

- 6.1 The site is not within impact areas for statutory designated sites. The impacts of construction traffic and noise, dust and pollution upon the designated sites or other designated sites would be negligible.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 6.2 None required.

Residual Impacts

- 6.3 The impacts will be negligible.

Habitats

Potential Impacts

- 6.4 The proposals would impact only the existing building and bare ground. In the absence of mitigation, the proposals would include dust, noise and light pollution of adjacent garden habitats. Inappropriate storage of materials could lead to the further degradation of the garden and provide additional habitat for commuting small reptiles and amphibians. Impacts are of **minor magnitude at site level**.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 6.5 All construction will be undertaken in accordance with best practice advice with regards to control of dust, noise and emissions. No chemicals or fuels shall be stored on open ground. All materials and plant shall be stored on existing sealed surfaces.

Residual Impacts

- 6.6 Once mitigation is taken into account, the impacts will be negligible.

Bats

Potential Impacts

- 6.7 The building is classified as offering 'low' bat roost potential, and the emergence survey identified that it is highly unlikely any bats roost in the building. It is highly unlikely that a bat would be injured or killed, or a roost disturbed or destroyed in the course of works.
- 6.8 In the absence of mitigation, incorrect lighting could lead to loss of foraging and commuting areas.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 6.9 As a matter of course, a suitable pre-demolition inspection should take place (which could consist of either a daytime assessment or a further dusk emergence survey) and tiles and other suitable features be taken off manually with due care prior to full demolition. Should a bat or evidence thereof be discovered, works must cease whilst a licenced ecologist is contacted for advice. It is likely that an emergency licence would be required to continue works should this occur.
- 6.10 Any new lighting will be expected to accord with the principles within the BCT/ILP Guidance Note 08/23; consideration will be given to the following aspects should any external lighting be required:
- Temperature – 2700K or below is preferable
 - Power – the lowest power necessary;
 - Lighting type – LED lighting tends to emit a lower-intensity beam than older styles of lighting, although the full lighting spectrogram must be assessed as some LED lights emit blue and white light;
 - Angle – lights must be angled below the horizontal and as far down as possible;
 - Adaptations – luminaires can be fitted with guards or cowls to reduce the angle of lightspill;
 - Timings and controls – lighting controls should aim to minimise light use when not necessary – PIRs can be used but must be set to be low-sensitivity; lights should be set to automatic shut-off whenever possible.

Residual Impacts

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

Nesting Birds

Potential Impacts

- 6.12 It is considered possible for birds to nest within the building between the initial visit and demolition of the property.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 6.13 Prior to works commencing, a nesting bird check shall be undertaken. This could be done alongside the bat pre-demolition check.
- 6.14 Should any nests be noted, works must be postponed until the chicks have fledged. A buffer of at least 3.0 m should be provided to any active nest. Suitable mitigation should then be provided in the construction of the new building such as bird boxes ideally suited to the species recorded nesting.

Residual Impacts

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

Other Species

Potential Impacts

- 6.16 In the absence of mitigation there is a low risk of hedgehogs being disturbed or trapped within groundworks. The debris on site may harbour potential for amphibians, reptiles and other small animals.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 6.17 Any footings and trenches shall be covered at night or fitted with a shallow angled ramp to ensure any mammals which fall in can escape. All materials shall be stored on hard surfaces or pallets, up off the ground and away from garden margins. Any piles of aggregates, timber etc. must be checked for presence of wildlife before removal.

Residual Impacts

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

7.0 Ecological Enhancements

- 7.1 Because of the scale and nature of the proposals, ecological enhancement opportunities within the construction zone are limited. The site is likely to be exempt from mandatory BNG as the proposals affect less than 25 sqm of habitat, but must seek a biodiversity gain according to local policy.
- 7.2 The most beneficial enhancements would involve improvement of the garden to include a variety of flowering plants and larger shrubs. Furthermore, integration of bird nesting features such as sparrow terraces and integrated swift brick into the new construction, or wall mounted boxes where integration is not possible, would also demonstrate a positive impact for ecology on site.
- 7.3 Given the existing bat roost potential, a new bat box would ensure no loss of ecological functionality for bats into the future. This could be integrated into the new building fabric.
- 7.4 Bug hotels and bee bricks are excellent enhancements to aid invertebrates. These can be purchased or self-made using natural materials, such as straw, bark, wood, and bamboo canes. Guides for construction are available across many different platforms including (The Wildlife Trust, 2023) (RSPB, 2023).
- 7.5 Deadwood can provide a home for many species. Leaving wood piles on the ground under a shaded area will maintain a moist environment and encourage a multitude of organisms including fungi (The Royal Horticultural Society, 2023a).
- 7.6 Efficient nests are essential for hedgehogs to survive the winter months. Supplying a dedicated hedgehog box can provide them with a safe and suitable location to hibernate (The British Hedgehog Preservation Society, 2023). Hedgehogs travel extensive distances so ensuring there is good accessibility to and from the site will be a benefit to the species. This could be done by as simple as cutting a 13cm² hole in fencing (Hedgehog Street, 2023).
- 7.7 Water is an essential resource for wildlife. Where space is limited, the addition of a water receptacle such as a bird bath will be a significant benefit to many species, especially during summer months.
- 7.8 Garden plants are becoming increasingly important for wildlife. They interact with multiple organisms from providing sources of food such as berries, fruits, nectar to creating habitat. There are many plants that will encourage a variety of wildlife, such as the RHS 'Plants for Pollinators' list (The Royal Horticultural Society, 2023c).
- 7.9 It is also good to consider a range of plants with varying flowering and fruiting times, to support wildlife during every month of the year.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 Overall, the proposals are likely to represent a 'negligible' impact upon ecology. The proposal area consists of an existing building and bare surfaces of negligible ecological value.
- 8.2 A single bat emergence survey reveals that bats are highly unlikely to be using the building and surrounding garden however given the derelict condition there is a low risk of future colonisation. Basic protection measures in the form of a further final check and careful removal of suitable features would minimise the risk of harm to bats or contravention of legislation. Minor potential impacts from lighting only are predicted and can be controlled by use of appropriate external lighting if required.
- 8.3 No significant effects are anticipated upon any designated site or priority habitats.
- 8.4 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 minor net gain. The proposals would therefore accord with the relevant local and national planning policies and the relevant legislation.

9.0 References

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- South Downs National Park Authority / Natural England (2018). Sussex Bat Special Area of Conservation Planning and Landscape Scale Enhancement Protocol. Available online: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2018/04/TLL-15-Draft-Sussex-Bat-SAC-Protocol.pdf>
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10.0 Appendix A - Site Maps

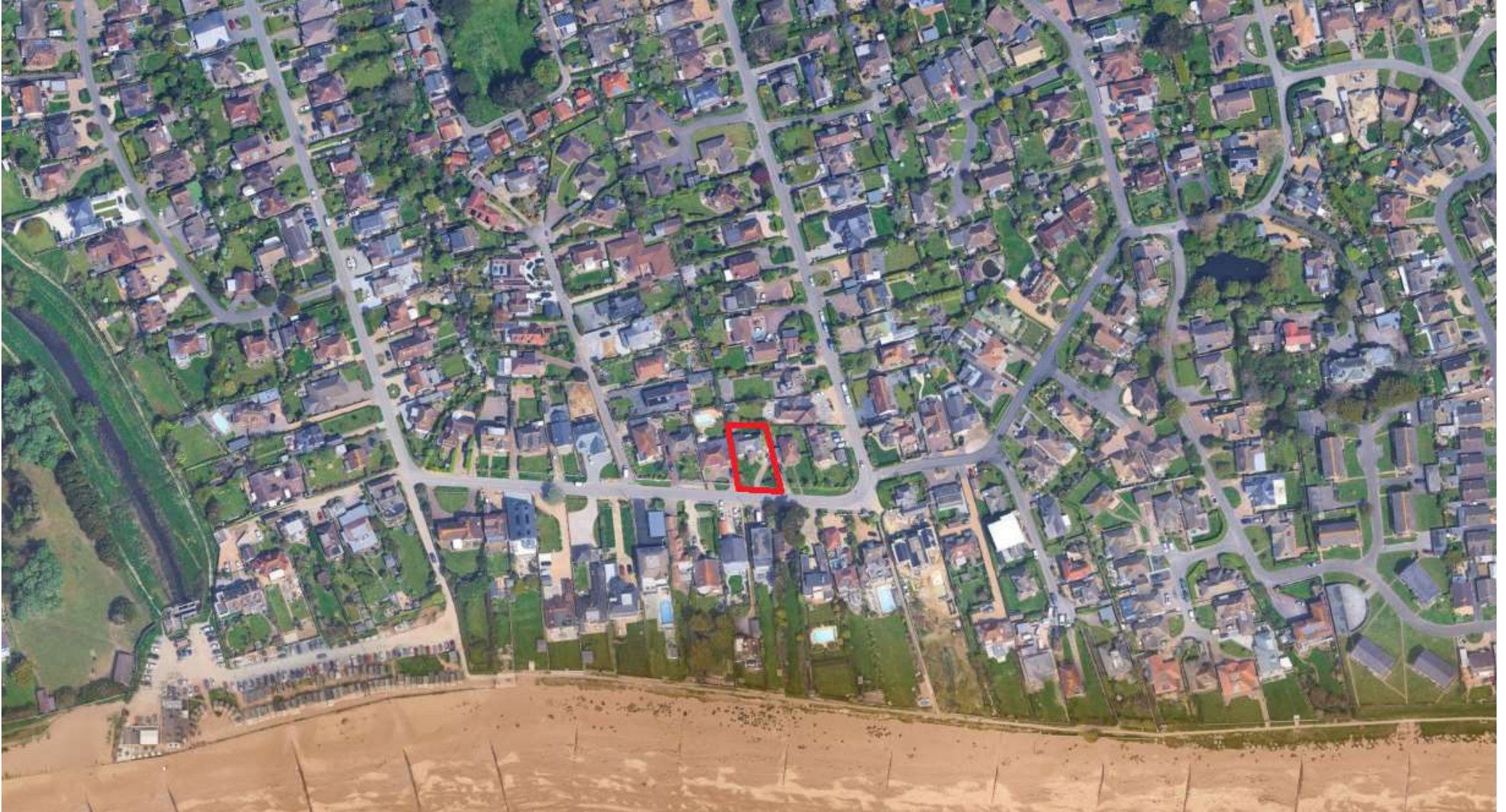


Figure 1: Aerial imagery of the site, displayed as a red polygon marker, and surrounding area. Map created using © 2023 Google Earth

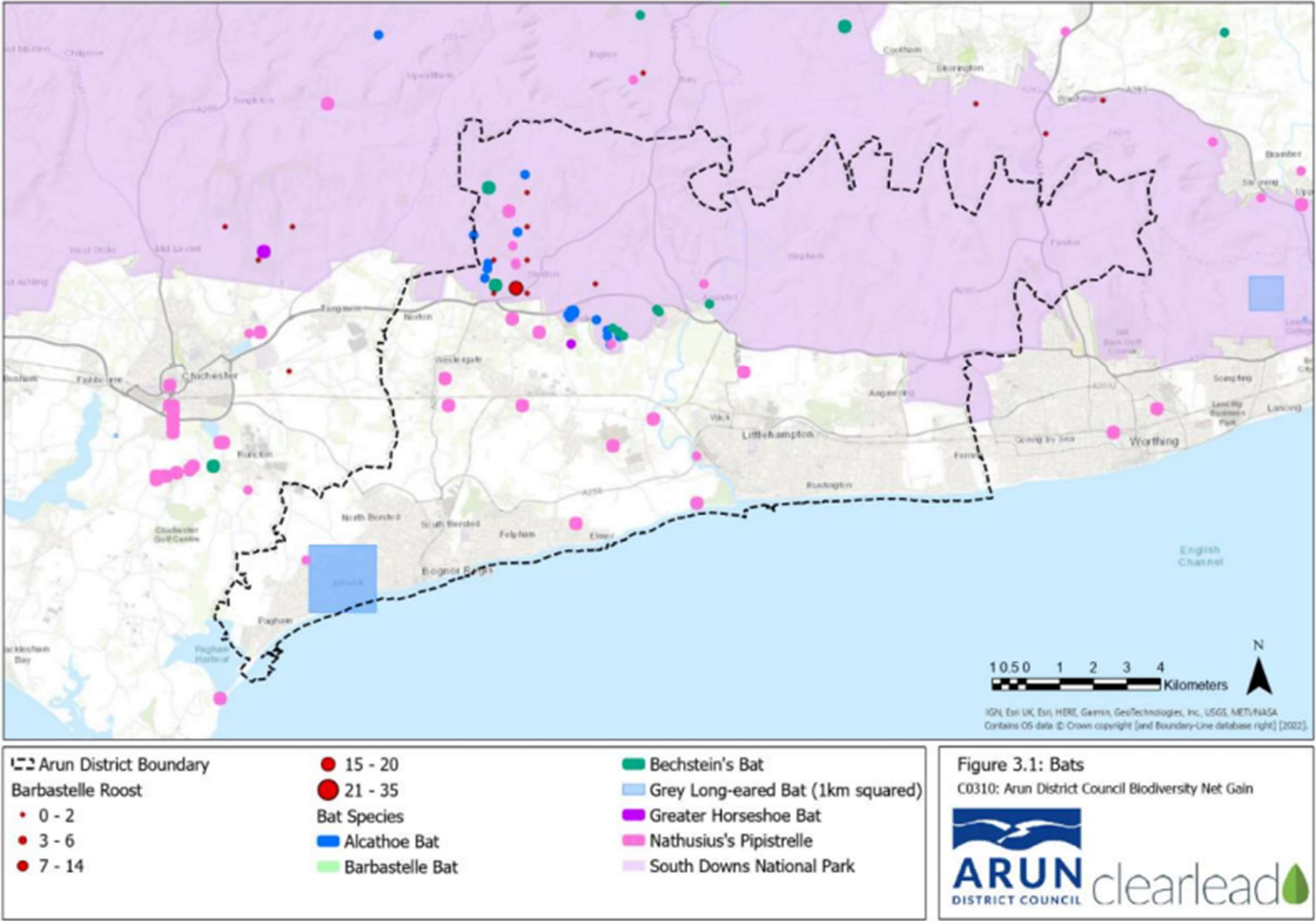


Figure 2: Map produced by Arun District Councils BNG Evidence Study focused on bats (ClearLead Consulting Limited, 2022)

11.0 Appendix B - Site Photos



Photo 1 – Front of the building (Southern Elevation)



Photo 2 – Northeast corner of the building with significant volume of missing roof tiles



Photo 3 – North elevation of the building



Photo 4 – West elevation of the building



Photo 5 – Rear garden (North perimeter)



Photo 6 – Pile of rubble and soil in the front garden

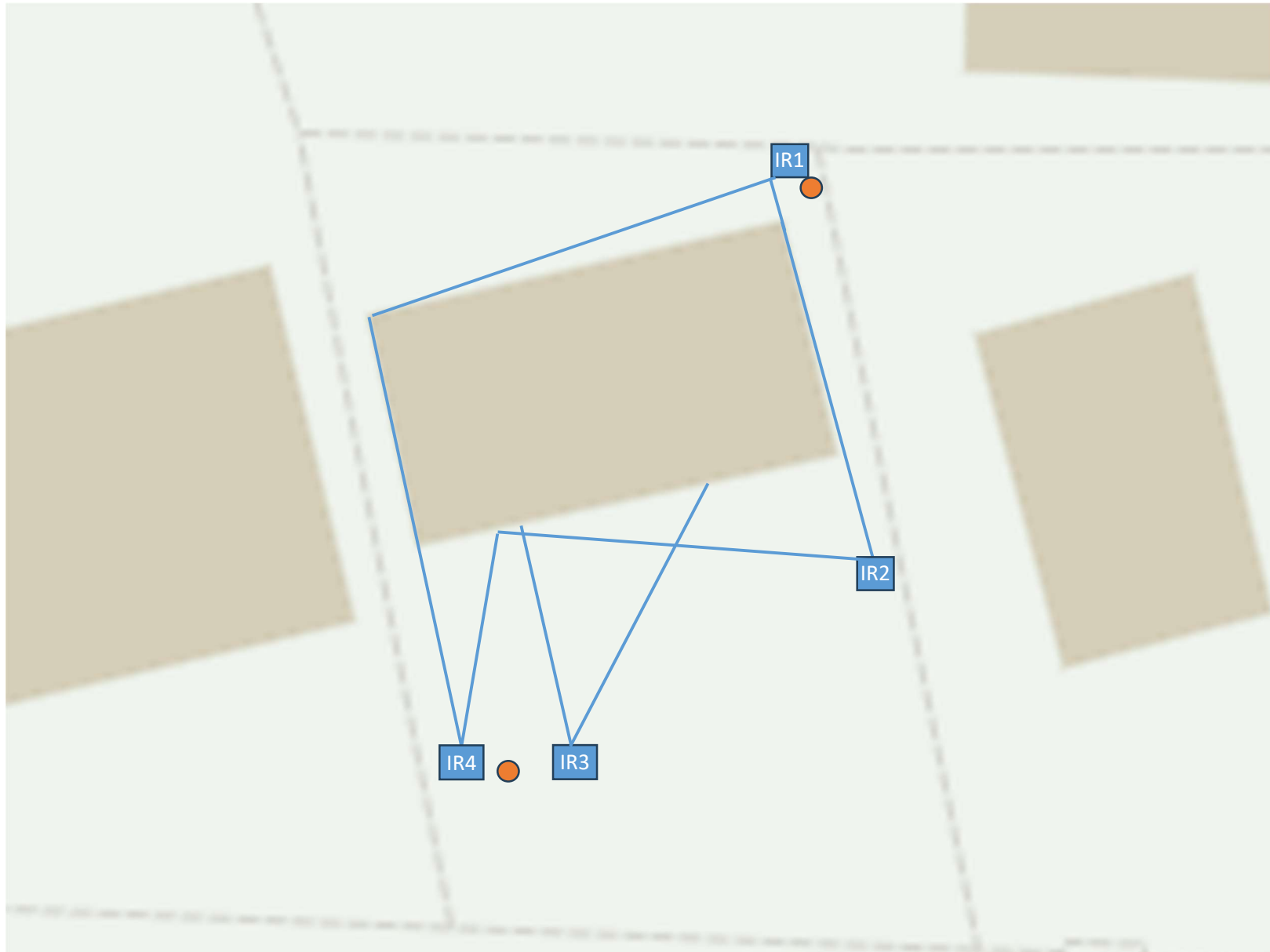


Photo 7 – Removed plasterboard in front room allowing for access between the living space and loft void



Photo 8 – Loft void facing east demonstrating light ingress

12.0 Appendix C – Bat Survey Plan



13.0 Appendix D - Night vision Stills from Emergence Survey



Photo 1 – IR.1 Start



Photo 2 – IR.1 End



Photo 3 – IR.2 Start



Photo 4 - IR.2 End



Photo 5 – IR.3 Start



Photo 6 - IR.3 End



Photo 7 – IR.4 Start



Photo 8 – IR.4 End