



Bat Preliminary Roost Assessment

Sir Roberts Farm, Goose Green Lane, Pulborough
West Sussex, RH20 2LW

April 2025



Arun Ecology Ltd

Registration in England and Wales. Company number: 12524764

Registered Address: Russetts, Hayes Lane, Slinfold, West Sussex

Email: enquiries@arunecology.com – www.arunecology.com



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001	15/04/2025	Hannah Baker BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM – Director and Principal Ecologist	Joseph Baker BSc (Hons) - Director and Principal Ecologist

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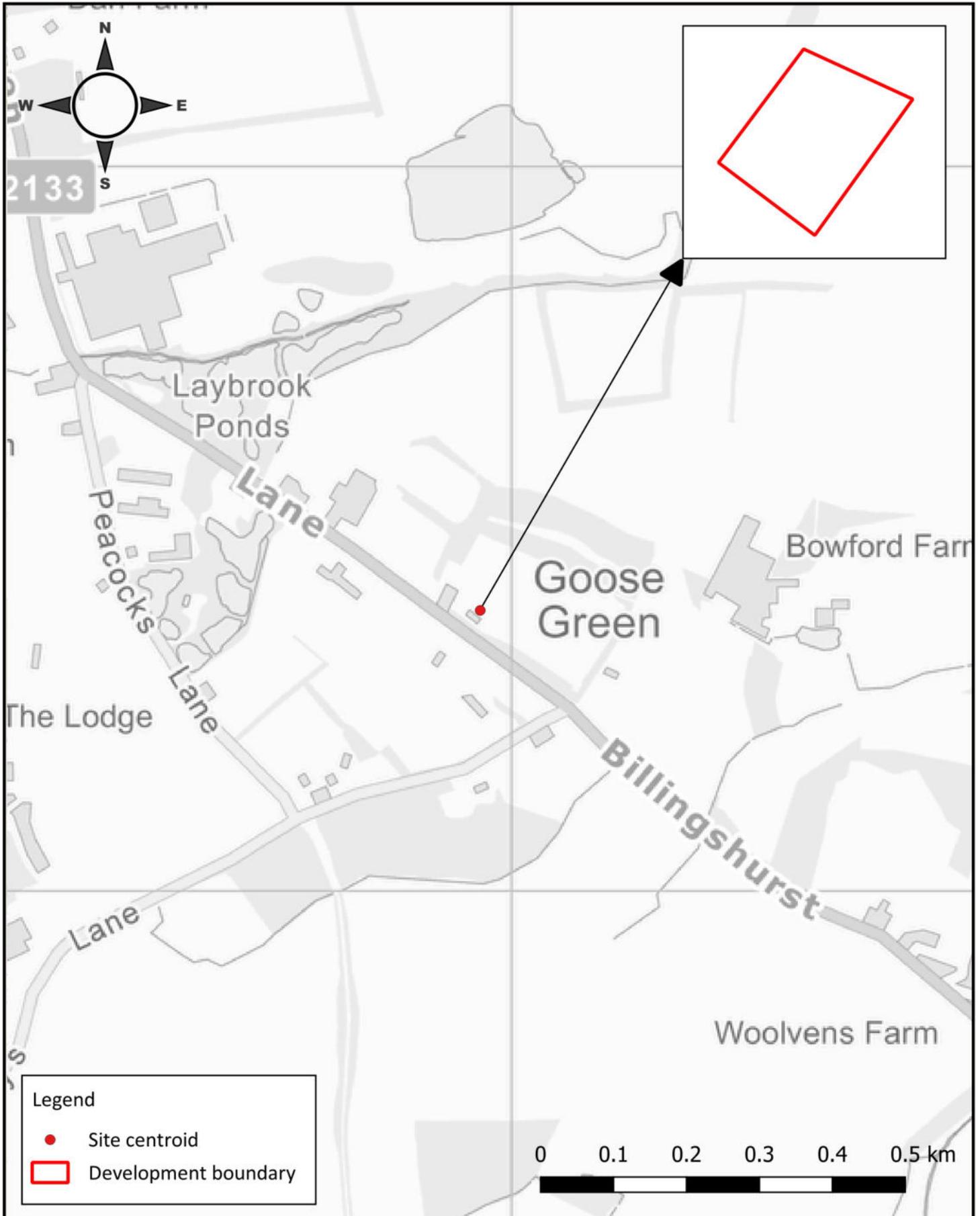


Figure title: Site Location		Client: D-PIW-001-006-001 Peter Isherwood
Site location: Sir Roberts Farm, Goose Green Lane, Pulborough, West Sussex		
Figure number: 1	Date drawn: 15/04/2025	Scale at A4: 1:7000
Revision: 1	Cartographer: AO	Approver: HB



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Photo 1: Displaying the north-eastern and north-western aspect of building B5 within the development boundary.



Photo 2: Displaying the north-western and south-western aspect of building B5 within the development boundary.



Photo 3: Displaying the north-western aspect of building B5 within the development boundary.



Photo 4: Displaying the south eastern aspect of building B5 within the development boundary.



Photo 5: Displaying the north-eastern aspect of building B5 within the development boundary.



Photo 6: Displaying the south-eastern and part of the north-eastern aspect of building B5 within the development boundary.



Site Location			Client		
Sir Roberts Farm, Goose Green Lane, Pulborough, RH20 2LW			Peter Isherwood		
Figure Title			Report reference		
Bat Preliminary Roost Assessment Photographs			D-PIW-001-006-001		
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AO	15/04/2025	HB			



1. Summary and Recommendations

Proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Isherwood is proposing a development (grid reference: TQ 11947 18378) at Sir Roberts Farm, Goose Green Lane, Pulborough, RH20 2LW (see Figure 1). • The proposals include the replacement of an existing bungalow with a two-storey dwelling, construction of a single-storey garage and associated landscaping of the site.
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken that comprised of a desk study relevant to bats and a site visit on the 3rd March 2025 that included an external inspection of building B5.
Impact assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is reasonably unlikely to result in any adverse impacts to designated sites of international, national or local importance for bats, including The Mens SAC that is designated for barbastelle bat. • Building B5 was classified as having negligible suitability for roosting bats during the bat PRA. As such, bats are considered likely absent from the building at the time of the bat PRA. • Based on the results of the bat PRA the development is reasonably unlikely to result in harm to individual bats or have any adverse impacts on bat roosts. Therefore, the development will be able to proceed lawfully and there should be no objection for reasons relating to bats. • In-line with national and local policy, the development will be required to incorporate ecological enhancements into the design.
Recommendations	<p style="text-align: center;">The recommendations below represent a summary only. The full recommendations of this report are outlined in section 6 of this report.</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not foreseen that bats or their roosts will be adversely impacted by the development, however, in the unlikely event a bat is discovered during the construction phase of the development at the site, all works should stop, and a bat mitigation licence sought. <p>Survey Validity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If sufficient time should pass (i.e. more than one bat survey season) before the determination of the planning application, the bat PRA will need to be repeated to ensure bats are still likely absent. <p>Ecological Enhancements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ecological enhancements outlined within this report should be incorporated into the design of the development.



2. Introduction

2.1 Development Background

2.1.1 Peter Isherwood is proposing a development (grid reference: TQ 11947 18378) at Sir Roberts Farm, Goose Green Lane, Pulborough, RH20 2LW (see Figure 1). The property is hereafter referred to collectively as ‘the site’, and Peter Isherwood as the ‘applicant’. The existing bungalow within the site is hereafter referred to as ‘building B5’.

2.1.2 The local planning authority for the site’s location is Horsham District Council (HDC).

2.2 Development Proposals

2.2.1 The applicant seeks planning consent for the replacement of an existing bungalow with a two storey dwelling, construction of a single storey garage and associated landscaping of the site.

2.2.2 The proposals above are hereafter referred to collectively as ‘the development’ in this report and the red line boundary of the development as the ‘development boundary’.

2.3 Ecology Background

2.3.1 A previous Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was completed by Phlorum Limited in July 2022. Section 3.8 of the ‘9961 PEA Rev0’ PEA report identified building B5 as having negligible bat roosting potential.

2.3.2 It is our understanding that a planning application for the above development has been submitted to HDC and that HDC has subsequently requested an updated bat Preliminary Roost Assessment of building B5 to be submitted.

2.4 Brief and Objectives

2.4.1 Arun Ecology Ltd were commissioned by the applicant to undertake a bat Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) on building B5 within the development boundary.

2.4.2 The key objectives of a bat PRA, as per Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Good Practice guidance (Collins, 2023) is to determine:

- The actual or potential presence of bats;
- The need for further bat surveys (such as bat emergence surveys); and/or
- The need for any bat mitigation.



2.4.3 The brief of the bat PRA survey was to:

- Carry out an ecological desk study obtaining records (excluding purchased records) of designated sites, bat roosts and European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) granted for bats within 2 km of the development;
- Undertake an internal and external survey, comprising a systematic search of the internal loft space and the exterior of building B5 to identify potential or actual bat access/ egress points and roosting places, and to locate any evidence of bats (such as live or dead specimens, bat droppings, feeding remains, urine splashes, fur oil staining and/or bat noises, such as social calls); and
- Provide a technical report supported by digitised mapping. The report will present the methods and results (including any limitations) of the bat PRA. The report will also include a discussion of the legislation and planning policy issues, and our recommendations for how these may be overcome.



3. Method

3.1 General Approach

3.1.1 The bat PRA survey was carried out in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines for Ecologists (Collins, 2023).

3.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment - Desk Study

Zone of Influence

3.2.1 The study area for the desk study at this stage of the development is based upon a provisional 'zone of influence'. 'The 'zone of influence' is defined as per CIEEM guidance as 'the area over which ecological features may be affected by biophysical changes as a result of the proposed project and associated activities' (CIEEM, 2018).

3.2.2 The provisional zone of influence for the development where data was sought is set as the following:

- Statutory and non-statutory designated sites – 2 km; and
- Granted European Protected Species Licences for Bats – 2 km.

3.3 Preliminary Roost Assessment - Field Survey

3.3.1 A bat PRA of building B5 as well as an assessment of the sites habitat for bats was carried out in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines for Ecologists (Collins, 2023).

3.3.2 A ground level inspection of the exterior of building B5 was undertaken with the aid of torchlight and binoculars to search for bat PRFs that might provide suitable crevices or access/egress points to voids or cavities for roosting bats.

3.3.3 Where accessible and safe to do so, a search for signs of bats such as bat specimens, droppings, urine staining, and audible sound (such as social calls) was undertaken at building B5. This included an internal inspection of any roof voids present at the building.

3.3.4 The bat PRA also included the collection of information on the structure type and condition as well as the construction materials.

3.3.5 A classification based upon the roosting suitability for bats was assigned for the building as well as the overall suitability of the site habitat. The classification descriptions are detailed below in Table 1.



Table 1 – Suitability assessment for a proposed development site for bats, as adapted from BCT Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Potential Suitability	Definition	
	Roosting habitat	Potential flight paths and foraging habitat
None	No habitat features on-site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/ suitable shelter at all ground/ underground levels).	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/ protection for flight lines or that generates shelter for insect populations that is available to foraging bats).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats, however, small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roosting sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site but could be used by individual hibernating bats).	Habitat that can be used by a small number of bats as flight paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream but isolated i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitats. Suitable, but isolated habitat that can be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status, with respect to roost type only, such as maternity or hibernation roosts.	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight paths such as lines of trees, scrub and linked back gardens and for foraging such as trees, scrub grassland and water.
High	A structure with one or more potential roosting sites that are obviously suitable for use by a larger number of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation sites.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined water courses and grazed parkland. The site is close to and connected to known bat roosts.
<p>^a Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute)</p>		



3.4 Survey Dates and Conditions

3.4.1 Details on the date, timing and conditions recorded during the bat PRA are provided below in Table 2.

Table 2 – Bat PRA Survey Information.

Date	Survey Type	Survey Timings		Temperature (°C)		Rain	Wind (Beaufort scale)
		Start	Finish	Start	Finish		
03/03/2025	Bat PRA	10:30	11:30	10	10	None	1

3.5 Surveyors

3.5.1 The bat PRA was undertaken by Hannah Baker BSc (Hons), MSc, ACIEEM. Hannah Baker has 11 years of professional ecological consultancy experience and is registered to use the Natural England Level 2 Class Licence to survey bats.

3.6 Limitations

3.6.1 No limitations were recorded as part of the bat PRA survey.



4. Results

4.1 Desk Study

Designated Sites

4.1.1 The results of the desk study search for statutory and non-statutory designated sites for bats are detailed below in Table 3.

Table 3 - Statutory and non-statutory designated sites for bats returned from the desk study search.

Statutory and non-statutory designated sites			
Designation level	Site name	Distance & direction	Summary
National			
SAC	The Mens	Within the outer 12km zone of Influence. Nearest boundary is 10 km south of the site.	Designated due to its lowland broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland, and its assemblages of invertebrates and breeding birds. Barbastelle bat is also another qualifying feature of this designation.

Granted European Protected Species Licences

4.1.2 Two EPSLs were granted for bats within 2 km of the site. Information on the EPSLs granted within 2 km of the site are provided below in Table 4.

Table 4 - Information of EPSLs granted within 2 km of the site.

Licence Number	Species	Grid reference	Distance from site	Summary of activities
2015-16248-EPS-MIT	Brown long-eared and common pipistrelle	TQ 1166 1681	1.6 km South	Allowed damage to a known breeding and resting place.
2017-31760-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	TQ 1362 1882	1.9 km East	Allowed damage and destruction of a known breeding and resting place.



4.2 Bat Roost Suitability Classification

Building B5

- 4.2.1 The results of the external inspection including a description of each building, roost classification and selection justification are given in Table 5 – Appendix I with photos displayed in Figure 2.
- 4.2.2 No evidence of bats or any bat potential roosting features or access/egress points were recorded on building B5 during the external inspection of the building. As such, building B5 was classified as having negligible suitability to support roosting bats.

Site Habitat

- 4.2.3 The habitat within the development boundary was classified as having moderate suitability for bats. The justification for this was based on the presence of modified grassland and a line of trees within the site that provided suitable foraging habitat and commuting habitat for bats.

4.3 Other Ecological Considerations

- 4.3.1 No evidence of nesting birds (including previous evidence such as disused nests) was recorded during the external or internal inspection undertaken as part of the bat PRA at building B5.



5. Legislation and Planning Policy Evaluation

5.1 Background

5.1.1 The purpose of this section is to evaluate the legislation and planning policy that we know are relevant to the development, based upon the results of the desk study and the field survey results. This section does not include legislation or policy at this time that would require further actions to determine if it is relevant to the development (such as further bat surveys or mitigation).

5.2 Bats

5.2.1 As set out in Appendix II, all bats and their roosts are protected, and the following legislation and planning policy could be relevant to the development based on the results of the bat surveys:

- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017;
- Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended);
- Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act, 2006;
- Countryside Right of Ways Act, 2000;
- National Planning Policy Framework, 2024; and
- Horsham District Council Adopted Local Plan, 2015.

5.2.2 In addition to the above government circular 06/2005 is also relevant to the development, as outlined in Appendix II.

Designated Sites

5.2.3 The site falls within the outer zone of influence for The Mens SAC, of which, barbastelle bat is one of the qualifying features of the SAC.

5.2.4 Based upon the proposal of the development, it is reasonably unlikely that the qualifying features of the SAC will be impacted and the law and planning policy outlining its protection contravened, as:

- It will not include the removal of any bat flightlines or significantly increase the level of light pollution on any bat flight lines; and
- No barbastelle bat roosts will be adversely impacted by the development.



Building B5

5.2.5 Building B5 was classified as having negligible suitability to support roosting bats and bats are considered to be likely absent from building B5 at the time of the bat PRA. Therefore, the development will be compliant with the legislation and planning policy relevant to bats as:

- The development will not result in damage or destruction to a bat roost; and
- The development will not result in harm (including killing, injuring or disturbance) to individual bats.

5.2.6 Recommendations are outlined in section 6.2 of this report to ensure the development is compliant with the legislation and planning policy relevant to bats and is able to proceed lawfully.

5.3 Ecological Enhancements

5.3.1 In line with the NPPF (2024), all developments should incorporate ecological enhancements for the benefits of biodiversity into the design. The following ecological enhancements have been recommended for the development:

- One bat box for crevice dwelling bats to be mounted in a suitable unlit area within the site.
- One solitary bee box to be installed within the site.



6. Requirements and Recommendations

6.1 Background

6.1.1 This section is based upon the results of all bat surveys undertaken to date and includes recommendations following the mitigation hierarchy (avoidance, mitigation, and compensation; BSI, 2013) on how the development can proceed lawfully with respect to bats.

6.2 Bats

6.2.1 To ensure the development remains compliant with the legislation and planning policy relevant to bats, the following recommendations should be followed:

- It is not foreseen that bats or their roosts will be impacted as a result of the development. However, in the unlikely event that a bat is encountered during the construction phase of the development, works should stop and an ecologist consulted. In such an event, a bat mitigation licence could be required from Natural England before the development is able to proceed again lawfully; and
- Bat survey data used to inform planning applications and bat mitigation licence requirements should be collected in the most recent bat survey season. As such, if sufficient time should pass (i.e. more than one bat survey season before the development commences) the bat PRA survey may need to be repeated or validated.



7. Conclusion

- 7.1.1 Bats are considered to be likely absent from building B5 at the time of the bat PRA and as such the development is reasonably unlikely to result in any impacts to bats and their roosts.
- 7.1.2 The recommendations outlined in this report for bats will ensure that the development remains compliant with the legislation and planning policy outlining the protection of bats. The inclusion of ecological enhancements within the development will ensure the development is compliant with national planning policy with respect to biodiversity.



8. Bibliography

- 8.1.1 BSI Group (2013), BS42020 – a code of practice for biodiversity in planning and development. The British Standards Institution. (Online). Available at <http://www.bsigroup.com/LocalFiles/enGB/biodviersty>. Accessed April 2022.
- 8.1.2 CIEEM (2022) Code of conduct. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- 8.1.3 Collins, J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN – 13 978-1-872745-96-1.
- 8.1.4 Russ, J. (2012) British Bat Calls: A Guide to Species Identification. Pelagic Publishing, Exeter.



Appendix I – Bat Preliminary Roost Assessment Results

8.1.5 The results of the Bat Preliminary Roost Assessment are shown in full in Table 5 below.

Table 5 - Preliminary Roost Assessment Results.

Building number	Description	External inspection	Internal inspection	Evidence of bats	Bat roost potential	Rationale and potential roosting features recorded
B5	Building B5 is a single storey bungalow with wooden cladding, a hip roof with concrete roof tiles. The roof is generally in good condition with no missing or broken tiles.	Yes	No	None	Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No bat PRFs on the exterior of building B5 or access/egress points leading to the interior of building B5 were recorded during the bat PRA.



Appendix II – Legislation & Planning Policy

8.2 Background

8.2.1 This section provides a summary of the legislation and planning policy that could be relevant to the development. Where possible we have limited this section to the areas relevant to this report. This means the legislation and planning policy outlined below is not included in its entirety.

8.2.2 This section does not constitute legal advice, and only represents the interpretation and professional judgement of the ecologists named in this report, on the legislation and planning policy considered relevant to the development.

8.3 Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations, 2017

8.3.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 transposes the EC Habitats Directive and some elements of the EC Bird Directive into national law in England and Wales. The objective of the Habitats Directive is to protect biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora. The directive lays down rules for the protection, management and exploitation of such habitats and species.

Protected Species

8.3.2 The regulations include provisions that prohibit certain actions from the protection of species listed under Annex II of the Habitat Directive. It is a criminal offence for a person to ‘intentionally or recklessly’ take the following action:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European Protected Species (EPS);
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species in such a way as to be likely to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they are likely to belong;
- Deliberately take or destroy eggs of any such wild animal;
- Deliberately pick, collect, uproot or destroy a wild plant of an EPS; and
- Keep transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead wild animal or plant of an EPS, or any part of or anything derived from such an animal or plant.



- 8.3.3 The disturbance of such animals includes in particular; any disturbance that is likely to impact their ability;
- To survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young;
 - In case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
 - To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Protected Sites

- 8.3.4 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 puts an obligation on the appointed appropriate authority for England & Wales to establish priorities for a network of nationally important sites.
- 8.3.5 The aforementioned sites, often referred to as European protected sites are formed of two types of sites, Special Protection Areas (sites specifically designated for birds) and Special Areas of Conservation (specifically designated for fauna and flora). The objective is for all species and habitats covered by these sites to contribute towards the maintenance and restoration of their favourable conservation status.
- 8.3.6 Designation can include but is not limited to the following reasons:
- A natural habitat type specified in Annex I of the Habitat Directive;
 - A species specified in Annex II of the Habitats Directive;
 - For the coherence of the national network of protected sites; and
 - For threats of degradation or destruction to which the sites are exposed.

8.4 The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended)

- 8.4.1 The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) primarily transposes the UK Governments obligations under the Bird Directive and Bern Convention into law. The act outlines provisions for the protection of nationally important sites for nature conservation and provides protection at different levels for certain animals and plants, including certain prohibitions.

Protection of Animals

- 8.4.2 Part 1 – Section 9 of the act includes certain prohibitions for the protection of certain animals named in schedule 5. In summary offences include:



- If any person intentionally or recklessly kills, injures or takes any wild animal included in schedule 5;
- If any person has in his possession or control any live or dead wild animal included in schedule 5, or any part of, or anything derived from, such an animal;
- If any person intentionally or recklessly damages or destroys, or obstructs access to, any structure or place which any wild animal included in schedule 5 uses for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose; and
- Sells, offers or exposes for sale, or has in their possession or transports for the purpose of sale, any live or dead wild animal included in schedule 5, or any part of, or anything derived from, such an animal, or publishes or causes to be published any advertisement likely to be understood as conveying that they buy or sell, or intends to buy or sell, any of those things.

8.5 Countryside Right of Ways Act, 2000 (CRoW, 2000)

8.5.1 The Countryside Right of Ways Act, 2000 (CRoW Act, 2000) makes provisions for public access, amends the law for public rights of ways and amends existing law on nature conservation and the protection of wildlife as well as makes further provisions for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Wildlife Legislation

8.5.2 Part III of the CRoW Act, 2000 includes provisions for wildlife protection and nature conservation and includes amendments to the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981.

8.5.3 Schedule 9 of the CRoW Act, 2000 increases powers for the protection and management of SSSI. There are increased powers for appropriate authorities to secure management agreements for SSSI. A duty is placed on public bodies to have regard for the continued conservation and enhancement of SSSI. Furthermore, there are increased penalties for the prosecution of wildlife crime, including for third parties that damage SSSI.

8.5.4 Schedule 12 of the CRoW Act, 2000 makes certain offences under the provision of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 arrestable. Greater powers are given to police and appointed wildlife inspectors under the CRoW Act, 2000 and enables heavier penalties for the prosecution of wildlife crime.



8.6 Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act, 2006

8.6.1 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC), 2006 is primarily intended to implement key aspects of the governments rural strategy published in July 2004. It also addresses a wider range of issues relating broadly to the natural environment.

Section 40

8.6.2 Section 40 of the NERC Act, 2006, places a duty on any public authority and statutory undertaker to have due regard for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity when delivering their functions, extending the provisions outlined under section 74 of the CRoW Act, 2000.

8.6.3 The policy goes on to state that conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population of that habitat.

Section 41

8.6.4 Section 41 of the NERC Act, 2006 requires the secretary of state in consultation with Natural England to outline Species of Principle Importance (SPI) and Habitats of Principle Importance (HPI) that in their opinion are important for the conservation of biodiversity.

8.6.5 The secretary of state is required to:

- Take such steps as appear to the secretary of state to be reasonably practicable to further the conservation of the living organisms and types of habitats included in any list published under this section; or
- Promote the taking by other of such steps.

8.6.6 The NERC Act, 2006 also provides some amendments to the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) and includes provisions for enforcement powers and the protection of SSSI.

8.7 National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

8.7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2024) sets out the Governments planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework which locally prepared plans for housing and other developments can be produced.

8.7.2 The NPPF supplements Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation 06/2005 (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005).



Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

8.7.3 Paragraph 187 states: Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

8.7.4 Paragraph 188 states: Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

8.7.5 Paragraph 189 states that: great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas



should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

8.7.6 Paragraph 190 states that: When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

8.7.7 Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 189), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

Habitats and biodiversity

8.7.8 Paragraph 192 states that: To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
- Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

8.7.9 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 improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

8.7.10 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.

8.7.11 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.

Ground Conditions and Pollution

8.7.12 Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural



environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;
- b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
- c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

8.8 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation Circular 06/2005

8.8.1 Biodiversity and geological conservation circular 06/2005 provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England. It complements the national planning policy in the NPPF, 2024 and the Planning Practice Guidance. Broadly the guidance covers designated sites, the conservation of habitats and species, including outside of designated sites, protected species by law and the duties and powers used by planning authorities.

8.8.2 Paragraph 82 of the guidance states that ‘in determining the application for development that is covered by up-to-date standing advice, a planning authority must take into account this standing advice’.

[Protected Species and Planning](#)

8.8.3 Paragraph 98 of the guidance states ‘the presence of a protected species is a material planning consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat’.

8.8.4 Paragraph 98 also states that ‘they (the planning authority) should consider attaching appropriate planning conditions or entering into planning obligations under which the developer would take steps to secure the long-term protection of the species’.

8.8.5 Paragraph 99 of the guidance goes on to state: ‘it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision’. Paragraph 99 also states that ‘this is justified only, where there



is a reasonable likelihood of the species being present and affected by the development.’

8.9 Horsham District Council Adopted Local Plan (2015)

Local Plan

- 8.9.1 Policy 25 sets out Horsham District Councils (HDCs) commitment to protecting the Natural Environment and Landscape Character. Policy 25 states:-
- 8.9.2 The Natural Environment and landscape character of the District, including the landscape, landform and development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats will be protected against inappropriate development. The Council will support development proposals which:
1. Protects, conserves and enhances the landscape and townscape character, taking into account areas identified as being of landscape importance, the individual settlement characteristics, and maintains settlement separation.
 2. Maintain and enhances the Green Infrastructure Network and addresses any identified deficiencies in the District.
 3. Maintains and enhances the existing network of geological sites and biodiversity, including safeguarding existing designated sites and species, and ensures no net loss of wider biodiversity and provides net gains in biodiversity where possible.
 4. Conserve and where possible enhance the setting of the South Downs National Park.
- 8.9.3 Policy 31 sets out Horsham District Councils (HDCs) commitment to protecting biodiversity in the district. Policy 31 states:
- 8.9.4 1) Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing green infrastructure will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that mitigates or compensates for this loss, and ensures that the ecosystem services of the area are retained.
- 8.9.5 2) Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity, and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate. The Council will support new development which retains and /or enhances significant features of nature conservation on development sites. The Council will also support development which makes a positive contribution to biodiversity through the creation of green spaces, and linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks.



- 8.9.6 3) Where felling of protected trees is necessary, replacement planting with a suitable species will be required.
- 8.9.7 4. a) Particular consideration will be given to the hierarchy of sites and habitats in the district as follows:
- i. Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
 - ii. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs); and
 - iii. Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and any areas of Ancient woodland, local geodiversity or other irreplaceable habitats not already identified in I & II above.
- 8.9.8 b) Where development is anticipated to have a direct or indirect adverse impact on sites or features for biodiversity, development will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that:
- The reason for the development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site; and
 - That appropriate mitigation and compensation measures are provided.
- 8.9.9 5. Any development with the potential to impact Arun Valley SPA or the Mens SAC will be subject to a HRA to determine the need for an Appropriate Assessment. In addition, development will be required to be in accordance with the necessary mitigation measures for development set out in the HRA of this plan.



8.10 Bibliography

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- 8.10.3 Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024) National Planning Policy Framework. (Online) Ministry of housing and Local Government, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF. Accessed December 2024.
- 8.10.4 Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act, 2006. (Online). Available at <http://legislation.gov.uk>.
- 8.10.5 ODPM Circular 06/2005. Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their impact within the Planning System (2005). Norwich: HMSO. Available at <http://www.go.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-and-geological-conservation-circular-06-2005>.
- 8.10.6 The Conservation of Habitat & Species Regulation (2017) (Online). London: The Statutory Office. Available from <http://legislation.gov.uk>.
- 8.10.7 Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (As amended). (Online). Available at <http://www.legislation.go.uk>.