

29 Arbor Lane
Winnersh
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG41 5JE

Preliminary Roost Assessment & Great Crested Newt Statement

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Report Quality Control Information	
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Mr Abhi Rohila to prepare a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and Great Crested Newt (GCN) Statement for 29 Arbor Lane, Winnersh in Wokingham. The PRA and GCN Statement were commissioned to accompany a householder planning application to be submitted to the Wokingham Borough Council seeking consent for a proposed first floor extension with rear dormer and a detached double garage (see planning drawings in **Appendix 1**).
- 1.1.2** A site visit was undertaken on the 18th June 2025 by Conor Watson ACIEEM registered under Natural England Survey Class Licences CL08 and CL18, and Lauren Hayward – seasonal ecologist.
- 1.1.3** The detached bungalow has been assigned negligible suitability for roosting bats. As a result, no further survey to determine the presence or likely absence of roosting bats (i.e. emergence survey) is deemed necessary.
- 1.1.4** The application site falls inside an amber risk zone (from NatureSpace modelling for GCN district licensing); it is a residential property with no standing water, i.e. GCN breeding habitat, and mainly garden habitats including a closely-mown lawn and paving, i.e. terrestrial habitats of negligible value to GCN.
- 1.1.5** Based on the assumption that the nearby ponds support breeding GCN, i.e. the worst case scenario, the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment Tool indicated that the proposed development is highly unlikely to result in an offence. However, in the absence of mitigation there is an extremely low risk that individual GCNs could potentially be injured and/or killed during the construction activities if traversing across the habitats on site. To avoid this, it is recommended that reasonable avoidance measures to minimise the risk of killing individual GCNs are implemented during the construction phase (see **Section 6.2**).
- 1.1.6** This report contains information regarding a mobile species so it will likely be valid for 12 months only (CIEEM 2019).

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Background

- 2.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Mr Abhi Rohila to prepare a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*) (GCN) Statement for 29 Arbor Lane, Winnersh in Wokingham.
- 2.1.2** The PRA and GCN Statement were commissioned to accompany a householder planning application to be submitted to the Wokingham Borough Council seeking consent for a proposed first floor extension with rear dormer and a detached double garage (see planning drawings in **Appendix 1**).
- 2.1.3** The planning history for the property includes prior approval consent for the erection of a single storey rear extension granted in February 2019 (Planning no.: 190252). John Wenman Ecological Consultancy prepared a '*Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Great Crested Newt Habitat Assessment*' report (Report ref.: R2166b) to accompany this application which concluded that the bungalow had limited potential roosting opportunities for bats and that the proposals would not adversely impact bats; the report also recommended non-licensed avoidance measures to protect GCN.

2.2 Site Location and Context

- 2.2.1** The property is a detached bungalow towards the western end of Arbor lane, Winnersh in Wokingham (central OS grid reference: SU 77782 71078).
- 2.2.2** The property is in a suburban setting characterised by similar residential dwellings with associated gardens to the north, west, east and beyond a railway line to the south of the bungalow. In the wider areas are amenity playing fields located 135 metres to the east and 165 metres to the north east as well as farmland to the northeast and south. Winnersh Meadow, bordered by mature trees, is approximately 410 metres northeast, and the Dinton Pastures Country Park, a large country park managed in part for nature conservation by Wokingham Borough Council, is approximately 760 metres northeast of the property.

2.3 Report Objectives

- 2.3.1** The aim of the PRA is to ascertain if there is evidence of the presence of bats and/or potential for roosting bats to be present, and therefore whether further survey and/or mitigation would be required for the proposed development activities.
- 2.3.2** For householder applications that are in a red or amber risk zone (from NatureSpace

modelling for GCN district licensing) and within 50m of a known pond, a GCN Statement is required to either demonstrate that harm is unlikely (e.g. through non-licensable measures) or that the risk of harm needs to be mitigated through licensable measures (e.g. district licensing).

3 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY BACKGROUND

3.1 Relevant Legislation

3.1.1 In England and Wales, all bat species and Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*) (GCN) found in the wild are fully protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA) and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended); the regulations are commonly referred to as the Habitat Regulations and hereafter referred to as such. The Habitat Regulations refer to European Protected Species (EPS) and all species of bats in the United Kingdom (UK) are EPS. Although the UK left the European Union on the 31st January 2020 and is therefore no longer tied to European legislation, the Habitat Regulations have been retained in their current format.

3.1.2 The legal framework underpinned by the WCA and Habitat Regulations makes these specific actions an offence as follows:

- Deliberately kill, injure, capture or take a wild bat/GCN;
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb bats/GCN; in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, to rear or nurture their young, to hibernate or migrate, or to significantly affect local distribution or abundance;
- Damage or destroy a place used by a bat/GCN for breeding or resting; and
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used by a bat/GCN for shelter or protection.

3.2 Planning Policy

3.2.1 The biodiversity duty imposed through the Environment Act 2021 states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must consider what action they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. Government planning policy, such as the ODPM Circular 06/2005, requires LPAs to account for the conservation of protected species when considering and determining planning applications.

3.2.2 The ODPM Circular 06/2005 states that '*the presence of a protected species is a material 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.*' This policy means that in instances where there is a reasonable likelihood of bats being present and affected by a development, surveys must be undertaken to inform a mitigation strategy to be agreed prior to granting planning permission.

3.3 Mitigation Licensing

3.3.1 The government's statutory nature conservation body, Natural England, is responsible for issuing European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licences that would permit activities that would otherwise lead to an infringement of the Habitat Regulations. An EPS mitigation licence can be issued if the following three tests derived from Regulation 55 have been satisfied:

- (2)(e) – the derogation is for the purposes of *'preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment.'*
- (9)(a) – there is *'no satisfactory alternative'* to the derogation; and
- (9)(b) – *'the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.'*

3.3.2 LPAs have a statutory duty under Regulation 7(3)(e) of the Habitat Regulations to consider and determine whether these three tests are likely to be satisfied by planning proposals affecting EPS before granting planning permission. If an EPS mitigation licence is necessary, a licence can be sought once all the necessary planning consents have been granted. Natural England aims to issue a decision on licence applications within 30 working days of submission.

3.3.3 The Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) scheme allows ecologists to apply to become Registered Consultants to use this licence for low conservation status roosts, i.e. roosts comprising small numbers of seven commonly occurring species. A site registration form must be completed as a condition of the licence and submitted to Natural England at least three weeks before the licensable activities are due to start; Natural England aims to register sites within two weeks of submission.

3.3.4 The District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme is an alternative approach to traditional mitigation licensing which authorises developments that adversely affect GCNs. Instead of relying solely on site-specific mitigation and compensation, a 'Conservation Payment' can be made to fund a net increase in GCN habitat elsewhere. Please refer to the NatureSpace guidance for more details.

3.3.5 Baseline survey information supporting EPS mitigation licence applications or BMCL site registrations must be up-to-date and have been completed within the current or most recent optimal season. A suitably experienced ecologist will be required to

undertake a site walkover/check within three months prior to application/registration submission to confirm that conditions have not changed since the most recent survey.

4 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

4.1 Desk Study

4.1.1 A desk-based study for bats and Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*) (GCN) was undertaken to collate and review existing information about the site and the surrounding land. The study utilised the following open access resources:

- Google Earth and OS maps – satellite imagery and maps were used to identify potential flight paths and foraging habitats for bats, and to identify potential breeding ponds and terrestrial habitat connectivity;
- MAGIC – examined to locate granted European Protected Species (EPS) licences; and
- Pre-existing ecology reports – any available reports were obtained from the client or relevant planning portal to provide background information for the site.

4.2 Building Inspection

Survey Details

4.2.1 A detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of the property was undertaken on the 18th June 2025 by Conor Watson ACIEEM registered under Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 (Registration no.: 2024-11877-CL18-BAT) and Lauren Hayward – a seasonal ecologist, in accordance with good practice guidelines (Collins 2023). The equipment used during the inspection comprised binoculars, a high-power (1 million candlepower) LED torch, a headtorch, ladder and PPE (facemask, gloves etc.). The inspection involved a systematic search of the exterior and interior of the structure during daylight hours to compile information on potential and actual bat access points; potential and actual bat roost sites; and any evidence of bat presence.

External Survey

4.2.2 Frequently used bat access points and/or roost sites include (but are not limited to) spaces:

- behind hanging tiles, weatherboarding, soffit boxes and barge boards;
- under lead flashing (particularly around chimneys) and roof tiles/slates; and
- in existing bat boxes.

4.2.3 It is important to note that the two most abundant and widespread bat species, common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*),

typically only require gaps measuring 15mm by 20mm to gain access to a roost inside a building.

4.2.4 The external survey involved a systematic search for evidence of bats including:

- live or dead specimens;
- droppings;
- urine marks;
- fur-oil staining; and
- squeaking noises.

4.2.5 It should be noted that bats can be present in a building while leaving no visible signs externally and wet weather has the potential to wash any evidence away. The search for evidence was focused on (but was not limited to) the ground, windowsills, windowpanes and walls (including cladding and hanging tiles); particularly in places near to potential bat access points and/or roost sites.

Internal Survey

4.2.6 The internal survey comprised a systematic search for evidence of bats on the upper floors of the building (i.e. checking the exterior from windows) and inside the roof and eave spaces. Evidence of bats found during an internal inspection can include:

- live or dead specimens;
- droppings;
- urine marks;
- fur-oil staining;
- feeding remains (i.e. moth wings);
- squeaking noises;
- bat-fly (Nycteribiid) pupal cases; and
- odour.

4.2.7 It should be noted that only specimens or droppings can be relied upon in isolation to confirm the presence of a bat roost.

4.2.8 Frequently used roosting locations within the roof include (but are not limited to):

- the apex of the gable end or dividing walls;

- the top of chimney breasts;
- ridge and hip beams;
- mortise and tenon joints;
- behind purlins; and
- between tiles and roof lining.

Survey Limitations and Validity

- 4.2.9** There were no significant survey limitations because PRAs can be carried out at any time of year under any weather conditions and the building was fully accessible.
- 4.2.10** It should be noted that it is not always possible to inspect all potential roost sites during a survey, particularly for bat species which typically roost in hidden crevices. Therefore, an absence of bat evidence found during a survey does not necessarily equate to evidence of bat absence in a building.
- 4.2.11** This report contains information regarding a mobile species so it will likely be valid for 12 months only (CIEEM 2019).

4.3 Site Walkover

Survey Details

- 4.3.1** A visual assessment of the site for its potential to support GCN was undertaken on the 18th June 2025 by Conor Watson ACIEEM registered under Natural England GCN Survey Class Licence CL08 (Registration no.: 2018-36455-CLS-CLS) and Lauren Hayward – a seasonal ecologist.
- 4.3.2** GCNs require standing water for breeding and favour small to medium-sized ponds with surface areas ranging from 50m² to 250m². For larval development to take place and young newts to emerge from ponds, ponds must hold water until the end of August (Langton *et al.* 2001).
- 4.3.3** GCNs require terrestrial habitats for feeding, movement from pond to pond and for hibernation. Habitats of greatest value to GCNs are those listed below that provide invertebrate prey and provide cover such as under logs or stones:
- Woodland;
 - Rough grassland;
 - Scrub;

- Hedgerows; and
- Waste ground.

4.3.4 Terrestrial habitats of highest value to GCNs are those rich in invertebrate prey, which provide cover during periods of cold and dry weather, such as under logs or stones for example. Open habitats, such as closely mown grassland, do not provide important habitats for feeding or shelter but can be traversed by GCNs moving between more preferable habitats (English Nature 2001; Langton *et. al.* 2001).

Impact Risk Assessment

4.3.5 A risk assessment of the impacts to GCN was carried out using the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment Tool. The Tool takes into account the impacts of the development on GCN and determines the likelihood of effects on populations in the absence of mitigation.

Survey Limitations

4.3.6 There were no significant survey limitations because GCN habitat assessments can be carried out at any time of year under any weather conditions and the application site was fully accessible.

5 SURVEY RESULTS

5.1 Bats

Desk Study

- 5.1.1** The property is in a suburban setting with surrounding areas characterised by similar residential dwellings, amenity playing fields, areas of woodland, such as Winnersh Meadow (approx. 410 metres northeast) and several large ponds, such as Mungell's Ponds (approx. 810 metres northeast). The railway line (approx. 50 metres south) with bordering trees and hedgerows as well as the areas of woodland provides flight paths to the high-quality foraging areas, i.e. nearby woodland, for bats roosting locally.
- 5.1.2** Bat mitigation licences that have been granted within the last 10 years inside a 2km radius of the application site are detailed in **Table 1** below.

Table 1. Bat mitigation licences granted within a 2km radius (Source: MAGIC).

Case Reference of Granted Licence	Species on the Licence	Licensable Period	Licensable Works	Distance (m)
2015-13607-EPS-MIT 2015-13607-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	2015-2020	Destruction of resting place	~1460 SE

- 5.1.3** A previous Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) produced by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy in February 2021 stated that:

'Externally, the bungalow had few visible features suitable for use by crevice-dwelling species such as pipistrelle (Pipistrellus spp.) and/or small Myotis species; the bungalow had tight interlocking roof tiles and soffits, offering limited opportunities for roosting bats. There was a potential gap under the lead flashing around the chimney but this was limited in extent as potential for use by crevice-dwelling bat species. Internally, no bat droppings were found inside the roof void of the bungalow confirming an absence of void-dwelling species such as long-eared (Plecotus spp.) bats. Gaps were visible behind the barge boards on the garage offering access into the building, however to the interior there were no suitable crevices for bats to roost and furthermore there was no evidence of bats.' This assessment is in line with the property being classified as negligible suitability for roosting bats.

Building Inspection

- 5.1.4** The findings from the external and internal inspections carried out for the property are described with photographs and are annotated in a plan (see **Figure 1**), as follows:

External Survey

- 5.1.5** The property was a detached bungalow with rendered walls, a small hipped roof with two front gables, and a large mansard flat roof with roof lanterns, skylights and solar panels (**Photographs 1 & 2**).



Photograph 1. Front of property viewed from north.



Photograph 2. Rear of property viewed from south.

- 5.1.6** The roof was covered in overlapping clay pantiles that were mostly flat and tight. There were two small gaps underneath the overlapping pantiles that were closely inspected and of limited extent (**Photographs 3 & 4; Target note 1**). All hip and ridge tiles were intact, with no visible gaps in the mortar across the bungalow (**Photograph 5**).



Photograph 3. Overlapping clay pantiles (rear elevation).



Photograph 4. Small superficial gap underneath pantile (western elevation).



Photograph 5. Intact ridge tiles and ridge mortar (rear elevation).

- 5.1.7** The lead flashing around the skylights and roof lanterns was tight to the overlapping clay pantiles across the bungalow (**Photographs 6 & 7**).



Photograph 6. Lead flashing tight to clay pantiles (rear elevation).



Photograph 7. Lead flashing tight to clay pantiles (western elevation).

- 5.1.8** The uPVC soffit boxes were tight to the walls at the eaves and mainly flush to the uPVC cladding on the front gables, featuring tight dry verges (**Photographs 8 & 9**).



Photograph 8. uPVC soffits tight to rendered brick of the bungalow (western elevation).



Photograph 9. Tight gable ends of bungalow (front elevation).

- 5.1.9** No evidence of roosting bats was found during the external inspection.

Internal Survey

- 5.1.10** There was one roof void, that was mainly used for storage, accessed via a loft hatch on the ground floor of the bungalow with a ridge to floor height of approximately 1.5 metres (**Photograph 10**).



Photograph 10. Loft space.

- 5.1.11** The hipped roof was of 'cut and pitch' construction with a ridge beam and rafters. The eaves were blocked by fibreglass and the ridge was lightly cobwebbed (**Photographs 11 & 12**).



Photograph 11. Timber 'cut and pitch' construction with lightly cobwebbed ridge.



Photograph 12. Eaves filled with fibreglass.

- 5.1.12** The roof was lined with a breathable non-bituminous membrane that was intact across the roof (**Photograph 13**). The floor was partially boarded near the hatch entrance, with thick fibreglass insulation between the joists (**Photographs 14 & 15**).



Photograph 13. Intact breathable membrane across the roof.

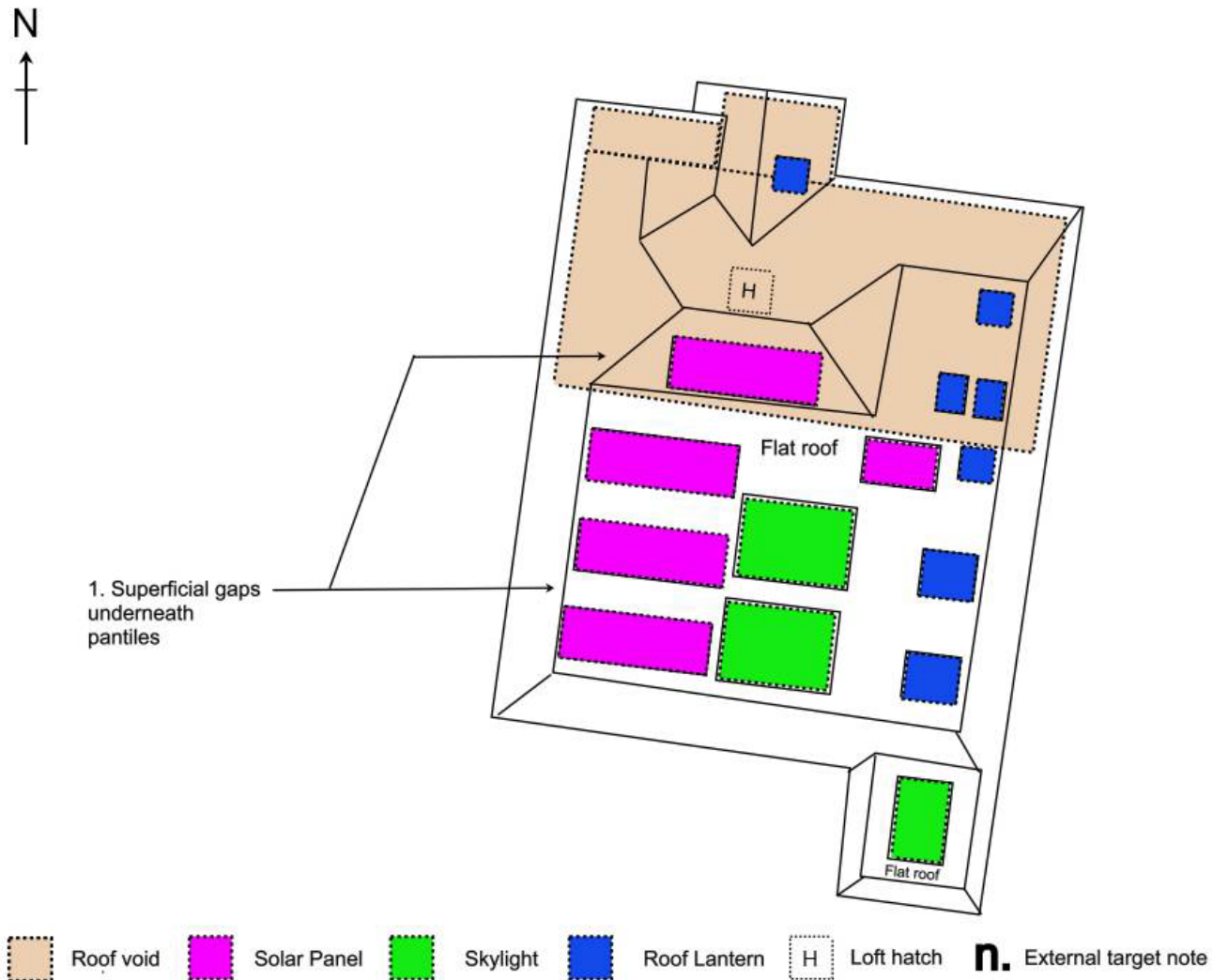


Photograph 14. Partially boarded floor near hatch.



Photograph 15. Thick fibreglass insulation between joists.

5.1.13 No evidence of roosting bats was found during the internal inspection.



Drawn by:	Date	Scale:	29 Arbor Lane Winnersh	
LH	June 2025	Not to scale	Figure 1 - Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Findings	

Figure 1. Building Inspection Plan.

5.2 Great Crested Newt

Desk Study

- 5.2.1** The desk study has identified three ponds within a 250-500m radius of the application site: Pond 1 – a woodland pond at Winnersh Meadow approximately 250m north; Ponds 2 and 3 – two ponds known as Reading Road Pond approximately 220m south; and Pond 4 – a pond associated with a small greenspace on Lockyer Close approximately 360m southwest (see **Figure 2**).

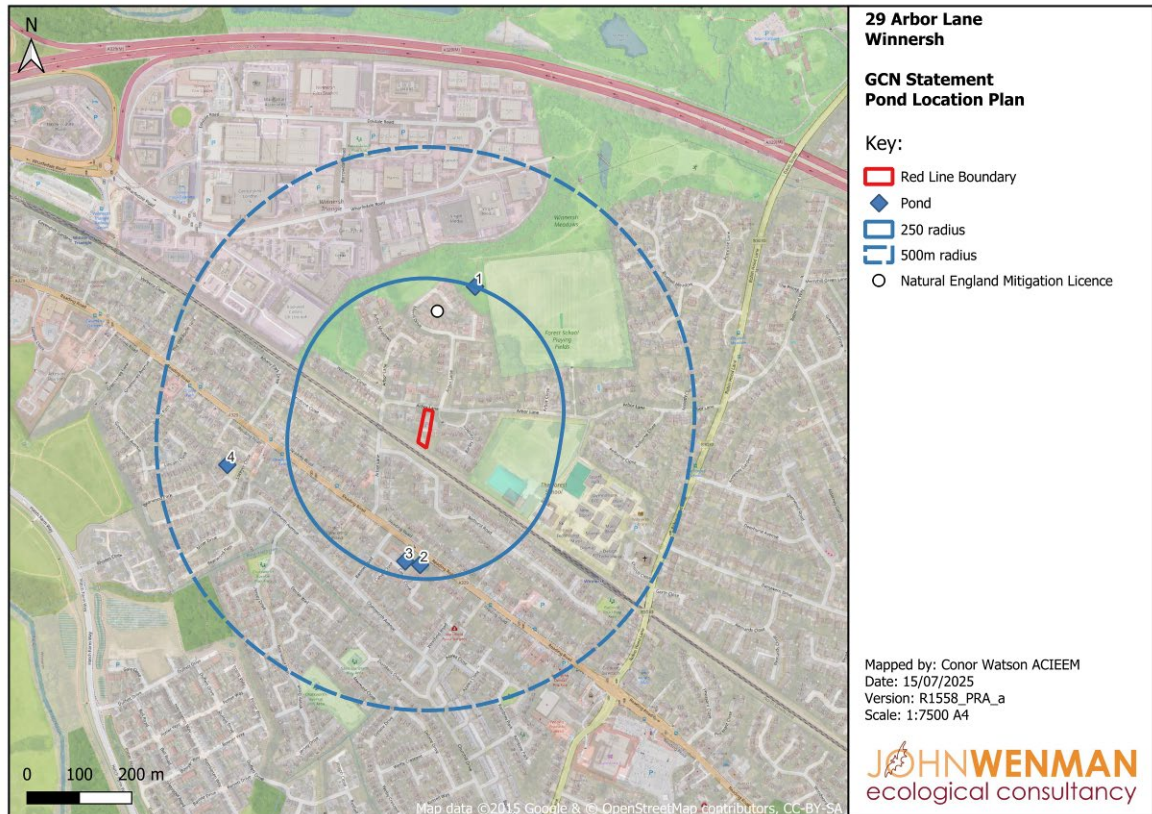


Figure 2. Pond Location Plan.

- 5.2.2** GCN mitigation licences that have been granted within the last 10 years inside a 2km radius of the application site are detailed in **Table 2** below.

Table 2. GCN mitigation licences granted within a 2km radius (Source: MAGIC).

Case Reference of Granted Licence	Licensable Period	Licensable Works	Distance (m)
2015-14054-EPS-MIT	2015	Damage & destruction of resting place	1070 NE
EPSA2013-6712-A-AD2 EPSA2013-6712-A-AD2-1 EPSA2013-6712-A-AD2-2 EPSA2013-6712-A-AD2-3	2015-2020	Damage & destruction of resting place	~225 N

2019-41221-EPS-MIT 2019-41221-EPS-MIT-1	2019-2025	Damage & destruction of resting place	~1585 SE
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- 5.2.3** A previous GCN Assessment carried out by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy in February 2021 stated that:

'The garden at 29 Arbor Lane had no standing water and therefore does not provide breeding opportunities for great crested newts. The garden lies approximately 240 metres from the nearest great crested newt breeding pond and a second pond lies 270 metres to the east on Arbor Lane. A wet ditch was present on the northern site boundary which could provide a suitable corridor for newts to move between ponds. The habitats present within the garden provide features suitable for shelter, particularly during hibernation.'

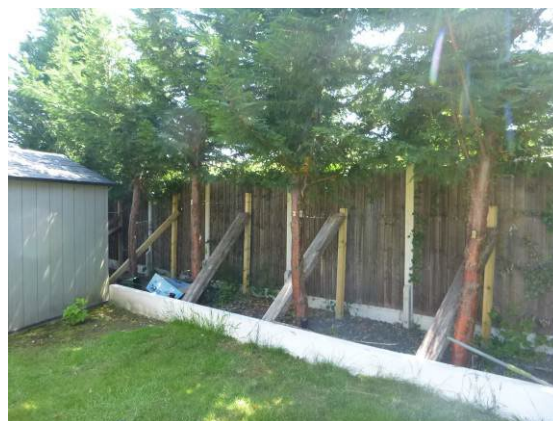
'There is a risk that great crested newts could be present in the garden in small numbers, however due to the short-term minimal impact of the small extension, if non-licensed avoidance measures are adopted, it is considered that a European Protected Species licence would not be required to allow the work to go ahead lawfully.'

Site Walkover

- 5.2.4** The findings from the visual inspection of the site are described with photographs, as follows:
- 5.2.5** The garden lawn was closely-mown and comprised cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*) and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) (**Photograph 15**). At the rear southern boundary of the garden was a planted line of cypress trees (**Photograph 16**).



Photograph 15. Garden lawn with paved path.



Photograph 16. Planted line of cypress trees on rear southern boundary.

- 5.2.6** The western side of the garden had three raised vegetable planters and the eastern side had two mature apple trees (**Photographs 17 & 18**).



Photograph 17. Raised vegetable planters on the western side of the garden.



Photograph 18. Mature apple trees on the eastern side of the garden.

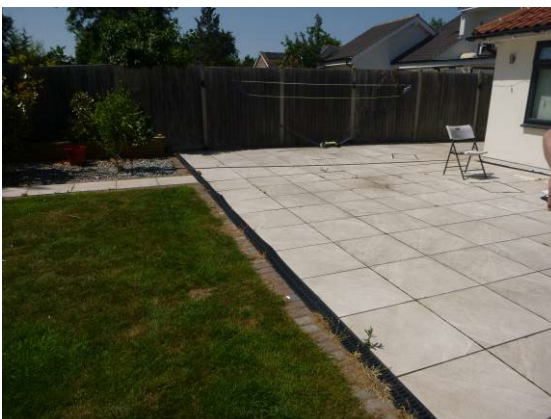
- 5.2.7** The western and eastern borders of the garden were lined with raised planting beds containing ornamental shrubs with concrete gravel boards at the base of the fences (**Photographs 19 & 20**). There was a patio area directly south of the house with a path leading around the grass lawn (**Photograph 21**).



Photograph 19. Raised planting beds.



Photograph 20. Concrete gravel boards at base of garden fences.



Photograph 21. Patio area at rear of house.

- 5.2.8** At the front of the house was a paved brick drive way and small area of closely-mown lawn (**Photographs 22 & 23**). The front garden had a mature pine on the western side

and was bordered to the north by a cherry laurel hedge and mature oak trees (**Photograph 24**). There was a dry ditch just beyond the northern boundary behind the hedge (**Photograph 25**).



Photograph 22. Paved brick driveway.



Photograph 23. Mown lawn area with mature pine tree on western side.



Photograph 24. Mature oak trees and cherry laurel hedge on northern boundary.



Photograph 25. Dry ditch just beyond northern boundary.

Impact Risk Assessment

- 5.2.9** Based on the assumption that the nearby ponds support breeding GCN, i.e. the worst case scenario, the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment Tool was used to assess the risk of the development proposals adversely affecting GCN. The development footprint (i.e. proposed detached double garage and parking on existing lawn) is less than 0.1ha and the Tool indicates that the loss or damage to 0.01-0.1ha of land between 100 and 250m of a breeding pond (i.e. Ponds 1, 2 & 3) and more than 250m away from another breeding pond (i.e. Pond 4) is highly unlikely to result in an offence (see **Figure 3**).

Component	Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	Notional offence probability score
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.01 - 0.1 ha lost or damaged	0.01
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.01 - 0.1 ha lost or damaged	0.001
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
	Maximum:	0.01
Rapid risk assessment result:	GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY	

Guidance on risk assessment result categories

"Green: offence highly unlikely" indicates that the development activities are of such a type, scale and location that it is highly unlikely any offence would be committed should the development proceed. Therefore, no licence would be required. However, bearing in mind that this is a generic assessment, you should carefully examine your specific plans to ensure this is a sound conclusion, and take precautions (see **Non-licensed avoidance measures tool**) to avoid offences if appropriate. It is likely that any residual offences would have negligible impact on conservation status, and enforcement of such breaches is unlikely to be in the public interest.

Figure 3. Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment Tool.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Bats

Assessment of Roost Suitability

- 6.1.1** The property is in a suburban setting with the railway line (approx. 50 metres south) with bordering trees and hedgerows as well as the areas of woodland provides flight paths to the high-quality foraging areas, i.e. nearby woodland, for bats roosting locally. Furthermore, the search of bat mitigation licences identified common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) roosting 1km away from the property.
- 6.1.2** The roof space of the bungalow was small and used for storage so was sub-optimal to support the internal flight exhibited by typically void-dwelling bats, such as the long-eared species (*Plecotus* spp.). In the absence of any evidence (i.e. droppings), it is considered highly unlikely that these bats are present inside the roof void.
- 6.1.3** Externally, the roof was covered in overlapping pantiles that were mostly tight with any visible gaps proven to be of limited extent without any evidence of use (i.e. droppings). Therefore, the bungalow lacked any gaps that offer potential roost sites to small crevice-dwelling bats, such as the locally recorded common pipistrelle (*P. pipistrellus*).
- 6.1.4** Based on the above assessment, the detached bungalow has been assigned negligible suitability for roosting bats (see **Appendix 1** for potential suitability categories). As a result, no further survey to determine the presence or likely absence of roosting bats (i.e. emergence survey) is deemed necessary.

Conclusion

- 6.1.5** The development proposals seek consent for a first floor extension with rear dormer (see planning drawings in **Appendix 1**). The survey findings demonstrate that these proposals are highly unlikely to result in the death, injury or disturbance of bats; the damage or destruction of a bat roost; or the obstruction of access to a bat roost. Therefore, a European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence would not be required to allow the development proposals to proceed lawfully.
- 6.1.6** In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during the works, works must stop immediately and a suitably licensed ecologist should be called to site attend to the bat and provide advice on how to proceed; works should not continue until further written advice has been received. At this stage, an EPS mitigation licence may be required to permit the works to recommence lawfully.

6.2 Great Crested Newt

Assessment of Habitat Suitability

- 6.2.1** The application site falls inside an amber risk zone (from NatureSpace modelling for GCN district licensing). The site is a residential property with no standing water, i.e. GCN breeding habitat, and mainly garden habitats including a closely-mown lawn and paving, i.e. terrestrial habitats of negligible value to GCN.
- 6.2.2** The ditch beyond the northern boundary of the site was dry at the time of the survey so did not constitute suitable amphibian breeding habitat.

Impact Assessment and Recommended Actions

- 6.2.1** The development proposals include a proposed detached double garage and parking with a footprint less than 0.1ha. The development footprint is small and will impact existing garden habitats, i.e. terrestrial habitats of negligible value to GCN, only.
- 6.2.2** Based on the assumption that the nearby ponds support breeding GCN, i.e. the worst case scenario, the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment Tool was used to assess the risk of the development proposals adversely affecting GCN. The development footprint (i.e. proposed detached double garage and parking on existing lawn) is less than 0.1ha and the Tool indicates that the loss or damage to 0.01-0.1ha of land between 100 and 250m of a breeding pond (i.e. Ponds 1, 2 & 3) and more than 250m away from another breeding pond (i.e. Pond 4) is highly unlikely to result in an offence.
- 6.2.3** In line with the guidance contained in the Tool and the impact assessment presented above, the nature and scale of the proposed development is highly unlikely to breach legislation protecting GCN or their habitats. However, in the absence of mitigation there is an extremely low risk that individual GCNs could potentially be injured and/or killed during the construction activities if traversing across the habitats on site. To avoid this, it is recommended that reasonable avoidance measures to minimise the risk of killing individual GCNs are implemented during the construction phase – as set out below.

Reasonable Avoidance Measures

- 6.2.4** The following reasonable avoidance measures should be adopted to minimise the extremely low risk of harming individual GCNs:

Pre-commencement of construction activities

- Any removal of rockery, debris or leaf litter will be carefully searched by hand

looking for amphibians; and

- The formal mowing of the lawn should be maintained prior to the commencement of site work to minimise the likelihood of GCN being present during excavations.

During construction activities

- Any stored building materials or waste, such as bricks or debris etc., that might offer shelter for GCN will be kept raised off the ground on pallets or on existing hard standing, and efforts should be made to process and removed from site as soon as possible; and
- Excavation works will be avoided after dusk and any open excavations or trenches will be backfilled (after a check for GCN presence) or left with escape ramps to prevent GCN from becoming trapped.

- 6.2.5** In the unlikely event that a GCN is found during the course of construction, works will stop immediately and a licensed ecologist will be called onto site to ensure the GCN is not harmed and provide further advice on how to proceed; work will recommence only once further written advice has been received.

Enhancement Opportunities

- 6.2.6** The value of the application site to wildlife could be enhanced by adding features suitable for sheltering and hibernating GCN, such as creating rockeries and allowing areas of grassland to grow tall and diversify.

7 REFERENCES

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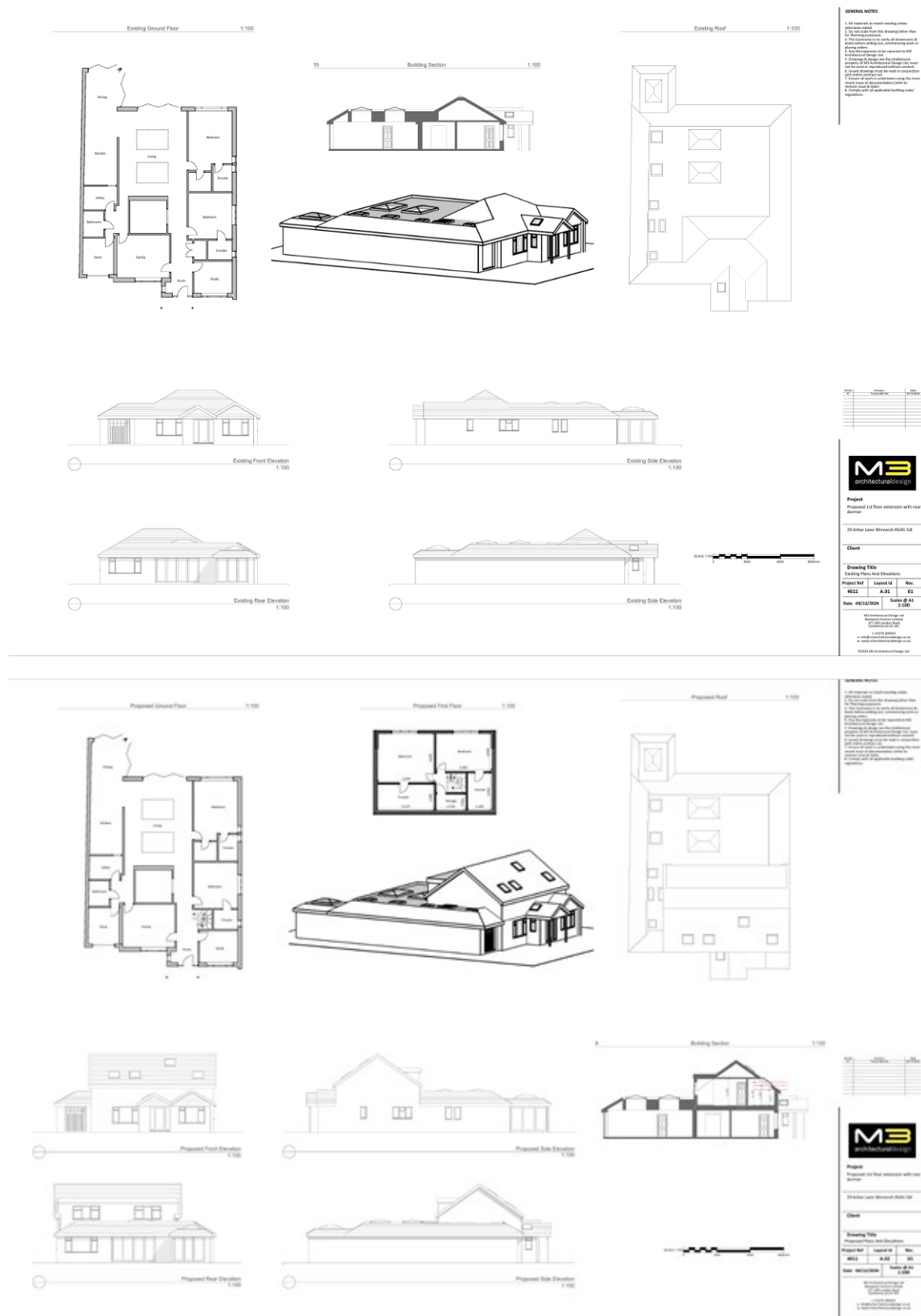
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APPENDIX 1 – PLANNING DRAWINGS



APPENDIX 2 – POTENTIAL SUITABILITY CATEGORIES FOR ROOSTING BATS

The categories detailed in **Table 3** below are derived from the '*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)*' (Collins 2023) and provide guidance for assessing the potential suitability of buildings (and other structures) for roosting bats. These categories are applied using professional judgement and irrespective of whether the presence of a bat roost has been confirmed during a survey, as additional bat roosts could be present which have not yet been discovered.

Table 3. Categories for potential suitability of buildings (and other structures) for roosting bats.

Potential Suitability	Category Justification
None	A building (or structure) that has no features likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of cracks, crevices or voids that could provide suitable shelter).
Negligible	A building (or structure) that has no obvious features likely to be used by roosting bats, but in this case a small element of uncertainty remains as bats will occasionally use small and apparently unsuitable features. This category may also be used where a bat could potentially roost due to one attribute, but it is considered unlikely due to another attribute (e.g. a feature that is subject to constant illumination from artificial lighting).
Low	A building (or structure) that has one or more potential roost sites suitable for opportunistic use by individual bats at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites for bats do not provide sufficient space, shelter, protection, conditions and/or surrounding suitable habitat to be used regularly or by large numbers (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for a maternity colony and not a classic hibernation site).
Moderate	A building (or structure) that has one or more potential roost sites suitable for regular use by individual bats, or small non-breeding groups, due to sufficient space, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. However, these potential roost sites for bats are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status with regards to the type of roost only (i.e. maternity colonies and classic hibernation sites).
High	A building (or structure) that has one or more potential roost sites suitable for use by large numbers of bats more regularly and for longer periods of time due to sufficient space, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These potential roost sites for bats are capable of supporting high conservation status roosts (i.e. maternity colonies and classic hibernation sites).

APPENDIX 3 – DEFINITION OF BAT ROOST TYPES

The potential suitability of a building in conjunction with any evidence of bat presence is used to provide an initial assessment of likely roost type and importance. The types of roost considered are based on the following Natural England definitions:

- Day roost – a summer resting place used by individual bats, or small non-breeding groups, during the day;
- Night roost – a resting place used by individual bats on occasion, or by a whole colony regularly, during the night;
- Feeding perch – a resting place used by individual bats, or a few individuals, primarily for short periods of feeding during the night;
- Transitional roost – a place used by a few individual bats, or occasionally small groups, for a short period of time upon waking from hibernation or in the period prior to hibernation;
- Maternity roost – a place used by small to large groups of female bats to give birth and raise their young to independence;
- Hibernation roost – a place used by individual bats, or in groups, during winter where there is a constant cool temperature and high humidity; and
- Satellite roost – a place used by a few individuals to small groups of breeding female bats found in close proximity to the main nursery colony throughout the breeding season.

The importance of a bat roost is underpinned by the conservation status of the suspected species (i.e. the distribution/rarity of a species in a specific geographic location) and the type of roost (i.e. not all roosts have the same level of importance in supporting the local bat population). Further roost characterisation surveys may be required to fully determine the importance of a confirmed roost to allow for a robust impact assessment.

APPENDIX 4 – FURTHER SURVEY RATIONALE

In cases where no evidence of use by bats is found during a building inspection but the possibility of their presence cannot be ruled out, further presence/likely absence survey is likely to be required if the development proposals will impact potential roost sites. Emergence surveys are carried out to establish the presence or likely absence of roosting bats in buildings (and other structures) and these are designed in accordance with the ‘*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)*’ (Collins 2023) detailed in **Table 4** below.

Table 4. Recommended further survey for establishing presence/likely absence of roosting bats in buildings (and other structures).

Potential Suitability	Further Survey
None	No further surveys are required.
Negligible	No further surveys are required.
Low	A minimum of one dusk emergence survey visit should be undertaken in the period of May to August. However, if all areas (including cracks, crevices and voids) can be thoroughly inspected and no evidence of use by bats is found, then emergence surveys may not be required. In cases where a complete inspection cannot be carried out, professional judgement and proportionality should be applied when assessing the impacts of the development proposals.
Moderate	A minimum of two dusk emergence survey visits should be undertaken in the period of May to September, with at least one of the surveys between May and August; the survey visits should be spaced at least three weeks apart.
High	A minimum of three separate dusk emergence survey visits should be undertaken in the period of May to September (inclusive), with at least two of the surveys between May and August; the survey visits should be spaced at least three weeks apart.

In cases where the PRA and/or further survey establishes the presence of roosting bats in a building (or structure), this will likely trigger the need for roost characterisation to collect sufficient information to inform the impact assessment and mitigation strategy. The roost characterisation comprises information collected during the PRA, emergence surveys and by other methods, such as DNA analysis of bat droppings, and ultimately aims to determine the bat species roosting; the number of bats the roosts support; the roost access points; the locations of the roosts and the types of roost present. This information is crucial when applying for planning permission and/or a European Protected Species mitigation licence.