



Preliminary Roost Assessment

17 Vauxhall Drive,
Woodley,
Reading,
RG5 4EA

Preliminary Roost Assessment of 17 Vauxhall Drive, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4EA

REPORT DETAILS

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management, nature conservation,
communication materials, design and wildlife
book publisher.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NatureBureau Ltd was commissioned by Linn Rankin to undertake a daytime bat Preliminary Roost Assessment at 17 Vauxhall Drive, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4EA (Building B1) to inform proposed development. The survey was carried out on 15 May 2026 by Natural England licenced bat ecologist Kristina Wood. The survey included a desk study and an external inspection of a residential dwelling proposed for an extension.

The surrounding landscape is of high value to bats, comprising a well-connected mosaic of woodland, wetland, grassland, and riparian habitats. These habitats support high levels of invertebrate abundance and provide extensive opportunities for foraging and commuting.

Linear landscape features, including tree lines, hedgerows, rivers, and transport corridors, further enhance connectivity and are likely to function as key movement routes through the local environment.

Internally, B1 provides no potential access for roosting bats within the loft void; and an inspection found no evidence of roosting bats within a loft which has been reroofed within the previous few years. Externally, the building fabric is in good condition, with well-maintained brickwork, windows, doors, and soffits. Inspection of the roof found it to be in excellent condition, with no bat roosting potential. Similarly, hanging tiles are well fitted.

No features typically associated with bat hibernation, such as cellars, deep cavities, or substantial stone crevices, are present on site. The limited external crevice features observed are unlikely to provide the stable, humid, and thermally buffered conditions required for hibernation.

In accordance with Collins (2023), **B1 at 17 Vauxhall Drive, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4EA offers negligible potential for roosting bats.**

Accordingly, **no adverse impacts upon bats are anticipated**, and the likelihood of committing offences under relevant wildlife legislation is considered negligible.

In accordance with Collins (2023), **no further bat surveys are required.**

No evidence of nesting birds was identified during the survey; however, nesting could occur during the bird breeding season, and appropriate recommendations have been provided.

1 INTRODUCTION

NatureBureau Ltd was commissioned by Linn Rankin (hereafter referred to as “the client”) to undertake a Preliminary (bat) Roost Assessment (PRA) at 17 Vauxhall Drive, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4EA (hereafter referred to as ‘the site’) to satisfy planning conditions in relation to bats and their roosts, which are protected by law. This report summarises the findings of that survey.

1.1 Site Overview

The site, centred on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SU 76816 72927, comprises a detached residential dwelling (Building B1). The property includes an amenity garden to the rear (north) and a driveway and lawn to the front (south).

The site is situated within a high-density residential area in Woodley, approximately 5 kilometres (km) east of Reading.

1.2 Site Plans

The proposed development comprises the erection of a two-storey front extension, first floor side extension, single storey rear extension and garage conversion to create habitable accommodation.

An impact assessment is provided in Section 4.1.

Site plans can be found in Section 6.1.

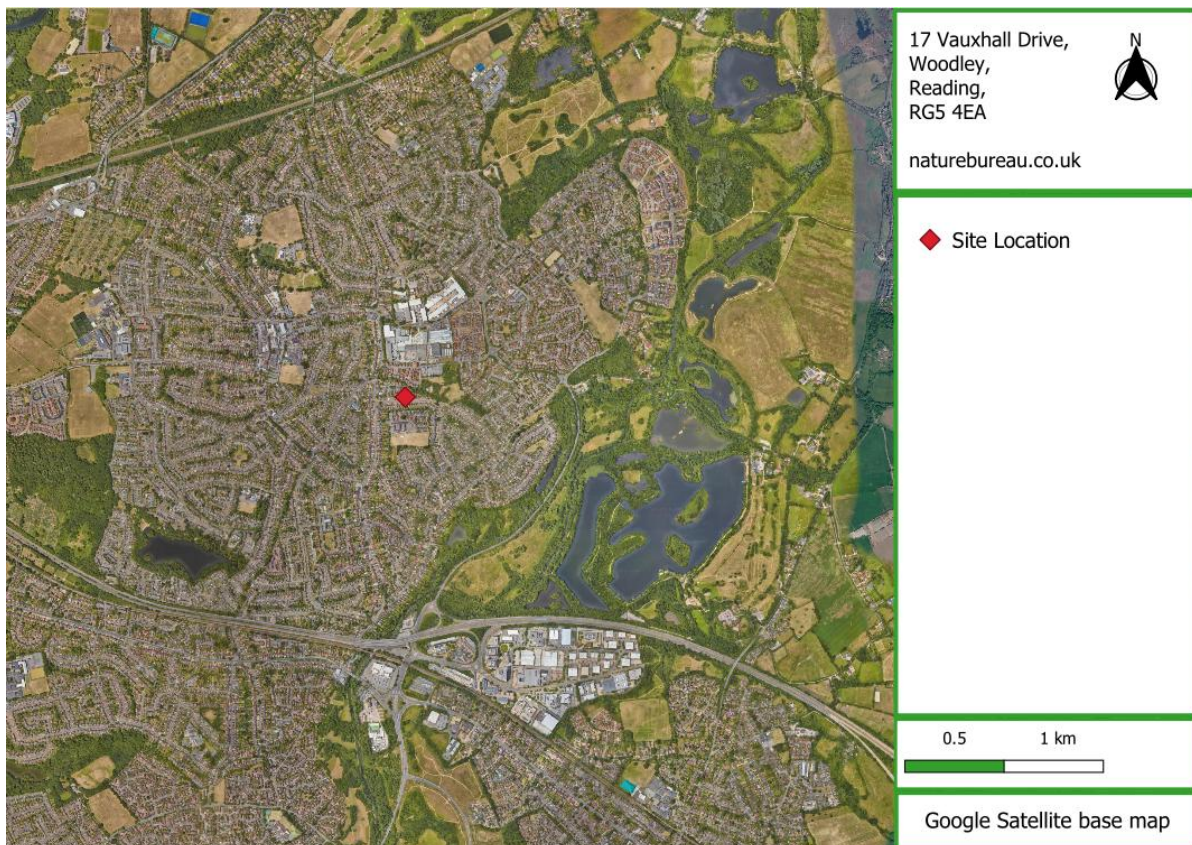
1.3 Scope of Assessment

The aim of the roost assessment is to assess the potential status of roosting bats on the site and to determine the existence and location of any bat-suitable foraging and commuting habitats. With regards to roosting bats, this information will serve to assess the potential ecological impact of the proposals and identify any ecological and legislative constraints and/or mitigation measures that may be required.

Figure 1: 17 Vauxhall Drive, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4EA



Figure 1: The site within the wider landscape



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study

Freely available online datasets were searched for licences granted for works involving bats within 2 km of the site, and for records of relevant designated sites within this same radius. Additionally, maps/aerial images were interrogated for features of bat interest.

Table 1: Resources used during the desk study

Resource	Information assessed
Google Earth ¹	Assessment of the local landscape. Latest image date: May 2025
Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website ²	Records of licences issued by Natural England for works affecting bat species within 2 km of the site; any relevant site designations within 2 km of the site; Special Areas of Conservation designated for bat interest within 10 km of the site; Priority Habitats in the local area

2.2 Field Survey

A site visit was undertaken on 15 May 2026, between 11:10 and 12:00 hours. The survey was carried out by Kristina Wood - a Natural England bat licenced ecologist.

The work, analysis and reporting were undertaken in line with CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct³, the Bat Conservation Trust's Good Practice Guidelines⁴ and other relevant guidelines and legislation as listed in the Appendices of this report.

2.2.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment

An assessment was carried out on B1 to determine its potential to support roosting bats. The assessment included an external investigation of structures for signs of bat activity such as droppings, rub or scratch marks, staining at potential roosts and exit holes, live or dead bats, and features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats, such as raised or missing tiles. Equipment used during the survey includes binoculars, a high-powered torch, a DJI mini drone and a phone camera.

The suitability of B1 to support bats was rated from no suitability to high suitability in accordance with Section 4.3 of the Bat Conservation Trust's Good Practice Guidelines, and recommendations for further survey requirements are also taken from Collins (2023)⁴.

2.3 Limitations

DEFRA's MAGIC mapping system has recently been updated (12 December 2024), and as a result, European Protected Species licences are not always displayed accurately or in full. It is possible that the available data is incomplete.

The survey was conducted in accordance with current best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023) to determine the presence or likely absence of roosting bats. However, the data collected represents a snapshot in time, based on conditions observed during specific survey dates. As such, it provides an indication of site use by bats at the time of assessment only.

Identifying bat roosts within buildings can be challenging, particularly in larger structures or those with numerous potential roosting features. Roosting sites used by solitary bats or males can be especially difficult to detect due to their discreet nature. Many bat species utilise narrow crevices, such as gaps between roof tiles or beneath tile linings, where any droppings or signs of occupancy may become concealed and inaccessible to surveyors.

Additionally, inspections may not always reveal evidence of bat presence, as droppings and other field signs can degrade quickly due to adverse weather.

The results of this report are valid up to 12 months and/or if the conditions of the site change significantly, as per the Advice Note on the lifespan of ecological reports and surveys produced by CIEEM in 2019.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Natural England Protected Species Licences

According to Defra's MAGIC database, eleven Natural England European Protected Species (EPS) licences have been issued within 2 km of the site for activities affecting bats. These licences relate to works impacting brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*), common pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) between 2012 and 2020. These relate to the damage or destruction of resting and breeding places.

The nearest record (Licence Ref: 2014-649-EPS-MIT) pertains to works that caused the destruction of the resting place of common and soprano pipistrelle bats, located 1.2 km east, issued in 2014.

3.1.2 Site Designations

Wokingham Borough Council identifies the presence of approximately 117 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) across the borough, reflecting the strong ecological value of the wider landscape surrounding the site.

The site is located approximately 740m north-west of Dinton Pastures Country Park, a substantial 350-acre mosaic of woodland, meadow, lakes, ponds, rivers and streams. The variety of aquatic and terrestrial habitats present provide highly suitable foraging and commuting opportunities for a range of bat species, particularly edge-foraging and aerial-hawking species associated with wetland environments.

In addition, the site lies approximately 1.3km east of Lavell's Lake Local Nature Reserve, a 15-hectare reserve comprising open water, reedbeds, sedge-dominated wetland, species-rich grassland, coppiced scrub and mature hedgerows. These habitats are likely to support abundant nocturnal invertebrate populations and provide sheltered linear features conducive to bat commuting and foraging activity.

Further ecologically valuable habitats occur nearby, including Alder Moors Local Nature Reserve approximately 950m north-east of the site, and Sandford Park approximately 1.7km north-east. These areas comprise wet grassland, wildflower-rich meadow pasture, ponds, ditches, reedbeds and developing woodland habitats, all of which are considered highly favourable for bats due to their structural diversity, sheltered edge habitats and associated invertebrate abundance.

To the west, Highwood Nature Reserve lies approximately 1.5km from the site and supports mixed lowland woodland and heathland habitats, which may provide roosting, commuting and foraging opportunities for woodland-associated bat species.

Furthermore, Lodge Wood and Sandford Mill Site of Special Scientific Interest is located approximately 1.6km north-east of the site, further demonstrating the ecological significance of the surrounding landscape.

Collectively, the extensive network of woodland, wetland, grassland and linear vegetative habitats within the wider landscape is considered highly suitable for bats. Such habitats are likely to support high invertebrate prey availability, sheltered commuting corridors and connectivity between roosting and foraging areas. The site itself is considered moderately connected to these habitats via mature residential gardens, scattered trees and vegetated boundaries, which may facilitate bat movement through the local landscape.

No additional statutory designated sites, such as National Nature Reserves (NNRs) or Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), are located within 2 km of the site. Furthermore, there are no SACs designated for bat interest within a 10 km radius.

3.1.3 Priority Habitats

The site is bordered to the north by a tree line which provides direct connectivity between B1 and an area of Deciduous Woodland located approximately 36m north-east of the site. Additional areas of Deciduous Woodland are present throughout the local and wider landscape, alongside other Priority Habitats including wood-pasture and parkland, good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland fen and reedbed habitats.

Collectively, these habitats form a well-connected network of high-quality ecological features which are widely recognised as being highly suitable for bats. Mature trees within these habitats may provide roosting opportunities in the form of cavities, splits, lifted bark and other PRFs, whilst the structurally diverse woodland edges, wetland margins and linear vegetative features offer sheltered commuting corridors and productive foraging habitat. The proximity and connectivity of these habitats substantially increase the suitability of the surrounding landscape for a diverse assemblage of bat species.

3.1.4 Additional Landscape Features of Interest

The River Loddon is 940 m southeast, and there is a railway line 1.5 km north. Railway lines are recognised as important wildlife commuting routes, providing dark, sheltered corridors with high availability of invertebrate prey. Railway lines are of particular interest to commuting and foraging bats.

Similarly, Rivers and associated riparian corridors are widely recognised as high-quality bat habitat. They typically provide continuous linear features that are strongly used by bats for commuting, often acting as “dark corridors” that allow safe movement across otherwise open or fragmented landscapes.

In addition, riverine environments support high levels of insect abundance due to emergent aquatic invertebrates and the productivity of marginal vegetation. This makes them particularly valuable foraging habitats, especially for aerial-hawking bat species such as *Pipistrellus* spp. and *Myotis* spp.

3.2 Preliminary Bat Roost Survey

A daytime site inspection was undertaken on 15 May 2026 in bright, clear weather conditions, with an ambient temperature of approximately 18°C recorded at the time of the survey.

B1 comprises a detached two-storey residential dwelling with an attached single-storey garage. The structure is of traditional brick construction beneath a pitched roof clad with concrete roof tiles. Decorative hanging tiles are present to the south elevation, and a chimney stack is located on the north-east side of the main roof ridge. uPVC soffits and window frames are installed throughout the property.

3.2.1 External Assessment

The external brickwork was observed to be in good condition, with no evidence of significant deterioration, cracking, or displacement. All windows and doors appeared well fitted, appropriately sealed, and suitably integrated within the structure.

The main roof covering was found to be in excellent condition and appeared to have been installed within the last few years. All roof tiles were present, secure, and correctly aligned, with no slipped, lifted, or missing tiles identified during the inspection. Mortar was intact throughout, including along the verge detailing, and the chimney flashing was observed to be well fitted and in good condition, with no visible defects or lifting. The soffits were also noted to be well sealed around the entire building, with no discernible gaps, lifted sections, or suitable access points identified.

Decorative hanging tiles on the front (south) elevation were present and securely fixed, with no evidence of lifting, displacement, or significant gaps.

The attached garage comprises a flat felt roof covering. The felt was observed to be well fitted and in good condition, with no signs of lifting, splitting, or deterioration. Gaps around the eaves had been sealed with plastic trim/filler material, and no crevices, voids, or potential access points were identified.

3.2.2 Internal Assessment

Internally, B1 comprises a traditional A-frame timber roof structure forming the loft space. The roofing membrane was observed to be in excellent condition and appeared recently installed, with no holes, tears, or defects identified during the inspection. A light ingress assessment was undertaken by extinguishing all artificial light sources, during which no daylight penetration was observed.

The loft space was found to be clean, dry, and well maintained, with no evidence of bat activity identified. No bats were observed during the survey, and no droppings, staining, feeding remains, or other field signs indicative of bat presence were recorded.

3.2.3 On-site and Neighbouring Habitats

The site is predominantly comprised of highly managed amenity garden habitat, characterised by regularly maintained lawn and ornamental planting. Vegetation within the site is generally limited in structural diversity and ecological complexity.

A semi-mature tree line is present along the rear garden boundary; however, this vegetation is well managed and subject to regular maintenance. Overall, the habitats within the site are considered to provide low suitability for foraging and commuting bats, with limited ecological value for roosting or wider bat activity.

3.2.4 Tree Assessment

No trees are due to be impacted by the proposed development; therefore, no tree assessments were undertaken.

3.2.5 Nesting Birds

No birds were seen nesting on site at the time of the survey, however, the survey was undertaken outside of the main bird nesting season. It is possible that birds could begin nesting on or near B1 at any time during bird nesting season.

4 EVALUATION

The surrounding landscape is of high value to bats, comprising a well-connected mosaic of woodland, wetland, grassland, and riparian habitats. These habitats support high levels of invertebrate abundance and provide extensive opportunities for foraging and commuting.

A strong ecological network is present in the wider area, including multiple priority and semi-natural habitats such as deciduous woodland, reedbeds, fen, grassland, and parkland. These features collectively offer a range of roosting potential in mature trees, as well as sheltered commuting corridors and high-quality foraging habitat for a variety of bat species.

Linear landscape features, including tree lines, hedgerows, rivers, and transport corridors, further enhance connectivity and are likely to function as key movement routes through the local environment.

Internally, B1 provides no potential access for roosting bats within the loft void; and an inspection found no evidence of roosting bats within a loft which has been reroofed within the previous few years. Externally, the building fabric is in good condition, with well-maintained brickwork, windows, doors, and soffits. Inspection of the roof found it to be in excellent condition, with no bat roosting potential. Similarly, hanging tiles are well fitted.

No features typically associated with bat hibernation, such as cellars, deep cavities, or substantial stone crevices, are present on site. The limited external crevice features observed are unlikely to provide the stable, humid, and thermally buffered conditions required for hibernation.

In accordance with Collins (2023), **B1 at 17 Vauxhall Drive, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4EA offers negligible potential for roosting bats.**

4.1 Impact Assessment

The proposed works comprise a two-storey front extension, first-floor side extension, single-storey rear extension, and conversion of the existing garage to habitable accommodation.

Based on the findings of the PRA, these works are considered highly unlikely to result in the damage or destruction of a bat roost, or in injury, mortality, or significant disturbance to bats potentially roosting within the structure or adjacent features.

Accordingly, no adverse impacts upon bats are anticipated, and the likelihood of committing offences under relevant wildlife legislation is considered negligible, as detailed in the accompanying appendices (Section 6.3).

4.2 Recommendations

In accordance with Collins (2023), **no further bat surveys are required.**

4.3 Nesting Birds

No evidence of bird nesting was identified on or within B1. However, birds could potentially begin nesting anywhere on site at any time during bird nesting season. The proposed works could therefore cause disturbance, injury or death to nesting birds.

If work is to be carried out during bird nesting season (March to August, inclusive), the site owner and site contractors must be aware of their obligations towards nesting birds and must check for them prior to commencing the works. If an active bird nest is discovered, an exclusion zone must be put in place (minimum 5 m), and works must be halted in that area. Breeding birds and their nests are protected by law, and all active nests must be retained until the young have fledged. Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works.

5 CONCLUSION

17 Vauxhall Drive is situated within a landscape of high suitability for bats; however, the building itself offers negligible potential to support bat roosting. The proposed works are therefore considered highly unlikely to have any impact on bats, and no further bat survey work is required.

As a precaution, standard good practice measures should be implemented during the bird nesting season (typically March to August inclusive) to avoid disturbance to active nests and to ensure compliance with relevant wildlife legislation.

6 APPENDICES

6.1 Site Plans



6.2 Additional photos from the Site Visit on 15 May 2026



















6.3 Bat Legislation

All species of bats receive special protection under UK law, including the strict species protection provisions of the EU Habitats Directive as implemented in England and Wales by Part 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (the “2017 Regulations, amended by the 2019 Regulations due to Britain leaving the EU”), and Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Regulation 43 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended by the 2019 Regulations) makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat;
- Deliberately disturb bats in a way that would significantly affect their local distribution or abundance, or affect their ability to survive, breed or rear young; or
- Damage or destroy a roost – regardless of whether the action was deliberate or not.

Furthermore, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst they are occupying a structure or place which is used for shelter or protection, or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to this structure or place.

Eight of the UK bat species are also listed as Priority Species on the UK BAP¹, highlighting them as species of conservation concern.

6.4 Industry Guidance and Standards

This report has been written with consideration to:

- Bat Conservation Trust (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. 4th edition.
- Bat Conservation Trust (2019). National Bat Monitoring Program Annual Report 2019.
- British Standard 42020 (2013). Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

¹ [UK Biodiversity Framework - Biodiversity policy & advocacy - Bat Conservation Trust \(bats.org.uk\)](https://www.bats.org.uk/biodiversity-policy/)

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Garland, L. & Markham, S. (2008) Is Important Bat Foraging and Commuting Habitat Legally Protected? <http://biodiversitybydesign.co.uk/cmsAdmin/uploads/protection-for-bat-habitat-sep-2007.pdf>
- Harris, S. & Yalden, D. (2008). Mammals of the British Isles: Handbook, 4th Edition. The Mammal Society, Southampton.
- Institution of Lighting Professionals (2018). Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK. Bats and the Built Environment Series Publication: http://www.bats.org.uk/news.php/406/new_guidance_on_bats_and_lighting
- JNCC (2004) Bat workers manual (3rd edition). JNCC, Peterborough.
- Mathews F, and Harrower C. (2020). IUCN – compliant Red List for Britain’s Terrestrial Mammals. Assessment by the Mammal Society under contract to Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage. Natural England, Peterborough ISBN 978-1-78354-485-1.

6.5 Table 4.1 from Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines

Table 4.1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.

Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting habitats in structures	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the 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 generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a 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 roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^b 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 ^c).	Habitat that could be used by small numbers 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 habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a 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 ^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.	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 watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

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).

b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

c Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al.*, 2016 and Jansen *et al.*, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.

6.6 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development. The Framework specifies the need for protection of designated sites and priority habitats and species. An emphasis is also made on the need for ecological infrastructure through protection, restoration and re-creation. The protection and recovery of priority species (considered likely to be those listed as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006) is also listed as a requirement of planning policy.

In determining a planning application, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by ensuring that: designated sites are protected from harm; there is appropriate mitigation or compensation where significant harm cannot be avoided; measurable gains in biodiversity in and around developments are incorporated; and planning permission is refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including aged or veteran trees and also ancient woodland.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Biodiversity Duty

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'. Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of 'principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity'. This list is intended to assist decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications. A developer must show that their protection has been adequately addressed within a development proposal.

Proportionality

The work involved in preparing and implementing all ecological surveys, impact assessments and measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development. Consequently, the decision-maker should only request supporting information and conservation measures that are relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. Similarly, the decision-maker and their consultees should ensure that any comments and advice made over an application are also proportionate.