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A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

for

Mr and Mrs Arup

from

Four Winds

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1 **Executive Summary**

- Mr and Mrs Arup are seeking planning consent to extend a dwelling.
- Verdant Ecology conducted site visits on the 23rd May and the 20th June 2025.
- The site is a domestic dwelling and detached garage in a garden.
- Impacts on protected ecological features are unlikely if:
 - 1) A CEZ (Construction Exclusion Zone) is created as defined in Appendix 2 to prevent direct impacts on nearby habitat.
 - 2) Pollution (including light spill) is prevented (including the removal of the originally-intended roof lantern).
- No further ecological surveys are needed before a planning decision.
- Checks (and maybe controls) for badger setts, invasive plants and (if impacts start in the bird nesting season), nesting birds must occur before work starts on site.
- We understand that the application is exempt from BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain). See Appendix 6 for exemptions.
- However, legislation and policy expects enhancements to be made and some suggestions are made to achieve this. The Applicant and planning authority need to agree on which of these will be executed.

2 **Introduction**

Many ecological features are protected by legislation, policy and best practice. Where protected ecological features are likely to be present and likely to be affected, planning authorities are required (in advance of their decision) to request surveys, to consider the potential impacts of development and to make sure significant impacts are offset. They should also seek opportunities to improve the area for wildlife and in many cases, this means a formal BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain) exercise. See Appendices 4, 5, and 6 for further information.

The word 'site' refers to the development site only. The rest of the site is the ownership site.

The site is the footprint of the proposed building plus the areas needed for space to enable the construction of the building (e.g. scaffold, temporary materials storage, temporary parking). The rest of the site is the CEZ (Construction Exclusion Zone). Appendix 2 shows these.

This report:

- Describes an initial ecological baseline survey to provide information on the natural features of the area.
- Describes and/or maps the habitats on and adjacent to the site.
- Considers the potential for habitats on/near to the site to support protected species and habitats.
- Considers this in relation to the proposals.

- Provides some recommendations for avoiding/reducing the impacts of the project on wildlife.
- Provides recommendations for further survey (if needed) or justification (if not).
- Provides some recommendations for ecological enhancements of the site.

3 **Survey**

3.1 **Desk Study**

Sites designated for nature and species/habitats of conservation concern near the site were considered using Natural England's online MAGIC resource.

3.2 **Field Survey**

A baseline habitat survey of the site and its immediate surroundings was conducted (based on CIEEM's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal) in May and June 2025. Habitat types and ecological features on the site and its surroundings were identified and then compared to lists of protected habitats. Habitats and ecological features were then considered in terms of their suitability for protected species and those of conservation concern. Weather and season were considered appropriate for such work.

3.3 **Survey Limitations**

A baseline survey is not a complete set of surveys for/of protected ecological features. It is conducted so as to determine habitat types and ecological features. It may prompt further ecology survey work. In this case, investigations for signs of bats, badgers and nesting birds.

Adjacent areas were viewed from within the ownership site or from publicly-accessible areas.

4 **Results**

4.1 **Our Background Research**

The site is a house and garden.

An aerial image of the site and its surroundings can be viewed at <https://maps.app.goo.gl/5f6EUTzgybrTN7FR6>

Photographs of the site can be seen in Appendix 1.

The intention is to construct a single storey extension from the NW facing part of the house. Plans can be seen in Appendix 3.

4.1.1 ***Designated Sites within 2km (5km for SPA)***

The only protected site within 2km is Wellington College Bog SSSI (part of which is Edgebarrow Woods LNR), about 1.8km to the southeast at its closest. They are designated for wetland, heathland and woodland habitats and associated wildlife.

Several sections of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA exist in the area (about 5km to the west and south and about 3km to the east).

4.1.2 **Priority Habitats within 500m**

There are several areas of Priority habitat locally. The closest being heathland immediately across the highway to the south and several blocks of deciduous woodland, including one immediately north of the garden.

4.1.3 **Protected Species Records within 2km**

Local records of great crested newt are just over 2km away but are included here because the areas closer to site appear suitable. There are ponds locally but the closest on OS maps is about 360m away.

Approximately 25 bat impact/mitigation licences have been awarded, covering Brown Long-eared, Nathusius', Common and Soprano Pipistrelle bats.

4.2 **Description of Site and Adjacent Habitats**

The site is dwelling set in a well-maintained garden.

The site is has similar properties to the east and west. To the south is a highway with heathland beyond. To the north is deciduous woodland.

4.3 **Habitats and Flora**

Some habitats, trees and plants are protected (see Appendices 4 and 5 for details).

Approximately 40 varieties of plant are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, making it an offence to cause them to be transplanted into the wild and requiring special licensing to take (parts of) it off-site.

The following ecological features/habitats have been discerned on the site.

4.3.1 **Hardstanding**

There is a gravelled access driveway/parking at the front and areas of patio immediately west and north of the house.

4.3.2 **Invasive Plants**

Invasive/non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act were found within the ownership site (e.g. *Rhododendron ponticum*). Also on the ownership site is *Gaultheria shallon* (not Sch. 9-listed in England but perhaps should be and is a significant threat to nearby heathland habitats). It is an offence for all and any arisings from Sch. 9-listed plants to leave site unless a special licence is held, even if accidental (in, for example, tyre treads). The CEZ fencing must exclude all development-related activity from coming into contact with these plants. It may be necessary to remove plants just inside the CEZ to prevent seeds from occurring on the site. Before starting work on site, seek advice on how to manage these invasive plants. There is no obligation to eradicate these plants but it is desirable to do so.

4.3.3 **Lower Plants**

Some ferns/fungi/lichens/mosses occur on site. These have not been surveyed for and it is not intended to do so because protected species are usually associated with unusual habitats, whereas habitats on site are relatively commonplace.

4.3.4 **Trees**

There are significant trees in the front garden and a couple about halfway down the rear garden, with more on the fringes of the rear garden. Erect CEZ fencing as indicated in Appendix 2 to protect the root zones of these tree. If so, no arboricultural survey work is needed.

4.4 **Fauna**

Impacts on creatures with 'full' legal protection and on those protected by policy are a material consideration in planning decisions. The following list shows such creatures in alphabetical order and explains either why they are thought to be absent/unaffected or what potential there is for their presence. Other than checks for badger and bat and nesting bird field signs, no faunal surveys were conducted.

4.4.1 **Badgers**

Habitat on and off site is suitable. Signs of foraging badgers were found just off site.

Badger setts can be constructed suddenly/quickly so occasional surveys must be conducted before and during work. Badgers are protected for humane purposes, rather than conservation rarity. Therefore, if badger setts were to become established on/near site, work is likely to disturb them but a licence to close the setts (if necessary) would likely be achievable.

4.4.2 **Bats - roosts**

The roof and hanging tiles were considered suitable for bat roosts and evidence of bats was found associated with the hanging tiles around the door from the loft to the flat roof. We understand that there will be no direct impacts to the roof or hanging tiles except that the proposed extension will necessitate the loss of about 2 square metres of suitable tiles on the northwest-facing pitch of the existing single storey extension. These were inspected carefully on both our site visits (both after extended periods of dry weather) and no evidence found externally. On our second visit, the tiles and soffit/eaves cladding were further inspected using an endoscope. Then tiles were removed and the inter-batten and eaves spaces inspected further. No evidence of bats was found and conditions in the potential roost spaces were such (dry and with obstructions that would collect any falling droppings), that if bats had been using them, droppings would have been found. Nearby buildings, trees and woodland are likely to provide bat roosts but the CEZ will protect these. Indirect impacts from pollution (including light spill) can reasonably be prevented. No further surveys are needed.

4.4.3 **Bats – foraging**

The site itself is of Negligible value for foraging but its surroundings are of High suitability for foraging (as defined in Table 4.1 of the 2023 best practice guidelines). No further surveys are needed because pollution (including light spill) can reasonably be prevented.

4.4.4 **Birds**

Barn Owls

No nesting sites or foraging will be directly affected. Indirect effects can reasonably be prevented. No further surveys are needed.

Birds of Conservation Concern

Habitats on or around the site appear suitable for a range of birds of conservation concern (e.g. house sparrow, song thrush). However, the affected habitats are relatively commonplace and post-development enhancements can reasonably offset impacts.

Breeding/nesting birds

The site is suitable for nesting birds and they may nest nearby. If work occurs when birds are nesting, an offence may occur. Post-development disturbance is unlikely to affect nesting birds (any more than its current use). Pollution prevention measures will be needed.

4.4.5 **Common Toads**

The site is not in the known range for Natterjack toad. For 'common' toad, terrestrial habitats on site are of marginal suitability but those just off site are considered suitable and there are several ponds locally. Individuals are not protected but their conservation status should be maintained or enhanced. This can be achieved by enhancements such as new semi-natural planting. Pollution prevention measures will be needed.

4.4.6 **Dormice**

Dormice likely occur locally. Individuals and habitat are legally-protected. Habitat on site is considered unsuitable. Habitat off site is suitable. Indirect impacts are possible (pollution, including light spill) but if these are prevented, surveys do not need to be conducted.

4.4.7 **Great Crested Newts**

GCN occur locally. Individuals and habitat are legally-protected. Habitat on site is considered unsuitable. Habitat off site is suitable. If mitigation measures are taken as in 'Reptiles' below, surveys will not be needed.

4.4.8 **Harvest Mice**

Habitat on site is considered unsuitable. Habitat near site is considered suitable. Individuals are not protected but their conservation status should be maintained or enhanced. Pollution prevention measures will be needed.

4.4.9 **Hedgehogs**

Habitat on site is considered marginally suitable. Habitats around the site are considered suitable. Individuals are not protected but their conservation status should be maintained or enhanced. Pollution prevention measures will be needed.

4.4.10 **Insects**

The site and surrounding area supports a range of habitats that are suitable for insects. These have not been surveyed for and it is not intended to do so because protected species are usually associated with unusual habitats, whereas habitats on site are relatively commonplace. Pollution prevention measures will be needed.

4.4.11 **Otters**

Habitat locally is unsuitable.

4.4.12 **Reptiles**

Habitat locally (the heathland) is suitable for smooth snake and sand lizard. Both they and their habitat are fully-protected.

Habitat on site is marginally-suitable for 'common' reptiles and that just off site is suitable. These are protected against harm and their conservation status should be maintained or enhanced.

Prevent harm to reptiles by:

- 1) Establishing a CEZ that excludes activity from anything other than existing hardstanding and lawn.
- 2) Not storing materials during development unless they are on pallets or in skips.
- 3) Covering excavations/footings with boards with edges covered in earth each night, checking for trapped individuals each morning.

Pollution prevention measures will be needed. Consequently, surveys are not needed.

4.4.13 **Water Voles**

Habitat is unsuitable.

4.4.14 **White-clawed Crayfish**

Habitat is unsuitable.

5 **Evaluation of Importance**

See Appendices 4 and 5 for an explanation of the legislation and policy related to ecological features. See Appendix 7 for an explanation of terms used by Verdant Ecology in evaluating ecological features.

5.1 **Designated Sites**

SPA/SAC should be considered of International importance. SSSI should be considered of National importance. Non-statutory sites (LWS/SNCI/SINC) should be considered of County importance. If pollution prevention measures are successful, ecological impacts on protected sites are unlikely.

5.2 **Legally Protected Plants and Habitats**

No legally protected habitats or plants were found on site. Such-protected plants and habitats are therefore considered to be of Negligible importance.

5.3 **Legally Protected Fauna**

The assumed/likely assembly of fauna on site is considered to be of Negligible value.

5.4 **Policy-protected Features**

Trees are material considerations in planning decisions.

Habitats, plants and fauna listed in National or Local BAP (Biodiversity Action Plans) or Priority Habitats/Species are protected by policy and if present would be of importance.

Fauna protected by policy (and not also protected legally) likely occur on or near site (e.g. hedgehogs, toads) but would also be of no more than Local importance.

6 **Impacts**

6.1 **Impacts Considered**

There is always potential for development work to contravene legislation and policy protecting native wildlife.

Impacts considered possible from this development are;

6.1.1 ***Harm to Individuals or Roost/Nest/Resting Places***

Individuals or their place of rest may be protected.

6.1.2 ***Habitat Loss***

Habitats may be protected in their own right or they may harbour protected species.

6.1.3 ***Exclusion, Isolation, Fragmentation***

Animals may be excluded from foraging or shelter by new roads, fencing, lighting, etc. Existing habitat may be broken up into smaller, less viable areas.

6.1.4 ***Pollution/Disturbance***

Such as air-borne dust, noise, vibration, heat or toxic substances and suspended solids in run-off or channel flow. These can be prevented by devising and complying with a pollution prevention plan. Special consideration should be given to controlling light pollution. Disturbance can arise from development action or come from people or pets, post-development.

6.1.5 ***Compaction***

Activities such as storing materials, site staff parking or tracking machinery can damage soil structure and/or tree roots beyond the footprint of the actual construction. This can be avoided by confining all activity to outside the CEZ.

6.1.6 ***Peripheral Activities***

Consider; soil testing, fencing, drainage, service runs, temporary parking/offices/toilets, access routes, plant tracking, burning sites, storage/sorting areas etc. Any may damage ecological features.

6.2 **Impact Assessment**

See Appendix 7 for an explanation of terms used by Verdant Ecology in evaluating ecological features.

The following impacts are perceived in the **absence** of mitigation.

- 1) A pollution event (including significant light spill) could have Major Negative impacts on sites of County - National importance and species of at least Local importance.
- 2) Failure to establish the CEZ could lead to harm to individuals, loss of habitat, and disturbance to resting places of fully-protected wildlife.

However, if the mitigation recommendations herein are complied with and pollution prevention measures are successful, it is reasonable to believe that ecological impacts are likely to be Negligible at the Site/Local scale in the Short Term but with potential for Minor-Major Positive gain at the Site/Local scale.

7 **Recommendations**

7.1 **Further surveys**

If the work impacts can be constrained as recommended herein and pollution is prevented/controlled, no further surveys are needed before a planning decision.

7.2 **Prior to development**

If signs of any protected species are found during work, work must stop immediately whilst advice is sought.

7.2.1 ***Invasive Plants***

Mark the locations of these. Ensure measures are taken to prevent their arisings from leaving site.

7.2.2 ***Badgers***

Remain vigilant for signs of badgers. If any setts arise, stop work and seek advice.

7.2.3 ***Birds (nesting)***

There is no licensing system to affect nesting birds for development purposes. Therefore, it is easiest to time destructive and noisy work for the winter months. If work is conducted between about February and August (inclusive), seek advice from a competent ecologist on whether it can continue. Note that birds can nest at any time of the year. It would be sensible to remove any potential nest sites, in or near the affected parts, in the winter months before work starts.

7.2.4 ***Construction Exclusion Zone***

Establish a CEZ as indicated in Appendix 2.

This line must never be moved or crossed, or have anything associated with the development deposited beyond it, for the duration of the project.

7.2.5 **Pollution Prevention**

Provide a comprehensive, fool-proof pollution prevention plan demonstrating you will avoid significant indirect impacts on protected ecological features. Suggested minimum standards can be found in the COSHH regulations and the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines series. This must include tight controls on light spill. See Bat Conservation Trust and Institute for Lighting Engineers (2023), GN 08/23, Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night for more information.

7.3 **During Development**

7.3.1 **Materials Storage**

Confine to the pre-existing hardstanding outside the CEZ and always keep in skips or on pallets, not directly on the ground (so as not to attract reptiles, amphibians etc.).

7.3.2 **Excavations**

Any excavations (e.g. footings) must be covered with boards at night and the edges covered with earth to prevent the above-mentioned wildlife falling in. Excavations must be checked each morning for trapped wildlife.

7.4 **Post-development**

Over and above avoiding/offsetting impacts (addressed above), further wildlife enhancements can be expected.

Some reasonable suggestions are provided here. The local authority cannot dictate exactly which/how many will be used but they and the Applicant will have to agree on what seems appropriate.

New tree planting.

New, diverse planting that only uses species with a widely-recognised value for wildlife.

Nest/roost boxes.

Untreated, hardwood timber structures (fences, pergolas etc.).

Compost piles (timber boxes, not plastic bins).

8 **Summary**

If the advice herein is followed, impacts can be considered unlikely/insignificant.

8.1 **Advisory Notes**

Due to the SPA nearby, you may need to make a contribution to SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace). The local authority will determine this.

Consult a competent ecologist;

- Every few months until project completion.
- If there are changes in plans.
- If new ecological information arises.
- If signs of protected species are discovered, stop work immediately and seek the advice of a competent ecologist.

9

Appendices

9.1

Appendix 1. Photographs of the Site

The house viewed from the SW



The site (viewed from the NW)



9.2 **Appendix 2. CEZ**



9.3 **Appendix 3. Plans of the Proposals**

Existing



Proposed



9.4 **Appendix 4. Legislation, Policy and Licensing Relating to Protected Ecological Features**

All legally protected ecological features (the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010) are material considerations in planning decisions under the National Planning Policy Framework and as in ODPM and DEFRA 2005 and ODPM 2006. This means that before granting permission, planning authorities should consider the potential impacts of development on legally protected features and should be confident that any negative impacts can be mitigated for. Legally protected features are protected, whether planning permission is applied for, held, or not. Licensing from Natural England may be required to conduct work and mitigation. European Protected Species Mitigation Licences can usually only be applied for after planning permission has been received and all conditions relating to the protected feature have been released. They are only granted where there is 'overriding public need', 'no suitable alternative' and the conservation status of the species concerned remains favourable.

Additionally, some ecological features are 'Priority Species/Habitats' in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. These equate to 'Habitats and Species of Principle Importance' and may be referred to as such. We use BAP because it has been around longer. Local Biodiversity Action Plans may also be in place for certain species/habitats not covered by the national BAP. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 expect those in a position of influence to consider the impacts of their actions on biodiversity, especially Biodiversity Action Plan features and to seek opportunities to benefit them. Many BAP features (e.g. otters) carry alternate and higher-level legal protection.

Trees

Trees may be protected by being part of a habitat that is protected, by being in a Conservation Area or by having a Tree Preservation Order placed on them. Trees may be indirectly protected by harbouring protected species (e.g. bats) or by being part of a hedgerow protected by the Hedgerow Regulations. Impacts on veteran trees, ancient semi-natural woodland and habitats (trees?) that serve to connect are specifically mentioned in planning policy as to be avoided. Trees may also be protected by Forestry Commission restrictions on the quantity

of timber arisings. Licensing may be needed to fell trees. If planning permission is granted it overrides other protection mechanisms. The standard for assessing and protecting trees on and near development sites is BS 5837.

Hedgerows

Some hedges may be classed as 'Important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 and afforded legal protection accordingly. Receipt of planning permission overrides the restriction of these regulations. Hedges may be protected by harbouring other protected features (e.g. badgers or hazel dormice).

Habitats

Many areas are already designated for wildlife conservation. Some areas not designated may be protected by various legislation and policy if they are of a particular habitat type. These are many and varied.

Schedule 9 Plants

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act it is an offence to cause any plant on Sch.9 to be transplanted in the wild. This includes accidental propagation. Arisings containing any such plant matter are a controlled waste and if leaving the site must do so via an authorised waste carrier with a waste transfer note under The Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991.

Amphibians

Great crested newts and their habitats are legally protected by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Combining the legislation means it is an offence to; intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, take or disturb a GCN (including eggs) or damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter, breeding or protection. If GCN or their habitat is affected, licensing will be needed, significant delays are possible and habitat enhancements will be needed. Natterjack toads are similarly protected but are rare and localised in distribution. Common toads are listed as a national BAP species meaning those in a position of influence are expected to seek opportunities to improve their conservation status. For toads, careful site clearance and habitat enhancements may be appropriate.

Badgers

Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, badger setts showing signs of current or recent use (generally considered to mean within the last year) are protected. Harming badgers is illegal. Their feeding areas and access to them may also be protected. A licence from Natural England is needed if work might disturb an active sett or badgers using it. Licences are not usually available for such work during winter, spring and early summer if there is reason to believe the sett is occupied by a breeding female and/or juveniles.

Bats

The main items of legislation protecting bats in England are The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Combining the legislation means it is an offence to; intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, take or disturb bats, or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter, breeding or protection. Bat roosts are protected even if unoccupied. Bats may also be indirectly protected by virtue of their association with protected trees or veteran trees and habitats that serve to connect (both specifically mentioned in the NPPF) and hedgerows (Hedgerow Regulations 1997). If impacts on bat roosts are likely, further survey and licensing will be needed, significant delays are possible and habitat enhancements will be needed.

Birds

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, all birds are protected from disturbance at the nest, as are the nests. Some (Schedule 1) birds (e.g. barn owls) are protected whilst near the nest. The conservation of species that are rare and/or in decline (e.g. BAP-listed/RSPB's red-listed) should be considered by in the planning process. Work must not disturb nesting birds. Habitat enhancements are likely to be appropriate.

Dormice

The main items of legislation protecting bats in England are The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Combining the legislation means it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb or harm dormice, damage, destroy or obstruct access to places used for shelter or protection. If they are present and impacts are likely, further survey and licensing will be needed, significant delays are possible and habitat enhancements will be needed.

Hare, Harvest Mice and Hedgehogs

These are listed on the national BAP and/or as Species of Principle Importance meaning those in a position of influence are expected to seek opportunities to improve their conservation status. This usually means careful site preparation and post-development habitat enhancements.

Insects

Some species have full legal protection but these tend to be rare/specialised. Some species are BAP-listed meaning those in a position of influence are expected to seek opportunities to improve their conservation status. This usually means post-development habitat enhancements.

Other Invertebrates

White-Clawed Crayfish are fully protected. Some molluscs are fully protected.

Reptiles

Common reptiles are protected against killing and injury. They are also BAP-listed meaning those in a position of influence are expected to seek opportunities to improve their conservation status. Smooth snakes and sand lizards have further legal protection but have very specialised habitat requirements and a limited, well-documented range. If common reptiles are found, a population estimate is then obtained and this determines the level of effort exerted on a translocation operation. This usually involves ring-fencing the site, capturing individuals, gradual site clearance and may take several months. Note that the translocation operation (if required) would also need to be conducted in fine weather between May and September. It is usually necessary to enhance the receptor site and secure its long-term future before starting the translocation operation.

9.5 Appendix 5. What Policy/Legislation Means for You

The onus is on the developer to provide enough information about protected ecological features that are likely to be present and likely to be affected so as to enable the planning authority to make an informed decision as to whether the development will have negative impacts on the protected features. If protected features are found to be present and affected, the developer must demonstrate to the planning authority how, in principle, the work can be carried out without negative impacts overall. Those involved should seek opportunities to enhance the ecological feature.

Planning permission should only be given if the status of the affected protected feature can be maintained or enhanced and if measures are taken to avoid harming individuals. Recent changes in legislation and policy are increasing the emphasis on expecting improvements or enhancements.

Changes to the law in 2007 also removed certain defences – the most significant of which was that of an offence being excusable when ‘*an incidental result of an otherwise lawful operation*’ (such as planning permission). Further changes in early 2009 mean remaining defences (such as health and safety issues) no longer apply if there was a suitable alternative and the action negatively affects the favourable conservation status of the species concerned (individuals are still protected from harm by the Wildlife and Countryside Act).

If planning permission is granted, a European Protected Species mitigation licence from Natural England may be available - to protect you from what may otherwise be an offence (disturbance, destruction of roosts, etc.). Such a licence is only granted if;

- there is no reasonable alternative (e.g. site),
- it is in the overriding interest of the public,
- the population of concern will remain in favourable conservation status.

Local authorities must also consider these three conditions when making their decision.

The licence application (if needed) will have to justify the need for your proposed actions. It will also have to include a comprehensive plan that seeks to preserve habitats and any roosts, minimise disturbance, prevent killing or injury, ensure a continuation of suitable habitat and provide enhancements. It is usual for several years post-construction monitoring of mitigation to be a condition of licensing.

9.6 Appendix 6. Biodiversity Net Gain Exemptions

1) De minimus

Development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than:

- 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat.
- 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows.

2) Householder applications (i.e. an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse).

Does not include an application for change of use or an application to change the number of dwellings in a building.

Does not include 'full' applications.

3) Self-build and custom build applications

If it meets all the following conditions:

- consists of no more than 9 dwellings
- on a site that has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares
- consists exclusively of dwellings that are self-build or custom housebuilding (as defined in [section 1\(A1\) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015](#) (i.e. the development is for the use of the owners and is built by them or by a party working for them. It does not include buying a plot and building according to plans approved for the previous owner).

4) Permitted development

9.7 Appendix 7. Assessment and Evaluation Tables Used by Verdant Ecology

Relative Terms in Assessment and Evaluation of Ecological Features and Potential Impacts

Importance of Ecological Feature		Area of Impact	
Negligible		Negligible	
Local/Site		Local/Site	
District/Borough		District/Borough	
County		County	
Regional		Regional	
National		National	
International		International	
Duration		Extent of Change	
		Major negative	
Short term (1-5 years)		Minor negative	
Medium term (5-20 years)		Negligible/Neutral	
Long term (>20 years)		Minor positive	
		Major positive	

Matrix for Estimating the Significance of Impacts

		Degree of Impact				
		Major negative	Minor negative	Negligible	Minor positive	Major positive
Geographic Scale	International	Major	Major	Negligible	Major	Major
	National	Major	Major	Negligible	Major	Major
	Regional	Major	Moderate	Negligible	Moderate	Major

	County	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Minor	Moderate
	District/ Borough	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Minor	Moderate
	Local/Site	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Minor

9.8

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