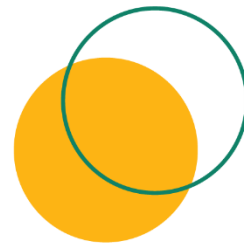




Balancing Growth with Green



Preliminary Roost Assessment



Ryan Hall
7 Rowan Close, Wokingham, RG41 4BH

July 2025

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Ryan Hall ('the client') is seeking consent for a proposed development at 7 Rowan Close, Wokingham, RG41 4BH (hereafter referred to as the 'proposed development site'), which is within Wokingham Borough Council (WBC).

The proposal involves a two-storey extension to the existing dwelling (plans provided by the client can be found in Appendix A).

ACP Consultants Ltd. was instructed by the client to conduct a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment to accompany the planning application to WBC, seeking consent to undertake the proposed work. The purpose of the Preliminary Roost Assessment is to determine the presence of roosting bats and identify the need for any further surveys, where necessary. If necessary, appropriate mitigation measures are to be identified and recommended.

A Preliminary Roost Assessment report has been prepared to determine the presence/likely absence of roosting bats for this proposed development and identify need for any further consideration.

Local Authorities are tasked with determining new development and local planning applications against a wide range of social, economic, and environmental criteria. The purpose of this report is to assess whether the development proposal is compliant with the relevant local policies in terms of ecological impact as a result of the proposed residential development.

This assessment has been carried out in accordance with good practice guidelines, including the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and applicable local supplementary guidance. Planning policy is located in Appendix C.

The remainder of this report is presented in the following order:

- Section 2: Methodology.
- Section 3: Results and Evaluation.
- Section 4: Recommendations for Further Survey, Mitigation and Enhancement.
- Section 5: Conclusions.

1.2 Objectives

- To gain an understanding of the importance of the defined survey area for bats.
- To identify potential bat roosts provided by buildings within the site.
- To determine the presence/likely absence of roosting bats within suitable features.
- To determine levels of bat foraging and commuting activity within habitat potentially affected by the proposed development.

2 Methodology

To achieve the objectives outlined in Section 1.2, a desktop study was completed followed by a site visit led by Ayan Chakravartty (Level 2 Bat Licence number - 2024-12540-CL18-BAT).

2.1 Desktop Study

The desk study was undertaken by referring to the following data sources:

- Defra (2025). Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)

Satellite mapping, Ordnance survey, road map, habitat, and designated site data from Defra (2025) was used to assess the value of the surrounding habitat for bats in the area at a landscape scale (5km), including any potentially important habitat corridors (linear habitat features), feeding grounds or potential roost opportunities, such as large expanses of woodland. The features and habitats immediately surrounding the site (local area) were also assessed at a finer scale as these influence the likely presence of bats within the survey site. Defra was also used to determine if any Granted European Protected Species Applications for bats are present with 2km of the site.

2.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

On the 15th of July 2025, an inspection of the site was undertaken during daylight hours to determine the suitability for bats. This was to establish, if possible, whether bats are using the buildings or have been using the buildings in the past. An assessment of the buildings was undertaken in accordance with the latest published best practice guidance (Collins, 2023).

All accessible parts of the buildings were inspected internally and externally, to look for bats and signs of the presence of bats, including:

- Droppings.
- Feeding remains including moth and butterfly wings.
- Staining from urine or oils near crevices or holes or on timber (such as roof beams), walls, chimney breasts etc.
- Scratch marks on walls and timber.
- Squeaking or chattering calls.

The assessment outside the building included inspection of all walls, windows, windowsills, and tiles, including a search for any crevices under tiles, missing mortar, gaps in the ridge or gable end of the roofs, crevices in render and brickwork, gaps tiles and any other potential bat roost opportunities.

Table 1: Guidelines for assessing the proposed development site for bats (from Collins, 2023).

Suitability	Roosting habitats in structures	Potential flightpaths and foraging habitats	Number of activity survey visits required
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).	None
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small	None

Suitability	Roosting structures	habitats in	Potential flightpaths and foraging habitats	Number of activity survey visits required
	<i>small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.</i>		<i>element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.</i>	
Low	<i>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 and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a larger number 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).</i>		<i>Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat.</i> <i>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.</i>	One
Moderate	<i>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).</i>		<i>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</i> <i>Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.</i>	Two
High	<i>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 and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.</i>		<i>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.</i> <i>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.</i> <i>Site is close to and connected to known roosts.</i>	Three

2.3 Limitations

The results of the survey and assessment work undertaken by ACP Consultants Ltd. are representative at the time of surveying.

Any third party and external data sources used may vary due to the quality and scale, the supporting information used to define locations/boundaries and sensitivity of the data itself. ACP Consultants Ltd. cannot take responsibility for the accuracy of external data sources and as such discrepancies and inaccuracies may occur. Any distances, locations or dimensions appearing in the report should be considered as estimates.

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the features on site in the context of their suitability for roosting bats, this does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This survey provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of bats being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on site and in the local area, the ecology and biology of bats as currently understood, and the known distribution of bats as recovered during the desk study.

A thorough inspection of the building, including cavities, cannot be conducted without specialist access equipment, meaning only accessible areas have been surveyed. Therefore, a negative result does not definitively prove the absence of protected species. The absence of bats can only be fully confirmed with bat activity/emergence surveys.

We encourage the client and authorised users of the report to remove any information containing records of protected species locations within the report prior to publishing in the public domain to prevent human interference.

3 Results and Evaluation

3.1 Overview

The following section sets out the existing conditions in relation to ecology for the proposed development. Relevant ecological information is available from several sources including local, regional, and national ecological reports and websites. For the purpose of this assessment, some data has been obtained from Defra provided geographical sources¹.

3.2 Designated Sites and Existing Landscape

Details of any statutory designated sites within a 5km radius of the proposed development including their reasons for notification, are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Designated sites within a 5km radius of the survey site.

Site Name	Designation	Distance from Site	Area
Longmoor Bog	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	2.9km southwest	14.03 Ha
Heath Lake	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	4.1km southeast	6 Ha

Defra (2025) has been used to undertake a review of the proposed site and surrounding area. The site is situated in a suburban area located in Wokingham. The landscape within the immediate vicinity of the site comprises of residential buildings and public parks. There are areas of scattered woodland within 2km listed in Table 3 below. These areas could provide suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat for bats.

Table 3: Priority habitats within 2km of the site

Habitat Type	Number of Parcels within 2km	Distance of Closest Parcel to the Site (km)
Broadleaved Woodland	45	0.2km south
Ancient Woodland	16	0.3km south
Coniferous Woodland	7	1km northwest
Young Trees	2	1.4km southwest
Water Bodies	31	0.7km southeast

3.3 Data Search and Historical Records

Defra (2025) was used to provide bat records for within 2km of the site. This was primarily due to the nature of the proposed development. Results of bat records within a 2km buffer can be seen below in Table 4.

Table 4: Bat records within a 2km buffer

Bat Record	Distance from Site	Start and End Date	Bat Species Present
Granted European Protected Species Record	0.3km north	22/07/2014-31/10/2015	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>), Brown Long Eared Bats (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)
		15/04/2014-30/09/2014	Brown Long Eared Bats (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)
Granted European Protected Species Record	1.1km northeast	05/09/2015-26/08/2017	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)

¹Figure 3.1 Area surrounding potential development site (highlighted in red) (Source: Defra). Defra (2025). Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)

Bat Record	Distance from Site	Start and End Date	Bat Species Present
Granted European Protected Species Record	1.1km southwest	29/09/2017- 30/04/2023	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)
Granted European Protected Species Record	1.2km northeast	01/04/2016- 31/03/2021	Brown Long Eared Bats (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)
Granted European Protected Species Record	1.5km southwest	30/07/2013- 30/09/2014	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>), Brown Long Eared Bats (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)
Granted European Protected Species Record	1.6km northeast	23/03/2010- 31/07/2011	Noctule Bat (<i>Nyctalus noctule</i>)
Granted European Protected Species Record	1.9km northwest	26/08/2015- 05/08/2020	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)
		01/12/2015- 05/08/2020	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)

3.4 Field Survey Results

The weather conditions recorded at the time of the survey are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of conditions during survey

Abiotic Factor	Survey 1
Survey Type	Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment
Date Completed	15.07.2025
Temperature °C	25°C
Precipitation	0
Weather Conditions	Clear sky

3.5 Site Features

The results of the Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment are summarised in Table 6 below. Photograph references (Appendix B) relate to the building descriptions below.

Table 6: Site features and descriptions linking to photos in Appendix B.

Building Reference	Internal or external	Description (if applicable)	Suitability for Bats	Use by birds	Bat Signs, Access Points and Features
A	External	Building exterior (tiled gable)	Low	None recorded	Raised tiles could act as an access point for roosting bats or support crevice-dwelling bats.
B	External	Soffit box	Low	None recorded	Small gaps in soffit boxes could act as access points for roosting bats.
C	External	Building exterior (tiled gable)	Low	None recorded	Raised tiles could act as an access point for roosting bats or support crevice-dwelling bats.
D	External	Building exterior (tiled gable)	Low	None recorded	Raised tiles could act as an access point for roosting bats or support crevice-dwelling bats.
E	External	Building exterior (interlocking tile roof)	Low	None recorded	Raised tiles could act as an access point for roosting bats or support crevice-dwelling bats.

Building Reference	Internal or external	Description (if applicable)	Suitability for Bats	Use by birds	Bat Signs, Access Points and Features
F	Internal	Building interior (concrete brick walling and material lining)	Low	None recorded	Internal void
G	Internal	Building interior (concrete brick walling and material lining)	Low	None recorded	Internal void
H	Internal	Building interior (concrete brick walling and material lining)	Low	None recorded	Internal void

3.5.1 Exterior of Building

The residential building on-site comprised brick exterior walls, hanging tiles and interlocking tiled, pitched roof and gable. Overall, the exterior brick walls looked to have been kept in good condition, with no visible cracks or missing brickwork (Building Reference C). There are a few raised or broken hanging tiles (Building References A, C, and D). These tiles could potentially be used as access points for roosting bats or support crevice-dwelling bats. In addition to these features, there are some small cracks visible in the soffit boxes which could be used by crevice-dwelling bats (Building Reference B). Finally, there were a few raised tiles on the roof, which could be used as access points for roosting bats (Building Reference E).

3.5.2 Interior of Building

The loft of the residential building was also assessed – interior areas comprised of concrete block, timber truss frames, and material insulation (Building Reference F, G, and H). The loft looked to be in moderate condition internally, with the insulation and timber supports all in place (Building Reference H). However, there was light ingress and broken blocks leading to internal voids (Building Reference F). One ventilation point was assessed, and no physical bat evidence was found (Building Reference G).

3.5.3 Results

From our external and internal inspection of the building on site, the risk of bat roosts within the building is low. This is due to the condition of the hanging tiles and few gaps in soffits and roof tiles. In addition to the aforementioned, there is suitable habitat in close proximity (Table 3) and also historic bat records within close proximity (Table 4).

4 Recommendations for Further Survey, Mitigation and Enhancement

Due to the low suitability and risk of proposals harming bats or their roosts (as explained in Section 3), one further emergence survey is required. This suitability rating was given due to the historic records surrounding the site but minimal external access points for roosting bats (Building References A, B, and C).

In accordance with best practice guidelines set out in Table 1, it is recommended that one further emergence surveys are undertaken on-site prior to the commencement of works.

Further bat legislation can be found in Appendix D.

5 Conclusions

This report provides an assessment and evaluation of a Preliminary Bat Roost Survey of the following potential key impacts associated with the proposed development at 7 Rowan Close, Wokingham, RG41 4BH. The aims were:

- To gain an understanding of the importance of the defined survey area for bats.
- To identify potential bat roosts provided by buildings within the site.
- To determine the presence/likely absence of roosting bats within suitable features.
- To determine levels of bat foraging and commuting activity within habitat potentially affected by the proposed development.

Due the minimal potential roosting features and bat records within 2km, the risk of proposals harming bats, or their roosts is low. This is further explained in Sections 3 and 4.

The proposed work is not predicted to cause disturbance that would significantly affect the ability for bats to survive, breed, reproduce, nurture young and hibernate if bat roost(s) are found within the building.

Appendices

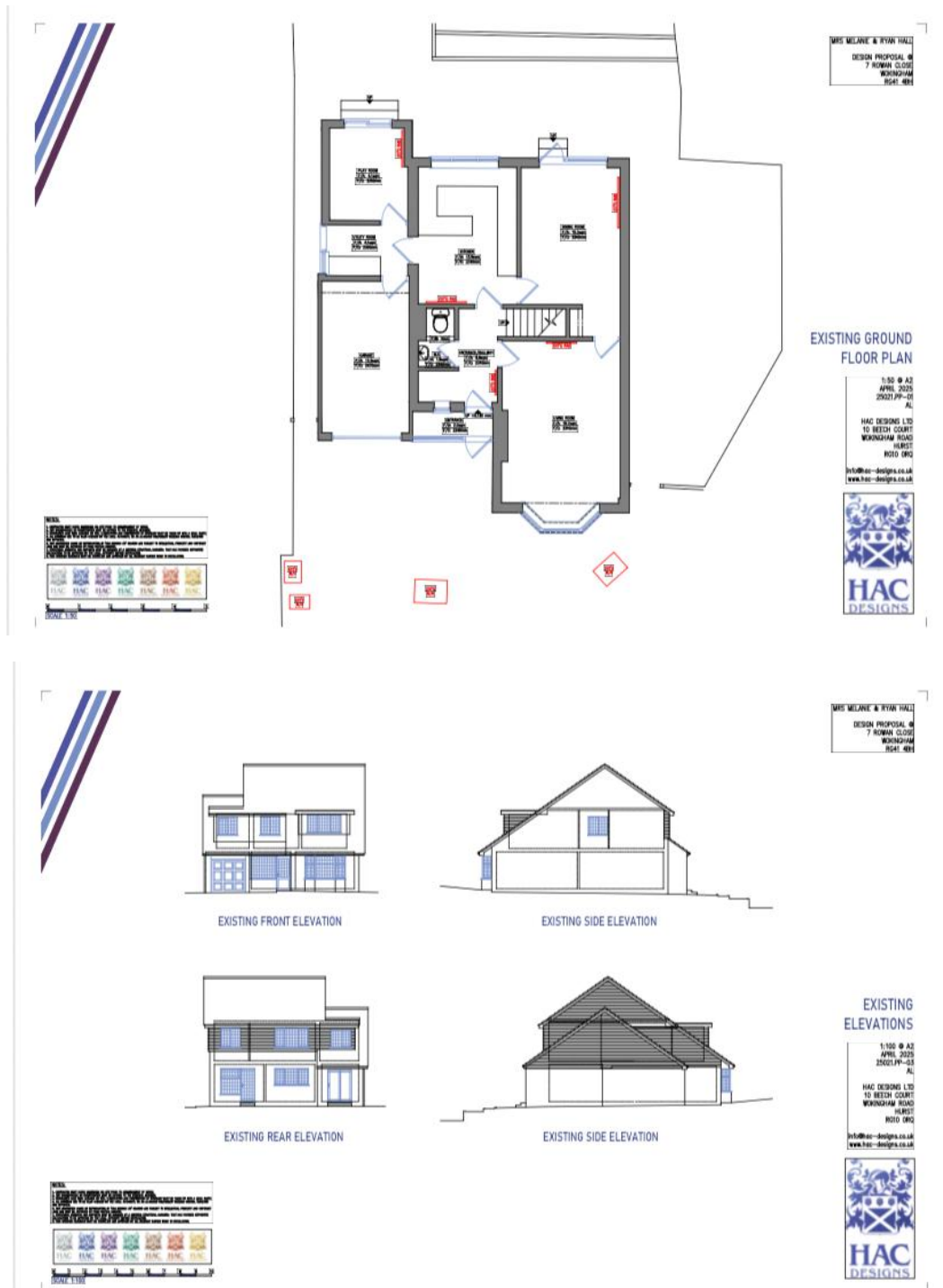
Appendix A: Existing Plans

Appendix B: Site Photographs

Appendix C: Planning Policy & Legislation

Appendix D: Bat Legislation

Appendix A: Existing Plans



Existing Plans (Source: Client, 2025)

Appendix B: Site Photographs

Building Reference	Photograph
A	
B	

Building Reference	Photograph
C	

Building Reference	Photograph
D	 A photograph showing a close-up of a brick wall. The bricks are reddish-brown and laid in a standard running bond pattern. To the left of the bricks, a white window frame is visible, with a dark, textured glass pane. The top of the image shows a white horizontal surface, possibly a ceiling or a ledge.

Building Reference	Photograph
E	

Building Reference	Photograph
F	 A close-up photograph showing a wooden beam (likely a roof truss or joist) running diagonally across the frame. Below the beam, there is a concrete wall or floor. A significant vertical crack is visible in the concrete, extending from the bottom towards the beam. The concrete surface is rough and appears to have some yellowish-brown staining or residue. The lighting is somewhat dim, suggesting an interior or sheltered outdoor environment.

Building Reference	Photograph
G	 A close-up photograph of a brick wall. The bricks are reddish-brown and arranged in a standard running bond pattern. A horizontal mortar joint is visible, showing some cracking and peeling. Below the mortar joint, there is a rectangular opening or cavity in the brickwork, possibly a roosting site for birds. The surrounding wall surface is dark and textured, possibly due to weathering or staining.

Building Reference	Photograph
H	 A photograph showing the interior of a roof space. Several wooden rafters are visible, supporting a dark, textured ceiling. A brick chimney is visible on the right side. In the foreground, there are cardboard boxes and white plastic bags, suggesting storage or construction materials.

Appendix C: Planning Policy & Legislation

This section summarises the relevant National and Local legislative and policy background, statutory and non-statutory guidelines relevant to the potential commercial development.

National Policy

National Planning Policy (December 2024)

The principal national planning policy guidance with respect to the potential development is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The most recent update of the NPPF was published in December 2024 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. This guidance sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. Three dimensions to sustainable development have been identified in the NPPF: economic, social, and environmental.

The NPPF Section 187 states that:

“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

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

Section 188 states that:

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

Section 189 states that:

“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads⁶³. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.”

Section 190 states that:

“When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development⁶⁴ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

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

Section 192 states that:

“To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

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

Section 193 states that:

“When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.”*

Section 194 states that:

“The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.”

Relevant National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG, 2016)

NPPG is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning.

The guidance note on 'Natural Environment' explains key issues in implementing policy to protect and enhance the natural environment, including local requirements. This has been referred to when preparing this report. It states that:

"Planning authorities need to consider the potential impacts of development on protected and priority species, and the scope to avoid or mitigate any impacts when considering site allocations or planning applications. Guidance on the law affecting Habitats Sites, protected species and SSSIs.

Natural England has issued standing advice on protected species. A protected species mitigation licence from Natural England may be required before any work can start."

The PPG also states that:

"Information on biodiversity and geodiversity impacts and opportunities needs to inform all stages of development (including site selection and design, pre-application consultation and the application itself). An ecological survey will be necessary in advance of a planning application if the type and location of development could have a significant impact on biodiversity and existing information is lacking or inadequate. Pre-application discussions can help to scope whether this is the case and, if so, the survey work required.

Even where an Environmental Impact Assessment is not needed, it might still be appropriate to undertake an ecological survey, for example, where protected species may be present or where biodiverse habitats may be lost.

As with other supporting information, local planning authorities should require ecological surveys only where clearly justified. Assessments should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development proposed and the likely impact on biodiversity. Further guidance on information requirements is set out in making an application."

Biodiversity net gain is mentioned in the PPG and states that:

"The National Planning Policy Framework encourages net gains for biodiversity to be sought through planning policies and decisions. Biodiversity net gain delivers measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Biodiversity net gain can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures. It may help local authorities to meet their duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006."

Species and Habitats Legislation

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) consolidates all various amendments made to The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994, in respect of England and Wales. The 1994 Regulations transposed the EC Habitats Directive 1992 (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) into national law.

Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive list (respectively) habitats and species for which member states are required to establish and monitor SACs. The EC Birds Directive provides a similar network of sites (SPAs) for all rare or vulnerable species listed in Annex I and all regularly occurring migratory species, with particular focus on wetlands of international importance.

Together with SACs, SPAs form a network of pan-European protected areas known as 'NATURA 2000' sites.

The Habitats Regulations also make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade on the animals listed in Schedule 2, or pick, cut, uproot, destroy or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 4.

This legislation was amended in January 2021: The main changes to the 2017 Regulations are:

- “the creation of a national site network within the UK territory comprising the protected sites already designated under the Nature Directives, and any further sites designated under these Regulations
- the establishment of management objectives for the national site network (the ‘network objectives’)
- a duty for appropriate authorities to manage and where necessary adapt the national site network as a whole to achieve the network objectives
- an amended process for the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- arrangements for reporting on the implementation of the Regulations, given that the UK no longer provides reports to the European Commission
- arrangements replacing the European Commission’s functions with regard to the imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) test where a plan or project affects a priority habitat or species
- arrangements for amending the schedules to the Regulations and the annexes to the Nature Directives that apply to the UK.”

The Convention on Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979)

The Convention on Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979) aims to ensure conservation and protection of all wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats (listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention), to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to afford special protection to the most vulnerable or threatened species (including migratory species).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981)

The WCA is the primary UK mechanism for statutory site designation (Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSIs]) and the protection of individual species listed under Schedule 1,2,5 and 8 of the Act, each subject to varying levels of protection.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

This legislation strengthens the provision of the 1981 WCA (as amended), both in respect of statutory sites such as SSSIs and protected species. It also places a statutory obligation on Local Authorities and other public bodies to further conservation of biodiversity in the exercise of their functions, thus providing a statutory basis to the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) process, which began in 1994. Section 74 of the Act lists the habitat types and species of principal importance in England. The UK Biodiversity action Plan has now been superseded by the ‘UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework’ (July 2012), however, many of the species and habitats in the UK and local BAPs have not been updated and are still considered relevant to date.

A Bill to amend the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to extend the right of public access to the countryside, including to woodlands, the Green Belt, waters and more grasslands; and for connected purposes is currently in second reading in the House of Commons (November 2022).

Appendix D: Bat Legislation

All bat species, their breeding sites and resting places are fully protected by law - they're European protected species.

You may be able to get a licence from Natural England if you cannot avoid disturbing them or damaging their habitats, or if you want to survey or conserve them.

What you must not do

You're breaking the law if you do certain things including:

- *deliberately capture, injure or kill bats*
- *damage or destroy a breeding or resting place*
- *obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places*
- *possess, sell, control or transport live or dead bats, or parts of them*
- *intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it's in a structure or place of shelter or protection*

Either or both of the following could happen if you're found guilty of any offences:

- *you could be sent to prison for up to 6 months*
- *you could get an unlimited fine*

Activities that can harm bats

Activities that can affect bats include:

- *renovating, converting or demolishing a building*
- *cutting down or removing branches from a mature tree*
- *repairing or replacing a roof*
- *repointing brickwork*
- *insulating or converting a loft*
- *installing lighting in a roost, or outside if it lights up the entrance to the roost*
- *removing 'commuting habitats' like hedgerows, watercourses or woodland*
- *changing or removing bats' foraging areas*
- *using insecticides or treating timber*

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bats-protection-surveys-and-licences>