

**Chevron
3 Swanmore Close
Lower Earley
Berkshire
RG6 3TG**

Preliminary Roost Assessment

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<i>Report Quality Control Information</i>	
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Simon Gill to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for bats at Chevron, 3 Swanmore Close in Lower Earley, Berkshire. The PRA was commissioned to accompany a householder planning application to be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council seeking consent for a part two storey/part single storey side extension and single storey rear extension (see proposed plans in **Appendix 1**).
- 1.1.2** The nearby connecting private gardens and nearby open space with deciduous woodland provide habitat that could be used as bat flight paths and feeding habitat, connecting to additional high-quality foraging habitats in the nearby area, such as the River Loddon to the south, for any bats roosting locally.
- 1.1.3** The house and garage roof voids were of a suitable size and condition for void dwelling bats, such as the locally recorded brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), however, no evidence was observed and therefore the presence of void-dwelling bats is considered highly unlikely. The buildings lacked features suitable for crevice dwelling bat species, such as the locally recorded common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*). The property is considered to be of negligible potential suitability for bats (see **Appendix 1** for potential suitability categories).
- 1.1.4** As the development proposals will not impact any potential roost features it is considered highly unlikely the proposals will result in the death, injury or disturbance of bats; the damage or destruction of a bat roost; or the obstruction of access to a bat roost. As such, a European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence would not be required for the planned works to go ahead lawfully.
- 1.1.5** In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during the course of the work, the work will stop immediately and a licensed ecologist will advise how works should proceed; this may require a EPSML to permit the work to continue lawfully.
- 1.1.6** This report contains information regarding a mobile species so it will likely be valid for less than 12 months (CIEEM 2019b).

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Background

2.1.1 John Wenman Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Simon Gill to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for bats at Chevron, 3 Swanmore Close in Lower Earley, Berkshire.

2.1.2 The PRA was commissioned to accompany a householder planning application to be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council seeking consent for a part two storey/part single storey side extension and single storey rear extension (see proposed plans in **Appendix 1**).

2.2 Site Location and Context

2.2.1 The house is situated at the southern end of Swanmore Close in Lower Earley near Reading, Berkshire (OS grid reference SU 76350 70446).

2.2.2 Swanmore Close is part of housing estate at Lower Earley with further houses situated to the north, west and east. The land immediately to the south comprises public open space that extends to the east and west alongside Lower Earley Way. The open space comprises open grassland and woodland, which is mapped as Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat (a Habitat of Principal Importance for Conservation (as defined under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006), within 15m of the property.

2.2.3 In the wider area, the open space with further deciduous woodland extends along the length of Lower Earley Way. The River Loddon and associated wetland habitats are about 150m to the south beyond Lower Earley Way. The habitats close to the house are of high value to feeding and commuting bats.

2.3 Report Objectives

2.3.1 The aim of the PRA is to ascertain if there is evidence of the presence of bats and/or potential for roosting bats to be present, and therefore whether further survey and/or mitigation would be required for the proposed development activities.

3 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY BACKGROUND

3.1 Relevant Legislation

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

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

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

3.2 Planning Policy

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

3.2.2 The ODPM Circular 06/2005 states that ‘the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat.’ This policy means that in instances where there is a reasonable likelihood of bats being present and affected by a development, surveys must be undertaken to inform a mitigation strategy to be agreed prior to granting planning permission.

3.3 Mitigation Licensing

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

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

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

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

3.3.4 Baseline survey information supporting EPS mitigation licence applications or BMCL site registrations must be up-to-date and have been completed within the current or most recent optimal season. A suitably experienced ecologist will be required to undertake a site walkover/check within three months prior to application/registration submission to confirm that conditions have not changed since the most recent survey.

4 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

4.1 Desk Study

4.1.1 A desk-based study for bats was undertaken to collate and review existing information about the site and the surrounding land. The study utilised the following open access resources:

- Google Earth – satellite imagery was used to identify potential flight paths and foraging habitats for bats;
- MAGIC – examined to locate granted European Protected Species licences; and
- Pre-existing bat survey reports – any available reports were obtained from the client or relevant planning portal to provide background information for the site.

4.2 Building Inspection

Survey Details

4.2.1 A detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of the house and garage was undertaken on May 14th 2026 by John Wenman - registered under Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 (Registration no. 2025-85948-CL18-BAT) - in accordance with good practice guidelines (Collins 2023). The equipment used during the inspection comprised binoculars, a high-power (1 million candlepower) LED torch, a headtorch, a ladder and video endoscope (Pancellent linked to an iPhone). The inspection involved a systematic search of the exterior and interior of the structure during daylight hours to compile information on potential and actual bat access points; potential and actual bat roost sites; and any evidence of bat presence.

External Survey

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

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

4.2.3 It is important to note that the two most abundant and widespread bat species, common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), typically only require gaps measuring 15mm by 20mm to gain access to a roost inside a building.

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

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

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

4.2.6 Due to the limited impacts of the proposed works, which will only impact the single-storey garage and ground floor across the front elevation of the property, an internal survey for the second-storey roof void was not carried out as this will be retained and remain unaffected by the works.

Survey Limitations and Validity

4.2.7 There were no significant survey limitations because PRAs can be carried out at any time of year under any weather conditions and the building was fully accessible.

4.2.8 It should be noted that it is not always possible to inspect all potential roost sites during a survey, particularly for bat species which typically roost in hidden crevices. Therefore, an absence of bat evidence found during a survey does not necessarily equate to evidence of bat absence in a building.

4.2.9 This report contains information regarding a mobile species so it will likely be valid for 12 months only (CIEEM 2019).

5 SURVEY RESULTS

5.1 Desk Study

5.1.1 The nearby private gardens and wooded habitats in the open space to the south provide continuous habitat that could be used as bat flight paths and feeding habitat, connecting to additional high-quality foraging habitats in the nearby area such as the River Loddon to the south, for any bats roosting locally.

5.1.2 The following table lists the bat mitigation licences issued within the last 10 years within a 2km radius of the property.

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

Case Reference of Granted Licence	Species on the Licence	Licence start	Licence end	Licensable Works	Distance (m)
2015-18114-EPS-MIT	BLE, C- PIP, DAUB, S- PIP	19/01/2016	18/01/2021	Damage & destroy resting place	1554m S
2015-18114-EPS-MIT-1	BLE, C- PIP, DAUB, S- PIP	30/09/2016	01/04/2021	Damage & destroy resting place	1554m S
2020-49081-EPS-NSIP1	DAUB, S-PIP	03/10/2020	01/11/2025	Damage breeding roost	1554m S
2015-18114-EPS-MIT-2	BLE, C- PIP, DAUB, S- PIP	07/06/2017	30/04/2021	Destroy resting place	1554m S
2015-18114-EPS-MIT-3	BLE, C- PIP, DAUB NOCT, S-PIP	20/12/2018	30/04/2021	Destroy resting place	1554m S

5.1.3 There were no pre-existing bat survey reports held by the client or available for the property on the Wokingham Borough Council website.

5.2 Building Inspection

Overview

5.2.1 The findings from the external inspection and internal inspection of the house and

garage are described with photographs and are annotated in a plan, as follows:

External Survey – House

- 5.2.2** The property comprises a detached house and detached double garage with a flat roofed, lean to covering the area between the house and garage. The house is of modern, cavity wall construction with a hipped main roof with front (south east facing) gable and single storey attached pitched roofed extension on the north east side to the rear of the garage at the house's south eastern corner (**Photographs 1 & 2**).



Photograph 1. Front of house and garage viewed from southwest.



Photograph 2. Rear of property viewed from northeast showing single storey roof to the rear of the garage.

- 5.2.3** The house's pitched roof was covered by flat concrete tiles that were in place and the ridge mortar was fully intact (**Photographs 3 & 4**). A ridge vent was situated centrally on the main roof, which was filled with an insect mesh making it unsuitable for bat access (**Photograph 5**). The tiles on the single storey roof were all in place; however, the lower tiles were slightly raised on the verge on the rear slope, but these showed no evidence of bats and were of limited extent when closely inspected with an endoscope (**Photograph 6; Target note 1**).



Photograph 3. Flat, tightly fitted roof tiles and fully intact ridge and hip mortar (rear elevation).



Photograph 4. Flat, tightly fitted roof tiles and fully intact ridge mortar (front elevation).



Photograph 5. Ridge vent (rear elevation).



Photograph 6. Slightly raised verge tiles on rear of single storey roof showing no evidence of bats during an endoscopic inspection.

- 5.2.4** The house's roof line was formed by intact timber soffits, which were tightly fitted to the walls on the main roof on all sides of the roof (**Photographs 7 & 8**). The front gable had intact verge mortar and the soffits were tightly fitted to the walls



Photograph 7. Intact verge mortar on front gable.



Photograph 8. Tightly fitted soffits (front gable).



Photograph 9. Tightly fitted soffits (front elevation).



Photograph 10. Tightly fitted soffits (rear elevation).

External Survey – Garage

- 5.2.5** The garage was a hipped roofed building with a flat tiled roof and single skin walls and metal doors to the front (**Photograph 11**). The roof was covered with flat concrete tiles that were all in place and tightly fitted on all sides of the roof; the hip tiles were all in

place and tightly fitted (**Photograph 12**).



Photograph 11. Garage viewed from front (west)



Photograph 12. The tightly fitted, flat tiles and hips.



Photograph 13. The garage viewed from the rear (east)



Photograph 13. Tightly fitted soffits.

Internal Survey - House

- 5.2.6** The house had one roof void, accessible via a first floor loft hatch, that covered its footprint. The void was of 'cut and pitch' construction with supporting trusses, and had an approximate floor-to-ridge height of 2.25 metres in the main section dropping down to approximately 1.25m in the front gable (**Photographs 14 & 15**).



Photograph 14. Main section of void.



Photograph 15. Space in front gable open to main roof.

- 5.2.1** The roof was lined with bitumen felt that was mostly intact throughout the void other than

a gap around a pipe at the ridge a (**Photographs 16 & 17; Target note 2**).



Photograph 16. Intact, tightly fitted bitumen felt.



Photograph 17. Gap in felt around pipe at ridge.

- 5.2.2** The floor was mostly boarded and carpeted; fibreglass insulation that partly blocked the eaves (**Photograph 18**). The front gable wall was formed of blockwork and there were gaps around the that and the end rafters; there was no evidence of the presence of bats, but occasional mouse droppings and old wasp nesting material were visible (**Photograph 19**). No bats or evidence of bats was visible in the space.



Photograph 18. Eaves partly blocked by fibreglass insulation.



Photograph 19. Gaps around blockwork of front gable with old wasp nesting material.

Internal survey – garage

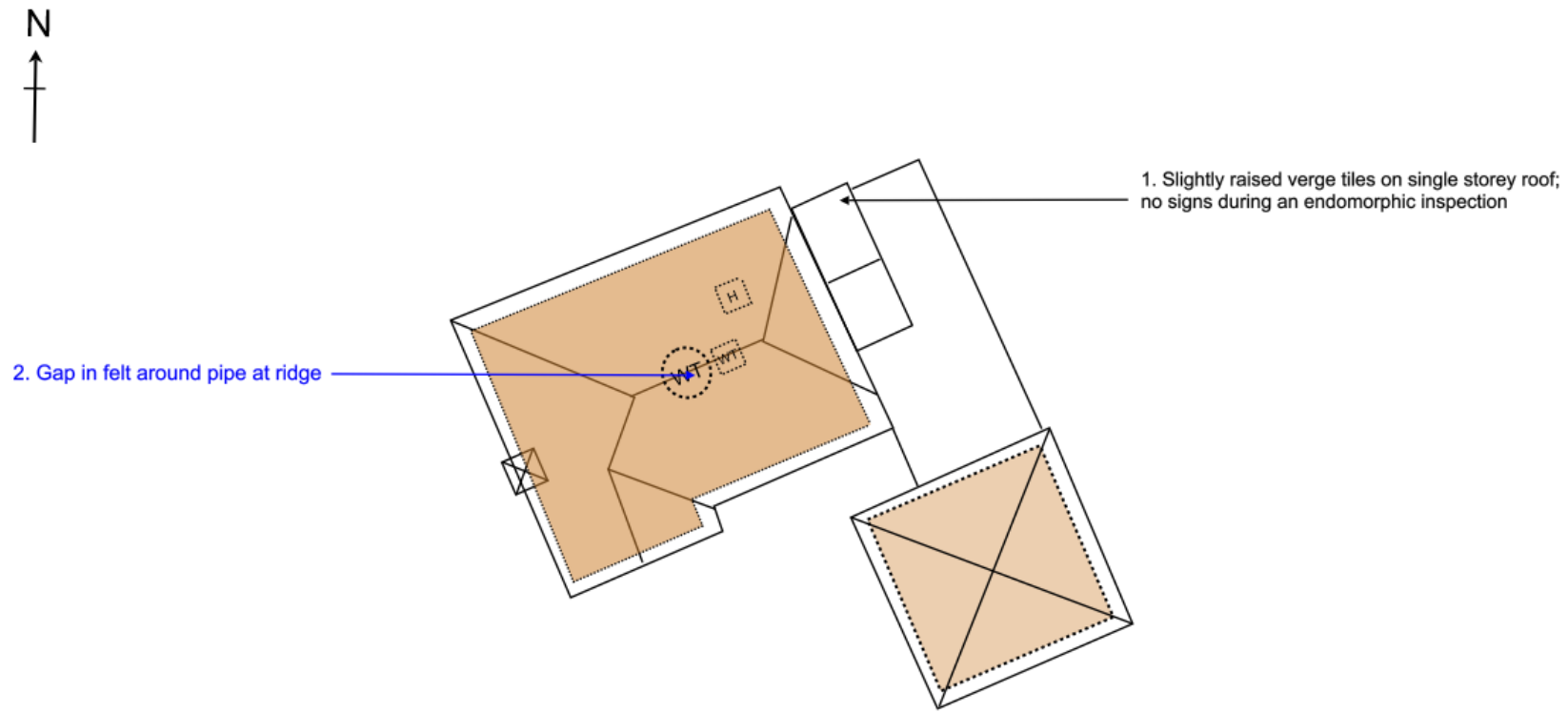
- 5.2.3** The interior of the garage's roof space was open to the concrete floor, which was used for household storage (**Photograph 20**). Some stored items were on the rafters; no evidence of bats was visible on these items or on the floor or other items. The roof was lined with intact bitumen and hessian felt, which was cobwebbed at the apex (**Photograph 21**).



Photograph 20. The interior of the garage open to the void above.



Photograph 21. Cobwebbed timbers and intact bitumen felt at the apex.



 Roof void
 H Loft hatch
 X Chimney
 WT Water tank
 n. External target note
 n. Internal target note

Drawn by:	Date	Scale:	3 Swanmore Close Lower Earley	
JW	May 2026	Not to scale	Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Findings	

Figure 1. Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment findings.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Assessment of Roost Suitability

6.1.1 The nearby private gardens and wooded areas in the open space to the south provide habitat that could be used as bat flight paths and feeding habitat, connecting to further additional high-quality foraging habitats such as the River Loddon to the south, for any bats roosting locally. Furthermore, the search of granted bat mitigation identified five species known to be roosting within a 2km radius of the property: common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), Daubenton's (*Myotis daubentonii*) and noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*).

6.1.2 The property mostly lacked potential bat access points but the following were visible:

- Slightly raised verge tiles on the single storey extension (**Photograph 6; Target note 1**). Whilst these verge tiles were slightly lifted, close inspection with a high-powered torch and endoscope confirmed these features to be of limited extent with no signs of use by roosting bats.

6.1.3 The roof void was of a suitable size and condition for void dwelling bats, such as the locally recorded brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), however, as no evidence of these species was observed, the presence of void-dwelling bats is considered to be highly unlikely. No external features that may lead to crevice roost sites for crevice-dwelling bats such as the locally recorded common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) were visible on the house and garage.

6.1.4 The house and garage are considered to be of negligible potential suitability for bats (see **Appendix 1** for potential suitability categories).

6.2 Assessment of Impacts and Recommendations

6.2.1 The development proposals seek consent for a two storey and single storey extensions to the house (see proposed plans in **Appendix 1**). The survey findings show that the proposals will affect buildings of negligible bat roost potential with no evidence of the presence of bats.

6.2.2 As such, the survey findings demonstrate that these proposals are highly unlikely to result in the death, injury or disturbance of bats; the damage or destruction of a bat roost; or the obstruction of access to a bat roost. Therefore, a European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence would not be required to allow the development proposals to proceed lawfully.

7 REFERENCES

CIEEM (2019). *Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys*. CIEEM, Winchester.

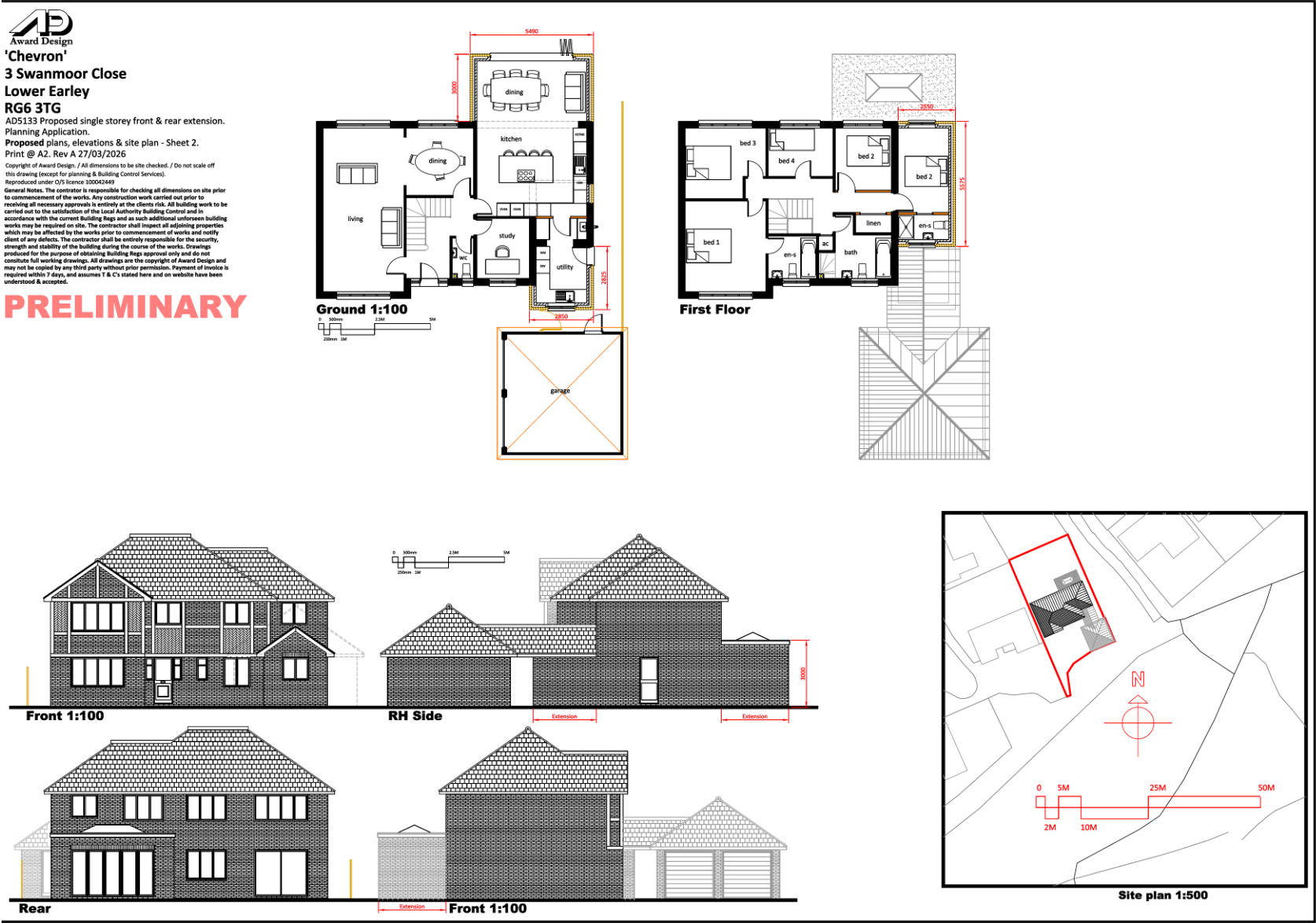
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Mathews F., Kubasiewicz L.M., Gurnell J., Harrower C.A., McDonald R.A., Shore R.F. (2018). *A Review of the Population and Conservation Status of British Mammals*. A report by the Mammal Society under contract to Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage. Natural England, Peterborough.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. & McLeish, A. P. (2004). *Bat Workers' Manual (3rd edition)*. JNCC, Peterborough.

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2025). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Version 1.2*. CIEEM, Ampfield.

APPENDIX 1 –PROPOSED PLANS



APPENDIX 2 – POTENTIAL SUITABILITY CATEGORIES FOR ROOSTING BATS

The categories detailed in **Table 2** below are derived from the '*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)*' (Collins 2023) and provide guidance for assessing the potential suitability of buildings (and other structures) for roosting bats. These categories are applied using professional judgement and irrespective of whether the presence of a bat roost has been confirmed during a survey, as additional bat roosts could be present which have not yet been discovered.

Table 2. Categories for potential suitability of buildings (and other structures) for roosting bats.

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

APPENDIX 3 – DEFINITION OF BAT ROOST TYPES

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

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

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

APPENDIX 4 – FURTHER SURVEY RATIONALE

In cases where no evidence of use by bats is found during a building inspection but the possibility of their presence cannot be ruled out, further presence/likely absence survey is likely to be required if the development proposals will impact potential roost sites.

Emergence surveys are carried out to establish the presence or likely absence of roosting bats in buildings (and other structures) and these are designed in accordance with the '*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)*' (Collins 2023) detailed in **Table 2** below.

Table 2. Recommended further survey for establishing presence/likely absence of roosting bats in buildings (and other structures).

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

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