

Bat Mitigation Plan

Survey site:

The Moat House, Arborfield, Garrison, Arborfiel RG2 9LN

Client:

Hicks Developments

Report date:

20th January 2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application for the proposal described as:

Full Planning Permission for the change of use of the Moat House building from office (Use Class E) to residential (Use Class C3) to provide 4no. residential dwellings and associated internal roads, parking, landscaping, drainage, plant, bin, and cycle storage.

Wokingham Borough Council Application Number: 242252

This report is an addendum to and must be read in conjunction with the: AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location – Bat Mitigation Strategy. AECOM (2021). Parcel S Bat Survey Report. AECOM (2024). Moat House Ecological Constraints Report (Revision 2) Landscape Perspective Ltd (2025) Landscape and Ecological Management Plan This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the consultant for advice.
Introduction and Scope Arbtech Ltd. were commissioned by Hicks Developments (the client) to produce a Bat Mitigation Plan (BMP) for the site of The Moat House, Arborfield, Garrison, Arborfield RG2 9LN (hereafter referred to as the site). The scope of this report is to provide a detailed bat mitigation plan for the site to help discharge conditions of the approved planning application [Wokingham Borough Council Application Number: 242252], and to outline the measures that would be used to comply with legislation, the LPA and other parties. It details the supervision of the refurbishment works and enhancements for bats at the site. The plan details the actions required to ensure compliance with relevant wildlife legislation while also seeking to enhance the site’s overall biodiversity value. Where necessary, it also provides recommendations for adjustments to the proposed works to safeguard protected species. The BMP is informed the overarching Arborfield Garrison Bat Mitigation Strategy (AECOM, 2014) which establishes a strategic approach to maintaining bat connectivity, dark corridors and roost availability across the wider development area. This site-specific BMP aligns with that strategy. The BMP is also informed by evidence gathered in the Ecological Constraints Report (AECOM, 2024). This Bat Mitigation Plan has been prepared specifically to address and fully discharge Ecology Condition 26 attached to planning application ref. 242252. The measures set out herein are consistent with, and subordinate to, the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Bat Mitigation Strategy (AECOM, 2014), and include: ▪ Measures to maintain dark corridors during construction and operation ▪ Measures to avoid disturbance to confirmed bat roosts ▪ Provision of enhanced roost availability ▪ Clear contingency procedures should bats be encountered

All mitigation, contingency and enhancement measures described within this document shall be implemented in full and retained thereafter in accordance with the approved scheme.

Ecology-Related Planning Conditions

Condition 26	Bats 26. Prior to commencement a detailed bat mitigation strategy for the site, in line with the submitted overarching Arborfield Garrison – Bat Mitigation Strategy (AECOM Environment, Sept 2014), with measures to maintain the dark corridors and provide enhanced roost availability, shall be submitted for approval. The approved mitigation, contingency and enhancement measures shall thereafter be implemented in full. <i>Reason: To maintain the favourable conservation status of a protected species as per the ODPM circular and local plan policies CP7 and TB23.</i>
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Site Context and Landscape History

The Site is located at Moat House, Buttenshaw Avenue, Arborfield Green, at Ordnance Survey grid reference SU 76955 65715. The Site comprises the Grade II listed Moat House building, a private access road, hardstanding, and a field to the south with boundary hedgerows and tree lines.

Baseline Bat Information

Bat surveys undertaken in 2021 confirmed the presence of non-breeding day roosts of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) within the Moat House (AECOM, 2021). These roosts were associated with external crevices beneath roof tiles, flashing and felt. The building therefore remains a confirmed bat roost and retains high suitability for roosting bats. Although emergency roof repairs were undertaken in 2024 following theft of materials, potential roosting features remain present and bats may continue to use the building.

An Ecological Constraints Report (AECOM, July 2024) walkover survey confirmed:

Moat House Building:

Potential roost features: missing roof tiles (eastern, northern, southern elevations); gaps in dormer window cladding

Assessment: High suitability for roosting bats

Status: Confirmed roost (retained despite 2024 repairs)

Trees:

Tree 185 (veteran oak): bat box installed 2023; low suitability for roosting bats

Trees T37, T40, T42, T44 (hedgerow limes with ivy): low suitability for roosting bats

The site lies within a mapped secondary dark corridor identified by the Arborfield Garrison Bat Mitigation Strategy (AECOM, 2014). The definition of which is: *Commuting and foraging habitats within generally more lit and urbanised areas but still with numbers of light sensitive bats commuting through. To be maintained at low light levels but with acceptance of some appropriate urban lighting.* The retained hedgerows and tree lines to the north and west of the site provide moderate-quality commuting and foraging habitat and connectivity to the wider landscape.

Informative and EPSL statement

Based on the nature and scope of the proposed works (internal refurbishments), and provided that all mitigation and precautionary measures set out within this Bat Mitigation Plan are implemented in full, the proposals are not anticipated to result in the disturbance, damage or destruction of a bat roost. As such, a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) from Natural England is not currently required.

However, bats and their roosts are legally protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). If, at any stage, works are likely to result in impacts not covered by this plan, all works shall cease immediately in the affected area and advice shall be sought from a licensed bat ecologist. Where necessary, works shall not recommence until an EPSL has been granted by Natural England.

Ecological Mitigation Measures

The enhancements will include a range of site-specific, suitable and achievable gains. Best practice management regimes will be implemented to further increase the ecological interest of the site.

Pre-commencement

Prior to the start of works, a series of precautionary steps will be implemented to ensure that bats are safeguarded and that all personnel on site are aware of their responsibilities under wildlife legislation. These measures are designed both to reduce the risk of accidental disturbance to the retained roost and to provide a clear protocol for site staff.

Toolbox Talk

Before any works commence, a licensed bat ecologist will deliver a toolbox talk to all contractors. This briefing will explain the legal protection afforded to bats, outline the presence of roosting individuals within the site, and set out the procedures to follow should bats be encountered during works. This ensures that all staff have an appropriate level of awareness and competence to work responsibly in proximity to the roost.

As part of the induction process, all staff will be informed of the exact location of the retained roost under lead flashing and roof tiles of The Moat House that no works will be conducted to the lead flashing on the roof and or to clay roof tiles and the importance of minimising noise, vibration, and light disturbance in its vicinity. Staff will also be reminded that bats are highly sensitive to changes in their environment and that strict adherence to ecological measures is required.

Exclusion Zones

A precautionary buffer zone of approximately ~10 m (where practicable) will be established around the retained roosts to reduce the risk of accidental disturbance. External works are not anticipated to be undertaken within ~10 m of the roost locations, further reducing the likelihood of direct disturbance. The buffer zone will be clearly marked on site plans and communicated to all staff during induction (see appendix 2b for works and operational buffers). No operations such as material storage, high-intensity activities or power tools or radios will be permitted within this buffer.

Pre-Start Inspection

Immediately prior to commencement of any external works to The Moat House, a suitably qualified and licensed bat ecologist shall undertake a pre-start inspection of the building using a high-powered torch and endoscope where appropriate.

The purpose of this inspection is to confirm the current status of identified roosting features and to ensure that no bats are present in locations where they could be affected by the proposed works. Written confirmation shall be provided to the client and contractor that works may proceed.

Timing

Works will be conducted during the shoulder seasons March/April or Oct/Nov to avoid the hibernation/maternity period. Night works will be avoided where possible. If unavoidable, a lighting strategy will be implemented to minimise light spill onto roost access points and commuting routes.

Precautionary Working Methods

To minimise the risk of indirect disturbance to the retained roost and ensure bats can continue to use surrounding habitats, the following precautionary measures will be implemented throughout the construction phase:

Noise and Vibration Control

Low-impact methods: Where works occur near the roost, low-vibration machinery and hand tools will be used in preference to heavy plant.

Noise suppression: All plant and equipment will be fitted with silencers or acoustic shielding where possible.

Work scheduling: High-noise or vibration activities will be scheduled for daytime hours, avoiding dusk and dawn periods when bats are most active.

Lighting Control

Artificial lighting has the potential to disrupt bats' foraging and commuting behaviour. A sensitive approach to lighting will therefore be adopted:

During Construction

Minimisation: Lighting will be kept to the absolute minimum required for safe working.

Direction: All task lighting will be directed downward and away from roost entrances, flight lines, and foraging habitats, using hoods, shields, or cowls to prevent light spill

Timing: Temporary lighting will only be used when essential and switched off outside working hours. Any permanent lighting installed will use timers or PIR motion sensors to avoid continuous illumination.

Light type: Where lighting cannot be avoided, low-lux, warm-white LEDs (<2700 K) will be used, as these wavelengths are less disruptive to bats.]

Sensitive areas: No lighting will be directed towards the hedgerows, trees and wider gardens and trees offsite.

Dust and Pollutant Control

Dust suppression: Water spraying, sheeting, and covering of stockpiles will be undertaken to reduce dust deposition near roosting and foraging habitats.

Pollution prevention: Fuel, oils, and chemicals will be stored securely in bunded containers away from sensitive habitats. Spill kits will be available on site, and all staff will be trained in their use.

Contingency Measures

The appointed Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) shall have full authority to halt works, either temporarily or permanently, should there be any risk of harm or disturbance to bats or their roosts, or if works are not being undertaken in accordance with this Bat Mitigation Plan.

If a bat is found in unexpected locations during works, all works shall cease in the affected area and a licensed bat ecologist shall be consulted immediately. The bat left alone, if safe and an EPSL applied for, which is likely to require night surveys to be carried out in the active season (May-September inclusive). If the bat is not safe to remain on site due to roost destruction or weather conditions etc, or if one is accidentally harmed it will be carefully placed by thick-gloved hand in a vivarium. Works shall only recommence once appropriate mitigation has been agreed and, if required, licensed by Natural England.

Post-Development Lighting

The operational lighting scheme for the Moat House development shall comply with the following principles, derived from the 2014 Arborfield Garrison Bat Mitigation Strategy and Bat Conservation Trust & Institution of Lighting Professionals guidance (Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK, 2023).

The proposed lighting scheme is included in Appendix 2.

External lighting will be limited and installed in accordance with Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK (BCT & ILP 2023):

- Light spill to hedgerows and trees, in particular T185, should be avoided
- Use narrow spectrum light sources to lower the range of species affected
- Use light sources that emit minimal ultra-violet light
- Avoid white and blue wavelengths; use warm/neutral colour temperature <4,200 Kelvin
- Avoid bare bulbs and any light pointing upwards; keep spread of light at or below horizontal
- Reduce light spill via low-level lighting with hoods, cowls, louvers and shields
- External lighting on PIR sensors sensitive to large objects only (not triggered by bats)
- Set to shortest time duration
- Wall lights and security lights to be dimmable and set to lowest intensity
- No high-powered security lights will be installed

To mitigate impacts of light spill through windows:

- All luminaires should lack UV elements; no metal halide or compact fluorescent sources
- LED luminaires should be used for sharp cut-off and lower intensity
- Warm white light source (2700 Kelvin or lower) to reduce blue light
- Peak wavelengths higher than 550nm
- Internal luminaires recessed where possible, minimum 1m from windows
- Lighting controlled by dimmers
- Black-out blinds or curtains recommended on all elevations

Enhancement Measures

Provision of roosting opportunities before the works

- A total of three external bat roost features shall be installed on and around the Moat House. Two Schwegler 2F Bat Box will be erected on retained trees on site and one Beaumaris midi bat box will be installed on the southern elevation of the Moat House prior to the commencement of works, as an enhancement. These bat boxes provide suitable night/feeding roosts for a range of bats including pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats due to their suitable crevice and cavity designs. They will be erected on retained trees 4-5m above ground level, facing south/south-west, with a clear flight path to and from the entrances, as well as out of direct lighting.



Schwegler 2F Universal Bat Box – credit <https://www.wildcare.co.uk>



Beaumaris midi bat box – credit <https://www.nhbs.com>

The only maintenance required is to replace any bat boxes that are broken or fall down e.g. during storms.

Maintain the bat boxes indefinitely and ensure entrances do not become blocked or the boxes become damaged or fall down e.g. during storms. Replace any that become unviable or broken.

Compliance and Reporting

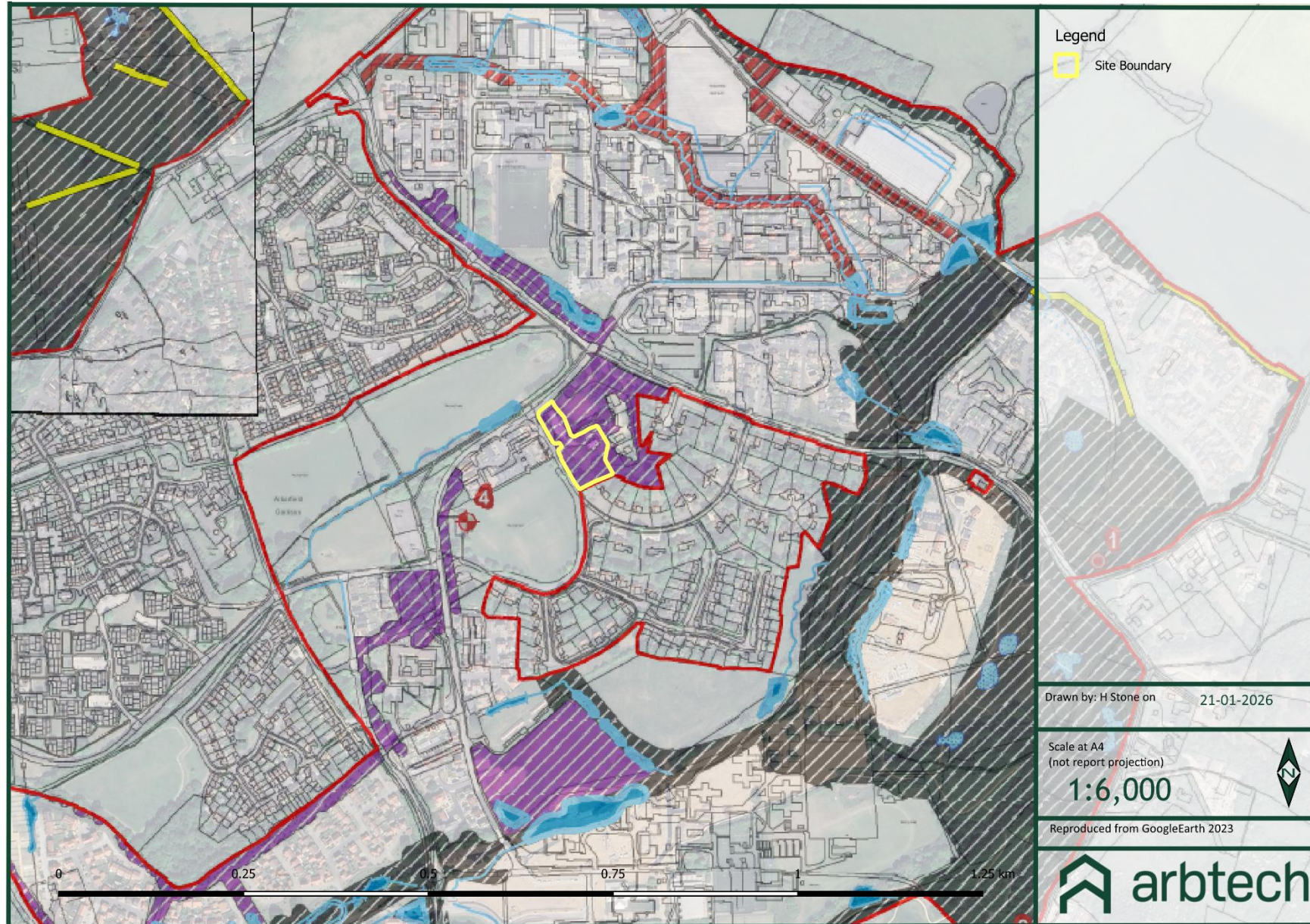
The BMP requires stakeholders to comply fully with the pre-construction and construction-related elements of any mitigation strategies agreed with the Local Planning Authority and Natural England under any license requirements. Construction activities will therefore be conducted strictly in accordance with the approved BMP. Regular inspections and monitoring will be undertaken to ensure compliance with the plan's requirements and a post-development inspection of the site will be carried out to ensure compliance with these recommendations.

Any deviations or incidents that may affect ecological receptors will be immediately reported to the designated ecologist / Natural England.

Updates to the BMP will be relayed to the Local Planning Authority.

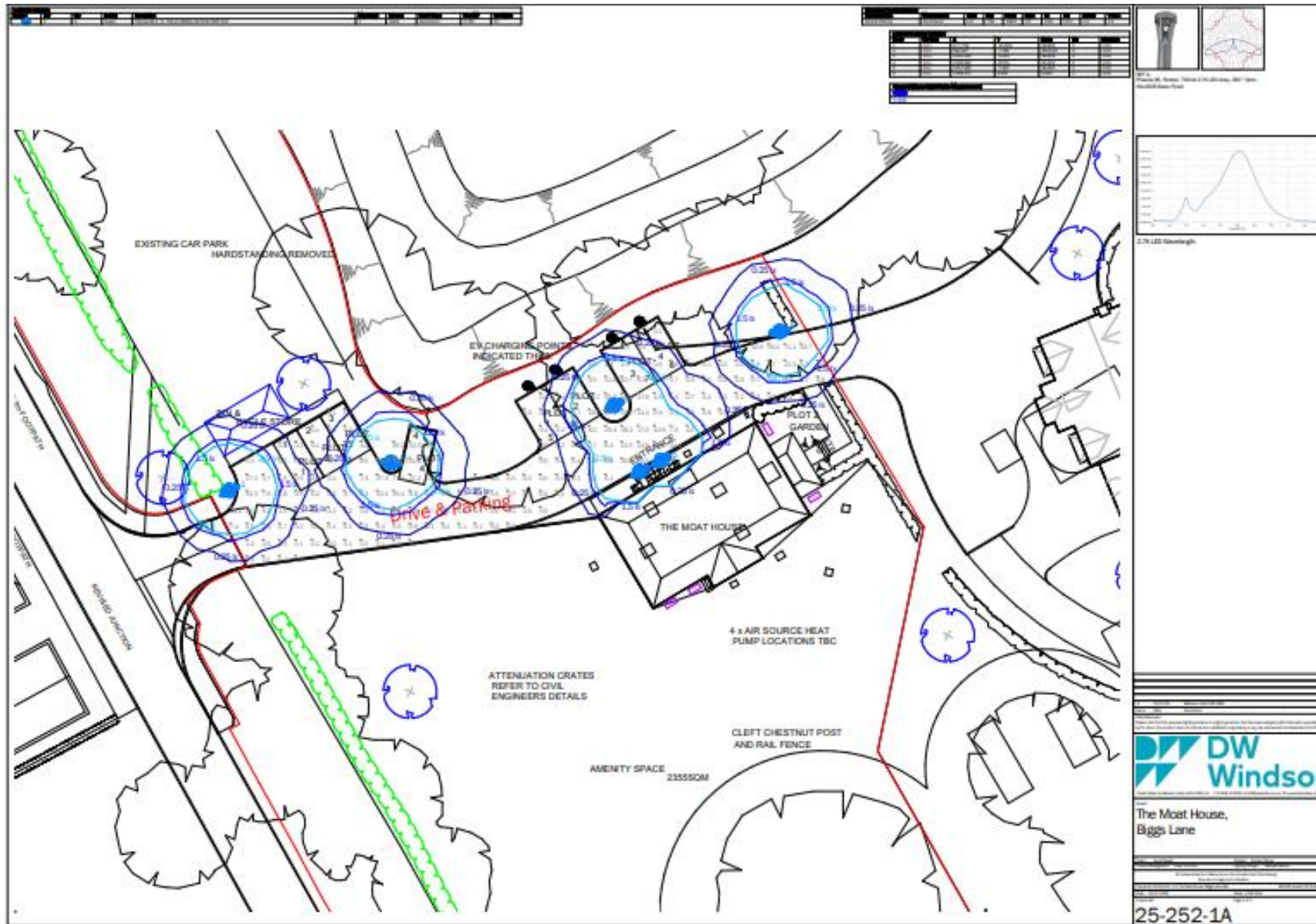
The BMP will be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary throughout the construction phase to address changing site conditions and evolving ecological considerations.

Appendix 1a: Site Location Plan in Relation Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location – Bat Mitigation Strategy (ACEOM, 2014)



Appendix 2a: Suitable Roosting Feature Results and Works Exclusion









Version control			
Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Harley Stone BSc, Senior Consultant Ecologist	20/01/2026
Final	1.0	Harley Stone BSc, Senior Consultant Ecologist	21/01/2026
Updated Plan	2.0	Harley Stone BSc, Senior Consultant Ecologist	04/02/2026

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