



Preliminary Roost Assessment

1 Newbury Close, Fair Oak, Hampshire, SO50 8ES

Mr and Mrs Lucas

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	1	Annabel Sharpe BSc (Hons) Graduate Ecologist	27/03/2023
Reviewed	1.1	Lizi Pimlott BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM MRSB, Principal Ecologist	27/03/2023
Final	2	Annabel Sharpe BSc (Hons) Graduate Ecologist	27/03/2023

Arbtech Consultant's Contact Details:

Annabel Sharpe
Graduate Ecologist
Tel: 07749498206 **Email:** Annabelsharpe@arbtech.co.uk
<https://arbtech.co.uk>

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Industry Guidelines and Standards

This report has been written with due consideration to:

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- British Standard 42020 (2013). Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.
- British Standard 8683:2021 (2021). Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain.

Proportionality

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

The desk studies and field surveys undertaken to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) might in some cases be all that is necessary.

(BS 42020, 2013)

Executive Summary

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Mr and Mrs Lucas to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 1 Newbury Close, Fair Oak, Hampshire, SO50 8ES (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for a two-storey side extension and alteration to fenestration (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”).

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Table 5 of this report.

Feature	Foreseen impacts	Recommendations <i>Measures required to adhere to guidance, legislation and planning policies.</i>
Roosting bats.	Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within this building and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in this location as a result of the proposed development.	In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development, all work must stop and a bat-licensed ecologist contacted for further advice. It's advised that the hanging tiles that are showing the first signs of slipping should be secured back into place before these develop into potential bat roosting features if they were to slip further or fall.

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1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Mr and Mrs Lucas to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 1 Newbury Close, Fair Oak, Hampshire, SO50 8ES (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for a two-storey side extension and alteration to fenestration (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). A plan showing the proposed development is provided in Appendix 1.

The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting. This has been undertaken with due consideration to the “Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines” publication (Collins, 2016). No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author’s knowledge, by any other consultancy.

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference SU 48752 18744 and has an area of approximately 0.02ha comprising a residential dwelling, a garage and a garden. It is surrounded by urban infrastructure with roads and residential dwellings in all directions. A site location plan is provided in Appendix 2.

1.3 Scope of the Report

This report provides a description of all features suitable for roosting, foraging and commuting bats and evaluates those features in the context of the site and wider environment. It further documents any physical evidence collected or recorded during the site survey that establishes the presence of roosting bats. It provides information on possible constraints to the proposed development as a result of bats and summarises the requirements for any further surveys to inform subsequent mitigation proposals, achieve planning or other statutory consent and to comply with wildlife legislation.

To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:

- A desk study has been carried out.
- A field survey has been undertaken, including an external survey and internal inspection of built structures where possible, to determine the presence or the suitability of any features which bats could use for roosting and to assess the suitability of the site’s bat foraging and commuting habitat.
- An outline of potential impacts on any confirmed or unidentified roosts has been provided, based on the proposed development.
- Recommendations for further surveys and mitigation have been made, along with advice on the requirements for a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) application if appropriate.
- Opportunities for the enhancement of the site for roosting, foraging and commuting bats have been set out.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

The desk study included a 2km radius review of statutory designated sites with bat qualifying interests and granted EPSL records for bats held on magic.gov.uk database. An assessment of the surrounding landscape structure was also completed using aerial images from Google Earth and OS maps.

2.2 Field Survey

The survey was undertaken by Annabel Sharpe Graduate Ecologist, Accredited on Licence 2022-10316-CL18-BAT, on 23/03/2023

The PRA focussed on 1 built structure which will be affected by the proposed development as well as providing an overview of the wider site and the surrounding landscape for bat roosting, foraging and commuting habitat.

For any surveyed buildings

A non-intrusive visual appraisal was undertaken from the ground, using binoculars to inspect the external features of the building for features which bats could use for roosting, including access or egress points and for signs of bat use including droppings, scratch marks, insect remains and urine smear marks. An internal inspection of the building was also made, including the living areas and any accessible roof spaces, using a torch and ladders. The surveyor paid particular attention to the floor and flat surfaces, window shutters and frames, lintels above doors and windows, and carried out a detailed search of numerous features within the roof space

2.3 Breeding Birds and Other Incidental Observations

The surveyor also made note of any other ecological constraints observed during the survey, notably the likelihood of presence or signs of breeding birds, and the suitability of the site for barn owls.

2.4 Suitability Assessment

Built structures were categorised according to the likelihood of bats being present and the types of roost that the identified features could support. This is summarised in Table 1 for buildings below. Roost suitability is classified as high, moderate, low and negligible and dictates any further surveys required before works can proceed.

Table 1: Features of a building that are correlated with use by bats

Classification	Feature of building and its context
Moderate to high	Buildings or structures with features of particular significance for larger numbers of roosting bats e.g. mines, caves, tunnels, icehouses and cellars. Habitat on site and surrounding landscape of high quality for foraging bats e.g. broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is connected with the wider landscape by strong linear features that would be used by commuting bats e.g. river and or stream valleys and hedgerows. Site is proximate to known or likely roosts (based on historical data). Buildings with high suitability could support roosts of high conservation value such as maternity or hibernation roosts.

Low	A small number of possible roost sites or features, used sporadically by individual or small numbers of bats. Potential roost features may be suboptimal for reasons such as shallow depth, poor thermal qualities or upwards orientation with exposure to inclement weather or predators. Habitat suitable for foraging in close proximity but isolated in the landscape. Or an isolated site not connected by prominent linear features. Few features suitable for roosting, minor foraging or commuting.
Negligible	Unsuitable for use by bats.

2.5 Limitations

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. Bats are highly mobile creatures that switch roosts regularly and therefore the usage of a site by bats can change over a short period of time.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

There was a large quantity of stored items within the loft area of B1 which would make a search for any bat evidence more difficult.

These limitations have been taken into account during the evaluation of the site and requirement for further surveys and mitigation.

3.0 Results and Evaluation

3.1 Desk Study Results

A summary of desk study results is provided below.

3.2 Designated Sites

Details of any statutory designated sites with bat qualifying interests within a 2km radius of the site, including their reasons for notification, are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Statutory designated sites with bat qualifying interests within 2km radius of the site.

Designated site name	Distance from site (approx.)	Reasons for notification from Natural England
River Itchen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	1.5km to the southwest	Bats are also well represented within the River Itchen catchment and species such as the serotine bat <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> , Daubenton's bat <i>Myotis daubentonii</i> , noctule bat <i>Nyctalus noctula</i> and the pipistrelle bat <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> use the riverine and floodplain habitats for feeding and where appropriate for roosting.

3.3 Historical Records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. EPSL records for bats are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Granted EPSLs for bats within 2km of the site.

EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Impacts allowed by licence
2020-48450-EPS-MIT	Soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place
2019-39954-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place
2019-39527-EPS-MIT	Brown long eared, common pipistrelle and natterer	Destruction of a resting place

3.4 Field Survey Results

The results of the field survey are illustrated in Appendix 3. The weather conditions recorded at the time of the survey are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Weather conditions during the survey

Date: 23/03/2023	
Temperature	12°C
Humidity	78%

Cloud Cover	100%
Wind	18mph
Rain	None

B1 – southern elevation

B1 is a semi-detached, two-storey building. It is constructed out of red brick, with cement-rendered lower walls, plastic façade board upper wall and a skirt of clay hanging tiles between.

The roof is constructed of interlocking concrete tiles and there is a singular chimney. The soffit box area and windows are all constructed in PVC plastics.

This building has been reroofed within the last ten years. The roof was in good condition with no significant gaps or lifting or lifting around the flashing of the chimney. There are no gaps in the soffit area and all vents are present.

The hanging tiles were inspected closely from below, and these were all lay flush to each other and to the underlying wall with no gaps suitable for roosting bats, one or two tiles are showing early signs of slipping, but this had yet to create any potential roosting spaces.

No bat evidence was seen at the base of the walls or around the windowsills or under the lowest hanging tiles.



B1 – Eastern elevation

This photograph is of the eastern elevation and the site of the proposed extension.

The porch will be removed as part of the proposal, an inspection of this porch, did not produce any bat evidence. The clay tiles on the hanging porch as well as the façade board front had no roosting features and were in good condition.

The barge board at this elevation had no spacing underneath for roosting bats.

**B1 –North elevation**

This photograph is of the north elevation of B1, there is a flat roof extension at this elevation. The tiles at this elevation were also in good condition, as were the hanging clay tiles, with no significant lifting seen at their feature. Like the south elevation, there were one or two hanging tiles starting to show first signs of starting to slip but had yet to produce any suitable roosting space.

The roofing felt on the flat roof building is also in good condition with no peeing or lifting observed.



B1 – interior (pictured opposite). This photograph is of the interior of B1. The interior is a small space of 3.3m wide 5m long and 1.7m high. There are exposed ridge beams and rafters, as well as supporting struts. The interior was in good condition due to a re-roofing within the last ten years. The lining is a grey breathable membrane which had no rips or tears. There is a large volume of items stored within the space, which would greatly reduce any flying space for any bat present. A close search was conducted, paying attention to the top of stored items, underneath the ridge beam area as well as at both gable-ended walls, but no evidence of void-bat occupation was discovered. This space is regularly disturbed for accessing the stored items present.	
B1 – Suitability B1 is negligible for roosting bats, there are no identifiable roosting features seen externally on any elevation, and the internal void space has poor suitability due to regular disturbance and lack of overall flying space inside for bats.	N/A
Bat foraging and commuting habitat The site itself has poor foraging habitat, for the surrounding of the building has a paved southern garden and a northern garden with a plastic lawn area. The residential areas in all directions do have a collection of small gardens which will provide some foraging habitat. There is a small collection of trees and greenery 100m to the northwest, as well as a stoke park woods which is 450m to the northwest.	N/A
Nesting birds No evidence of nesting birds was seen on the exterior or interior of B1.	N/A

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations

4.1 Informative Guidelines

A summary of the relevant legislation and planning policies is provided in Appendix 3

Bats

Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019).

There are three possible outcomes of this survey, each with specific recommendations. These are outlined below:

Confirmed bat roost

Best practice survey guidelines (Collins, 2016) recommend additional surveys for confirmed roosts. Three further surveys are required to characterise the bat roost present including species, roost type and access points to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. Surveys must be completed during the active bat season (May – September). At least two of the surveys should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August, and at least one of the surveys should be a dawn re-entry survey.

Low, moderate or high likelihood of a bat roost present

Best practice survey guidelines (Collins, 2016) recommend additional surveys for features assessed as having low to high suitability for roosting bats. One, two or three further surveys are required to confirm presence or likely absence of a bat roost, based on a low, medium or high roost likelihood evaluation. Surveys must be completed during the active bat season (May – September). If more than one survey is recommended, at least one of them should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August, and at least one of the surveys should be a dawn re-entry survey. If two or one further survey is recommended these surveys must be completed during the optimal survey period (mid-May to August). For low and moderate roost likelihood evaluation the survey effort recommended at this stage is iterative and if bats roosts are confirmed in the building, a further survey will be required to provide sufficient information to inform an EPSL application to Natural England.

Negligible likelihood of a bat roost present

Buildings assessed as comprising negligible suitability for roosting bats do not normally require further surveys. However, if bats are found during any stage of the development, work should stop immediately, and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted for further advice.

Birds

Legislation protects all wild birds whilst they are breeding, and prohibits the killing, injuring or taking of any wild bird or their nests and eggs. Certain species of bird, including the barn owl, are subject to special provisions; it is an offence to disturb any bird or their young during the breeding season.

4.2 Evaluation

Taking the desk study and field survey results into account, Table 5 presents an evaluation of the value of the site for bats and also details any other ecological constraints identified such as nesting birds in relation to the proposed development which will comprise of a two-storey side extension and alteration to fenestration.

Table 5: Evaluation of the site for bats and any other ecological constraints

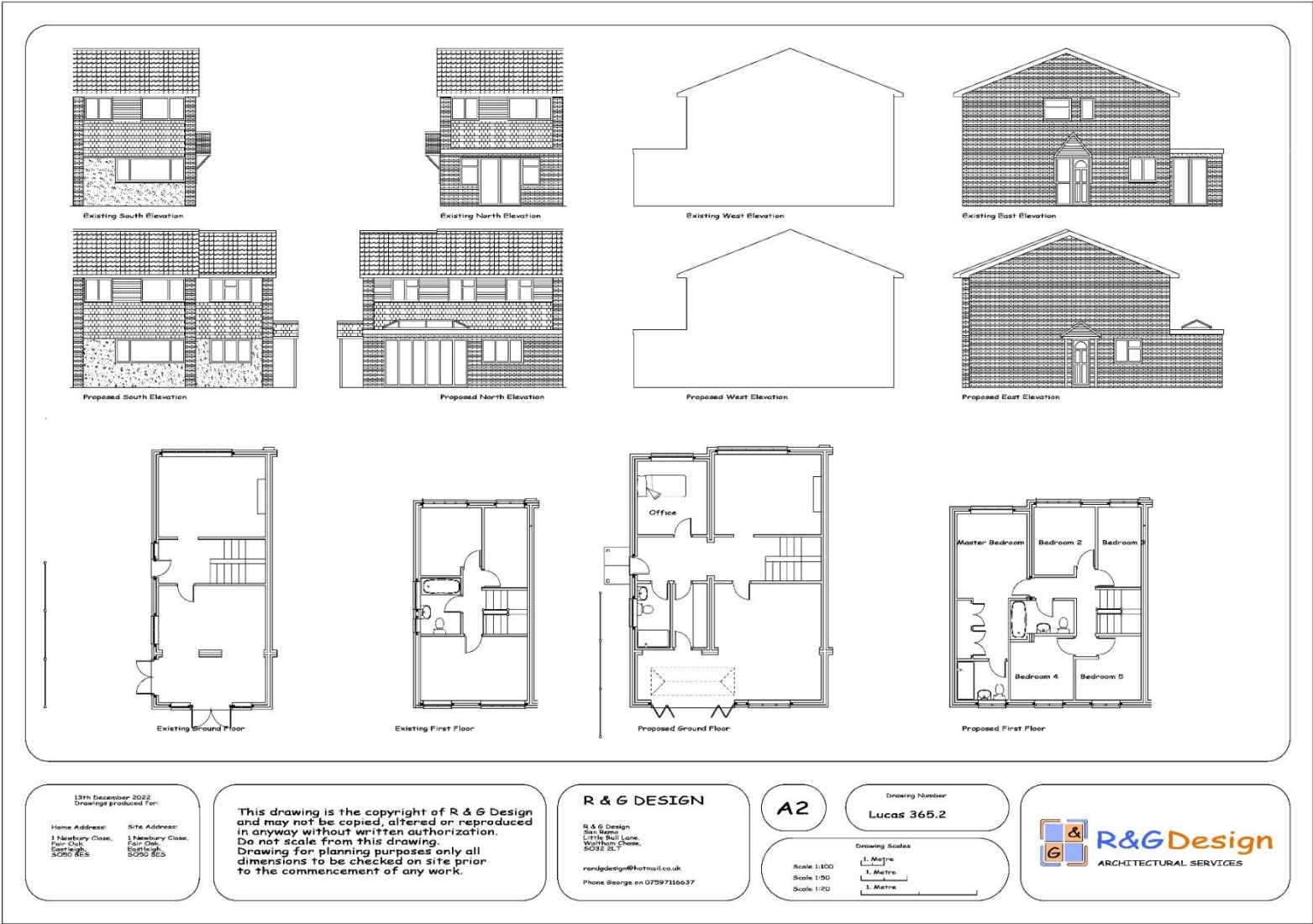
Feature	Survey conclusions (with justification)	Foreseen impacts	Recommendations <i>Measures required to adhere to guidance, legislation and planning policies.</i>	Biodiversity Enhancements <i>The Local Planning Authority has a duty to ask for enhancements under the NPPF (2021)</i>
Roosting bats B1	The building has negligible value for roosting bats due to a lack of potential roost features.	Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within this building and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in this location as a result of the new extension or alterations to fenestration.	In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development, all work must stop and a bat-licensed ecologist contacted for further advice. It is advised that the hanging tiles that are showing the first signs of slipping should be secured back into place before these develop into potential bat roosting features if they were to slip further or fall.	The installation of a minimum of one bat boxes on the new extension will provide additional roosting habitat for bats e.g. Vivara Pro Woodstone Bat Box Or a similar alternative brand. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light. Alternatively, bat boxes could be incorporated into the build of the new extension on the site e.g. Habibat Bat Box Bat tubes should be inserted into the fabric of the building during construction, positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance and facing landscape areas, away from artificial light.
Foraging and commuting bats	There are no habitats on the site which could be used by bats for	The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats.	None.	None.

	foraging or commuting.			
Nesting birds B1	The building offers no opportunities for nesting birds.	None.	None.	The installation of a minimum of one bird boxes on the walls of the new extension will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Woodstone Nest Box Sparrow terrace boxes Or a similar alternative brand. Woodstone nest boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground. Sparrow terraces should be positioned at the eaves.
Other ecological constraints	None identified.	N/A	N/A	N/A

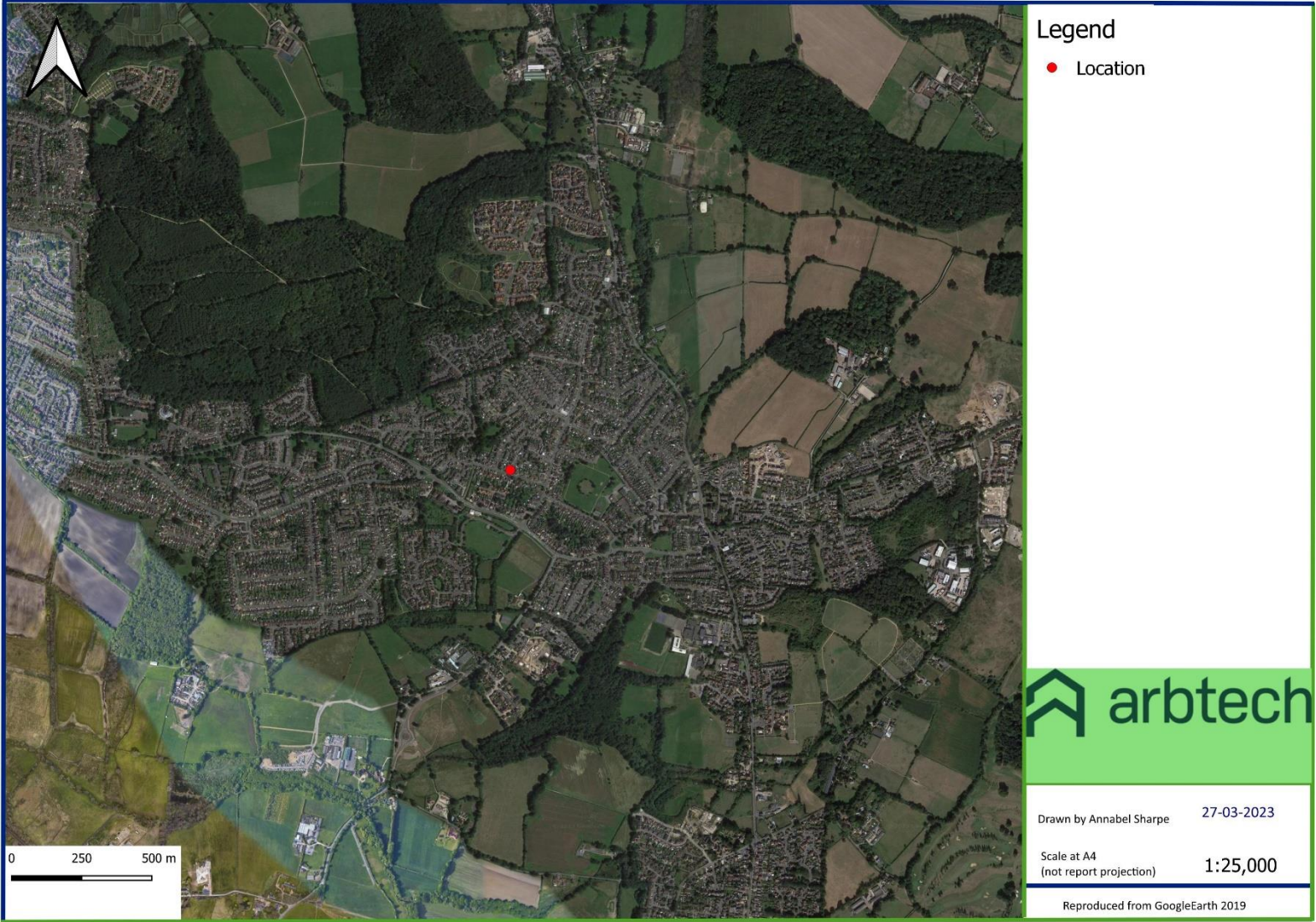
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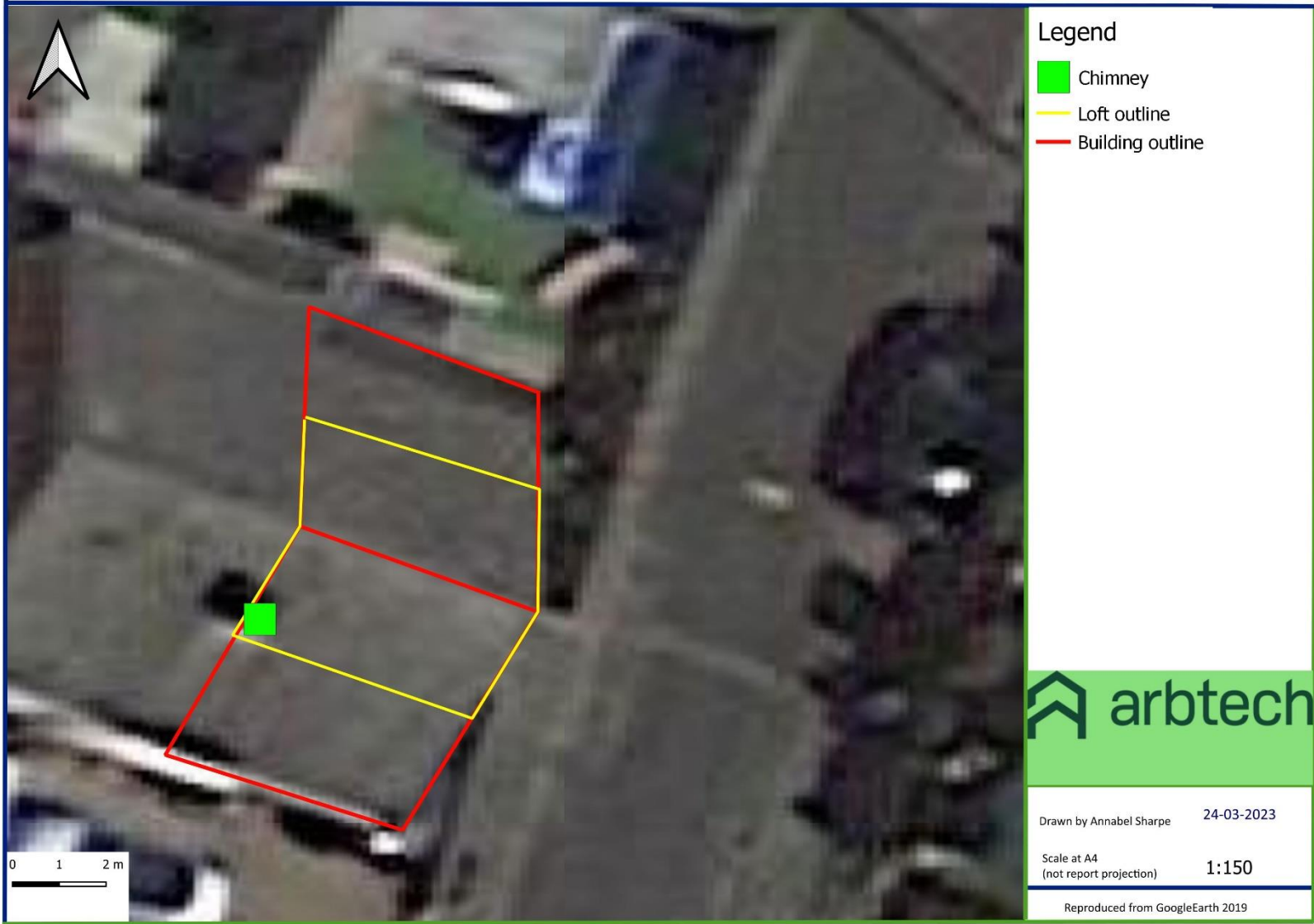
Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: Bat Survey Plan



Appendix 4: Legislation and Planning Policy Related to Bats

LEGAL PROTECTION

All species of bat are fully protected under *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 2.

Regulation 43: Protection of certain wild animals - offences

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if they:

- (a) Deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species,
- (b) Deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species,
- (c) Deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or
- (d) Damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1) (b), disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely—

- (a) To impair their ability:
 - (i) To survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - (ii) In the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
- (b) To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Bats are also protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 5. Under this Act, they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection
- Selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY (ENGLAND)

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

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

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

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

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'.

Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of 'principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity'. This list is intended to assist decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications. A developer must show that their protection has been adequately addressed within a development proposal.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Eastleigh Borough Local plan 2016-2036

The Eastleigh Borough Local plan can be viewed here. <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy-and-implementation/local-plan/local-plan-adoption>

Policy DM1, General criteria for new development

1. All new development should:
 - a -not have an unacceptable impact on, and where possible should enhance the biodiversity (avoiding significant adverse impacts)
 - d- not involve the loss of or damage to trees, woodlands, hedgerows, ponds, priority habitats or other landscape features of value to the character of the area, for appearance or biodiversity unless they can be replaced with features of equivalent or enhanced value, (recognising that some species and habitats may be irreplaceable);
 - e. include a landscape scheme covering the design and layout of external space

Policy DM11- Nature conservation

Priority habitats, protected and priority species and the local ecological network.

5. Development will not be permitted if it is likely (either individually or in combination with other developments) to have a direct or indirect adverse effect on priority habitats, protected or priority species, or on the local ecological network unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a. there are no alternative solutions.
- b. the adverse effects are unavoidable.
- c. measures are taken to mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects;
- d. there is an overall biodiversity net gain; and

e. if there are any residual adverse effects, the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the adverse effects on priority habitats, priority and protected species, and the local ecological network

Eastleigh Biodiversity strategy 2022-2032.

chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://meetings.eastleigh.gov.uk/documents/s50032382/Appendix.%201%20for%20Biodiversity%20Strategy%202022-2032.pdf

All bat species are included in the plan.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by Natural England will be required for works likely to affect a bat roost or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above (e.g. survive, breed, rear young and hibernate). The licence is to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficiency/success to be monitored. The legislation may also be interpreted such that, in certain circumstances, important foraging areas and/or commuting routes can be regarded as being afforded *de facto* protection, for example, where it can be proven that the continued usage of such areas is crucial to maintaining the integrity and long-term viability of a bat roost (Garland & Markham, 2008).

There are 17 species of bat breeding in England and Natural England issues licences under Regulation 55 of the Habitats Regulations to allow you to work within the law.

Licences are issued for specific purposes stated in the Regulations, if the following three tests are met:

- The purpose of the work meets one of those listed in the Habitats Regulations (see below);
- That there is no satisfactory alternative;
- That the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status (FCS) in their natural range

The Habitats Regulations permits licences to be issued for a specific set of purposes including:

1. include preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of over-riding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;
2. scientific and educational purposes;
3. ringing or marking; and,
4. conserving wild animals.

Development works fall under the first purpose and Natural England issues bat mitigation licences for developments.

EUROPEAN PROTECTED SPECIES POLICIES

In December 2016 Natural England officially introduced the four licensing policies throughout England. The four policies seek to achieve better outcomes for European Protected Species (EPS) and reduce unnecessary costs, delays and uncertainty that can be inherent in the current standard EPS licensing system. The policies are summarised as follows:

- Policy 1; provides greater flexibility in exclusion and relocation activities, where there is investment in habitat provision;
- Policy 2; provides greater flexibility in the location of compensatory habitat;
- Policy 3; provides greater flexibility on exclusion measures where this will allow EPS to use temporary habitat; and,
- Policy 4; provides a reduced survey effort in circumstances where the impacts of development can be confidently predicted.

The four policies have been designed to have a net benefit for EPS by improving populations overall and not just protecting individuals within development sites. Most notably Natural England now recognises that the Habitats Regulations legal framework now applies to 'local populations' of EPS and not individuals/site populations.