

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA) & NESTING BIRDS REPORT

29th October 2025

81 Freegrounds Road, Hedge End,
Hampshire, SO30 0HZ

Applicant: Mr Michael Cousens

REPORT ISSUE SHEET:

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Local Planning Authority:	Eastleigh Borough Council
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This report has been prepared to identify the presence of bats and nesting birds within the site, where this falls within the scope of the agreed works.

This report has been produced using all reasonable skill and care, and a Quality Assurance (QA) review process has been undertaken prior to issue of this report. If the reader identifies any inaccuracies or discrepancies, this should be brought to the attention of ABR Ecology immediately.

It is at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to determine whether the information and data on protected species contained within this report is made publicly available.

SURVEY DATA LIFESPAN AND VALIDITY:

Survey data is considered valid for 12-18 months from the survey date in accordance with the CIEEM Advice note (CIEEM, 2019), due to the presence of and/or potential for mobile species to be present within the site. The 12-18 month period is taken where the condition(s) of the building(s)/structure(s) on site remain unchanged since the survey and the proposals for the site are unchanged. If any changes to the plans occur, this report may not be valid and any conclusions provided may not be appropriate. In this event, it is the responsibility of the applicant to contact ABR Ecology to determine whether an amended report or resurvey of the site is required.

The result of the PRA indicate that it is unlikely that a bat would be present within the property, however, the survey only provides a 'snapshot' in time. Bats are a highly mobile species and it is therefore possible for bats to occupy the property at any time in the future, particularly if any alterations/changes to the property occur.

If a resurvey of the property is undertaken in the future and a bat roost is subsequently identified, a suite of three bat activity surveys will be required and survey data will be required to inform a bat European Protected Species (EPS) licence application. The building inspection (PRA) is considered valid for 3 months and activity data from the then current survey season (May – August/September) to inform a bat licence application.

This document has been prepared in accordance with CIEEM's Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing 2nd ed (CIEEM, 2017a) and the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines 4th ed (Collins, 2023).

ABR Ecology Ltd cannot accept responsibility for third party data supplied within this report.

At the time of writing, standard methodologies have been used which are accepted by Natural England and other statutory bodies. No responsibility will be accepted where standard methodologies change and where Government, national bodies and industry subsequently modify standards.

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Non-technical summary

- ◆ ABR Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Mr M Cousens to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 81 Freegrounds Road, Hedge End, Hampshire, SO30 0HZ to advise on the presence/absence of bats and nesting birds at the property.
- ◆ This report was requested to support a householder application for the addition of a wraparound extension, loft conversion and renovations to the bungalow.
- ◆ The PRA and nesting birds survey were undertaken on the 21st October 2025 by Natural England class 2 licensed bat ecologist Russell Hoyle and graduate ecologist Alex Homewood.
- ◆ The PRA revealed no evidence of bats, and the building was identified to hold ‘**negligible potential**’ for roosting bats due to a lack of potential bat exit/entry points and potential roosting features.
- ◆ The building is not considered to support roosting bats at this time and so no action regarding bats is recommended. However, should 12-18 months pass without works commencing, and/or any material changes occur to the building (such as deterioration), or if the proposals for the site change, this report would no longer be valid and an update site visit to reassess the building would be required. Further information is provided in Section 4 of this report regarding the validity of this report.
- ◆ Bats may be foraging and commuting across the site; measures for lighting reduction are detailed in Section 4 to minimize impacts of obtrusive lighting on foraging and commuting bats that may be using the gardens and general surrounding area.
- ◆ No evidence of nesting birds or potential for nesting birds was recorded during the visit. Therefore, nesting birds are not considered to be impacted from the development.
- ◆ One ‘Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box’ will be provided as an enhancement to ensure the application is compliant with planning policy. This is detailed in Section 4.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 ABR Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Mr M Cousens to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 81 Freegrounds Road, Hedge End, Hampshire, SO30 0HZ (central grid reference: SU 49546 12426) to advise on the presence/absence of bats and nesting birds at the property. This report was requested to support a householder application for the addition of a wraparound extension, loft conversion and renovations to the bungalow.
- 1.2 The PRA and nesting birds survey were undertaken on the 21st October 2025 by Natural England class 2 licensed bat ecologist Russell Hoyle and graduate ecologist Alex Homewood.
- 1.3 Existing elevations are provided in Appendix A and proposed elevations are provided in Appendix B.

Site context

- 1.4 The application site comprises a residential property consisting of a detached bungalow in Hedge End, Hampshire within an urban area. The immediate surrounding landscape comprises residential housing and gardens, with treeline corridors to the south alongside the railway. The wider surrounding landscape comprises urban residential development with gardens, public ornamental gardens and pockets of woodland. The surrounding areas are considered to provide good foraging opportunities and commuting corridors for bats.

Aims and scope of the PRA and report

- 1.5 The principal aim of a PRA survey is to determine the actual and potential presence of bats within the building structure. This report is based on the results of the PRA and records of bats and bat roosts as supplied by Hampshire Bat Group (HBG, 2025).
- 1.6 The results of the PRA and the data search were principally aimed at determining if a bat roost is present within the property and/or whether the building holds the 'potential' to support roosting bats in line with The BCT Good Practice Guidelines 4th ed (Collins, 2023). The results of the data search were also used to determine the Zone of Influence (Zol) for bats associated with the project.
- 1.7 This report aims to establish whether the proposed works will likely impact roosting bats and identifies if there are requirements for additional activity (dusk) surveys; the report also aims to identify if there is a requirement for a bat European Protected Species (EPS) licence or Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) from Natural England to allow the works to proceed lawfully following planning approval.
- 1.8 The aim of the nesting birds survey was to determine if there is any recent or historical evidence of nesting birds within the building onsite.

Relevant planning policy and legislation

1.9 Full details of relevant planning policy and legislation are provided in Appendix C of this report; the following policy and legislation in respect of bats and nesting birds is applicable to this application:

- ◆ Eastleigh Borough Council (2022). The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (Adopted April 2022).
- ◆ The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019
- ◆ The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) – Section 1 and Schedule 1 (birds) and 5 (bats)
- ◆ The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 – Sections 40 and 41
- ◆ The Environment Act 2021
- ◆ The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 – Section 15
- ◆ National Planning Practice Guidance Natural Environment (para 10-35)
- ◆ Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System

1.10 **It is the responsibility of the applicant(s) to ensure that the proposed development proceeds in full compliance with legislation, national and local policy, and in accordance with all conditions of the obtained planning consent(s). It is also the responsibility of the applicant(s) to request a report amendment / reassessment of the site for roosting bats and nesting birds where the scale/nature of the proposed plans subsequently change.**

2. Methodology

Desktop data search – bat records

- 2.1 Hampshire Bat Group (HBG, 2025) was contacted to provide records of bats and bat roosts within a 2km radius of the application site. These records were used to inform the assessment of the site in its potential to support roosting bats and identifying any potential cumulative impacts on bats from the proposed development.

Zone of Influence (Zol) for bats

- 2.2 The results of the desktop data search and the proposed plans were used to determine a Zone of Influence (Zol) for bats; the Zol is defined by CIEEM (2017b) as *‘the areas/resources that may be affected by the biophysical changes caused by activities associated with a project’*.
- 2.3 Due to the localised and small-scale nature of the proposals (as shown in Appendix B), the Zol for roosting bats is confined to the site boundary. The Zol for foraging bats may extend just beyond the site boundary where artificial lighting is concerned, however, this is considered to be minimal if lighting mitigation is implemented, and therefore the survey area was confined to the building only.

Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

- 2.4 Natural England class 2 licensed bat ecologist Russell Hoyle and graduate ecologist Alex Homewood undertook the PRA of the building on site. Conditions for the PRA are provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Weather conditions, equipment and timings for PRA survey

Survey date	Time of survey	Surveyors	Equipment available to use	Weather conditions		
21/10/2025	11:00am	Russell Hoyle ACIEEM & Alex Homewood	High-powered torch, mirrors, sealable bags, FFP3 face masks, gloves, extendable ladder, binoculars	Temp:	Okta cloud cover:	Beaufort wind force:
				14°C	6/8	1/12

- 2.5 The surveying ecologists have received training in Working at Heights (and in-house training in the use of ladders for PRA surveys), Manual Handling, and Emergency First Aid At Work to ensure compliance with Health and Safety legislation (The Work at Height Regulations 2005, Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981).
- 2.6 The PRA was undertaken in accordance with The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines 4th ed (Collins, 2023). A systematic search was made of any internal building areas / loft spaces and exterior building areas. Where present, information was compiled on the potential and actual bat entry/exit points (where possible); potential and actual bat roosting locations; and any evidence of bats found.
- 2.7 The internal inspection involved a search of internal building areas and where loft spaces were present, the ecologists undertook a search of areas such as beams/felt;

fibreglass insulation/flooring; crawl boards; water tanks; internal chimney stacks; gable ends; and stored materials etc.

2.8 The external building assessment included an inspection of the ground/flooring, and where present, any windowsills, windowpanes, behind peeling paintwork/lifted render, brick/block work, chimneys, eaves, lead flashing, tiles and soffits etc.

2.9 Evidence of roosting bats can include:

- ◆ The presence of physical live/deceased bats
- ◆ Bat droppings (distinguished from rodent droppings by their crumbly texture)
- ◆ Fur-oil staining around entry/exit points
- ◆ Urine splashing
- ◆ Feeding remains, such as insect wings and casings

2.10 The building was identified as a ‘confirmed’ bat roost where bat evidence was recorded. If droppings were present, a sample of the bat droppings were collected and couriered to Swift Ecology Ltd for DNA analysis to confirm the species of bat present.

2.11 Most native bats in England are crevice-dwelling species, with bats roosting in remote areas, such as under roof tiles; behind cladding; in cavities; soffits; and behind lead flashing etc, and evidence of these species is often concealed and/or inaccessible. Therefore, where no evidence of roosting bats was recorded, an assessment on the availability of potential roosting areas and bat exit/entry points around the building(s) was conducted. The building was then assigned a category based on a sliding scale of potential for bats, ranging from ‘none’ to ‘high’ (Collins, 2023):

Table 2: Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of buildings for bats (Collins, 2023)

Bat roosting potential	Description
‘High’	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 & potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions (temperature, humidity, height above ground level, adverse light levels, or high levels of disturbance), and surrounding habitat. The structure has the potential to support high conservation status roosts for example maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation sites.
‘Moderate’	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions (temperature, humidity, height above ground level, adverse light levels, or high levels of disturbance), and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity & hibernation and this is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence if confirmed via the PRA).

‘Low’	The building features one or more potential roosting features that could be used by bats opportunistically at any time of year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions (temperature, humidity, height above ground level, adverse light levels, or high levels of disturbance) and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a larger number of bats.
‘Negligible’	There are no obvious habitat features likely to be used by bats, however there is a small element of uncertainty as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion. (*negligible is defined as ‘so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant’. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute), but it is unlikely that they would (due to another attribute).
‘None’	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).

Nesting birds

- 2.12 A search was conducted for evidence of barn owl (*Tyto alba*) and other nesting birds within and around the building during the site visit. Evidence of nesting birds can include the physical presence of chicks and/or adult birds, nesting material, eggs and/or egg casings, feathers, white splashing (droppings), and pellets (for barn owls).

Survey limitations

PRA and nesting bird surveys

- 2.13 Bats and nesting birds are highly mobile species, and it is therefore possible for bats and nesting birds to occupy the property at any time in the future, particularly if any alterations/changes occur to the property. The PRA only provides a ‘snapshot’ in time and does not account for seasonal variation; some bat species and nesting birds may have been overlooked due to seasonal constraints. As such, it is not possible to have complete certainty that bats and nesting birds are not present, rather, there was no indication of bat/nesting bird presence at the time of survey.
- 2.14 Potential evidence of bats, in particular crevice-dwelling species, may have been overlooked due to access restrictions to remote areas of the building. Binoculars were used to help identify any potential bat droppings on the exterior features of the building.
- 2.15 Often bats leave no visible sign of their presence on the outside of a building, and even when they do, wet weather can wash evidence away.

Reporting and survey data lifespan

- 2.16 The data within this report should not be seen as comprehensive. Data obtained from the HBG (2025) data search is highly unlikely to be representative of the bat species and

roosts existing within the area. It is therefore possible that bat species/bat roosts may occur that have not been recorded in the area by the local records centre.

- 2.17 This report is considered valid for 12-18 months from the survey date in accordance with the CIEEM Advice note (CIEEM, 2019) for planning purposes only; and is only intended for the proposed plans outlined within this report. If any material changes to the building(s)/site occur or if the nature and/or extent of the proposed development changes, an update visit to reassess the building(s) will be required, as any conclusions provided herein may not be valid.

3. Results

Desktop data search – bat records

- 3.1 HBG (2025) provided records of bats and bat roosts within a 2km radius of the site as presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Records for bats and bat roosts around the site

Common name	Scientific name	Number of records	Most recent record	Nearest record to site
Bechstein's bat	<i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>	1	2016	1.6km southeast
Brown long-eared bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	29	2020	80m northwest
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	172	2024	225m south
Daubenton's bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	1	2017	Within 2km northeast
Leisler's bat	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	4	2024	1.05km northeast
Long-eared bat species	<i>Plecotus sp.</i>	37	2024	130m southeast
Myotis bat species	<i>Myotis sp.</i>	48	2024	1.05km northeast
Nathusius's pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	8	2024	1.05km northeast
Natterer's bat	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	7	2024	1.25km south
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	53	2025	225m south
Pipistrelle bat species	<i>Pipistrellus sp.</i>	18	2024	150m east
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	60	2024	225m south
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	102	2024	225m south
Western barbastelle	<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	8	2023	1.05km northeast
Whiskered/Brandt's bat	<i>Myotis mystacinus/brandtii</i>	8	2016	1km south
Whiskered bat	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	4	2016	1.6km southeast

- 3.2 There are records for multiple species of highly light-sensitive bats species in the area. These include long-eared bats, western barbastelles and at least three species from the *Myotis* genus. There is potential for changes in artificial lighting to impede foraging and commuting bats that may be using the general site; therefore, lighting specifications are detailed in Section 4 of this report to reduce obtrusive lighting impacts on bats.

Bat survey results

Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

- 3.3 A description of the building surveyed for roosting bats is provided in Table 4 below and photographs of the building are provided in Appendix D:

Table 4: Building description.

Building	Description
Bungalow ('B1')	◆ A single-storey detached brick and render built bungalow is present. ◆ The roof is pitched and hipped and constructed of concrete interlocking tiles. ◆ uPVC and wooden windows and door frames are present ◆ Wooden soffits and barge boards are present.

	◆ A single-storey attached garage with a pitched and hipped concrete tiled roof is present. No void is present. ◆ A single storey rear brick and render extension is present. ◆ Two internal, enclosed loft voids are present, and descriptions are provided below: Void 1- - The main loft is rectangular shaped. measuring 9.5m in length, 6.5m in width and 1.8m in height to the apex. - Fiberglass insulation is present. - Partial boarding is present. - The roof is lined with bituminous 1F felt. - The roof is constructed of a ridge beam, half truss and purlins. - One internal chimney is present in the south. - Void 2- - The loft is rectangular and measures approximately 5m long, 3m wide and 1m high to the apex. - A ridge beam and rafters are present. - Fibreglass insulation is present.	
	Potential bat entry/exit points:	Potential roosting areas:
	- No ingress points considered suitable for bats were identified around the property.	- Due to a lack of access, no potential roosting areas were identified.
	Evidence of bats recorded:	
	- No evidence of bats was recorded within or around the building.	
	DNA analysis of dropping sample (as tested by Swift Ecology Ltd):	
	- n/a	
	Roost status / potential of the building for bats:	
	'Negligible potential' for roosting bats	

3.4 No evidence of bats was recorded, the building was assessed and was deemed to hold 'negligible potential' for roosting bats in line with the BCT Guidelines (Collins, 2023). This was due to a lack of potential bat exit/entry points and potential roosting areas around the building.

3.5 On this basis, it is considered that bats are likely absent from the building and therefore roosting bats are not considered likely to be impacted by the proposed works.

3.6 No further surveys or licensing requirements are recommended, however, further information regarding the validity of this report and what to do in the unlikely event a bat is unexpectedly found is provided in Section 4 of this report.

Artificial lighting and bats

3.7 It is possible that bats are commuting and foraging across the general property and within the gardens. Bats are very sensitive to artificial lighting, which can impede their ability to successfully forage and can alter flightpaths (BCT & ILP, 2023). As bats may be using the property during nocturnal hours, it is essential that new lighting is designed to minimise impacts on foraging bats, particularly around areas with mature vegetation such as trees and hedges. Light spill can extend beyond the site boundary and may therefore also impact bats using neighbouring land.

- 3.8 Specifications for new lighting designed to reduce impacts on bats are detailed in Section 4.

Nesting birds

- 3.9 No evidence of nesting birds was recorded within or around the building on site. The potential for nesting birds is considered to be negligible as no ingress points for birds was noted. Therefore, it is considered unlikely nesting birds would be impacted by the proposed development, and no further action is recommended for nesting birds.

4. Conclusions, mitigation and enhancement plan

Conclusions on roosting bats

- 4.1 The PRA of 81 Freegrounds Road was undertaken, the building was assessed and considered to hold 'negligible potential' for roosting bats. On this basis, it is considered that bats are likely absent from the building(s) and therefore roosting bats are not considered likely to be impacted by the proposed works as shown in Appendix B of this report.
- 4.2 The PRA only provides a 'snapshot' in time and do not account for seasonal variation; bats may have been overlooked due to seasonal constraints. Bats are a highly mobile species and as such, it is not possible to have complete certainty that bats are not present, rather, that there was no indication of bats at the time of survey.
- 4.3 The survey can only be considered valid for 12-18 months from the survey date in accordance with the CIEEM Advice Note (CIEEM, 2019). The 12-18 month period is considered acceptable where the condition of the building on site remain unchanged since the survey and the proposals for the site are unchanged. If any changes to the plans occur, or if 12-18 months pass and no works have been undertaken, this report and any conclusions provided will not be valid. In this event, it is the responsibility of the applicant to contact ABR Ecology to determine whether an amended report or resurvey of the site is required.
- 4.4 **In the unlikely event bat(s) are encountered at any stage, work must cease immediately, and Natural England or a suitably qualified bat ecologist must be sought for advice by the applicant/landowner.** The applicant must be aware of the severe penalties associated with bat crimes and their legal obligation to report this information.
- 4.5 In the event a bat is unexpectedly discovered, the nature of the advice will concern allowing the bat(s) to leave of their own accord or waiting for a licensed person to remove the bat(s). A bat licence may then be deemed necessary following the necessary survey work. **All persons including contractors are explicitly forbidden from handling bats or interfering with bats in any way.**

Foraging and commuting bats

- 4.6 Bat records exist within the local area, however, the site is not located adjacent to dark unlit habitats and/or rural habitats, and so the full lighting specifications as outlined in the 'Bats and Artificial Lighting At Night' Guidance Note BN08/23 (BCT & ILP, 2023) is not considered appropriate for the site. However, artificial lighting will be kept to a minimum as detailed below:
 - ◆ Preferably, no net increase in external light fixtures will be installed. If external lighting is required, this will be limited and only installed where required for safety purposes. Light fixtures will only be installed at doorways/at the site entrance etc to allow for visibility.

- ◆ All luminaires installed will lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources will not be used.
- ◆ LED luminaires only will be used due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability.
- ◆ A warm white light source (2700Kelvin or lower) will be adopted to reduce blue light component.
- ◆ Light sources will feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats (Stone, 2012).

Biodiversity enhancement

- 4.7 To ensure the application is compliant with Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) and local planning policy, one 'Vivara Pro Woodstone House Sparrow Nest Box' (<https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-house-sparrow-nest-box>) will be installed near the apex on the proposed front elevation of the garage as close to the eaves as possible as shown in Appendix E.

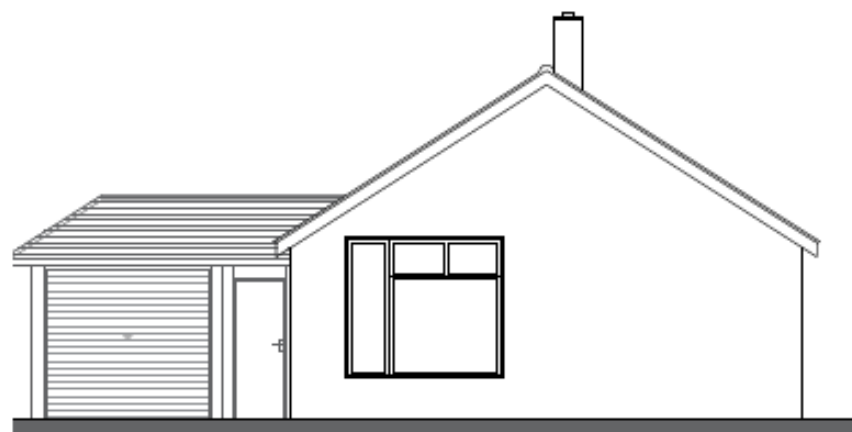
5. References

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- Hampshire Bat Group (HBG) (2025). 81 Freegrounds Road, Hedge End - *bats only data search 2km radius*.
- JNCC (The Joint Nature Conservation Committee) (2016). *UK BAP priority terrestrial mammal species*.
- Stone, E.L., Jones, G., Harris, S. (2012). *Conserving energy at a cost to biodiversity? Impacts of LED lighting on bats*. Glob. Change Biol. 18, 2458–2465

Appendix A: Existing elevations



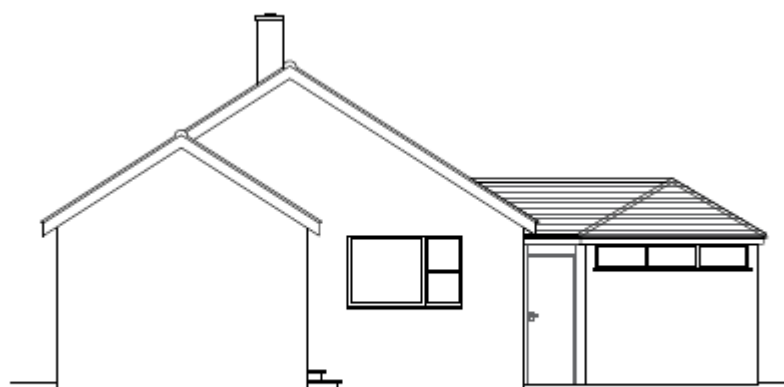
Site Location Plan 1:1250 @ A3



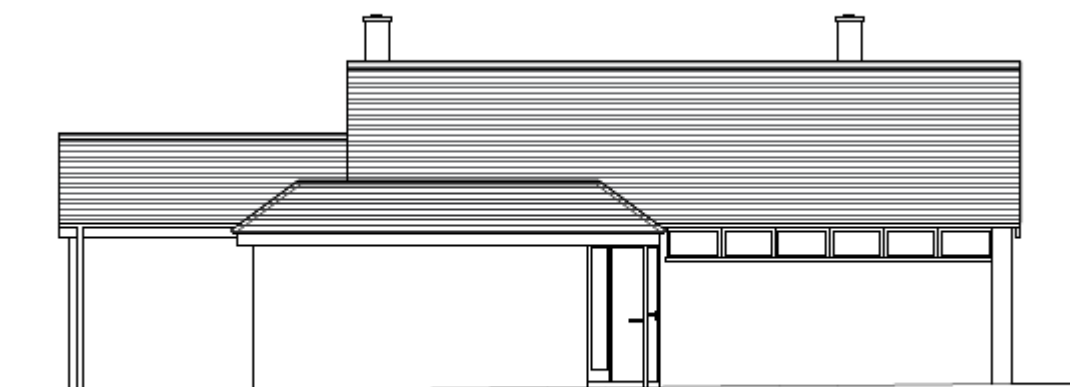
Existing Front Elevation | 1:100 @ A3



Existing Side Elevation | 1:100 @ A3

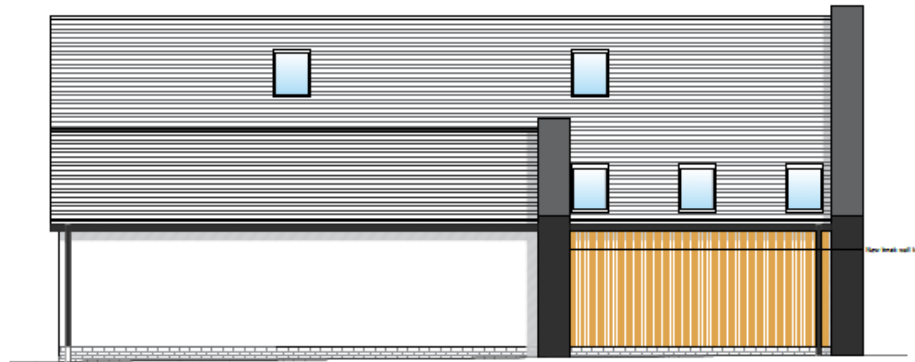


Existing Rear Elevation | 1:100 @ A3



Existing Side Elevation | 1:100 @ A3

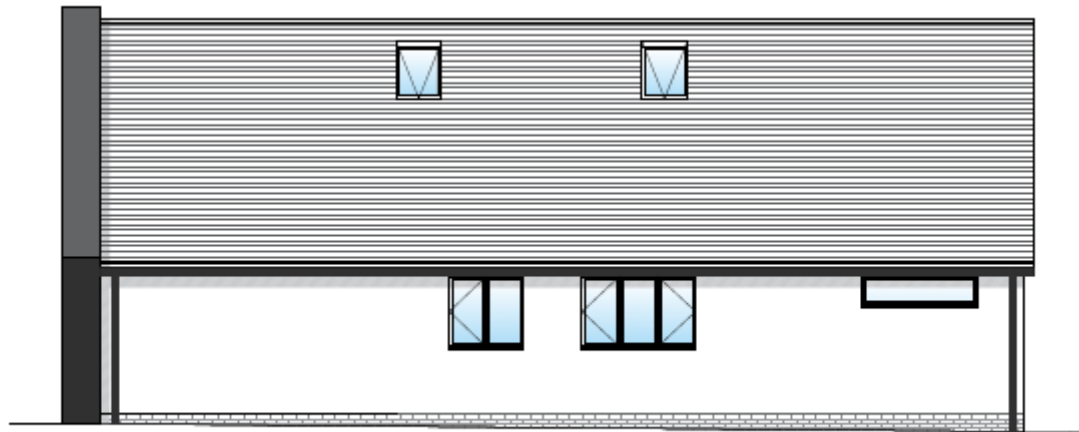
Appendix B: Proposed plans



Proposed Side Elevation | 1:100 @ A3



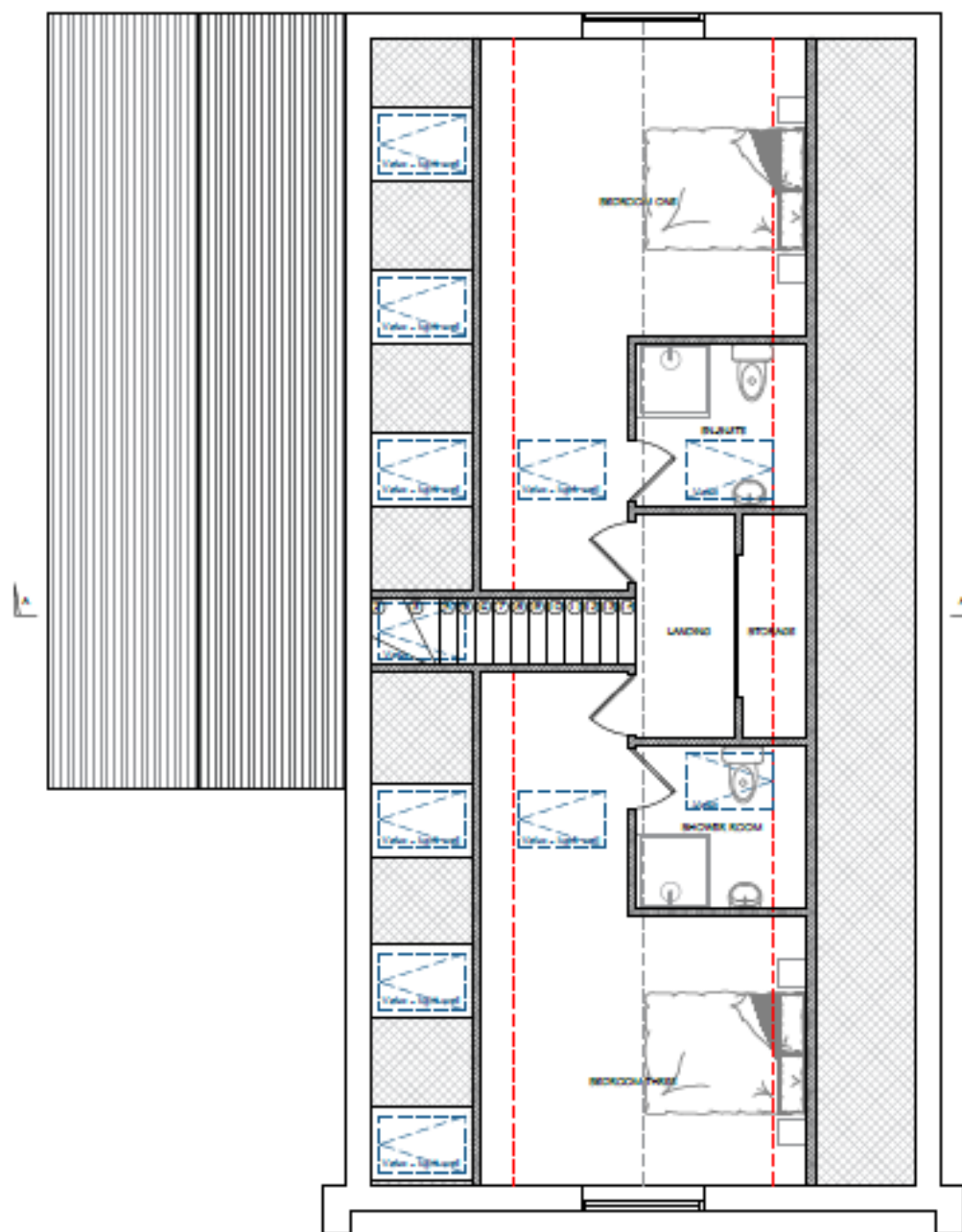
Proposed Rear Elevation | 1:100 @ A3



Proposed Side Elevation | 1:100 @ A3



Proposed Front Elevation | 1:100 @ A3



Appendix C: Relevant legislation and planning policy

Legislation and UK BAP priority species

Legislation – bats

In England, all bats are legally protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (1981) (as amended). Additionally, all bats are fully protected under Annex IV of the EC Habitats and Species Directive (1992), which is transposed into UK law under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

The legislation protects bats from many acts, including to:

1. Deliberately take, injure or kill a wild bat.
2. Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturbing a group of bats.
3. Destroy or damage a place used by bats for breeding or roosts (even if bats are not occupying them at the time).
4. Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
5. Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat species found in the wild in the EU (dead or alive) or any part of a bat.

Several species of bat are afforded additional protection under Annex II of the EC Habitats and Species Directive (1992) due to their rarity. These species include lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*), greater horseshoe (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*), Bechstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*) and barbastelle bat (*Barbastella barbastellus*).

Legislation – birds

In England and Wales, all wild birds, their young, nests and eggs are legally protected under Section 1 of the WCA (1981) (as amended). This legislation protects birds from the following acts:

1. To kill, injure or take any wild bird.
2. To take, damage or destroy the nest of a wild bird.
3. To take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built.
4. Takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird.

Some wild bird species, such as barn owls (*Tyto alba*) are afforded additional protection under Schedule 1 of the WCA (1981) (as amended). This legislation makes the following illegal for Schedule 1 species:

1. Disturbance of any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or
2. Disturbs dependent young of such a bird.

UK BAP priority bat and bird species

Several species are listed under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) (JNCC, 2016) as priority species due to their vulnerability or rarity as listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment

and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006), and Section 40 places a duty on all public authorities to conserve biodiversity.

Bats include barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*), Bechstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*), brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), both species of horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus spp.*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*).

Birds that commonly nesting in buildings include house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and common starling (*Sturnus vulgaris* subsp. *vulgaris*).

National and local planning policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. In the context of this report, Section 15 of NPPF is relevant and applicable, Section 15 states:

'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'

New developments and projects are supported where plans promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue measurable net gains for biodiversity.

To ensure this application is compliant with Section 15 of NPPF, enhancements for biodiversity, such as the inclusion of bat roosting and/or bird nesting boxes, are required as part of the development.

The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan

The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (Eastleigh Borough Council, 2022) was adopted in April 2022 and includes the following relevant policy under Chapter 5:

DM11 – Nature Conservation

General Approach

1. *The Council will work with statutory and voluntary agencies and developers, and will determine planning applications, to:*
 - a. *protect, conserve and enhance all:*
 - i. *international, national and local nature conservation designations; and*
 - ii. *networks of natural habitats and features, including the Local Ecological Network, Priority Biodiversity Areas and Priority Biodiversity Links, watercourses, wetland complexes, woodland trees, and trees and hedgerows important to biodiversity and local character; and facilitate their adaptation to climate change wherever possible;*
 - b. *assist in achieving national, county and local biodiversity targets as set out in Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs);*
 - c. *seek a net gain of biodiversity on all development sites (including sites for redevelopment) through the protection, enhancement and connection of existing*

and provision of new habitats and features of nature conservation interest compatible with the native biodiversity characteristics of the Borough, having regard to local geodiversity and soils; and

- d. contribute to major elements of the PfSH Green Infrastructure Strategy and other strategies for the provision and enhancement of multifunctional green infrastructure including green routes, ecological networks and biodiversity enhancements (see strategic policy S9).*

International Designations

- 2. Development which is likely (either individually or in combination with other developments) to adversely affect the integrity of an international or European nature conservation site will not be permitted subject only to imperative reasons of overriding public interest and securing any necessary compensatory measures in the absence of alternative solutions. A 'project level' Habitat Regulations Assessment will be required where there are likely significant effects or uncertainty. Any mitigation measures required to ensure no adverse impact must be implemented at the appropriate time.*
- 3. The Council will work with PfSH, Natural England, the Environment Agency and other wildlife organisations to develop and implement with developers a strategic approach to the protection and enhancement of international and European sites from the direct and indirect effects of development. Within Eastleigh Borough this will include:*
 - a. implementing:*
 - i. the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy (requiring contributions from residential developments within 5.6 kilometres of the Solent Special Protection Area to the Strategy); and*
 - ii. the interim and any future New Forest Recreation Mitigation Strategy if required; or alternative agreed site specific measures to address recreational disturbance;*
 - b. preserving the water quality and flows within the Itchen and Hamble, Southampton Water and Solent;*
 - c. protecting the River Itchen SAC, in particular the maintenance and where appropriate restoration of habitats and qualifying species to favourable conservation status (as defined by article 1 of the Habitats Directive); and*
 - d. seek contributions towards measures set out in the Southern Damselfly Conservation Strategy (or other strategy) specifically to deliver biodiversity net gain.*

National and Local Designations

- 4. 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 a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or Local Nature Reserve (LNR) as shown on the policies map (or on a more recent plan provided by the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre) 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 which cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated, the benefits of the development must clearly outweigh the adverse effects on the nature conservation value of the site and any broader impacts on national and local designations.*

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.*

Irreplaceable habitats

- 6. *Development will not be permitted if it results in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees), unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.*

Buffers

- 7. *Buffers free from development will be provided to designated sites to avoid/mitigate impacts, including recreational impact and impacts on edge habitats, and to maintain dark skies.*

Surveys

- 8. *Development will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:*
 - a. *there have been thorough habitat and species surveys;*
 - b. *the great crested newt strategic survey and strategy have been considered in all developments within 500m of a great crested newt pond; and*
 - c. *the strategic bat trapping survey has been considered in all developments within the locality of a woodland or connected habitat networks.*

It is the applicant's/landowner's responsibility to ensure that the proposed development proceeds in full compliance with this report and/or any update version report thereafter, that works are undertaken lawfully, in compliance with national and local policy, and in accordance with all conditions of the obtained planning consent(s).

Appendix D: Photographs



Photo 1: Front elevation.



Photo 2: Rear elevation.



Photo 3: Side elevation.



Photo 4: Rear of garage.



Photo 5: Main void 1.



Photo 6: Extension void 2.



Photo 7: Internal view of garage.

Appendix E: Biodiversity enhancement plan

One 'Vivara Pro Woodstone House Sparrow Nest Box' will be installed on the front elevation garage as close to the eaves as possible.



Proposed Front Elevation 1 1:100 @ A3