Preliminary Roost Assessment

25 Greenway, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD3 4RZ

Mr Nasaar

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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 Nasaar to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 25 Greenway, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD3 4RZ (hereafter referred to as "the site"). The survey was required to inform a planning application for change of use and internal alterations to former nursing home (C2) to form 12 apartments (C3) including creation of 20 parking spaces (hereafter referred to as "the proposed development").

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

Feature	Survey Results Summary	Impact Assessment	Recommendations
Roosting bats	Building one has low value for roosting bats. Missing mortar and gaps at the eaves provide suitably features that could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats such as common pipistrelle bats, that are known the be within 2km from the site based on EPSL records.	The proposed development includes internal works to the building with the addition of car parking. Therefore, no external works will be completed that will affect existing potential roosting features and will be retained.	Precautionary approach recommended.
Foraging and commuting bats	The recently removed trees on site could have been used by local bat populations for foraging and commuting, increasing the sites connectivity to the wider landscape. These could have been used by bats dispersing from nearby roosts. Onsite shrubs and modified grassland provide limited foraging suitability for bats.	The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of modified grassland and shrubs but given the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats. The proposed development will include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.	A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site.
Nesting birds	The building and onsite shrubs could be used by nesting birds. Missing mortar gaps on the eaves are large enough for birds to utilise. Eave guards are utilised along the eaves throughout the building.	No external works to the building are to be carried out as part of the proposed development. However, the proposed car park could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests through the removal of shrubs.	Precautionary approach recommended.

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1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Mr Nasaar to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 25 Greenway, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD3 4RZ (hereafter referred to as "the site"). The survey was required to inform a planning application for change of use and internal alterations to former nursing home (C2) to form 12 apartments (C3) including creation of 20 parking spaces (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 Location and Landscape Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference SE 10637 16211 and has an area of approximately 0.1ha comprising one building, recently removed trees, shrubs, modified grassland and hard standing. It is surrounded by treelines, residential dwellings with their associated gardens, and parkland to the south. 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 inspection of built structures 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 Matthew Edwards on the 1st June 2023: accredited agent to Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2022-10404-CL18-BAT.

The PRA focussed on one built structures 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 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***
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.
Moderate	Buildings or structures with one or more features suitable for more regular roosting due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation value such as maternity or hibernation roosts. Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape which could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees, linked gardens. Foraging habitat in the surrounding area such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
Low	Buildings or structures with one or more features suitable for use 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 largely isolated in the landscape. Or an isolated site not connected by prominent linear features.
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 search for historical bat records 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 bats, it is not anticipated that the purchase of historical records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

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 Designated Sites

No statutory designated sites with bat qualifying interests were identified within 2km of the site.

3.2 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 2.

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

EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Impacts allowed by licence
2014-1010-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	Destruction/damage of a resting place
EPSM2009-1162	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2012-5292	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place

3.3 Field Survey Results

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

Table 3: Weather conditions during the survey

Date:	01/06/2023
Temperature	13°C
Humidity	80%
Cloud Cover	100%
Wind	1mph
Rain	None

Table 4: PRA Results

Feature	Description	Photographs
B1 – western elevation	The site is comprised of one building. B1 is a detached L shaped brick-built buildings that had previously been utilised as a care home. The roof tiles, including ridge tiles appear to be in excellent condition with no gaps for bats to utilise. The doors and windows are timber frames and are in excellent condition with no gaps for bats to utilise. The brickwork is in excellent condition. However, vertical lines of missing mortar are located on the northern, eastern, western and southern elevations of the building which could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats. Additionally, missing mortar is present at the apex of the gabled end on the eastern elevation and southern elevation that could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats. Furthermore, there are gaps present on the northern elevation as the eaves.	
B1 – northern elevation	The red circle opposite showing the location of a gap at the eaves that could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats.	

B1 – eave gap	The red circle opposite showing a gap at the eaves that could be utilised by bats.	
B1 – eastern elevation	The red circle opposite showing missing mortar that could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats.	

B1 – southern elevation	The red circle showing vertical gaps of missing mortar that could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats.	
B1 – eastern elevation	The red circle showing vertical gaps of missing mortar that could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats.	

B1 – western elevation	The red circle showing vertical gaps of missing mortar that could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats.	
B1 – Loft void	The loft space is comprised of one single L-shaped loft space that been partitioned with fabric into three separate loft spaces. The structure is comprised of modern timber beams including the ridge beam. The roof is lined in bitumen felt, which is in excellent condition with no gaps or tears.	

B1 – Loft void	**B1 Evidence of bats** There was no evidence of bat activity located internally in B1. There was no evidence of bat use (e.g. bat droppings) found on external features. However, this kind of evidence is easily weathered away on the exterior of buildings and is rarely visible. **B1 Breeding birds and other incidental observations** There was no evidence of nesting birds located internally or externally on the survey building.	

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations

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.

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

Building	Survey Results Summary	Impact Assessment	Recommendations	Biodiversity Enhancement Opportunities[1]
Roosting bats	Building one has low value for roosting bats. Missing mortar and gaps at the eaves provide suitably features that could be utilised by crevice dwelling bats such as common pipistrelle bats, that are known the be within 2km from the site based on EPSL records.	The proposed development includes internal works only with the addition of car parking. Therefore, no external works will be completed that will affect existing potential roosting features and will be retained.	As stipulated in professional survey guidance, low value buildings typically require one bat emergence or re-entry survey to be completed during the active bat season (optimal May to August, suboptimal September) to confirm presence or likely-absence of a bat roost. However, a single bat emergence or re-entry survey has a low detection rate for bat roosts and is often an unreliable way of identifying the presence of bat roosts. Given the limited suitable bat habitat on the site it is considered unlikely that bat roosts would be present and that further bat surveys would be disproportional to the anticipated risk posed to bats as a result of the proposed development. It is anticipated that any risk to bats can be reduced to an acceptably low level though the implementation of a Bat Mitigation Plan.	The installation of four bat boxes at the site will provide roosting habitat for bats. The bat boxes will be installed on the proposed building. 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. The bat boxes will be a specification suitable for both crevice and cavity dwelling bats such as one Beaumaris Woodstone Bat Box and one Vivara Pro WoodStone Bat Box or a similar alternative brand.
Foraging and commuting bats	The recently removed trees on site could have been used by local bat populations for foraging and commuting, increasing the sites connectivity to the wider landscape. These	The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of modified grassland and shrubs, but given the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats.	A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will include the following measures: • Light spill on to the building should be avoided. • Use narrow spectrum light sources to lower the range of species affected by lighting.	The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for foraging bats: • Planting of native tree, shrub and hedgerows to increase foraging opportunities.

[1] The Local Planning Authority has a duty to ask for enhancements under the NPPF (2021).

	could have been used by bats dispersing from nearby roosts. Onsite shrubs and modified grassland provide limited foraging suitability for bats.	The proposed development will include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.	• Use light sources that emit minimal ultra-violet light. • Avoid white and blue wavelengths of the light spectrum to reduce insect attraction and where white light sources are required in order to manage the blue shortwave length content they should be of a warm / neutral colour temperature <4,200 kelvin. • Not use bare bulbs and any light pointing upwards. The spread of light will be kept in line with or below the horizontal. • Light spill will be reduced via the use of low-level lighting used in conjunction with hoods, cowls, louvers and shields. Lights will also be directional to ensure that light is directed to the intended areas only. • External lighting will be on PIR sensors that are sensitive to large objects only (so that they are not triggered by passing bats) and will be set to the shortest time duration to reduce the amount of time the lights are on. • Wall lights and security lights will be 'dimmable' and set to the lowest light intensity settings. There are several products on the market that allow the control of the light intensity and the duration that the lights are on. All lighting on the developed site will make use of the most up to date technology available.	
Nesting birds	The building and onsite shrubs could be used by nesting birds. Missing mortar gaps on the eaves are large enough for birds to utilise. Eave guards	No external works are to be carried out as part of the proposed development. The proposed car park could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active	Works should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged.	The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings)

	are utilised along the eaves throughout the building.	bird nests through the removal of shrubs.		Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace (buildings) Or a similar alternative brand. Tree 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 on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole. Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.

5.0 Bibliography

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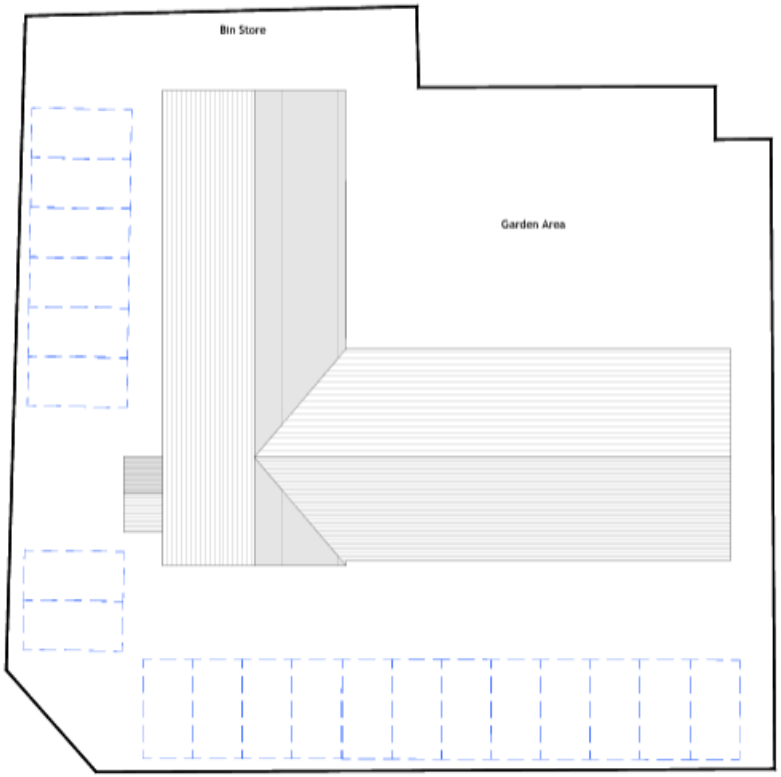
Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Parking and Amenity Layout 1.100

Mr Nasaar	
25 Greenway, Longwood HD3 4RZ	
Change of use C2 to C3	
Proposed Parking and Amenity	
UH	Aug 22	1.100@A1
2206/03	
PLANNING	

Appendix 2: Site Location Plan

Appendix 3a: PRA 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

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.

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.