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BAT SCOPING SURVEY

At

Glen Dimplex Factory

Stone Lane
Whiston
Knowsley
L35 2XW

NGR: SJ 479988 91567

Prepared for:

Written by:

Approved by:

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Y Cox', with a horizontal line underneath.

Date:

UES reference:

24th September 2025

UES05069/03



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is written by Joshua Howell, Sub-contractor at United Environmental Services Ltd (UES). It provides an assessment of the potential impacts on bats as a result of the proposed development at Glen Dimplex, Knowsley.

A bat scoping survey was undertaken on 13th August 2025. The objective of the survey was to establish the suitability of the buildings on site to support roosting bats, based on a site-specific survey and habitat assessment. The buildings were searched externally and internally (where accessible) for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidance (2023). The proposed development is for a housing scheme and will include the construction of numerous residential dwellings with associated access roads, footpaths and landscaping.

Glen Dimplex Factory is located in an suburban area that provides low quality habitat for bats. The habitats on site mainly comprise buildings and hardstanding urban habitats, with smaller areas of grassland and woodland which offer limited foraging opportunities for bats. Within the nearby area, the landscape consists of a network of residential dwellings with interlinked amenity gardens, and fields associated with the adjacent highschool. These habitats will provide connectivity to higher quality habitats within the wider surrounding area such as public parks, woodlands, agricultural fields and a golf course.

There are seven buildings located within the proposed development site, which were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats:

- Buildings 1, 2 and 3 – low potential to support roosting bats
- Buildings 4, 5 and 6 – negligible potential to support roosting bats
- Building 7 – moderate potential to support roosting bats

Building 1 was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats. Due to the large size of the building, two bat back tracking surveys are considered to be more appropriate than individual bat presence / absence surveys. These surveys should be undertaken during the bat survey season (May to September inclusive), with at least one of the surveys undertaken during the peak season of May to August inclusive. Surveyors should be positioned sufficiently to cover the proposed development site footprint.

Buildings 2 and 3 were assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats and as such, a single further bat presence / absence survey is required during the peak bat survey season of May to August inclusive.

Building 7 was assessed as having moderate potential to support roosting bats and as such, two further bat presence / absence surveys should be undertaken from May to September inclusive, with at least one of the surveys undertaken during the peak bat survey season of May to August inclusive.

Buildings 4, 5 and 6 were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats and as such, no further surveys or mitigation measures are required for these buildings, with regards to bats.

The roofs of the buildings are likely used by nesting herring gulls *Larus argentatus* and lesser black-backed gulls *Larus fuscus*. Due to the potential presence of breeding birds within the buildings, it is recommended that the works take place outside of the



breeding bird season and should not be undertaken from March to August inclusive. If this is not possible and works need to take place during this period, a breeding bird nest check should be undertaken prior to the commencement of works by a suitably experienced ecologist and an ecological clerk of works appointed to oversee the works if considered necessary.

Feral pigeons *Columba livia* were identified within the buildings onsite and feral pigeons are known to breed all year round. Given the number of pigeons present and the potential for birds to be nesting at the time of the proposed works, it may be necessary to engage the services of a pest control contractor who may be able to remove the feral pigeons under general licence, provided that all the necessary criteria have been met.

The report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 4, which give visual representations of the survey results.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author, surveyors and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Joshua Howell, UES Sub-contractor.

Surveyors present during the bat scoping survey include:

- Mark Halliwell MBiol, UES Senior Ecologist. Mark is licensed by Natural England to disturb, take and handle all species of bats under licence number 2023-11661-CL18-BAT (level 2).
- Bethany Dineley BSc, UES Graduate Ecologist

All surveyors have the knowledge, skills and experience identified within CIEEM's "Competencies for Species Survey: Bats" (2013) or were under the supervision of a surveyor with the required competencies.

1.2 Survey objectives

UES was commissioned to conduct site surveys which include the following activities:

- Conduct internal and external building inspections to look for field signs of bats
- Assess the suitability of the buildings for use by roosting bats
- Recommend further surveys, mitigation and compensation, where appropriate

1.3 Proposed development

The proposed development is for a housing scheme and will include the construction of numerous residential dwellings with associated access roads, footpaths and landscaping.

1.4 Structure of the report

This report sets out the methodology, results, and recommendations in relation to a specific bat survey. Recommendations are in line with statutory legislation and planning policy objectives.

The report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 4, which give visual representations of the survey results.



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

All surveys were carried out to recognised guidelines, timings and weather conditions, with particular reference to Natural England and BCT publications (see references for further information).

The habitats on site and in the surrounding area were assessed during a walkover survey and by studying aerial photographs, in order to gauge their suitability to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.

2.2 Building survey

The buildings onsite were searched both externally and internally for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in BCT guidance (Collins, 2023). This was conducted on 13th August 2025 by Mark Halliwell and Bethany Dineley.

2.2.1 External inspection

The external inspection was carried out from ground level using binoculars, and also using ladders and an endoscope to investigate suitable gaps. The objective of the survey was to find and record any signs of bat use, for example:

- Bat droppings
- Feeding remains
- Grease staining / urine marks
- Corpses or skeletons

The bat signs listed above are visible from the outside of a building. The following areas were searched, where present:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| • Roof and ridge tiles | • Gaps under felt |
| • Lead flashing | • Cracks / holes in woodwork or behind cladding |
| • Eaves | • Gaps in brickwork and mortar |
| • Boxed soffits | • Air bricks |
| • Fascia and barge boards | • Grills |
| • Window sills and panes | • Vents |
| • Walls | |

2.2.2 Internal inspection

The internal inspection covered all of the accessible rooms and roof spaces within the buildings.

Bats regularly utilise specific areas within roof spaces, which were searched for any field signs of bats using high-powered torches and an endoscope, where considered necessary by the licenced ecologist. The following features were searched, where present:

- Roof beams and junctions



- Gaps under felt
- Dividing walls
- Chimney breasts
- Gaps in brickwork and mortar
- Cracks / holes in woodwork
- Floor or other surfaces on which droppings could accumulate

2.3 Survey limitations

No limitations were encountered during the bat scoping survey.



3 RESULTS

3.1 Habitat assessment

Glen Dimplex Factory is located within Whiston, a town located to the east of Prescott. The habitats onsite mainly comprise buildings and hardstanding urban habitats that were associated with the disused factory. Smaller areas of grassland and semi-natural, broadleaved woodland are present along the margins of the development site, with offsite tree lines also present, that will provide slightly higher quality habitats for commuting and foraging bats.

The immediate surroundings (within 0.5km) to the north, east and west of the site comprise residential dwellings with interlinked amenity gardens and few trees offering low quality foraging and commuting opportunities for bats. Roosting opportunities may also be available within residential dwellings and other buildings in the surrounding area. Several grassland fields are situated between the residential buildings which may provide further foraging and commuting opportunities.

There is a highschool located directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the proposed development site. Although the majority of the school provides low-quality habitat for bats, in the form of hardstanding and buildings, the sports fields and trees provide some higher quality habitats for foraging and commuting bats. In addition, a small area of Whiston Woods is located approximately 250m to the south of the site, which is surrounded by agricultural land. These habitats will support an abundance of invertebrates upon which bats can forage.

Higher quality habitats are present in the wider surrounding area (within 2km), such as a golf course located approximately 900m to the south of the site. The golf course contains numerous tree lines offering a commuting corridor for bats, whilst roosting opportunities may also be available within PRFs in the mature trees. Further agricultural fields extend to the south and east of the site, and Stadt Moers Park is also located approximately 1km to the west. The park contains a large amount of woodland and grassland, with ponds also present. Eccleston Park is also situated approximately 800m to the north east of the site, offering similar habitats to Stadt Mooers park, which will support an abundance of invertebrates and provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

3.2 Building survey

There are seven buildings onsite at Glen Dimplex Factory, Whiston, which have been numbered for the purposes of this report (see Appendix 1 – Site Plan).

3.2.1 External inspection

Building 1 is the main factory building located within the centre of the development site (see Appendix 3 – Photographs, Photograph 1). It is a complex series of industrial units with a combination of pitched and flat roofs constructed from corrugated asbestos, sheet metal or bitumen felt (Photographs 1 to 4). The eaves of the building consist of wooden or asbestos fascia boards, and gaps were identified beneath the eaves, where it connects to the wall plate, which may provide a potential roosting features (PRF) for bats (Photographs 7 and 8).

The external walls are constructed from a combination of materials including redbrick, breezeblock and metal cladding. Cavities were identified within the brickwork, and where the cladding connects to the external wall, which may also provide a PRF for bats (Photograph 9). The western-most section of the building is an openly accessible loading area covered with a corrugated roof. Feral pigeons *Columba livia* were observed within this section of the building.



Building 2 is a disused office building with a flat roof covered in metal sheeting (Photograph 10). The lower half of the external walls are constructed from redbrick, whilst the upper half of the walls primarily comprise PVC windows with metal cladding directly above (Photograph 11). Gaps were identified where the eaves of the building connect to the cladding, which may provide a PRF for bats, and cavities were also identified within the brickwork.

Building 3 is a disused industrial building with a multi-pitched roof constructed from corrugated asbestos. The external walls are a combination of redbrick with corrugated asbestos cladding (Photograph 12). PRFs were identified during the bat scoping survey but were limited to gaps between the cladding and external walls, and cavities within the brickwork.

Building 4 is a single-storey security office. It has a flat roof which is covered in a bitumen felt, and the roof extends beyond the eaves of the building to form an overhang (Photograph 13). The external walls are constructed of redbrick and no suitable PRFs were identified during the bat scoping survey.

Building 5 is a single-storey substation. It has a flat roof which is covered in a bitumen felt, and the external walls are constructed of redbrick with stone lintels present above the doorways (Photograph 14). No suitable PRFs were identified during the bat scoping survey.

Building 6 is a single-storey substation. It has a flat roof which is covered in a bitumen felt, and the external walls are constructed of redbrick. No suitable PRFs were identified during the bat scoping survey.

Building 7 is a disused social club with a multi-pitched roof constructed from interlocking concrete roof and ridge tiles (Photograph 15). PRFs were found to be associated with the roof of the building due to the presence of raised or missing roof tiles, and gaps within the mortar of the verge pointing (Photographs 16 and 17). The eaves of the building consist of wooden boxed soffits and barge boards, which are damaged in places with gaps identified between the soffits and the gable end walls, and holes within the soffits (Photograph 18). The external walls are constructed of redbrick, and a hole was identified within the brickwork on the eastern aspect of the building.

No bat droppings or other field signs of bats were found during the external building inspections.

3.2.2 Internal inspection

Building 1 contains no loft void and is open from floor-to-ceiling (Photograph 19). It is a disused factory building consisting of a complex series of industrial units and as such, there is a large amount of storage and equipment present throughout. Due to the number of windows, the building is well-lit. Since there is no loft void, internal PRFs are limited to cracks and cavities within the brickwork. No evidence of roosting bats was identified within the building, but feral pigeons were observed within the building (Photograph 20).

Building 2 contains vaulted ceilings with no internal loft space present. No suitable PRFs were identified within Building 2 during the internal building inspection.

Building 3 is a disused industrial building. It contains no loft void and is open from floor-to-ceiling. PRFs identified within the building are limited to gaps between the cladding and the wall plate, and cavities within the redbrick walls. No evidence of roosting bats was identified within the building.



Building 4 is a single-storey security office with no loft void. No suitable PRFs or evidence of roosting bats was identified within the building during the survey.

Building 5 is a single-storey substation with no loft void. No suitable PRFs or evidence of roosting bats was identified within the building during the survey.

Building 6 is a single-storey substation with no loft void. No suitable PRFs or evidence of roosting bats was identified within the building during the survey.

Building 7 is a disused social club with false ceilings (Photograph 21). There is a large loft space within the building which is separated into two sections by a dividing wall. The loft has a traditional timber rafter and purlin structure, with exposed wooden joists indicating possible removed floors (Photograph 22). The roof is lined with a bitumen felt which is damaged within the western section of the roof and there is light ingress associated with the damaged felt, indicating potential access points into the building (Photograph 23). In addition, gaps were identified within the soffits along the eaves of the building which may provide further access points into the loft void. The gable end walls are constructed of redbrick and breezeblock, and PRFs were also found to be associated with these areas due to the presence of gaps above the wall plate (Photograph 24). No evidence of roosting bats was identified within the building.

No bat droppings or other field signs of bats were found during the internal building inspections.



4 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Evaluation of results

4.1.1 Qualitative assessment of foraging habitats

In summary, the habitats onsite at Glen Dimplex Factory provide low-quality foraging and commuting opportunities for bats due to the large areas of urban habitats which entirely surround the grassland and broadleaved woodland. Higher quality habitats exist within the wider surrounding area including agricultural fields, golf clubs, Stadt Moers Park and Eccleston Park, which will support an abundance of invertebrates upon which bats can forage. In addition, treelines and woodlands within these habitats will provide commuting corridors for bats, whilst roosting opportunities may be available within mature trees and buildings.

4.1.2 Qualitative assessment of roosting habitats

Buildings 1, 2 and 3 were assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats due to the presence of predominantly external PRFs including gaps underneath the eaves and cavities within the brickwork. No evidence of roosting bats was identified within these buildings during the internal and external building inspections.

Buildings 4, 5 and 6 were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats due to an absence of suitable PRFs. No evidence of roosting bats was identified within these buildings during the internal and external building inspections.

Building 7 was assessed as having moderate potential to support roosting bats due to the presence of both internal and external PRFs, such as missing or raised roof tiles, gaps within the verge pointing, cavities within the redbrick walls and gaps beneath the soffits. No evidence of roosting bats was identified within these buildings during the internal and external building inspections.

4.2 Mitigation and compensation measures

4.2.1 Bats

Building 1 was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats. Due to the large size of the building, two bat back tracking surveys are considered to be more appropriate than individual bat presence / absence surveys. These surveys should be undertaken during the bat survey season (May to September inclusive), with at least one of the surveys undertaken during the peak season of May to August inclusive. Surveyors should be positioned sufficiently to cover the proposed development site footprint.

Buildings 2 and 3 were assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats and as such, a single further bat presence / absence survey is required during the peak bat survey season of May to August inclusive.

Building 7 was assessed as having moderate potential to support roosting bats and as such, two further bat presence / absence surveys should be undertaken from May to September inclusive, with at least one of the surveys undertaken during the peak bat survey season of May to August inclusive.



Buildings 4, 5 and 6 were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats and as such, no further surveys or mitigation measures are required for these buildings, with regards to bats.

4.2.2 Breeding birds

The roofs of the buildings are likely used by nesting herring gulls *Larus argentatus* and lesser black-backed gulls *Larus fuscus*. Due to the potential presence of breeding birds within the buildings, it is recommended that the works take place outside of the breeding bird season and should not be undertaken from March to August inclusive. If this is not possible and works need to take place during this period, a breeding bird nest check should be undertaken prior to the commencement of works by a suitably experienced ecologist and an ecological clerk of works appointed to oversee the works if considered necessary.

Feral pigeons were identified within the buildings onsite and feral pigeons are known to breed all year round. Given the number of pigeons present and the potential for birds to be nesting at the time of the proposed works, it may be necessary to engage the services of a pest control contractor who may be able to remove the feral pigeons under general licence, provided that all the necessary criteria have been met.



5 CONCLUSION

Glen Dimplex Factory is located in an suburban area that provides low quality habitat for bats. The habitats on site mainly comprise buildings and hardstanding urban habitats, with smaller areas of grassland and woodland which offer limited foraging opportunities for bats. Within the nearby area, the landscape consists of a network of residential dwellings with interlinked amenity gardens, and fields associated with the adjacent highschool. These habitats will provide connectivity to higher quality habitats within the wider surrounding area such as public parks, woodlands, agricultural fields and a golf course.

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6 REFERENCES

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2013). *Competencies for Species Survey: Bats*.

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*. (4th ed.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2021). *National Planning Policy Framework*.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site Plan



Glen Dimplex Factory, Whiston

Site plan:

- Development boundary
- Building

B4

B5

B6

B1

B2

B3

B7



Appendix 2 – Aerial Photographs



Glen Dimplex Factory, Whiston

Close aerial photograph

— Development boundary



Glen Dimplex Factory, Whiston

Wide aerial photograph



Site location



Appendix 3 – Photographs



Photograph 1 – The eastern aspect of Building 1, showing the pitched roofs.



Photograph 2 – A flat roof located along the southern aspect of Building 1.



Photograph 3 – Corrugated asbestos roof on Building 1.



Photograph 4 – Sheet metal roof on Building 1.



Photograph 5 – A section of Building 1 which is constructed from metal cladding.



Photograph 6 – Wooden fascia boards located along the eaves of Building 1.



Photograph 7 – A gap between the eaves and external wall on Building 1.



Photograph 8 – A gap between the top of the wall plate and the eaves of Building 1.



Photograph 9 – Gaps are present underneath the metal cladding and external walls on Building 1.



Photograph 10 – The northern aspect of Building 2.



Photograph 11 – Showing the external structure of Building 2, including the cladding, redbrick walls and windows.



Photograph 12 – The southern aspect of Building 3 which is constructed of red brick with asbestos cladding.



Photograph 13 – Building 4.



Photograph 14 – Building 5.



Photograph 15 – Building 7 which contains a multi-pitched roof and external redbrick walls.



Photograph 16 – Missing mortar in the verge pointing of Building 7.



Photograph 17 – Missing tiles on the roof of Building 7.



Photograph 18 – Damaged boxed soffits along the eaves of Building 7.



Photograph 19 – Large open interior of Building 1.



Photograph 20 – A feral pigeon within Building 1.



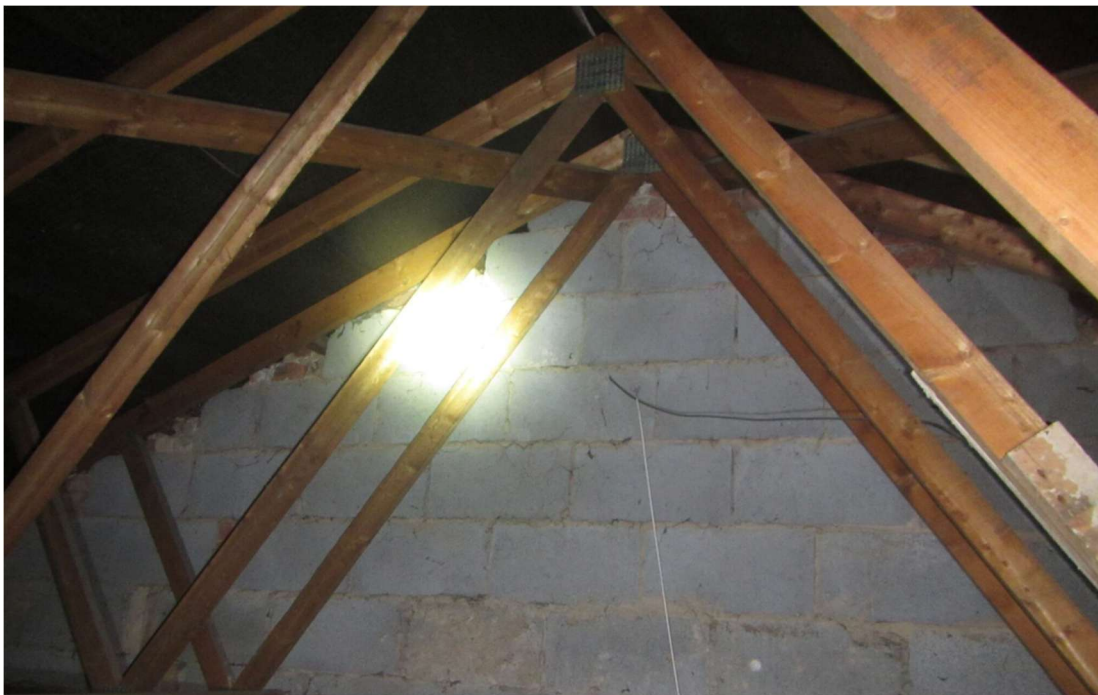
Photograph 21 – A damaged false ceiling within Building 7.



Photograph 22 – Traditional timber rafter and purlin structure within Building 7.



Photograph 23 – Damaged bitumen felt lining the roof of Building 7.



Photograph 24 – Gaps above the wall plate within the loft space of Building 7.



Appendix 4 – Statutory and Planning Context

Ecological assessments

Ecological assessments play an important part within the planning context; they include an initial assessment which highlights any specific interests of a site. From the initial site assessment, the surveyor assesses the suitability of habitats within the site to support protected species and makes recommendations for further survey works if required. The following paragraphs provide a brief interpretation of the legislative protection that is relevant to the findings of this report.

Bats

In the United Kingdom, all species of bat and their roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Amendment (EU exit) Regulations 2019 (known as the “Habitats Regulations”). The Wildlife and Countryside Act is the domestic implementation of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention) and was amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture a bat
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection (even if the bat is not present at the time)
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any live or dead bat, any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat

Under UK law, a bat roost is *any structure or place which any wild [bat] ... uses for shelter or protection*. As bats often reuse the same roosts, legal opinion is that a roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time of the activity taking place.

Penalties for offences include fines of up to £5000, plus up to six months imprisonment, for each offence committed.

If an activity is likely to result in any of the above offences, a licence can be applied for to derogate from the protection afforded. These licences must provide appropriate mitigation and are issued by Natural England.

A Natural England mitigation licence application requires a Mitigation Method Statement and, in many cases, a Reasoned Statement of Application. The Mitigation Method Statement contains details of the proposed mitigation works. The Reasoned Statement needs to provide a rational and reasoned justification as to why the proposed development meets the requirements of the Conservation (National Habitats & c.) regulations 1994, namely Regulations 44(2)(e), (f) or (g), and 44(3)(a).

The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) provides guidance on the interpretation of the law in relation to the natural environment and development.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 lists the following bat species as species of principle importance under Section 41:

- Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*
- Bechstein’s bat *Myotis bechsteinii*
- Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*
- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*
- Greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

Section 40 requires every public body in the exercising of its functions ‘have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity’ (all biodiversity and not just section 41 species and habitats); therefore making these bats a material consideration in the planning process and requiring a detailed ecological bat survey before planning permission can be granted.

Birds

All wild birds, their nests and young are protected throughout England and Wales by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is illegal to kill, injure or take any wild bird, or damage or destroy the nest or eggs of breeding birds. The legislation applies to all bird species, common and rare.

In addition to the protection afforded to all wild birds, more vulnerable species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act receive enhanced protection when breeding. Schedule 1 species, including their dependent young, are protected from intentional or reckless disturbance whilst at or near the nest, in addition to the protection afforded the more common species.

The NERC Act offers further protection to the nests of some species that regularly re-use their nests, even when the nests are not in use.

The leading governmental and non-governmental conservation organisations in the UK have reviewed the population status of 244 UK bird species. "Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the Red List for Birds" is the most recent publication summarising their findings. Three lists, Red, Amber and Green, have been produced based on the most up-to-date evidence available and criteria include conservation status at global and European levels and, within the UK: historical decline, trends in population and range, rarity, localised distribution and international importance. These lists are a valuable resource when considering conservation priorities.

Planning policy

National Planning Guidance is issued in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF). The most relevant section is 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Key relevant principles stated in 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment are;

- 187.** Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats, and hedgehogs;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
- 192.** To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity⁶⁸; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation⁶⁹; and
 - b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity

- 193.** When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
 - b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
 - c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁷⁰ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
 - d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.