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## **BAT GROUND LEVEL TREE ASSESSMENT**

**At**

### **Huyton Cricket Club**

Huyton Lane  
Huyton  
Liverpool  
L36 7XD

**NGR: SJ 44456 91306**

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|               |                                      |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
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| Written by:   | Duncan Morrison, UES Subcontractor   |
| Approved by:  | Mark Halliwell, UES Senior Ecologist |

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Halliwell', is positioned below the 'Approved by:' line.

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|                |                           |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Date:          | 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2026 |
| UES reference: | UES04790/13               |

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is written by Duncan Morrison BSc MSc, Subcontractor at United Environmental Services Ltd (UES). It provides an assessment of the potential impacts on bats as a result of the tree works associated with the development at Huyton Cricket Club, Huyton. The proposed development comprises a residential housing scheme, including the construction of multiple dwellings along with associated access roads and landscaping.

All trees onsite were subject to a ground-level assessment of bat roosting potential by UES on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2026. Potential roosting features (PRFs) were identified and inspected where possible using binoculars and a high-powered torch. All PRFs were assessed and categorised according to their suitability to support roosting bats, as detailed in Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidance (Collins, 2023).

Huyton Cricket Club is located in the suburban area of Huyton, which provides moderate quality habitat for commuting and foraging bats due to the close proximity of the River Alt and Huyton Wetlands SBI, and the number of linked residential gardens that will provide connectivity. The wider surrounding area contains additional pockets of woodland, green space, lines of trees and waterbodies, which will support an abundance of invertebrates and provide foraging opportunities for bats in the local area.

**The trees which are due to be impacted as part of arboricultural proposals have been categorised as either PRF-I or none as a result of the bat surveys undertaken onsite:**

- **PRF-I – Trees 4 and G1.1 were assessed as having suitability to support individual to low numbers of roosting bats (PRF-I). No further survey work is required; however, as a precautionary measure, they should be subject to soft felling techniques or a pre-commencement inspection by a licenced bat ecologist, to minimise any incidental risk of harm to bats.**
- **None – All other trees onsite, were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats (“none”). No further survey work or mitigation measures are required for these trees, with regards to bats.**

**Due to the potential presence of birds nesting within the trees, including within the owl box on Tree G6.1, any tree felling, arboricultural works and vegetation removal works (including enabling works) should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season and should not be undertaken from March to August inclusive. If this is not possible, a breeding bird nest check can be undertaken immediately prior to the works by a suitably qualified ecologist.**



# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Author, surveyors and qualifications**

This report has been compiled and written by Duncan Morrison BSc MSc, UES Subcontractor.

Other surveyors include:

- Mark Halliwell MBiol, UES Senior Ecologist. Mark holds a level 4 Botanical Society for Britain and Ireland (BSBI) field identification skills certificate (FISC), which certifies him as competent to undertake phase 1 habitat surveys, UKHab and national vegetation classification (NVC) surveys.
- Lauren Hancox BSc MSc, 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 by Breck Homes Ltd to conduct site surveys which include the following activities:

- Undertake a ground level tree assessment to assess the suitability and potential for the trees on site to be used by roosting bats
- Recommend further surveys, mitigation and compensation, where appropriate

## **1.3 Proposed development**

The proposed development comprises a residential housing scheme, including the construction of multiple dwellings along with associated access roads 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 5, 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 also assessed in order to gauge their suitability to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.

### 2.2 Ground-level tree assessment

All trees within the development boundary were subject to a ground-level bat roost assessment by UES on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2026 by Mark Halliwell and Lauren Hancox, using binoculars and a high-powered torch. Where possible, an endoscope was also used to inspect any cavities accessible from ground level. Using binoculars, all trees were inspected on all aspects and assessed for their potential to support roosting bats, based on the number and quality of PRFs present, as detailed in BS8596:2023 Surveying for Bats in Trees and Woodland and BCT guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Types of PRFs, as described in Bat Roosts in Trees (Bat Tree Habitat Key, 2018) are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Types of PRFs found in trees

| DISEASE & DECAY FEATURES | DAMAGE FEATURES      | ASSOCIATION FEATURES | OTHER FEATURES |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Woodpecker holes         | Lightning strikes    | Fluting              | Bat boxes      |
| Squirrel holes           | Hazard beams         | Ivy                  | Bird boxes     |
| Knot holes               | Subsidence cracks    |                      |                |
| Pruning cuts             | Shearing cracks      |                      |                |
| Tear-outs                | Transverse snaps     |                      |                |
| Wounds                   | Welds                |                      |                |
| Cankers                  | Lifting bark         |                      |                |
| Compression forks        | Desiccation fissures |                      |                |
| Butt rots                | Frost cracks         |                      |                |

With regards to the presence of PRFs, trees have been categorised according to the following system:

- NONE – No PRFs are known to be present within the tree, and it is unlikely that the tree will contain any PRFs.
- FAR – Further assessment is required to establish if any PRFs are present within the tree, potentially due to the large size or age of the tree or limitations to assess the tree in detail from ground level.
- PRF – The tree is known to contain at least one PRF.



Where PRFs could be fully viewed from ground level, individual PRFs were categorised according to the following system:

- PRF-I – The PRF is only suitable for individual bats or a very small number of bats, either due to size of the feature or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
- PRF-M – The PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

## **2.3 Survey limitations**

A proportion of the trees were subject to a partial assessment limited to the aspect(s) directly affected by the proposed works. Consequently, conditions on other sides of these trees have not been evaluated. This is not considered to be a significant limitation, since these trees all comprised offsite trees whereby arboricultural works were restricted to pruning or crown lift of branches that could be fully inspected.



## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Habitat assessment

Huyton Cricket Club is located within the suburban area of Huyton, Liverpool. The habitats onsite include three buildings, scattered trees, dense bramble and mixed scrub, other neutral grassland, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surfaces, lines of trees, and native hedgerow.

The habitats immediately adjacent to the north, west and south of the proposed development site mainly comprise residential dwellings with linked gardens that provide connectivity for bats. The River Alt runs along the north-eastern site boundary, with the left bank featuring a line of deciduous trees and associated ground flora. Upstream, the river flows through Huyton Wetlands Site of Biological Importance (SBI), a site which includes wet meadows and grasslands, and ponds and watercourses. These features will provide suitable opportunities for foraging and commuting bats.

The wider surrounding area has a similar composition with residential dwellings and suburban developments, and green spaces including Huyton Parish Church Cemetery to the south-west, King George V Memorial Playing Fields to the north-east, and amenity grassland associated with Lord Derby Academy to the south-east. In addition, there are scattered pockets of woodland and wetland in all directions around the site. These habitats will support an abundance of invertebrates and provide commuting and roosting opportunities for bats.

### 3.2 Tree assessment

A GLTA was undertaken of all trees onsite that are due to be impacted as per the Arboricultural Impact Assessment that accompanies the application (produced by Tree Solutions, report reference 25/AIA/Knowsley/31 (Rev A)). Only trees containing potentially suitable features for roosting bats are discussed within this report, all other trees onsite were found to lack PRFs and have been assessed as having negligible (“none”) potential to support roosting bats.

A summary of the GLTA results is provided in Table 2 below, and full details of the survey results are provided at Appendix 1 of this report with a tree location plan provided at Appendix 2.

*Table 2 – Results of the ground level tree assessment*

| Tree / group number | Potential to support roosting bats following GLTA |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| T4, G1.1            | PRF-I                                             |

## 4 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 Evaluation of results

The areas immediately surrounding Huyton Cricket Club, Huyton, provide moderate quality habitat for bats due to the close proximity of the River Alt and Huyton Wetlands SBI, which will provide commuting, foraging and roosting opportunities for bats. Linked residential gardens within the surrounding area will also provide connectivity for bats. The wider surrounding area contains additional pockets of woodland, green spaces, lines of trees, and water bodies which will support an abundance of invertebrates and provide foraging opportunities for bats in the local area.

During the ground level assessment, the trees were assessed as follows:

- PRF-I – Trees 4 and G1.1 were assessed as having potential to support individual to low numbers of roosting bats (PRF-I).

No bats or any evidence of roosting bats was recorded in any of the trees on site during the ground level assessment.

All other trees on site lack PRFs and have been assessed as having negligible potential ('none') to support roosting bats.

### 4.2 Mitigation and compensation measures

#### 4.2.1 Mitigation

A summary of the further survey and mitigation requirements for each tree is provided below:

*Table 3 – Summary of further survey and mitigation requirements*

| Tree                   | Further work required                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| T4 and G1.1            | <p>Trees assessed as PRF-I. They contain roosting features which have potential to support individual to low numbers of bats and therefore, were classified as PRF-I. No further survey work is required; however, as a precautionary measure, they should be subject to soft felling techniques or a pre-commencement inspection by a licensed bat ecologist, to minimise any incidental risk of harm to bats.</p> <p>Soft felling techniques involve cutting the tree in sections and lowering any section containing PRFs to the ground. Once lowered to the ground, the PRFs should be left facing upwards overnight, before being removed from the site at a minimum of 24 hours later. Alternatively, the features associated with these trees could also be inspected with an endoscope by a suitably licenced ecologist to confirm bat absence immediately prior to the felling of the tree. In the unlikely event that a roosting bat is observed, works must stop immediately until a licence can be secured from Natural England to allow the removal of the bat roost.</p> |
| All other trees onsite | All other trees that are proposed to be subject to arboricultural works onsite have been assessed as having negligible potential ('none') to                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |



|  |                                                                                                                         |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | support roosting bats. As such, no further survey work or mitigation is required for these trees, with regards to bats. |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Inappropriate lighting can sever commuting corridors, degrade foraging habitat and deter bats from roosting. As such, any external lighting in use during the construction works or the operational phase of the development should be designed to avoid light spill onto retained and newly planted trees and hedgerows, and the offsite watercourse to the north-east of the site. See Appendix 4 for further guidance on external lighting with regards to bats.

#### **4.2.2 Compensation and enhancement**

If any trees with bat roosting potential are to be felled or any PRFs with bat roosting potential are to be removed through pruning or any other arboricultural works, compensatory bat boxes should be provided to compensate for the loss of potential roosting opportunities.

Additional bat boxes could be installed to provide an ecological enhancement by increasing the availability of roosting opportunities for bats. Examples of bat boxes that could be affixed to retained trees on site include:

- Schwegler 2F bat box
- Schwegler 1FF bat box
- Schwegler 2FN bat box
- Schwegler 1FS, 2FS or 3FS colony box
- Schwegler 1FW hibernation box

Bat boxes should be fitted at a height of 4-6 metres on a south-facing aspect, with a clear drop-zone. There should be no clutter around the entrance from surrounding branches.

Any external lighting must be directed away from installed bat boxes, which may require the use of cowlings or relocation of the lighting or bat box. See Appendix 4 for further guidance on external lighting with regards to bats.

It should be noted that once bats have occupied a bat box, it can only be disturbed by a licenced ecologist.

#### **4.3 Breeding Birds**

An off-site tree (T10) contains a barn owl nesting box; therefore, any works affecting this tree must be undertaken outside the breeding bird season. Furthermore, due to the potential for birds to be nesting within trees onsite, any arboricultural work, tree felling, or vegetation clearance should be carried out outside of the nesting bird season and should not be undertaken from March to August inclusive. If this is not possible and works need to commence during the period, a breeding bird nest check should be undertaken immediately prior to the commencement of works by a suitably qualified ecologist and an ecological clerk of works appointed to oversee the works if considered necessary.



## 5 CONCLUSION

Huyton Cricket Club is situated in an area that provides moderate quality habitat for foraging and commuting bats due to its proximity to the River Alt and Huyton Wetlands SBI, with further pockets of woodland, green space and waterbodies also present.

During the GLTA, the trees were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. The findings of the assessment are as follows:

- **PRF-I – Trees 4 and G1.1 were assessed as having potential to support individual to low numbers of roosting bats (PRF-I). No further survey work is required; however, as a precautionary measure, they should be subject to soft felling techniques or a pre-commencement inspection by a licenced bat ecologist, to minimise any incidental risk of harm to bats.**
- **None – All other trees onsite, were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats (“none”). No further survey work or mitigation measures are required for these trees, with regards to bats.**

If any PRFs are to be removed, compensatory bat boxes should be provided, and additional bat boxes can be provided as an ecological enhancement. Any external lighting in use during the construction and operational phases of the development should be designed to avoid overspill onto retained or newly planted trees and hedgerows, the offsite watercourse to the north-east and any installed bat boxes.

Due to the potential presence of birds nesting within the trees, any tree felling, arboricultural works and vegetation removal works (including enabling works) should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season and should not be undertaken from March to August inclusive. If this is not possible, a breeding bird nest check can be undertaken immediately prior to the works by a suitably qualified ecologist.



## 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*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). *The Bat Workers Manual*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) JNCC

Bat Tree Habitat Key (2018). *Bat Roosts in Trees*.



## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1 – Survey Results**



## Appendix 1 - Survey results

Site: Huyton Cricket Club

Job no: UES04790

Date: 22.04.26

Surveyors: MH & LH

Table 1 – Summary of trees surveyed

| Tree ref / GPS          | Species                                   | Age Dead/ alive      | Height (m) / DBH | Description of PRF(s) & position in tree                                                                      | Tree assessment (None, FAR, PRF) | PRF classification (PRF-I/PRF-M) | Surrounding habitat context                             | All aspects of tree seen? Y/N | Climbable (only if qualified) | Photo no. | Notes from inspection of PRF(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| G1<br>SJ 44490<br>91372 | Grey poplar<br><i>Populus x canescens</i> | Alive<br>Mature      | 15m / 25 cm      | Light ivy coverage on several trees.<br><br>Superficial cavities are present on several trees.<br><br>No PRFs | None                             | None                             | Treeline on the northern site boundary.                 | Y                             | Y                             | 1         | See G1.1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| T2<br>SJ 44455<br>91239 | Sycamore<br><i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>    | Alive<br>Semi-Mature | 9m / 20cm        | Sparse Ivy coverage. No PRFs.                                                                                 | None                             | None                             | At the south-eastern site corner, adjacent to the road. | Y                             | Y                             | 2-3       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| T4<br>SJ 44476<br>91252 | Ash<br><i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>          | Alive<br>Mature      | 16m / 45cm       | Dense Ivy coverage, with cavities between Ivy stems in places.                                                | PRF                              | PRF-I                            | At the eastern site boundary.                           | Y                             | Y                             | 4-6       | There is dense Ivy coverage between 2-6m on the main trunks, with cavities between stems of ivy forming features potentially suitable for roosting bats. However, these features could be fully inspected with an endoscope, ladders, high-powered torch, and binoculars. |



|                         |                                            |                           |               |                                                                   |      |      |                                                                                               |   |   |    |                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| G5<br>SJ 44349<br>91320 | Sycamore                                   | Alive<br>Early-<br>Mature | 18m /<br>44cm | No PRFs noted on<br>overhanging branches, which<br>are all young. | None | None | Offsite line of trees<br>overhanging the site near the<br>pavilion.                           | Y | Y | 7  | Only the overhanging<br>branches of these trees<br>were surveyed, as these<br>are the only parts of the<br>tree due to be affected<br>by the proposed works. |
| T6<br>SJ 44497<br>91270 | Sycamore                                   | Alive<br>Early-<br>Mature | 13m /<br>48cm | Sparse Ivy coverage. No<br>PRFs                                   | None | None | At the approximate midpoint of<br>the eastern site boundary.                                  | Y | Y | 8  |                                                                                                                                                              |
| G6<br>SJ 44380<br>91258 | Sycamore                                   | Alive<br>Semi-<br>Mature  | 18m /<br>43cm | Sparse Ivy coverage on some<br>trees. No PRFs                     | None | None | At the south-eastern site<br>boundary, adjacent to<br>neighbouring residential<br>properties. | Y | Y | 9  |                                                                                                                                                              |
| T8<br>SJ 44388<br>91366 | Pedunculate<br>oak<br><i>Quercus robur</i> | Alive<br>Semi-<br>Mature  | 17m /<br>53cm | No PRFs                                                           | None | None | Situated to the immediate west<br>of a building onsite.                                       | Y | Y | 10 |                                                                                                                                                              |



|                           |                                                                                                                |                          |               |                                                                 |      |       |                                                                             |   |   |       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| G8<br>SJ 44508<br>91281   | Sycamore<br>Ash<br>Pedunculate<br>oak<br>Field maple<br>Acer<br>campestre<br>Hawthorn<br>Crataegus<br>monogyna | Alive<br>Young           | 6m /<br>15cm  | No PRFs                                                         | None | None  | Situated along the eastern site<br>boundary, adjacent to the<br>roundabout. | Y | Y | 11    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| G10<br>SJ 44549<br>91322  | Grey poplar                                                                                                    | Alive<br>Young           | 10m /<br>13cm | No PRFs                                                         | None | None  | Situated at the north-east<br>corner of the site.                           | Y | Y | 12-13 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| T10<br>SJ 44400<br>91280  | Sycamore                                                                                                       | Alive<br>Semi-<br>Mature | 13m /<br>48cm | No PRFs                                                         | None | None  | Situated at the southern site<br>boundary near to the pavilion.             | Y | Y | 14    | Only the overhanging<br>branches of these trees<br>were surveyed, as these<br>are the only parts of the<br>tree due to be affected<br>by the proposed works.                                                                                                                        |
| G1.1<br>SJ 44521<br>91348 | Grey poplar                                                                                                    | Alive<br>Mature          | 15m /<br>30cm | A cavity is present at<br>approximately 3m on the main<br>stem. | PRF  | PRF-I | Within G1 along the northern<br>boundary.                                   | Y | Y | 15-16 | The cavity was subject<br>to an endoscope<br>inspection and was<br>classified as suitable for<br>individual or low<br>numbers of roosting bats<br>on the basis it extends<br>horizontally<br>approximately 5cm. The<br>cavity was not found to<br>connect to any other<br>features. |



|                           |          |                           |               |                                        |      |      |                                             |   |   |       |                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------|------|------|---------------------------------------------|---|---|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| G6.1<br>SJ 44393<br>91279 | Sycamore | Alive<br>Early-<br>Mature | 18m /<br>43cm | An owl box is present on this<br>tree. | None | None | Within G6 at the south-east of<br>the site. | Y | Y | 17-18 | Pruning works should be<br>undertaken outside of<br>the breeding bird season<br>to prevent impacts on<br>nesting birds. |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------|------|------|---------------------------------------------|---|---|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



## Appendix 2 – Tree plan



## Ground-level Tree Assessment

**Site:** Huyton Cricket Club,  
Huyton  
**NGR:** SJ 44449 91330  
**Author:** Lauren Hancox  
**Date:** 30/04/2026



### Key

- Tree assessed as having potential to support individual to low numbers of bats (PRF-I)
- Tree assessed as negligible potential to support roosting bats
- Group of trees
- - - Survey boundary

MAP DATA FROM ©2026 GOOGLE, IMAGERY FROM ©2026 GOOGLE

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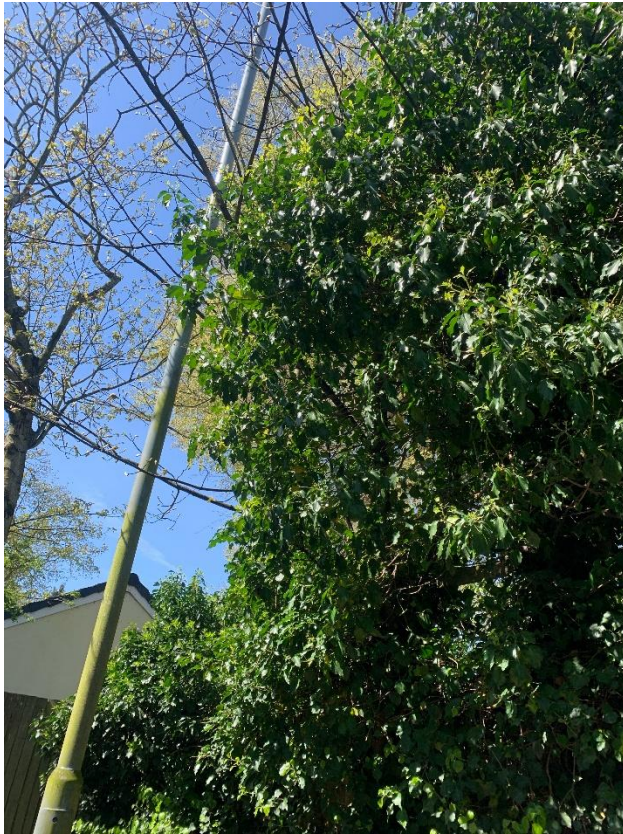
## Appendix 3 – Photographs



Photograph 1: Group 1 (G1) at the northern site boundary.



Photograph 2: Tree 2 (T2) at the south-eastern corner of the site.



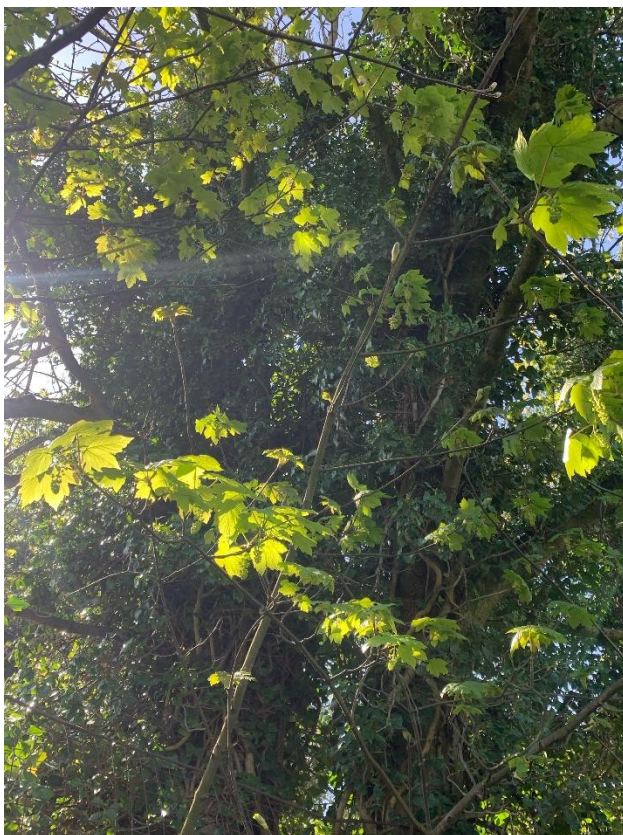
Photograph 3: T2 at the south-eastern corner of the site, with nearby road visible.



Photograph 4: Tree 4 (T4) at the eastern boundary.



Photograph 5: T4, with branches overhanging the nearby road.



Photograph 6: Dense ivy coverage on T4, with cavities between ivy stems.



Photograph 7: Group 5 (G5), with branches overhanging the site.



Photograph 8: Tree 6 (T6) at the eastern site boundary.



Photograph 9: Group 6 (G6) at the south-eastern boundary of the site.



Photograph 10: Tree 8 (T8) to the west of a building onsite.



Photograph 11: Group 8 (G8) at the eastern site boundary.



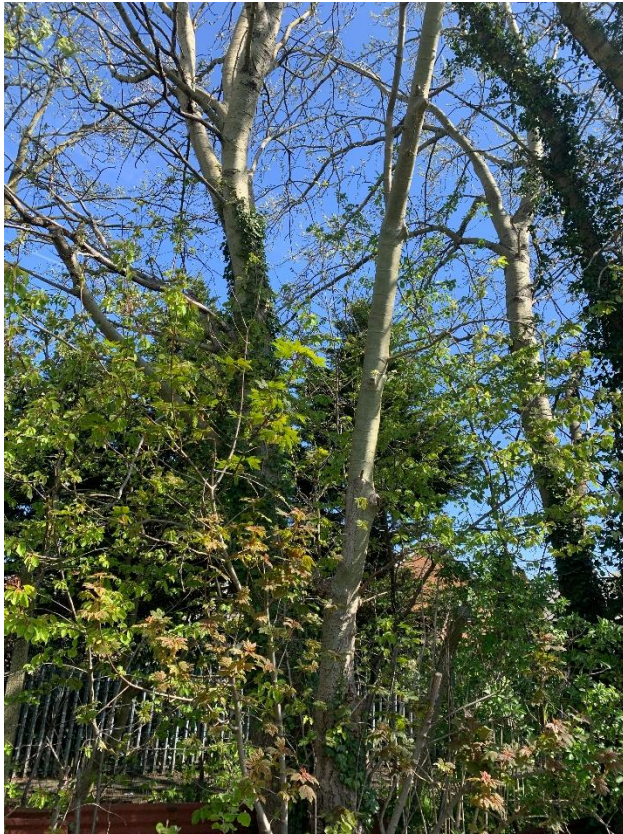
Photograph 12: Group 10 (G10) at the north-eastern corner of the site.



Photograph 13: G10 at the north-eastern corner of the site.



Photograph 14: Tree 10 (T10) at the southern boundary, with limbs overhanging the site.



Photograph 15: Tree G1.1 (G1.1) within Group 1 at the northern boundary.



Photograph 16: Cavity at ~3m on the main trunk of G1.1.



Photograph 17. Tree G6.1 (G6.1) within G6 at the south-east of the site.



Photograph 18: G6.1, with owl box visible.



## **Appendix 4 – External lighting guidance**

# Lighting scheme in relation to bats

The two most important features of street and security lighting with respect to bats are:

1. The UV component. Low or zero UV installations are preferred to reduce attraction of insects to lighting and therefore to reduce the attraction of foraging bats to these areas.
2. Restriction of the area illuminated. Lighting must be shielded to maintain dark areas, particularly above lighting installations, and in many cases, land adjacent to the areas illuminated. The aim is to maintain dark commuting corridors for foraging and commuting bats. Bats avoid well lit areas, and these create barriers for flying bats between roosting and feeding areas.

UV characteristics:

## Low

- Low pressure Sodium Lamps (SOX) emit a minimal UV component.
- High pressure Sodium Lamps (SON) emit a small UV component.
- White SON, though low in UV, emit more than regular SON.

## High

- Metal Halide lamps emit more UV than SON lamps, but less than Mercury lamps
- Mercury lamps (MBF) emit a high UV component.
- Tungsten Halogen, if unfiltered, emit a high UV component
- Compact Fluorescent (CFL), if unfiltered, emit a high UV component.
- Variable
- Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs) have a range of UV outputs. Variants are available with low or minimal UV output.
- Glass glazing and UV filtering lenses are recommended to reduce UV output.

## Street lighting

- Low-pressure sodium or high-pressure sodium must be used instead of mercury or metal halide lamps. LEDs must be specified as low UV. Tungsten halogen and CFL sources must have appropriate UV filtering to reduce UV to low levels.
- Lighting must be directed to where it is needed and light spillage avoided. Hoods must be used on each lamp to direct light and contain spillage. Light leakage into hedgerows and trees must be avoided.
- If possible, the times during which the lighting is on overnight must be limited to provide some dark periods. If the light is fitted with a timer this must be adjusted to reduce the amount of 'lit time' and provide dark periods.

## Security and domestic external lighting

The above recommendations concerning UV output and direction apply. In addition:

- Lighting should illuminate only ground floor areas. Light should not leak upwards to illuminate first floor and higher levels.
- Lamps of greater than 2000 lumens (150 W) must not be used.
- Movement or similar sensors must be used. They must be carefully installed and aimed, to reduce the amount of time a light is on each night.
- Light must illuminate only the immediate area required, by using as sharp a downward angle as possible. Light must not be directed at or close to bat roost access points or flight paths from the roost. A shield or hood can be used to control or restrict the area to be lit.
- Wide angle illumination must be avoided as this will be more disturbing to foraging and commuting bats as well as people and other wildlife.
- Lighting must not illuminate any bat bricks and boxes placed on buildings, trees or other nearby locations.



## **Appendix 5 – 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 2021 (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 2021 (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;

- 174.** 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;
  - 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.
- 179.** 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 biodiversity<sup>61</sup>; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation<sup>62</sup>; 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
- 180.** 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 reasons<sup>63</sup> 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.