Berkeley Homes (West London) Limited

Latchmere House, Richmond

Bat Mitigation Report

854891

AUGUST 2015

RSK

RSK GENERAL NOTES

Project No.: 856094

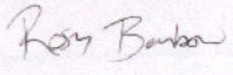
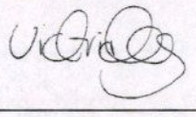
Title: Latchmere House Bat Mitigation Report

Client: Berkeley Homes (West London) Limited

Date: 27th August 2015

Office: Hemel Hempstead

Status: Rev 0

Author	Rosy Benbow	**Technical reviewer**	Victoria Gilbey
			
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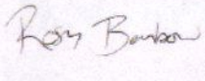
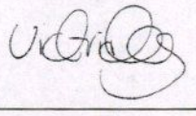
Project manager	Rosy Benbow	**Quality reviewer**	Victoria Gilbey
			
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1 INTRODUCTION

This report provides details of the bat mitigation strategy to be followed at Latchmere House, Ham Common, Richmond, Surrey, (Ordnance Survey Grid Reference TQ 184 172).

The site is a disused young offenders Institution previously owned by the Ministry of Justice. The site has been acquired by Berkeley Homes (West London) Limited who intend to re-develop the site into 73 residential units comprising 66 single family dwelling houses and 7 apartments in Latchmere House. This includes the demolition of twelve buildings and the extension of Latchmere House (Main House), plus associated landscaping and parking.

This plan was submitted in early 2015 and planning consent has been granted for a residential development by Kingston Council (ref: 14/12144/FUL) and by the Secretary of State at Appeal for Richmond Council (ref: APP/L5810/W/3002030).

This document has been prepared to discharge the following planning condition set out by Richmond Council:

No development, including any works of demolition, shall take place until a scheme for bat conservation and mitigation, including a timetable for its implementation, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall provide for:

a) Inspection of the existing trees on the site within one month prior to their felling to establish the presence or absence of roosting or hibernating bats.

b) No trees containing bats shall be felled until the bats have been safely excluded by such methods as have been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

c) Identification and retention of trees and hedgerows which are important for foraging bats.

d) No artificial lighting to directly illuminate any features of value to foraging or commuting bats, such as boundary trees.

Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The site is bordered to the south, east and west by residential properties. To the north it borders Ham Common; a 40 ha site that comprises secondary woodland and grassland. Richmond Park borders Ham common and lies 300 m to the east of Latchmere House (Figure 1). Richmond Park is a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC), National Nature Reserve (NNR) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site is well connected on the eastern boundary to Ham Common Local Nature Reserve (LNR) which provides good foraging and commuting link to a range of habitats for species, in particular bats.

RSK undertook an initial bat survey of all thirteen buildings on site in April 2013. No evidence of bats was found during this survey however, three of the buildings (Main House, Building 9 and Building 12) were assessed as having high potential for bats.

Emergence surveys on the Main House, Building 9 and Building 12 were carried out between June and September 2013. During these surveys a single Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) was recorded re-entering the gable end on the north-eastern corner of Building 1 during a dawn survey 6th August 2013. No other bats were recorded emerging from or re-entering any of the other buildings on the site, although they were recorded foraging and commuting around the site.

Updated bat surveys were carried out this year (2015) to inform the European Protected Species (EPS) licence.

Bat emergence surveys were conducted between June and August 2015 on the Main House, Building 9 and Building 12. During this year's surveys a single Soprano Pipistrelle was observed re-entering the gable end to the north east side of Building 9, on 25th June 2015 and emerging from between the roof tiles and gable end on 30th July 2015.

In total, two Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) bats were observed emerging from the gable end on the north-eastern side of the building 8th July 2015. These roosts are considered to be day roosts of transitory males or non-breeding females. No evidence of a maternity roost was noted.

On 25th August 2015 a bat mitigation EPS license was submitted to Natural England to allow the disturbance of bats during the demolition of Buildings 9 and 12. The following mitigation measures were included:

- During demolition the gable end and all roof tiles on both buildings will be removed by hand and in the presence of a licensed bat ecologist.
- Ten bat boxes will be erected in mature trees to the east and south of site in order to act as receptor locations if any bats are found during the demolition and as mitigation for loss of roosts. Bat boxes will be erected prior to the soft demolition works (*Figure 2*).
- Workers/ contractors will be given an induction on bat presence and will be provided with a Method Statement detailing the bat mitigation.
- Buildings 9 and 12 must be excluded from bats outside of the hibernation season (November to mid-March exclusive); all other buildings that do not conatin bat roosts can be demolished at any time.

- Demolition works of Buildings 9 and 12 will only take place once the licence has been granted and the night time temperature is above 8°C for three preceding days.

3 MITIGATION PLAN

Natural England's Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, 2004) state, that the level of mitigation (or compensation), must be proportionate to the ecological impact of the development. This depends on the conservation significance of the roosting sites, which is determined by species, population size and roost status. For feeding perches of both common and rare species, or for roosts of individual or low numbers of common species this includes "Flexibility over the provision of bat boxes, access to new buildings etc."

The conservation significance of bats recorded from Buildings 9 and 12 at Latchmere House is low. In addition the population size is recorded as single or up to 5 individuals using the buildings as day roosts. The removal of these two buildings will only have a minor negative effect on Soprano and Common Pipistrelle bats at a site Level. Hence the mitigation involves the installation of ten Schegler roost boxes (1FF, 2F and 1FD) on mature tress to the east and south of the site (Figure 2). These boxes are designed for crevice dwelling bats. This will assist in compensating for the loss of roosting beneath roof tiles and gable ends within the buildings. It was felt this was a better way forward as permanent roosts constructed in new buildings were more likely to be impacted by any works carried out by the new home owners after purchase from the developer. They have been located on mature trees which are well connected to commuting habitat and will be furthest away from any artificial lighting.

The bat boxes will be installed on site prior to any building or tree removal and the boxes will be maintained for 5 years following their installation around site to ensure they are still viable as bat roosts.

No monitoring is proposed on the site as monitoring is not required for small numbers of common species where it is not a maternity roost (Mitchell-Jones, 2004).

3.1 Key Retention Areas

The site has opportunities for commuting and foraging bats particularly on the eastern boundary of the site where it borders with Ham Common LNR. These areas will be retained to ensure links to connective habitats are retained, they are shown on *Figure 2*.

The proposed works will not result in fragmentation and isolation of habitats. Habitat loss associated with the development of the site is minimal and includes immature trees, ornamental plants and amenity grassland all of which are considered low ecological value to bats.

3.2 Tree Removal Plan

The tree removal required on site is mainly located towards the western end of site and the trees are ornamental or immature and of little value to bats.

All trees due to be removal on site will be subjected to a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA). This type of survey involves inspecting each tree from ground-level using binoculars and a 500, 000 candle power torch to view all angles of the tree. Any features that are recorded as having potential for roosting bats

such as woodpecker holes, rot cavities, splits, cracks, flaking bark and thick-stemmed or matted climbing plants will be noted and if they cannot be view sufficiently from the ground then the tree will be climbed.

Access to the suitable features so that they may be viewed in closed detail will be, where possible, through using a ladder, rope and harness. Once the feature has been accessed it will be examined using a bright torch and endoscope to inspect the full extent of the feature and search for bats or evidence of bat activity e.g. droppings, urine stains, odour, feeding remains, scratch marks and grease stains.

Trees which have features that are suitable for bats (and cannot be ruled out during the inspection) will either be retained or subject to emergence/ re-entry surveys during the active season for bats.

3.3 Lighting Strategy

The lighting proposals for the site do not include any lighting that would impact on the proposed roosts i.e. bat boxes. In addition the lighting is positioned so that it does not interrupt bats along the boundary hedges or features used by commuting and foraging bats (see *Figure 3*).

3.4 Timetable of works

Activity	Planned date
Installation of Bat Boxes	Early/mid September 2015
Ground level tree assessment/ tree climbing of trees to be felled	Mid September 2015
Emergence / re-entry surveys of trees with evidence of bats/trees that could not be inspected fully (to be felled)	Mid September to Mid October 2015
Tree removal	Mid October 2015 (once confirmed by the ecologist)
EPS licence return for Buildings 9 and 12	End September 2015
Exclusion of bats and building demolition (9 and 12)	End September- mid November 2015

4 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2012) *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines.* Bat Conservation Trust, London.

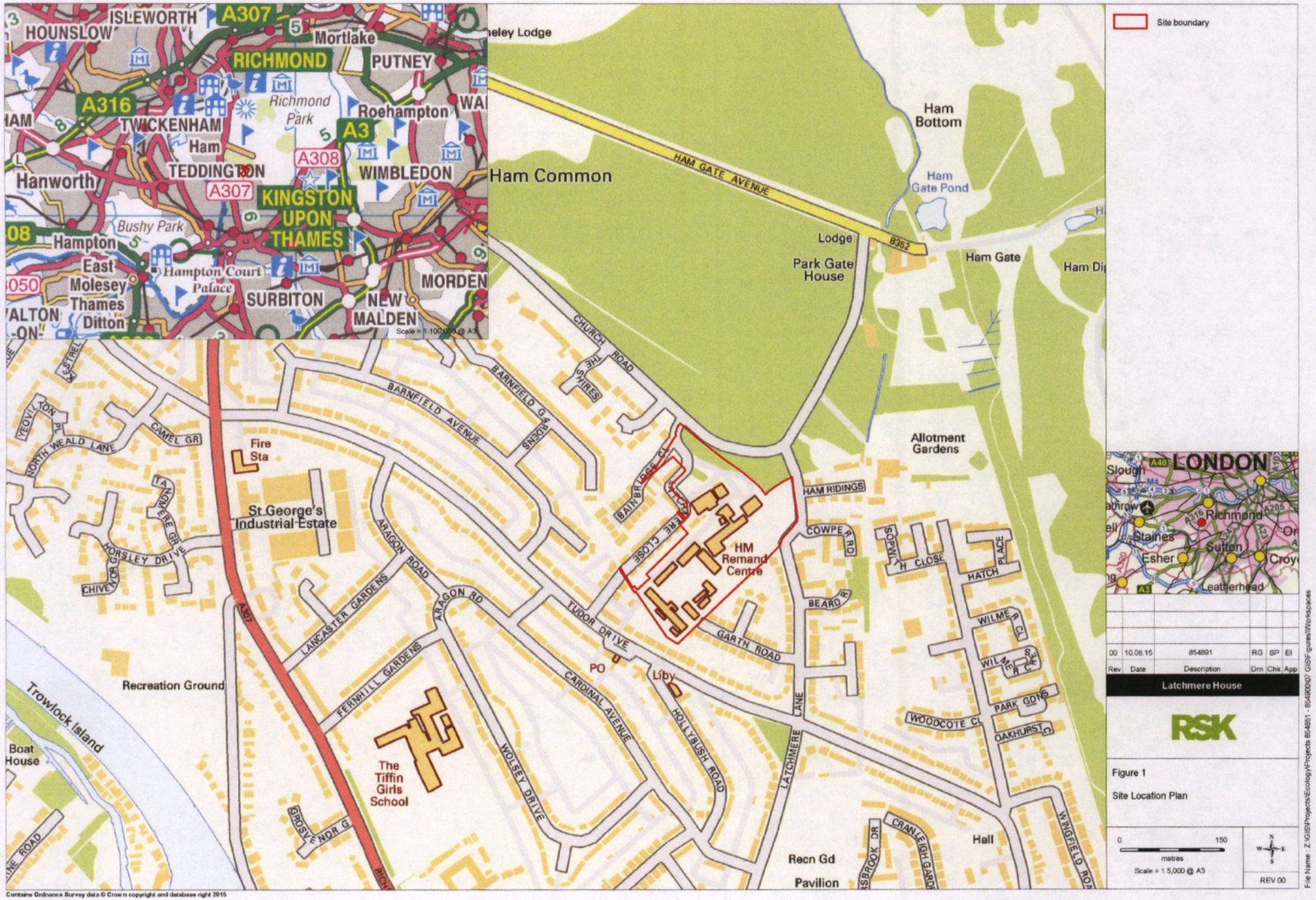
Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. 2004. 3rd Edition Bat Workers' Manual. JNCC.

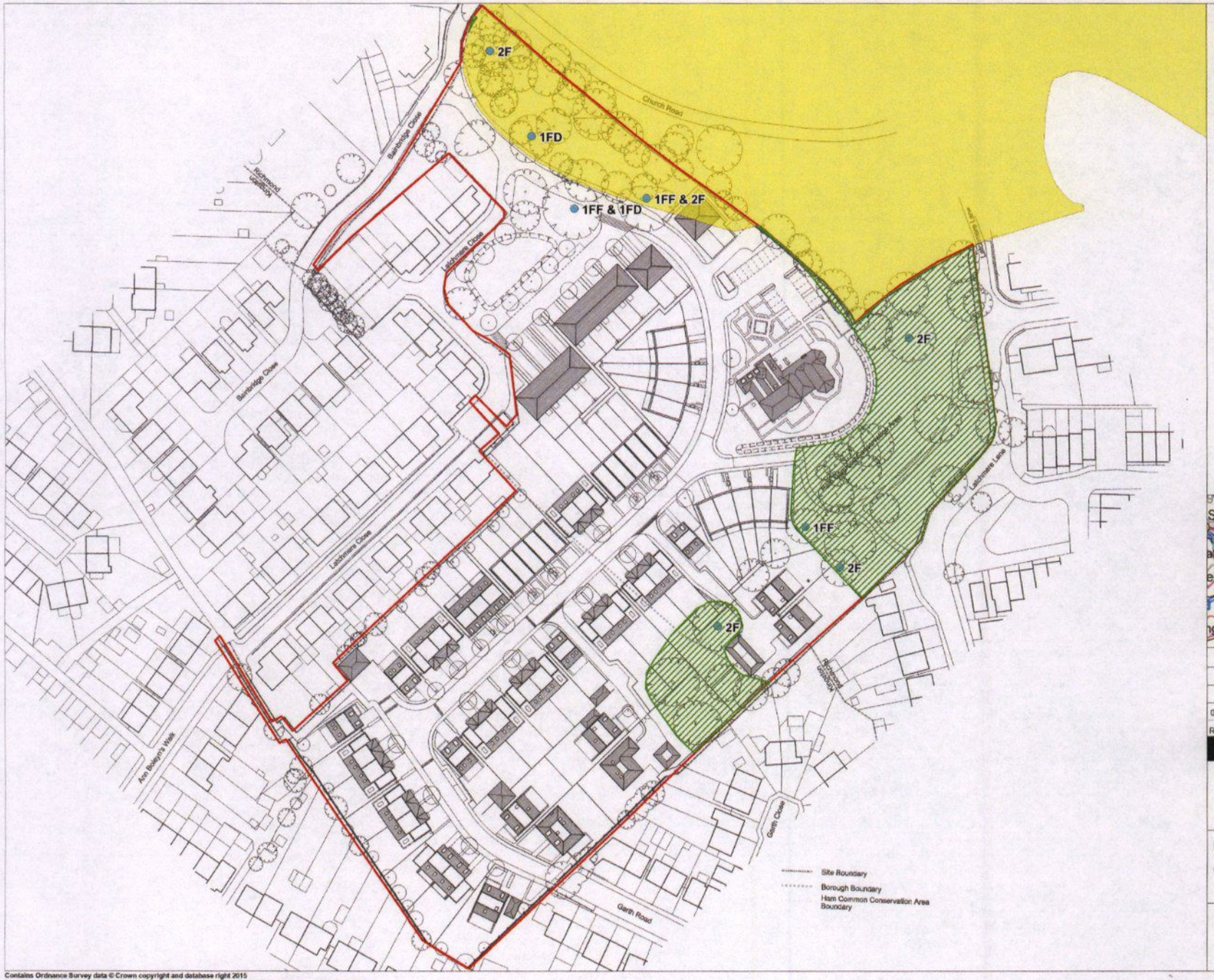
Richmond Council (2015) Appeal decision.

RSK (2013) Latchmere House Bat Initial Report. Hemel Hempstead.

RSK (2013). Latchmere House Bat Survey Report. Hemel Hempstead.

5 FIGURES





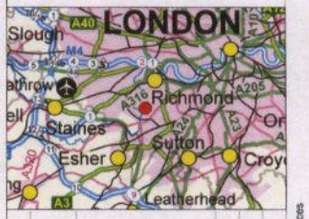
Site boundary

Ham Common Local Nature Reserve

Connective habitat

Bat box(es)

Box types labeled with Schwegler model ID



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Latchmere House

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Figure 2

Connective Habitat and Bat Box Locations

0 37.5 metres

Scale = 1:1,250 @ A3

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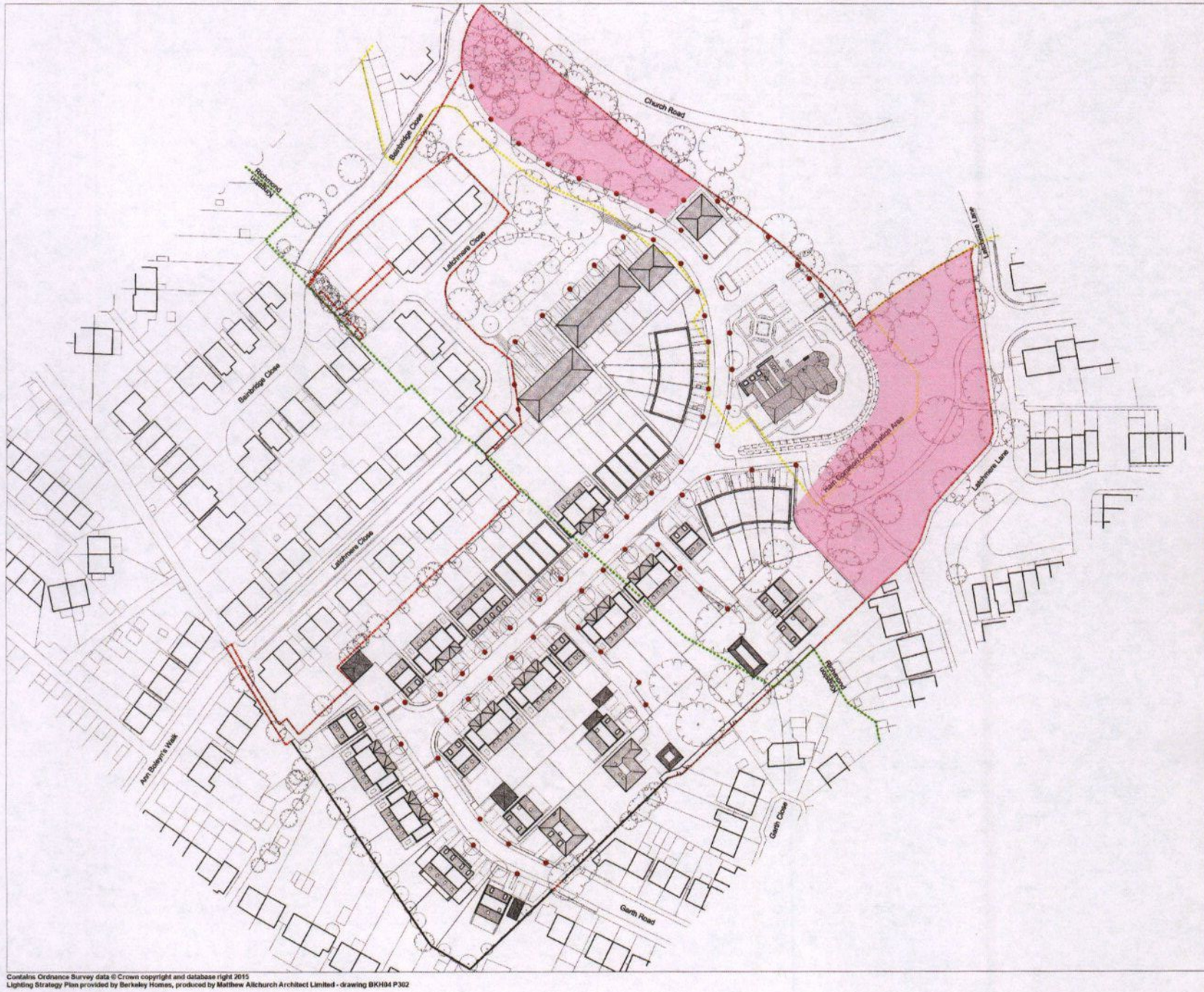

Lighting bollards (1m mounting height). 35w CDM-T lamp. 360° with 180° reflector where appropriate to reduce spillage

Sensitive area - no light spill

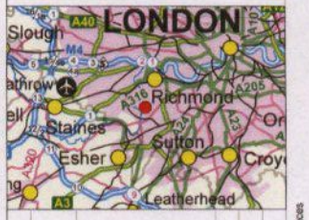

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Figure 2

Lighting Plan

0 37.5 metres

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Lighting Strategy Plan provided by Berkeley Homes, produced by Matthew Allchurch Architect Limited - drawing BKH04 P302

APPENDIX A – LEGISLATION

Bats

All species of British bat are protected by *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended),* extended by the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.* This legislation makes it an offence to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take;
- possess or control;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a breeding site or resting place; and
- intentionally or recklessly disturb whilst the animal occupies a breeding site or resting place.

Bats are also European Protected Species listed on *The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended).* This legislation makes it an offence to:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill;
- deliberately disturb, including 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) hibernate or migrate, where relevant; or (b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place; and
- possess, control, transport, sell, exchange, or offer for sale or exchange.