



Preliminary Roost Assessment

The Kings Head, Hampton Court Road, Hampton Wick, Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 4AE

Eastmont Holdings Limited

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Industry Guidelines and Standards

This report has been written with due consideration to:

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- British Standard 42020 (2013). Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.
- British Standard 8683:2021 (2021). Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain.

Proportionality

The work involved in preparing and implementing all ecological surveys, impact assessments and measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development. Consequently, the decision-maker should only request supporting information and conservation measures that are relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. Similarly, the decision-maker and their consultees should ensure that any comments and advice made over an application are also proportionate.

This approach is enshrined in Government planning guidance, for example, paragraph 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework for England.

The desk studies and field surveys undertaken to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) might in some cases be all that is necessary.

(BS 42020, 2013)

Executive Summary

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Eastmont Holdings Limited to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at The Kings Head, Hampton Court Road, Hampton Wick, Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 4AE (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for the replacement of three Velux roof windows (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”).

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Table 3 of this report.

Building	Recommendations <i>Measures required to adhere to guidance, legislation and planning policies.</i>
B1	<p>Building B1 was assessed as having ‘low’ habitat value to support roosting bats. This was due to the presence of a number of raised and slipped roof tiles along B1’s exterior. The building could support individual or small numbers of bats.</p> <p>Replacement of Velux windows may require removal of the sash window and the frame which could affect the lead flashing and a small number of roof tiles surrounding the windows. The replacement will be done by hand with minimal noise and vibration disturbance. However, there are a small number of raised roof tiles surrounding the Velux windows which may need to be temporarily removed or may become dislodged during the works. The works could result in disturbance to bats if present (although this is unlikely due to the low valuation of the building for roosts).</p> <p>Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to bat roosts, further bat surveys are considered to be disproportionate. It is anticipated that any risk to bats can be reduced to an acceptably low level through the implementation of a precautionary working method. This will include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works will be scheduled during the winter months (November to March) when bats are least likely to be present, insofar as is possible. • A toolbox talk will be given to contractors to make them aware of the possible presence of bats on the site. • A bat licensed ecologist will inspect the tiles around the windows prior to works commencing. Should no bats or evidence of bats be found then works can proceed further supervision. <p>One woodcrete crevice bat box will be installed at the site to compensate for the loss of any roost features as a result of the works. This is likely to also form enhancement as the bat box will have greater habitat value than the low value features on the building.</p>

Contents

1.0 Introduction and Context6

 1.1 Background6

 1.2 Site Context6

 1.3 Scope of the Report6

2.0 Methodology7

 2.1 Desk Study7

 2.2 Field Survey7

 2.3 Breeding Birds and Other Incidental Observations7

 2.4 Suitability Assessment.....7

 2.5 Limitations8

3.0 Results and Evaluation.....9

 3.1 Desk Study Results9

 3.2 Field Survey Results.....9

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations.....15

 4.1 Informative Guidelines.....15

 4.2 Evaluation15

5.0 Bibliography17

 Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan19

 Appendix 2: Site Location Plan20

 Appendix 3: Bat Survey Plan21

 Appendix 4: Legislation and Planning Policy Related to Bats22

1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Eastmont Holdings Limited to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at The Kings Head, Hampton Court Road, Hampton Wick, Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 4AE (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for the replacement of three Velux roof windows (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). A plan showing the proposed development is provided in Appendix 1.

The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting. This has been undertaken with due consideration to the “Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines” publication (Collins, 2016).

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report was completed by Arbtech Consulting Limited on 04th August 2020. No further surveys were recommended for this site based on the development proposals at the time, which did not intend to affect the roof. The only habitat value the building offered to support roosting bats was found on the roof.

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference TQ 17490 69340 and has an area of approximately 300m² comprising the built structure (B1), hard standing and scattered scrub. It is surrounded by Hampton Court Park (Home Park) directly to the south and Hampton Wick (leading to Bushey Park) to the northwest. The River Thames is also close proximity to the site, located ~170m to the east. All the aforementioned sites provide excellent foraging and commuting habitats for bats.

A site location plan is provided in Appendix 2.

1.3 Scope of the Report

This report provides a description of all features suitable for roosting, foraging and commuting bats and evaluates those features in the context of the site and wider environment. It further documents any physical evidence collected or recorded during the site survey that establishes the presence of roosting bats. It provides information on possible constraints to the proposed development as a result of bats and summarises the requirements for any further surveys to inform subsequent mitigation proposals, achieve planning or other statutory consent and to comply with wildlife legislation.

To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:

- A desk study has been carried out.
- A field survey has been undertaken, including an external survey and internal inspection of built structure where possible, to determine the presence or the suitability of any features which bats could use for roosting and to assess the suitability of the site’s bat foraging and commuting habitat.
- An outline of potential impacts on any confirmed or unidentified roosts has been provided, based on the proposed development.
- Recommendations for further surveys and mitigation have been made, along with advice on the requirements for a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) application if appropriate.

- Opportunities for the enhancement of the site for roosting, foraging and commuting bats have been set out.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

The desk study included a 2km radius review of statutory designated sites with bat qualifying interests and granted EPSL records for bats held on magic.gov.uk database. An assessment of the surrounding landscape structure was also completed using aerial images from Google Earth and OS maps.

2.2 Field Survey

The survey was undertaken by Deqa Mohamed BSc (Hons) (Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2019-41480-CLS-CLS) on 03rd February 2022.

The PRA focussed on one built structure (B1) which will be affected by the proposed development as well as providing an overview of the wider site and the surrounding landscape for bat roosting, foraging and commuting habitat.

For any surveyed buildings:

A non-intrusive visual appraisal was undertaken from the ground, using binoculars to inspect the external features of the building for features which bats could use for roosting, including access or egress points and for signs of bat use including droppings, scratch marks, insect remains and urine smear marks. An internal inspection of the building was also made, including the living areas and any accessible roof spaces, using a torch and ladders. The surveyor paid particular attention to the floor and flat surfaces, window shutters and frames, lintels above doors and windows, and carried out a detailed search of numerous features within the roof space. An endoscope was used to complete a close-up inspection of any accessible features, where appropriate.

2.3 Breeding Birds and Other Incidental Observations

The surveyor also made note of any other ecological constraints observed during the survey, notably the likelihood of presence or signs of breeding birds, and the suitability of the site for barn owls *Tyto alba*.

2.4 Suitability Assessment

The built structure was categorised according to the likelihood of bats being present and the types of roost that the identified features could support. This is summarised in Table 1 below. Roost suitability is classified as high, moderate, low and negligible and dictates any further surveys required before works can proceed.

Table 1: Features of a building that are correlated with use by bats

Classification	Feature of building and its context
Moderate to high	Buildings or structures with features of particular significance for larger numbers of roosting bats e.g. mines, caves, tunnels, icehouses and cellars. Habitat on site and surrounding landscape of high quality for foraging bats e.g. broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is connected with the wider landscape by strong linear features that would be used by commuting bats e.g. river and or stream valleys and hedgerows.

	Site is proximate to known or likely roosts (based on historical data). Buildings with high suitability could support roosts of high conservation value such as maternity or hibernation roosts.
Low	A small number of possible roost sites or features, used sporadically by individual or small numbers of bats. Potential roost features may be suboptimal for reasons such as shallow depth, poor thermal qualities or upwards orientation with exposure to inclement weather or predators. Habitat suitable for foraging in close proximity, but isolated in the landscape. Or an isolated site not connected by prominent linear features. Few features suitable for roosting, minor foraging or commuting.
Negligible	Unsuitable for use by bats.

2.5 Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the features on site in the context of their suitability for roosting bats, this does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This survey provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of bats being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on site and in the local area, the ecology and biology of bats as currently understood, and the known distribution of bats as recovered during the desk study. Bats are highly mobile creatures that switch roosts regularly and therefore the usage of a site by bats can change over a short period of time.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

These limitations have been taken into account during the evaluation of the site and requirement for further surveys and mitigation.

3.0 Results and Evaluation

3.1 Desk Study Results

The desk study methodology as outlined in 2.1 has been carried out, and any relevant findings regarding sites, habitats or species will be incorporated into the conclusions and recommendations section of this report (4.2) for ease of reading.

3.2 Field Survey Results

The PRA focussed on one built structure (B1) which will be affected by the proposed development as well as providing an overview of the wider site and the surrounding landscape for bat roosting, foraging and commuting habitat. The results of the field survey are illustrated in Appendix 3. The weather conditions recorded at the time of the survey are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Weather conditions during the survey

Date: 03/02/2022	
Temperature	9°C
Humidity	73%
Cloud Cover	90%
Wind	9mph
Rain	None

B1 Exterior**B1 – Northern and Eastern Elevations (pictured opposite)**

B1 is a two-storey, brick-built dwelling with a cross-hipped roof structure clad in clay tiles. The built structure has mostly been rendered and thus well sealed and in good condition. B1 was formerly a public house, although it is now closed.

As seen in the images pictured opposite, there is one flat roof dormer window present at B1's northern elevation and another two at the eastern elevation. These are also clad in clay hanging tiles, with minimal gaps present, most commonly along the corner where angled tiles are present. These provide suitable roosting locations for crevice-dwelling bats such as common pipistrelles *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*.

The northern elevation features a gable-end and red circles, arrows and squares in the images highlight areas where roof tiles have either slipped or are raised.

The rendered wall meets the eaves and fits well, with no gaps present for bats to exploit.



Picture 1: B1's northern and eastern elevations.



Picture 3: B1's eastern elevation.



Picture 2: B1's northern elevation.



Picture 4: Looking up at the eaves along B1's eastern elevation.

B1 – Southern Elevation (pictured opposite)

The exterior of the southern elevation of B1 is similar to that of the northern and eastern elevations. The exterior has been rendered and is well sealed against the eaves.

There is another flat roofed dormer window located at the southern elevation. There are two sections along the left-hand side and southern ends of the dormer window where the roof tiles have chipped (as indicated by the red arrows). More slipped and raised roof tiles are present at the southern elevation which bats could exploit.

In total there are four chimneys present. The windows and doors present across the exterior of B1 are timber framed and in good condition.



Picture 5: B1's southern elevation.



Picture 6: Looking up at the eaves along B1's southern elevation.

B1 – Western Elevation (pictured opposite)

The walls at this elevation were also rendered and in good condition. No gaps were present along the eaves once again. A small section of roof was raised to accommodate for an additional window, as seen in Picture 9. This was rendered along the sides where it protrudes from the roof structure.

Further raised and slipped roof tiles were prevalent along this elevation, as highlighted in the images opposite.

Three Velux windows were present along this elevation which are due to be replaced as a part of the proposed works. One of these windows was west facing, whilst two were south facing.



Picture 7: B1's western elevation.



Picture 8: Looking up at the eaves along B1's western elevation.



Pictures 9 & 10: Close up images of slipped and raised roof tiles present along B1's western elevation.

B1 Interior

The western hipped extension of B1 did not feature a loft space, and the images taken were of the north to south lying hipped section of the dwelling.

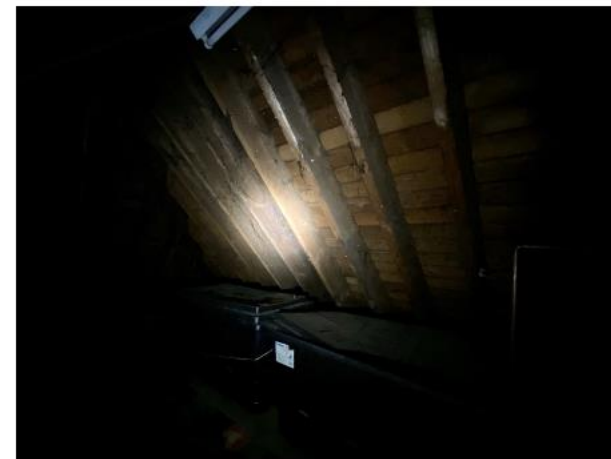
B1's roof structure is formed of treated timber beams and rafters, including the central ridge beam, which are in good condition. No splits or cuts could be seen.

A dark check was conducted, and no daylight could be seen entering the loft space. The entire loft void is lined with wooden sarking which was tightly fitted and in good condition.

A low coverage of cobwebs could be seen along the central ridge beam which indicates a lack of aerial activity in the loft void.



Picture 11: Inside B1's loft space, facing south.



Pictures 12 & 13: Inside B1's loft space, facing south-west and north-west, respectively.

B1 Interior Continued

Timber beams and glass wool insulation could be seen present along the floor, as was some scattered items.

Approximate internal dimensions: 4m wide x 9m long x 2m high (floor to ridge height).

B1: Evidence of Bats

No bats or evidence of bat activity i.e., droppings or feeding remains were located internally or externally on the survey building.

B1: Breeding Birds or Other incidental Observations

There was no evidence of nesting birds located internally or externally on the survey building.



Picture 14: Inside B1's loft space, facing north.



Pictures 15 & 16: Inside B1's loft space, facing north-east and south-east, respectively.

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations

4.1 Informative Guidelines

A summary of the relevant legislation and planning policies is provided in Appendix 4.

Bats

Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019).

There are three possible outcomes of this survey, each with specific recommendations. These are outlined below:

Confirmed bat roost

Best practice survey guidelines (Collins, 2016) recommend additional surveys for confirmed roosts. Three further surveys are required to characterise the bat roost present including species, roost type and access points to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. Surveys must be completed during the active bat season (May – September). At least two of the surveys should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August, and at least one of the surveys should be a dawn re-entry survey.

Low, moderate or high likelihood of a bat roost present

Best practice survey guidelines (Collins, 2016) recommend additional surveys for features assessed as having low to high suitability for roosting bats. One, two or three further surveys are required to confirm presence or likely absence of a bat roost, based on a low, medium or high roost likelihood evaluation. Surveys must be completed during the active bat season (May – September). If more than one survey is recommended, at least one of them should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August, and at least one of the surveys should be a dawn re-entry survey. If two or one further survey is recommended these surveys must be completed during the optimal survey period (mid-May to August). For low and moderate roost likelihood evaluation the survey effort recommended at this stage is iterative and if bats roosts are confirmed in the building, a further survey will be required to provide sufficient information to inform an EPSL application to Natural England.

Negligible likelihood of a bat roost present

Buildings assessed as comprising negligible suitability for roosting bats do not normally require further surveys. However, if bats are found during any stage of the development, work should stop immediately, and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted for further advice.

Birds

Legislation protects all wild birds whilst they are breeding, and prohibits the killing, injuring or taking of any wild bird or their nests and eggs. Certain species of bird, including the barn owl, are subject to special provisions; it is an offence to disturb any bird or their young during the breeding season.

4.2 Evaluation

Taking the desk study and field survey results into account, Table 3 presents an evaluation of the value of the site for bats and also details any other ecological constraints identified such as nesting birds in relation to the proposed development which will comprise the replacement of three Velux roof windows.

Table 3: Evaluation of the site for bats and any other ecological constraints

Building/Feature	Survey conclusions (with justification)	Foreseen impacts	Recommendations <i>Measures required to adhere to guidance, legislation and planning policies.</i>	Biodiversity Enhancements <i>The Local Planning Authority has a duty to ask for enhancements under the NPPF (2021)</i>
B1	<p>Building B1 was assessed as having ‘low’ habitat value to support roosting bats. This was due to the presence of a number of raised and slipped roof tiles along B1’s exterior. The building could support individual or small numbers of bats.</p> <p>The site is located between Hampton Wick and Kingston upon Thames and is directly adjacent to Hampton Court Park (Home Park). Hampton Wick, Bushey Park, The River Thames and several woodland copses are all within present within the local area which all provide suitable foraging and commuting habitats for bats.</p> <p>A review of the MAGIC database returned two designated sites within 2km of the site. These designated sites were Bushey Park and Home Park, which have both been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p> <p>A review of the MAGIC database also returned a total of three EPSL’s within a 2km radius of the site. The closest of</p>	<p>Replacement of Velux windows may require removal of the sash window and the frame which could affect the lead flashing and a small number of roof tiles surrounding the windows.</p> <p>The replacement will be done by hand with minimal noise and vibration disturbance. However, there are a small number of raised roof tiles surrounding the Velux windows which may need to be temporarily removed or may become dislodged during the works.</p> <p>The works could result in disturbance to bats if present (although this is unlikely due to the low valuation of the building for roosts).</p>	<p>Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to bat roosts, further bat surveys are considered to be disproportionate. It is anticipated that any risk to bats can be reduced to an acceptably low level through the implementation of a precautionary working method. This will include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works will be scheduled during the winter months (November to March) when bats are least likely to be present, insofar as is possible. • A toolbox talk will be given to contractors to make them aware of the possible presence of bats on the site. • A bat licensed ecologist will inspect the tiles around the windows prior to works commencing. Should no bats or evidence of bats be found then works can proceed further supervision. • One woodcrete crevice bat box will be installed at the site to compensate for the loss of any roost features as a result of the works. This is likely to also form enhancement as the bat box will have greater habitat value than the low value features on the building. 	<p>The installation of a minimum of an additional bat box on the retained building will provide additional roosting habitat for bats e.g. Beumaris Bat Box Vivara Pro Woodstone Bat Box Or a similar alternative brand. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.</p>

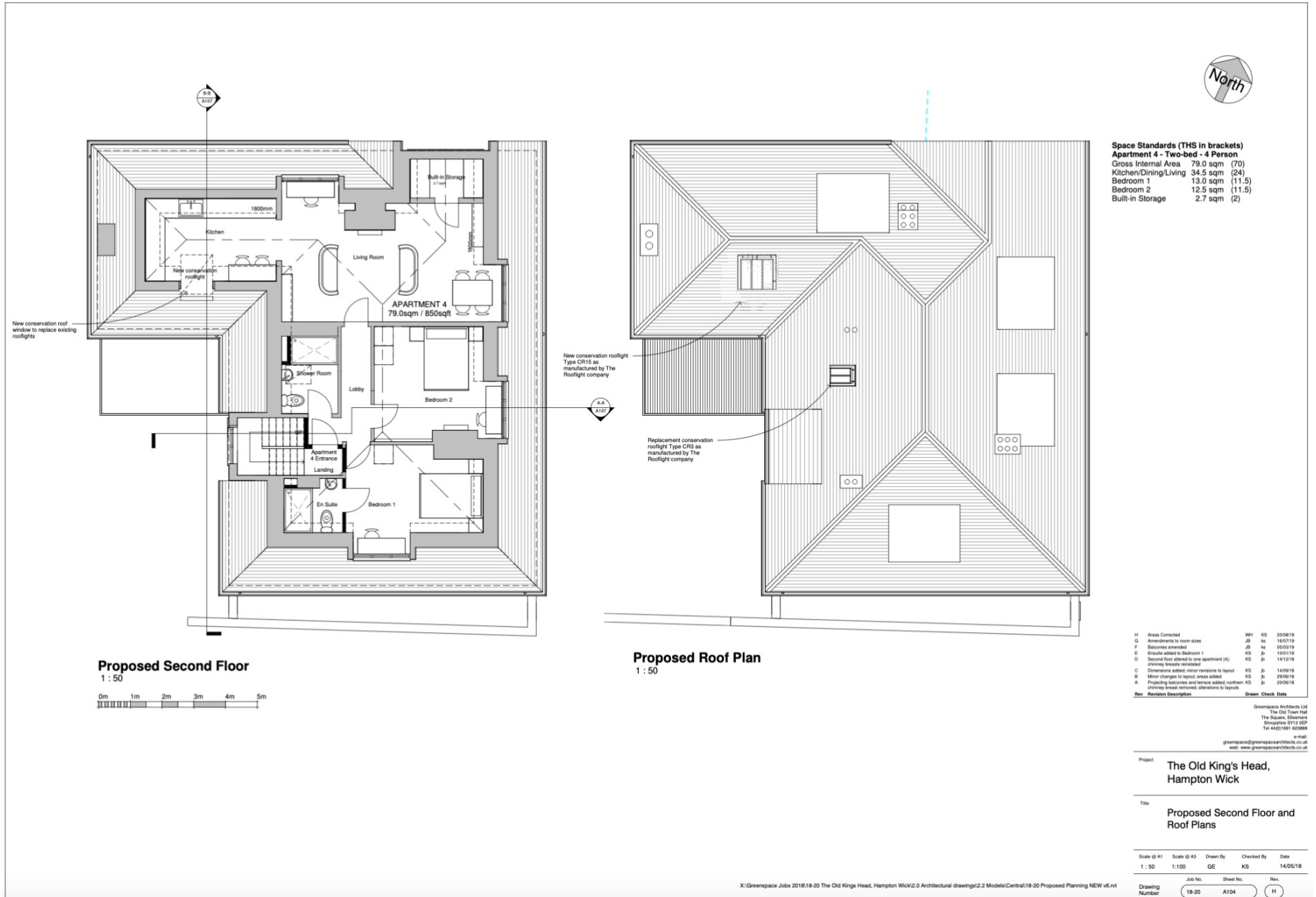
	these was situated ~830m to the north-west of the site and allowed for the destruction of a resting place. The bat species affected were common pipistrelles, soprano pipistrelles <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> , brown long-eared bats <i>Plecotus auritus</i> and natterer's bats <i>Myotis nattereri</i> .			
Nesting birds	The building offers no opportunities for nesting birds. Furthermore, no evidence of nesting birds and barn owls was found during the survey.	None.	None.	The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes on the retained building will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace Or a similar alternative brand. Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole. Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building.
Other ecological constraints	None identified.	N/A	N/A	N/A

5.0 Bibliography

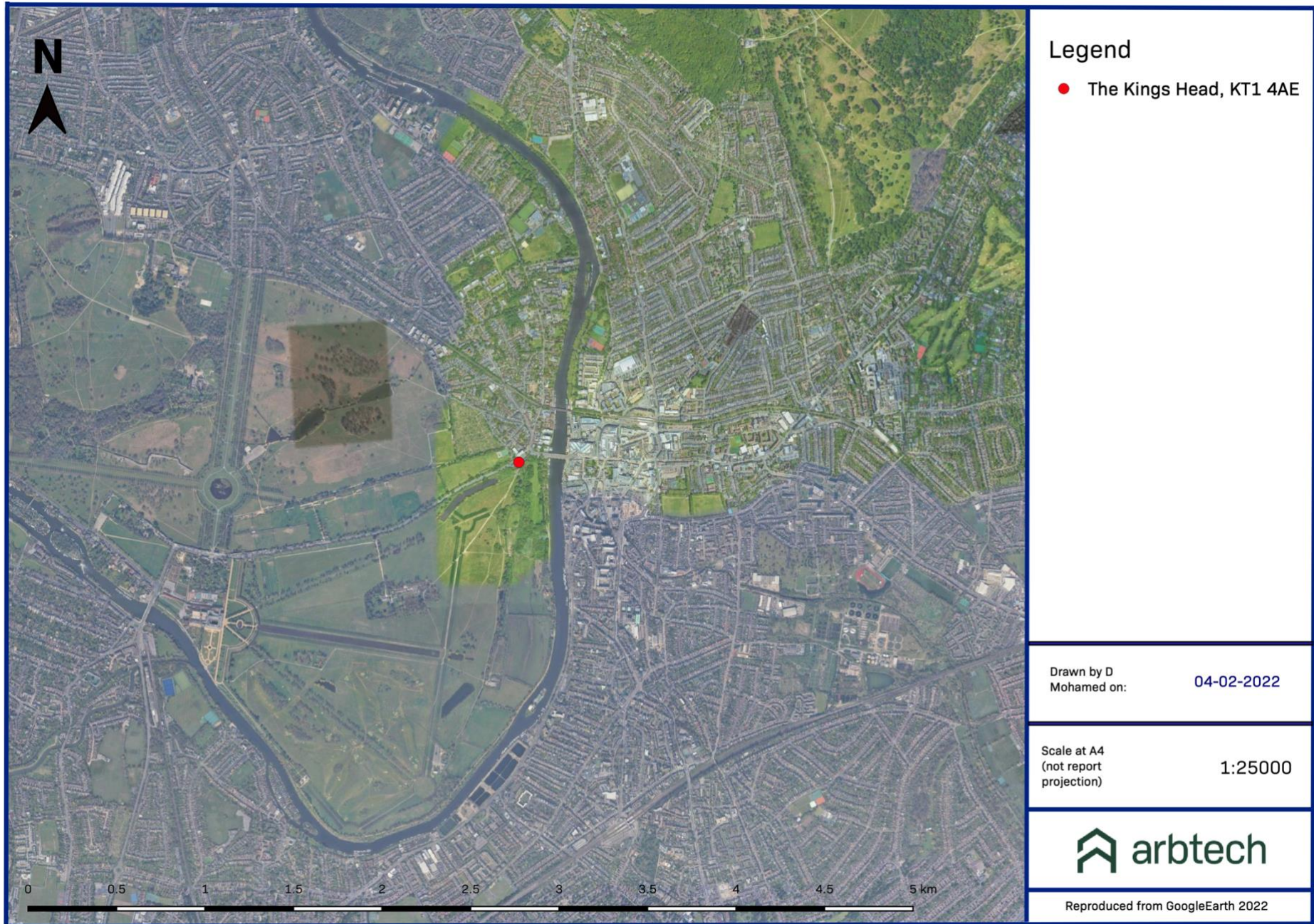
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Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: Bat Survey Plan



Appendix 4: Legislation and Planning Policy Related to Bats

LEGAL PROTECTION

The ***Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*** came into force when Britain left the European Union on 31st January 2020. It covered amendments relevant to this survey to:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981: England and Wales (x1 amendment)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (x29 amendments)

All species of bat are fully protected under ***The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017*** (amended by the ***Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*** which continue the same provision for European protected species, licensing requirements and protected sites after the UK leaves the EU) through their inclusion on Schedule 2.

Regulation 43: Protection of certain wild animals - offences

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if they:

- (a) Deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species,
- (b) Deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species,
- (c) Deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or
- (d) Damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1) (b), disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely—

- (a) To impair their ability:
 - (i) To survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - (ii) In the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
- (b) To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Bats are also protected under the ***Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*** through their inclusion on ***Schedule 5***. Under this Act, they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection
- Selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY (ENGLAND)

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development. The Framework specifies the need for protection of designated sites and priority habitats and species. An emphasis is also made on the need for ecological infrastructure through protection, restoration and re-creation. The protection and recovery of priority species (considered likely to be those listed as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006) is also listed as a requirement of planning policy.

In determining a planning application, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by ensuring that: designated sites are protected from harm; there is appropriate mitigation or compensation where significant harm cannot be avoided; measurable gains in biodiversity in and around developments are incorporated; and planning permission is refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including aged or veteran trees and also ancient woodland.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Biodiversity Duty

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'.

Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of 'principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity'. This list is intended to assist decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications. A developer must show that their protection has been adequately addressed within a development proposal.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by Natural England will be required for works likely to affect a bat roost or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above (e.g. survive, breed, rear young and hibernate). The licence is to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficiency/success to be monitored. The legislation may also be interpreted such that, in certain circumstances, important foraging areas and/or commuting routes can be regarded as being afforded *de facto* protection, for example, where it can be proven that the continued usage of such areas is crucial to maintaining the integrity and long-term viability of a bat roost (Garland & Markham, 2008).

There are 17 species of bat breeding in England and Natural England issues licences under Regulation 55 of the Habitats Regulations to allow you to work within the law.

Licences are issued for specific purposes stated in the Regulations, if the following three tests are met:

- The purpose of the work meets one of those listed in the Habitats Regulations (see below);
- That there is no satisfactory alternative;
- That the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status (FCS) in their natural range

The Habitats Regulations permits licences to be issued for a specific set of purposes including:

1. *include preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of over-riding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;*
2. scientific and educational purposes,
3. ringing or marking
4. conserving wild animals

Development works fall under the first purpose and Natural England issues bat mitigation licences for developments.

EUROPEAN PROTECTED SPECIES POLICIES

In December 2016 Natural England officially introduced the four licensing policies throughout England. The four policies seek to achieve better outcomes for European Protected Species (EPS) and reduce unnecessary costs, delays and uncertainty that can be inherent in the current standard EPS licensing system. The policies are summarised as follows:

- Policy 1; provides greater flexibility in exclusion and relocation activities, where there is investment in habitat provision;
- Policy 2; provides greater flexibility in the location of compensatory habitat;
- Policy 3; provides greater flexibility on exclusion measures where this will allow EPS to use temporary habitat; and,
- Policy 4; provides a reduced survey effort in circumstances where the impacts of development can be confidently predicted.

The four policies have been designed to have a net benefit for EPS by improving populations overall and not just protecting individuals within development sites. Most notably Natural England now recognises that the Habitats Regulations legal framework now applies to 'local populations' of EPS and not individuals/site populations.