# PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL
# and
# Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

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## 54, Stockheath Road, Havant
## Hampshire PO9 5HQ

NOVEMBER 2024

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tsa.ecology

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL

| | |
|---|---|
| Document Title: | Preliminary Ecological Appraisal |
| The Client: | Mac Construction Consultants Ltd. |

**TSA Ecology** has prepared this report in accordance with the instructions of has prepared this report in accordance with the instructions of Ms Sarah Sullivan, Senior Architect, MAC Construction Consultants Ltd.

| | Status<br>DRAFT | Date of issue<br>15/11/2024 |
|---|---|---|
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| Reviewed by | Tony Stones<br>BSc., MSc., MCIEEM, CEnV<br>Ecologist | |

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The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works.

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living creatures are capable of migration and whilst protected species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on site at a later date.

If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to works.

**Biological Records** of species identified during the field survey, the date, their location and a brief description of the circumstances of their identification, may be passed on to Biological Records Centres, local wildlife groups, the Wildlife Trust, Natural England and other interested parties unless written instructions not to do so are received within 30 days of receipt of this report.

The surveys and reporting was carried-out by Linda Pryke, an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (ACIEEM). Linda achieved a BSc (Hons.) in Conservation Management (UEA 2006) and a MSc (Hons) with distinction in Biodiversity Survey (US 2007).
Since 2007 Linda has worked on both large and small-scale development projects, industrial and domestic, holds a Great crested newt licence (level 1) and is an experienced ecologist competent in carrying out ecological surveys and assessments.

**Lifespan of report:** This report and its conclusions are valid for 12 months from the date of survey. Should there be any significant change in site condition or development boundaries, the report may need revision.

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# SUMMARY

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Bat Survey were carried out on behalf of Havant Borough Council, in support of proposed development at 54, Stockheath Road, Havant, Hampshire PO9 5HQ.

A site survey was carried out on 10th October 2024.

The site (c. 0.1 ha.) comprises a former care home with chalet bungalow linked to two linked, single-storey buildings, outhouse, amenity grassed areas, planted beds, and hardstanding. The site is bounded by an overgrown introduced conifer hedge and trees.

Although there are no foreseen risks of impacts on Priority or Principal Habitats or non-statutory conservation sites, **the site lies within the Zone of Influence for European (Habitat) sites. Measures may be required to mitigate recreational pressures.**

The site is within the catchment of one or more European (Habitats) sites vulnerable to nutrient impacts. Therefore, **further assessment (including Habitat Regulations Assessment with nutrient budget calculation) and consultation with Natural England may be necessary.**

Two buildings were assessed as having low bat potential, having external features suitable to shelter bats. Should bats be confirmed, a **Natural England Mitigation licence (or potentially a Low Impact Class Licence) would be required to enable works to proceed lawfully under the supervision of a suitably licenced bat ecologist.**

To assess whether bats are using the buildings **a single dusk survey will be required** on each building (two surveyors per building between May and August inclusive, during suitable weather conditions).

If bats are found to emerge, then two further surveys (May – September inclusive) will be required to classify any roost types present and to inform mitigation, and a **Natural England Mitigation licence (or potentially a Low Impact Class Licence)** would be needed to enable any works affecting it to proceed lawfully.

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**The development has the potential to impact on commuting bats**, so any proposed additional lighting should follow best practice and be directed away from sensitive areas.

No additional impacts are predicted on fauna with the exception of bats, and no further surveys are recommended.

No invasive plants subject to WCA (1981) Schedule 9 legislation were found to be present, but survey was undertaken late in the year, so it is possible that early perennial species may have been missed, in particular three-cornered leek and Montbretia. **It is an offence to cause these to grow in the wild. If any groundworks are to take place, then it would be advisable to survey for invasive species,** with any contaminated soil and plant material detected being managed or treated and/or disposed of appropriately and with regard to the legislation.

Buddleija (butterfly-bush) is present within the site, and although not included on Schedule 9, is invasive and it would be advisable to remove and dispose of it appropriately.

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# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

1.1 TSA Ecology was commissioned by Ms Sarah Sullivan, Senior Architect, MAC Construction Consultants Ltd. to undertake to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment in preparation for delivering a temporary accommodation for the homeless project for Havant Borough Council at 54, Stockheath Road, Havant, Hampshire PO9 5HQ (OSGR SU 71740793).

1.2 This assessment is required to inform a planning application associated with the proposed works. It provides baseline ecological information for the site and assesses the potential for protected species to be impacted. The assessment highlights any potential ecological constraints associated with the proposed works.

## 1.2 Scope of Report

1.3 This report is based on an extended field survey using standard Phase 1 habitat survey methodology (JNCC, 2010), and a protected species assessment. This approach is designed to identify broad habitat types at a site, to identify the potential of habitats to support protected species, and to assist in providing an overview of the ecological interest at a site. It is the most widely used and professionally recognised method for a preliminary ecological site appraisal.

1.4 The appraisal assesses the site as defined by the red line boundary provided by Havant Borough Council (see Appendix 1, Habitat Map).

## 1.3 Site Context and Status

1.5 The site is located within the town of Havant, within the jurisdiction of Havant Borough Council, approximately centred on National Grid Reference SU 7174 0793.

1.6 The site is approximately rectangular, covering c. 0.1 ha., within which a number of low, interconnected buildings are set within hardstanding and gardens, bounded by trees / overgrown hedge. Historic satellite imagery (Google Earth Pro 2024) shows little change since 1999. The most recent use of the property has been as a care home. Immediately to the west lies a modern supermarket and offices with car parking, residences with gardens to the north and east, and Stockheath Road to the south, with Battins' Copse woodland just beyond to the southeast.

The wider landscape is a matrix of housing and greenspaces, broadening out into more open countryside approximately 1 km to the north and east.

## 1.4 Development Proposals

1.7 It is understood that the project will convert the existing premises into suitable temporary living accommodation for homeless persons.

# 2 METHODOLOGY

## 2.1 Desk Study

2.1 An ecological desk study was undertaken to determine the presence of any designated nature conservation sites and legally protected or notable species in proximity to the site. This involved contacting appropriate statutory and non-statutory organisations which hold ecological data relating to the study area. TSA Ecology then collated and reviewed the desk study data provided.

2.2 The consultees for the desk study are:

- Natural England – MAGIC database; and
- Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre.

2.3 The desk study included a search for the following within a 1 km radius of the site:

- European statutory nature conservation sites;
- Non-statutory nature conservation sites;
- European protected species licences (to 5 km for bats); and
- Protected / notable species records (to 2 km for bats).

2.4 A check was made to determine the position of the site within SSSI risk zones and examine potential impacts.

2.5 The desk study did not cover Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) or Conservation areas designated for their special architectural and historical interest.

## 2.2 Phase 1 Habitat Survey

2.6 A walkover survey was carried out by Linda Pryke BSc, MSc on 10th October 2024.

2.7 The survey area comprised the boundary as shown on Figure 1, Appendix A. Where visibility permitted, the survey area was extended to approximately 30 m beyond this area. The latter was assessed from the site's boundary only. The survey of the site was carried out in accordance with the industry standard, JNCC (2010), in order to produce a Phase 1 Habitat map.

2.8 In addition to habitats, the presence, or potential presence, of legally protected and / or notable species was noted.

2.9 Whilst every effort is made to notify the client of any plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, as amended) present on site, it should be noted that this is not a specific survey for these species.

2.10 Data recorded during the field survey are discussed in Section 4. A habitat plan of the site is included in Appendix A.

## 2.3 Bat Roost Assessment

2.11 The exterior of all buildings and trees were inspected from ground level in accordance with BCT guidelines (Collins 2023), aided by binoculars. Any features likely to be used by bats were noted. The search also included evidence that could indicate the presence of bats such as droppings, feeding signs, staining or scratches at access points, bats (live or dead).

2.12 The interior and loft spaces of all buildings were inspected where accessible, and a systematic search made with the aid of a torch for evidence to indicate the potential presence or usage of the interior spaces by bats. Potential points of entry were also noted.

# 3 DESK STUDY RESULTS

3.1 This section provides the key findings of significance to the site and proposed works.

3.2 In compliance with the Terms and Conditions relating to its commercial use, the full desk study is not provided within this report.

## 3.1 Nature Conservation Sites: Statutory Designated

**3.3 The proposed development site is not within nor adjacent to any statutory designated conservation areas, nor are there any within 1 km of the site boundary.** An extensive complex of SSSIs with additional designations (SAC, Ramsar, SPA) lies 2.8 km to the south at the closest point, beyond the town of Havant (MAGIC 2024).

3.4 **The site is within the Impact Risk Zones for SSSIs,** the closest being Langstone Harbour (SSSI, SPA, Ramsar) 2.8 km SE. There is the possibility that the development may impact on designated European sites if it causes an increase in the local population, both by an increase of nutrients affecting water quality, and by recreational pressures. Therefore, **further assessment (including Habitat Regulations Assessment with nutrient budget calculation) and consultation with Natural England may be necessary** (Natural England 2024).

## 3.2 Nature Conservation Sites: Non-statutory

**3.5 The proposed development site is not adjacent to nor within any non-statutory designated conservation areas.** Table 1 includes a summary of the four Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) within the search area, the closest being Battins Copse, c. 30 m S, buffered from the site by roads.

| **Statutory Sites** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Site name** | **Grid ref.** | **Approximate distance/direction from site** | **Summary description/key features** |
| None. | | | |
| **Non Statutory Sites** | | | |
| **Sites of importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)** | | | |
| Site | | Size, Approximate distance/direction from site | Designation criteria category (Wilson 2021). |
| HV0134 | Battins Copse | 2.75 ha. 30 m S | 1B. Other woodland where there is a significant element of Ancient semi-natural woodland surviving or supporting some characteristics of ancient woodland. |
| HV0077 | Great Copse, Havant | 5.71 ha. 360 m NNW | 1A. Ancient semi-natural woodland. |
| HV0081 | High Lawn | 11.74 ha. 710 m N | 2B. Semi-improved grasslands which retain a significant element of unimproved grassland.<br>5B. Fens, flushes, seepages, springs and inundation grasslands of floodplains that support a flora and fauna of less-improved and wet conditions (Seasonal or permanent). |
| HV0070 | Thicket Lawn | 10.56 ha. 820 m N | 2B/5B as above. |

**Table 1: Statutory and Non-statutory Sites within 1 km of Site (HBIC 2024)**

## 3.3 Priority Habitats

**3.6** **The site does not contain, nor is it adjacent to any UK BAP priority habitats**. Four areas of **Deciduous Woodland** are present, the closest being Battins Copse SNCI. Further deciduous woodland is present as a component of Staunton Country Park along with **Woodpasture and Parkland** (630 m NNE at the closest point).

**Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh** occurs at the margins of the Hermitage Stream 780 m SW at the nearest point, isolated from the site by housing and roads.

**Ancient and Semi-natural Woodland** (Great Copse) is present 430 m N, also buffered by housing and roads.

## 3.4 Ponds

3.7 There are no ponds or areas of standing water within 500 m of the site, when viewed on MAGIC at a scale of 1:500.

## 3.5 Protected Species: Fauna

**3.8 A search on MAGIC (2024) returned no approved licence applications granted by Natural England pertaining to great crested newts or other European Protected Species within 1 km of the site,** and no records of great crested newt within Natural England's licencing returns.

3.9 The search returned no granted licence application by Natural England in respect of bats within 1 km of the site, two were issued for 1-3 km for works affecting common pipistrelles, with works further afield for Soprano pipistrelles, brown long-eared bats and serotine.

| Species | Distance from site, number of licences, activity, (licencing period) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 km (0) | 1-3 km (2) | 3-5 km (4) |
| **Common pipistrelle** | | Destruction of resting place (2019-2024, 2014-2015). | Destruction of resting place (2013-2016).<br>Damage of resting place (2015-2020).<br>Damage of breeding site (2020-2025. |
| **Soprano pipistrelle** | | | Destruction of resting place (2020-2024).<br>Damage of breeding site (2020-2025). |
| **Serotine** | | | Damage of resting place (2015-2020). |
| **Brown long-eared bat** | | | Destruction of breeding site (2013-2016).<br>Damage of resting place (2015-2020). |

**Table 2: Natural England granted EPSL licences for works pertaining to bats 2012-2023 (MAGIC 2024)**

3.12 HBIC returned seven records for **West European Hedgehog**, the closest and most recent being 520 S in 2020. No other legally protected or notable mammals were recorded.

**3.13** **Reptiles and amphibians** have been recorded (number of records in parentheses); common toad (1), adder (2) and common lizard (1) but none within 600 m of the site. There are four records for slow-worm, the closest from 260 m ESE, but there is limited habitat present within the locality and negligible suitability to attract or shelter this species. Full details of all historic species records are included within the HBIC Desk Study Report.

**Bats**

3.14 Fourteen bat species have been recorded within 2 km of the site post 2000.

A further 225 records were identified to genus level (number of records in parentheses): *Pipistrelle sp*. (57), *Plecotus* (41), *Myotis* (121) and 6 identified as whiskered / Brandts bat.

No bat records were recorded from within the site, with the majority of records being at a distance of 1 km away. The closest record was of a common pipistrelle, potentially 130 m SW in 2021. A summary is provided in Table 3.

| **Species** (number of records) nearest- distance, year, bearing. | **NERC S41** | **Habitats directive 1992** | **IUCN Red List Great Britain 2001** | **Other** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Common pipistrelle** (451) 130 m 2021 SW | | Annex 4 | | |
| **Soprano pipistrelle** (232) 600 m 2022 SW | * | Annex 4 | | |
| **Serotine** (174) Maternity roost 600 m 2023 SW | | Annex 4 | Vulnerable: high risk of extinction in the wild. | |
| **Noctule** (135) 600 m 2022 SW | * | Annex 4 | | |
| **Natterers bat** (47) 1.4 km 2022 N | | Annex 4 | | |
| **Brown long-eared bat** (41) >1km 2023 N | * | Annex 4 | | |
| **Bechsteins** (49) Tree roosts >1 km 2018 NNE | * | Annex 2 (non-priority), Annex 4. | | Species of County Interest. |
| **Nathusius' pipistrelle** (27) 580 m 2015 SW | | Annex 4 | Near Threatened: Likely qualify for threatened status in the near future. | |
| **Whiskered bat** (24) 1.4 km N 2022 | | Annex 4 | Data Deficient: Inadequate data to enable assessment of extinction risk. | |
| **Leislers' bat** (11) >1 km E 2022 | | Annex 4 | Near Threatened: Likely qualify for threatened status in the near future. | |
| **Daubentons** (8) >1 km NE 2022 | | Annex 4 | | |
| **Western barbastelle** (24) >1 km N and W 2022 | * | Annex 2 (non-priority), Annex 4. | Vulnerable: high risk of extinction in the wild. | Species of County Interest. |
| **Brandts** (1) 1560 m 2018 E | | Annex 4 | Data Deficient: Inadequate data to enable assessment of extinction risk. | |
| **Alcathoe** (1) 1560 m NE 2018 | | Annex 4 | Data Deficient: Inadequate data to enable assessment of extinction risk. | |

**NERC S41**: Natural environment and rural Communities Act (2006) species of principle importance.
**Habitats Directive Annex 4:** Animal & plant species of European community interest, in need of strict protection, protected from killing, disturbance, destruction of them, or their habitat.
**Habitats Directive Annex 2 (non-priority):** Endangered animal or plant species of European community Interest, requiring the designation of special areas of conservation.

**Table 3: Summary of bat records and conservation status post 2000, as provided by HERC (2024)**

**Birds**

3.14 There were 82 notable, noteworthy and protected bird species recorded within 1 km of the proposed development site, none from within the site boundary. The majority of species were associated with habitats not present at the site or nearby (i.e. gulls, common kingfisher, waders, farmland birds and birds of prey). Table 4 gives a summary of those species relevant to the habitats at the site.

| **Species** | **Designations** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NERC S41 | Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) Schedule1, part 1. | Birds of Conservation Concern (BOCC 5) | County status |
| Resident species | | | | |
| House Sparrow | * | | Red | |
| Greenfinch | | | Red | |
| Song Thrush | | | Red | |
| Linnet | | | Red | |
| Siskin | | | | Of Interest |
| Firecrest | | * | | Scarce and Schedule 1*[1] |
| Summer foragers/nesters | | | | |
| Pied Flycatcher | | | Red | Rare |
| Starling | | | Red | |
| Winter arrivals/ foragers | | | | |
| Redwing | | * | Red | Schedule 1*[1] |
| Fieldfare | | * | Red | Schedule 1*[1] |
| Black Redstart | | | Red | Rare |

**Table 4. Notable and protected bird records relevant to the site (HBRC 2024).**

3.15 It is to be noted that in addition to species-specific designations and legislation, all nesting wild birds, their nests and eggs are fully protected under the WLCA Section 1.

**Invertebrates**

3.16 Invertebrate records for the study area were dominated by moths recorded in 2000.

[1] Schedule 1 species are birds which have special protection during the breeding season anywhere in Britain and Ireland. You will need a specific licence or permit to approach an active nest or adult with dependent young. Note that fieldfare and redwing are winter visitors but firecrest is a Hampshire breeding species.

**Stag beetle** (Nationally scarce, S41 species) has been recorded 35 times within the study area (HBIC 2024) with records at several nearby locations, e.g. c. 300 m from the site in 2021 and 2023 (PTES 2024).

## 3.6 Protected Species: Flora

**Flora**

3.17 The data search from HBIC (2024) returned few records of flora within the 1 km search radius of the site post-2000; Box, Chamomile, Weasel's-snout, Ivy broomrape, Dwarf elder. None were close to, or specifically within the site boundary. Three further species were associated with features not present at the site *ie*. damp or aquatic habitats; Slender tufted-sedge, Brackish water-crowfoot and Lesser spearwort.

## 3.7 Invasive Flora

**Flora**

3.18 16 terrestrial species have been recorded within 1 km of the site. Of these, four are listed in WCA (2010) Schedule 9, making it an offence to cause these to spread into the wild: three-cornered leek (136 m S. 2023), Montbretia (460 m N 2001) Virginia creeper (c. 1 km S 2017) and Japanese knotweed (930 m S 1997).

The following species are also considered invasive - garden privet, Japanese honeysuckle and cherry laurel were all recorded within 70 m of the site in 2023, and other species recorded further afield are the tree species Corsican pine, false acacia, bay, evergreen oak and Turkey oak, along with the following shrub species Japanese honeysuckle, butterfly-bush and Kerria japonica.

# 4 PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY

4.1 The results of the Phase 1 Habitat Survey are presented below. An annotated Phase 1 Habitat Survey Drawing is provided in Appendix A, Figure 1. This drawing illustrates the location and extent of all habitat types recorded on site. Photographs taken during the field survey are presented in Appendix B. The Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken on 10th October 2024.

4.2 Table 5 details the weather conditions at the time of the survey.

| Parameter | Condition |
|---|---|
| Temperature (ºC) | 10 |
| Cloud (%) | 100% |
| Wind | 1 |
| Precipitation | Dry. (ground damp) |
| Notes | Preceding night mild, overcast. |

**Table 5: Weather Conditions During Field Survey**

## 4.1 Survey Constraints and Limitations

4.3 The survey was undertaken in October, which is considered sub-optimal (optimal times are March – September inclusive, when a majority of plant species are in flower). However, the weather had remained mild, without frost, and trees were still in leaf. The majority of flora generally expected to be present within the type of habitats that comprise the site should still have been evident.

## 4.2 Habitats

4.4 The following habitat types were recorded on site during the field survey:

- Buildings and hardstanding;
- Amenity grassland;
- Introduced shrub;
- Individual scattered trees;
- Boundary features (overgrown hedge and fences); and
- Flowerbed.

4.5 These habitats are described and assessed in Table 6 below. They are not in order of ecological importance.

| **Habitat** | **Photo** | **Description** | **Assessment** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Buildings and hardstanding | Photo 1 | The dominant habitat present on-site. A series of interconnected brick-built single-storey buildings linked to a chalet bungalow to the south. Hardstanding in the form of tarmac at the south of the site (Photo 1), and to the north and east of the site bordering the buildings (Photo 2).<br><br>Crazy paving is also present, particularly within the central garden area. Some vegetation is establishing in cracks, including butterfly-bush, fleabane and rough grasses (Photo 3). | No ecological value. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | <br>Photo 2<br> <br>Photo 3 | An extensive gravelled area sits to the south of the site, sparsely vegetated with colonizing annuals and perennials (Photo 4). | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Photo 4 | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Amenity grassland | Photo 5 | Amenity grassland. Neglected grassland area, species poor. Species present include dandelion, creeping cinquefoil and the grass species creeping bent (Photo 5). | Negligible ecological value. |
| Introduced shrub | | Present in planted beds in the central garden and interspersed within boundary planting and hedge, where growth is sparse (Photo 2). Species present include snowberry, cherry laurel, common privet, hydrangea and dwarf conifers. | Low ecological value. Limited in extent, but may support nesting birds. |
| Individual scattered trees | | Trees 1 and 2; Coppiced ash trees with some sign of ash dieback.<br>Trees 3-13; Row of semi-mature, closely planted introduced conifers, possibly overgrown hedge.<br>Photo 5 includes trees 1 and 2 with trees 3-13 behind the building. | Low ecological value. Limited in extent, but may support nesting birds.<br>No potential for roosting bats. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Boundary features | Photo 6 | Overgrown non-native conifer hedge confined by low retaining wall, backed by timber fencing to the eastern and southern boundaries of the site. Occasional introduced shrub present, poor, spindly growth due to shading. Photo 6 shows the boundary to the south of the site. | Low ecological value, but may support nesting birds and provide foraging opportunities for birds and bats. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Boundary feature.<br>Target Note 2. | <br>Photo 7 | Western boundary. Boundary marked by low wire mesh fence and introduced shrub extends into margin of adjacent car-park. Species present include cherry laurel and common privet. Some ivy and bramble is present (Photo 7). See also Target Note 2. | Low ecological value, but may support nesting birds and provide foraging opportunities. |
| Flowerbed.<br>Target note 1. | <br>Photo 8 | Small, neglected flowerbed containing annual and perennial species, native and introduced, with species including feverfew, Calendula, hebe and purple toadflax.<br>Photo 8. Target note 1. | Low ecological value due to limited extent. |

**Table 6: Phase 1 Habitats and Assessment**

## 4.3 Fauna

4.12 The time of year at which the survey is undertaken will affect species or field signs directly recorded during the survey.

**Birds**

4.13 The following bird species were recorded on site during the survey: wood-pigeon and magpie. Disused bird feeders were present in the garden (Target Note 3).

**Mammals**

4.14 No evidence of any mammal species was recorded from the proposed area of works.

## 4.4 Invasive Plant Species

4.15 No species were noted that are included within Schedule 9 of the WCA act (1981). However, the time of year that the survey was undertaken may mean that some perennial species were less likely to be detected, in particular three-cornered leek *Allium triquetrum* and Montbretia *Crocosmia x crocosmiiflora*. Species that are considered invasive but commonly found in amenity and garden planting schemes, present within the site include garden privet and cherry laurel.

Butterfly-bush *Buddleja davidii* is becoming established in cracks in paving close to buildings.

# 5 PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT

## 5.1 Survey Constraints and Limitations

5.2 The exterior and interior assessments were undertaken on 10th October 2024.

**Exterior:** Preceding weather had been mild but with rain, so any external indications of bats (e.g. droppings, feeding remains) may have been flushed away.

The buildings comprised three main buildings and one wooden outhouse, and were all untenanted at the time of survey. For the purpose of this report they are identified and marked on the site plan and roof plan as B1 (main building), B2 (reception building), B3 (extension) and B4 (outhouse).

A roof plan and locations of features with bat suitability is provided in Appendix B figure 1.

## 5.2 Exterior

The locations of features with bat potential are indicated on the roof plan Appendix B, Figure 1. Photographs are provided in Appendix B.

**B1 main building:** Brick-built and painted chalet bungalow with tiled, gabled porch to the front (south-east), Photo 3. Single-storey flat-roofed (bitumen-felted) kitchen extension to the rear with attached open lean-to (Photo 4). The building and roof is in overall good condition, but with some unevenness to the roof tiles at the southern and western ends of the building. The south-western gable end has hanging tiles with one tile missing. Therefore, this building is considered to have **low bat potential** (Appendix B, Figure 1 and Photo 2, features F1 and F2).

**B2 reception building:** Single storey brick-built and painted building with tiled gable and valley roof. Brickwork in apparent good condition. Flat-roofed extension to the front, Appendix B, Photo 5. Flat, bitumen-roofed extension to the rear.

The north-west facing gable end at the junction with B3 extension has uneven hanging tiles and uneven roof tiles on the slope. There is also apparent repair and replacement to the ridge tiles, see Appendix B, Photo 7, feature F3. Therefore, this building is considered to have **low bat potential.**

**B3 extension:** Brick-built and painted single storied building, with tiled cross-hipped roof. Small tiled canopy overhangs rear entrance. Building in good condition, the roof being undamaged and free of gaps (Appendix B, Photos 1 and 2). Therefore, this building is considered to have **negligible bat potential.**

**B4 outhouse:** Detached timber outhouse with lightly-gabled, bitumen-felted roof, with an open lean-to shelter attached (Appendix B, Photos 7 and 8). Therefore, this building is considered to have **negligible bat potential.**

## 5.3 Interior

5.4

**B1 main building:** Viewed through loft hatch. Small narrow space at apex of building with central chimney in apparent good condition. Bitumen lining to tiles. Space densely insulated with roll fibre, dusty, cobwebby, unswept, odour free, and with no light 'bleeding in'. No evidence of bats located (Appendix B, Photo 9). Therefore, this building is considered to have **negligible bat potential.**

**B2 reception building:** Viewed through loft hatch. Thick roll insulation between rafters, bitumen lining to tiles, dusty and with cobwebs. The timbers showed some signs of water ingress. No light 'bleeding in' from outside (Appendix B, Photo 11). Therefore, this building is considered to have **low bat potential.**

**B3 extension:** Low, narrow space. Thick roll insulation between rafters, bitumen lining to tiles. Space clean, dry, and odour free throughout. No light 'bleeding in' externally (Appendix B, Photo 10). Therefore, this building is considered to have **negligible bat potential.**

**B4 outhouse:** Unlined, had been used for storage with chest freezers and shelving. No evidence to suggest the presence of bats. The door was unlocked and open. (Appendix B, Photos 7 and 8). Therefore this building is considered to have **negligible bat potential**.

# 6 EVALUATION and CONCLUSIONS

## 6.1 Habitats

The areas of hardstanding, gravel, amenity grassland, introduced shrub, overgrown conifer hedge and trees that may be impacted by the proposals are considered to be of **negligible** ecological value, but with the **low potential for bats to roost in the B1 main and B2 reception buildings.**

## 6.2 Statutory Sites

The site is not adjacent to nor does it have any connectivity with statutory sites, but it does lie within the Zone of Influence for recreational impacts on one or more European sites and the catchment of a European site (Habitats) vulnerable to nutrient impacts. However, it is considered that there is **low potential for impacts** given the scale and nature of the development.

## 6.3 Non-statutory Habitats and Sites

The site is neither close to, nor directly connected to, any non-statutory conservation sites, Priority habitats or other habitats of principle importance. Given the scale and nature of the proposed development **no impacts are anticipated.**

## 6.4 Species

### 6.5 Fauna excluding birds and bats

Records were sparse for fauna excluding birds and bats. With the exception of slow-worm (260 m ESE) there are no records for fauna within 600 m of the site, and none for badger within a kilometre. The site does not possess features to attract or shelter notable or protected species, nor connectivity with significant suitable habitats. Stag beetle dominated the invertebrate records for the study area, but the site does not possess the deadwood resource needed to support this species. **No impacts on notable or protected fauna (with the exception of birds and bats) are**

**anticipated in the absence of mitigation or controls, and no further surveys necessary.**

## Bats

6.6 **Commuting and foraging.** Fourteen bat species have potentially been recorded within a 2 km radius of the site. The less common species such as Bechsteins and natterers bats were recorded at some distance to the north, where there is more suitable habitat for them (woodland, farmland, open countryside etc.). The most commonly recorded bats, common and Soprano pipistrelles, are more generalist, with the closest and most recent records being south of the site. The site is limited in extent, located within an urban setting, and has poor connectivity with other suitable habitat, although there is an isolated area of deciduous woodland 30 m to the south. Therefore, it is considered that there is a **low risk of impacts on foraging and commuting bats in the absence of controls.**

**Roosting bats.**

Building 4 (outhouse) has negligible bat potential.

Building 3 (extension) has negligible bat potential, having narrow, sealed loft space and no apparent external features.

The two additional buildings (Buildings 1 and 2) have small loft spaces but external features that suggest they may have the potential to shelter bats, in particular those crevice-roosting bat species such as common and Soprano pipistrelles.

Building 1 (main building) **Low bat potential** due to limited external features**.**

Building 2 (reception building) **Low bat potential** due to limited external features and limited internal inspection.

**Therefore, there is a high risk of impact on roosting bats in the absence of mitigation and controls. Further surveys are necessary, with mitigation dependant on results to ensure any works proceed lawfully.**

5.5 In Britain all bat species and their roosts are legally protected, by both domestic and international legislation. This means you may be committing a criminal offence if you:

- Deliberately take, injure or kill a wild bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats;
- Damage or destroy a place used by bats for breeding or resting (roosts) (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time);
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat of a species found in the wild in the EU (dead or alive) or any part of a bat; and/or
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

### Birds

5.6 Those species with the potential to be impacted by any development are those that may opportunistically nest or forage within trees, conifer hedges and introduced shrub. **Therefore, there is a risk of impact on nesting birds in the absence of controls.**

5.7 Nesting birds and their nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

### Invasive species

5.7 Those plant species identified as being present within the site are those commonly found in gardens and amenity planting schemes. Butterfly-bush has established on-site in cracks and gaps in paving and seeds prolifically.

Whilst no WCA schedule 9 species were found within the site, it is possible that perennials may have been dormant, in particular three-cornered leek and Montbretia, which have both been recorded nearby. **Therefore, it is considered that there is a moderate risk of impacts in the absence of controls.**

# 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

### Designated Sites

7.1 Although the site does not form part of any statutory or non-statutory designated nature conservation site, there is the risk of impacts on SSSIs and the European designated sites they encompass. **Further assessment (including Habitat Regulations Assessment with nutrient budget calculation) and consultation with Natural England may be necessary.**

### Trees

7.2 Root protection measures should be employed with respect to any retained trees within or adjacent to the site which might be impacted by works. Trees should be protected in accordance with BS5837: 2012 "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations" (British Standard 2012).

### Bats

7.3 **Roosting:** B1 main building and B2 reception building have external features that may shelter roosting bats and have both been categorised as having **low** bat potential.

**A single emergence survey** (at dusk, between May and August inclusive) should be undertaken to assess whether the buildings are accessed by bats. **Should results be positive, two further surveys will be required** (between May and September inclusive), to characterise the type of roost/s present, and **a Natural England mitigation licence (European Protected Species Mitigation Licence - EPSML) (or potentially a low-impact class licence, LICL) would be required to allow works to proceed lawfully.**

7.4 **Commuting and foraging:** There is low potential for bats to cross the site during commuting and foraging activities. If additional external lighting is installed, there are a number of methods which can minimise negative impact on bats from lighting (ILP, 2023), including:

- Minimising the use of external lighting to that required for security purposes;
- Use of timers for security lighting where required;
- Avoiding light spill by using accessories such as shields, louvres, hoods and cowls and careful design/choice of luminaire to be used; and
- Minimising the height of the lighting column.

These controls should be implemented as appropriate and linked to any mitigation measures proposed as part of any new development or refurbishment.

### Birds

7.5 The trees, shrubs and conifer hedges, present at site margins potentially provide suitable bird foraging and nesting habitat.

Nesting birds and their nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Any vegetation clearance or disturbance required as part of the works should be undertaken during the period October to February,, to avoid the bird nesting season. If this is not possible, prior to works commencing on site a check for nesting birds should be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist up to no sooner than 48 hours prior to works taking place. If active nests are located, then these will need to be left in situ until the chicks have fledged and the nest is no longer in use to avoid any potential offences relating to nesting birds.

If any nests are found, the nests are to be protected by an exclusion zone around the nest. Works may then proceed up to, but not within, this exclusion zone. Works may be completed once an ecologist has confirmed that the young have fledged the nest. If nesting birds are found at any time during clearance works, work must stop immediately, and an ecologist must be consulted immediately.

### 7.6 Invasive flora

**Buddleija (butterfly-bush)** is a prolific seeder and has become established into cracks and gaps in paving and brickwork, with the potential to damage buildings and spread into the wild, so should be removed and disposed of appropriately.

**Species listed in WCA Schedule 9 may be present, in particular three-cornered leek and Montbretia. It is an offence to cause these to grow in the wild.** If any groundworks are to take place then it would be advisable to survey for invasive species, and any contaminated soil and plant material managed or treated and/or disposed of appropriately.

### Other Legally Protected Species

7.7 The proposed development is not anticipated to impact on any other legally protected species, and therefore no further surveys are recommended in respect of these.

### Ecological Enhancement Opportunities

7.8 Within any proposed design for the site there are opportunities for the project to deliver long-term enhancements for biodiversity. Enhancement measures applicable to a site of this nature include:

- Bird and bat boxes surface mounted onto buildings or trees.
- Providing insect boxes and designing soft landscaping using plant species known to have benefits for biodiversity (such as plants with nectar-rich flowers and berries to provide a food source for invertebrates and birds).
- Creating a log pile to support stag beetle.

# 8 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

## 8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 An overview of the framework of British legislation and policy which underpins nature conservation and is a material consideration in the planning process in England, with relevance to the proposed development. The reader should refer to the original legislation for the definitive interpretation.

## 8.2 International Statutory Designations

8.2.1 **Special Areas of Conservation** (SACs) are designated sites for the protection of European protected species and habitats, in accordance with Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna (EC Habitats Directive).

8.2.2 **Special Protection Areas** (SPAs) protect important bird populations and sites on which they depend, in accordance with Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (EC Birds Directive).

8.2.3 **Ramsar** Sites are identified under the Ramsar Convention of Wetlands of International Importance (1971). These sites are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside act 1981 (as amended) and CRoW Act (2000).

8.2.4 **The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017** implements the Habitats and Birds Directives, provides the basis for the protection of European protected species and informs the national licencing system (EPSML licences) to enable lawful works with the potential to impact on them.

## 8.3 National Statutory Designations

8.3.1 **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)** are notified under WCA 1981, and are national conservation sites designated for their floral, faunal or geological features, and are generally considered to be irreplacable. **Impact Risk Zones (IRZs)** are Natural England's tool to guide the assessment of anticipated impacts on SSSIs by proposed developments, based on activities and proximity to sites.

8.3.2 **National Nature Reserves (NNRs)** are statutory reserves established under the WCA 1981, and are important sites for nature conservation.

8.3.3 **Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)** are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, and are owned, leased or managed by the local authority.

## 8.4 Non-Statutory Designations

8.4.1 **Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)** sites with 'substantive nature conservation value' identified at a local level, ranging from single ponds or road verges to woodlands and grassland, and in public or private ownership. These sites may also be referred to as 'Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation' (SINC), Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) or 'County Wildlife Sites' (CWS). Selection criteria is provided in DEFRA (2006) Local Sites Guidance on their Identification, Selection and Management.

## 8.5 National Legislation

8.5.1 **Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)** provides legal protection for SSSIs, lists of protected species both flora and fauna (Schedules) and details the possible offences that apply to these species. Section 14 refers to invasive non-native species.

8.5.2 **The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000** strengthens the protection of SSSIs and protected species, and requires that species and habitats that are included within Biodiversity Action Plans (UK BAP and LBAP) are taken into consideration. The species list in section 74 has been superseded by NERC S41.

8.5.3 **The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006** sets out the responsibilities of Local Authorities in conserving biodiversity. Section 41 lists habitats and species of principle importance.

## 8.6 National Planning Policy Framework

8.6.1 **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** was revised on 19th December 2023, replacing previous iterations. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The emphasis is on sustainable development, meeting economic, social and environmental objectives. Section 15 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' sets out the expectations regarding integrated provision for biodiversity. These include 'Habitats and Biodiversity 186: When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply principles including:

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.

7.6.2 **National Planning Practice Guidance**

In support of the NPPF, The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government produced the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), available online at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment. This includes a section entitled 'Natural Environment: Biodiversity, ecosystems and green infrastructure' which sets out information with respect to the following: **the statutory basis for minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains** where possible; the local planning authority's requirements for planning for biodiversity; what local ecological networks are and how to identify and map them; the sources of ecological evidence;

the legal obligations on local planning authorities and developers regarding statutory designated sites and protected species; the considerations for local (non-statutory) designated sites; definition of green infrastructure; where biodiversity should be taken into account in preparing a planning application; how development can enhance biodiversity; how policy is applied to avoid, mitigate or compensate for significant harm to biodiversity and how mitigation and compensation measures can be ensured.

## 8.7 Biodiversity Net Gain

8.7.1 Biodiversity Net Gain became mandatory from 12th February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This requires that "subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). The objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development value of the onsite habitat".

Further guidance is available online:

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain.

"Where an applicant believes the development would be subject to the biodiversity gain condition, the application must be accompanied by the minimum information set out in Article 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015".

## 7.8 The Local Plan

8.7.2 The current plan guiding development within the borough of Havant is the Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011, supplemented by the Local Plan (Allocations) adopted in 2014.

7.8.2 **Policy CS11 Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough** and **DM8 Conservation, Protection and Enhancement of Existing Natural Features** have relevance to the proposed development.

## 8.9 Other Legislation

8.9.1 **The Protection of Badgers Act (1992)** legally protects badgers and their setts. It is illegal to: wilfully capture, injure or kill a wild badger, be in possession of a live or dead badger, destroy, damage or obstruct access to an active badger sett, and / or disturb a badger while it is occupying a sett.

8.9.2 **Wild Mammals (Protection) Act (1996)** means that it is an offence to mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

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# APPENDIX A

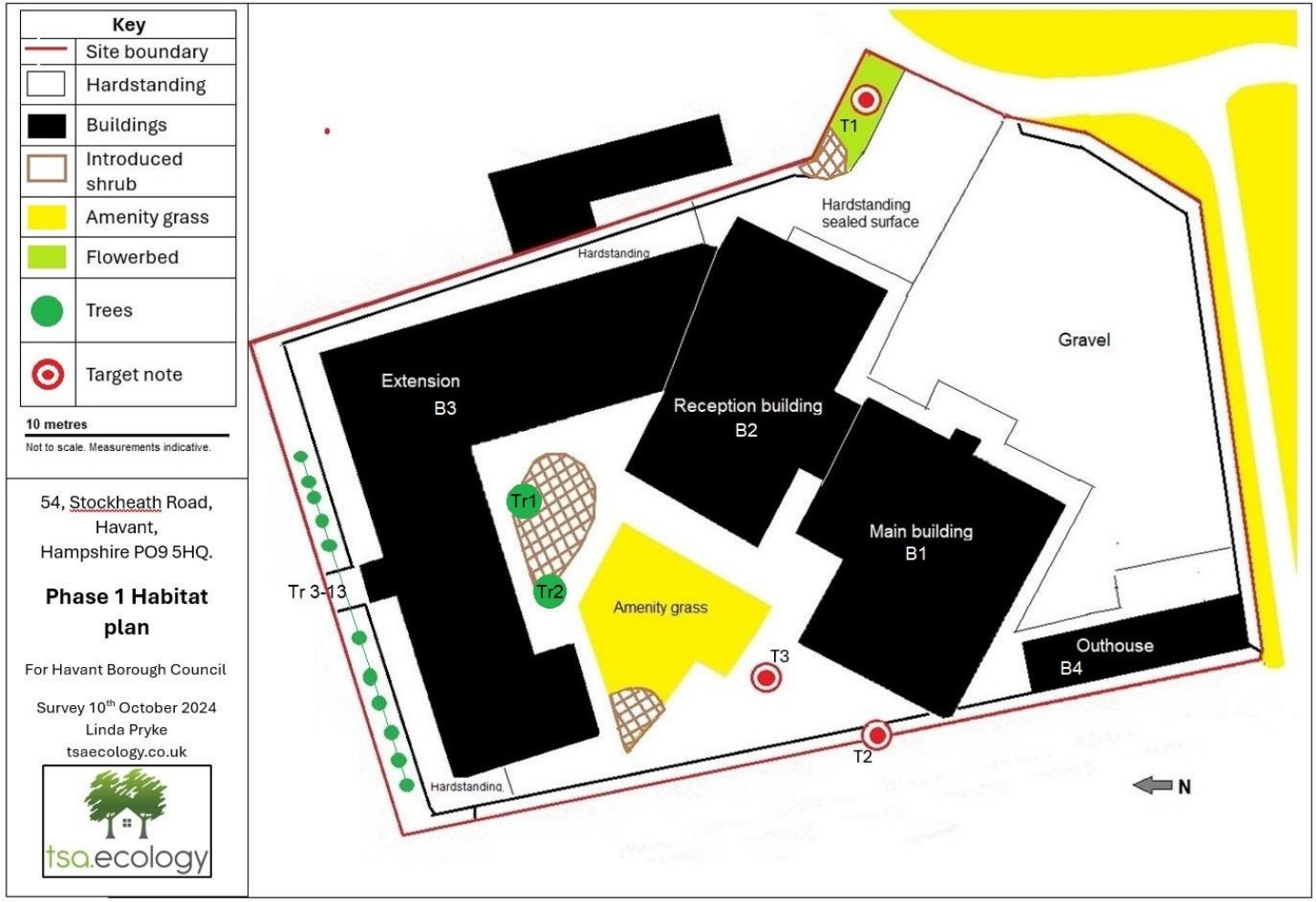


**Figure 1: Phase 1 Habitat Map**

| Species | Scientific name | Abundance (DAFOR*) |
|---|---|---|
| Buddleja | *Buddleja davidii* | R |
| Red valerian | *Centranthus ruber* | R |
| Hawthorn | *Crataegus monogyna* | R (single sapling) |
| Canadian fleabane | *Conyza canadensis* | O |
| Willowherb sp. | *Epilobium sp.* | O |
| Wood avens | *Geum urbanum* | R |
| Ivy | *Hedera helix* | R |
| Hydrangea | *Hydrangea macrophylla* | R |
| Perforate st Johns wort | *Hypericum perforatum* | R |
| Purple toadflax | *Linaria purpurea* | O |
| Dandelion | *Taraxacum sp.* | O |
| Dock | *Rumex sp.* | R |
| Yorkshire fog | *Holcus lanatus* | R |
| Ox-eye daisy | *Leucanthemum vulgare* | O |
| Common toadflax | *Linaria vulgaris* | R |
| Privet | *Ligustrum sp.* | R |
| Honeysuckle | *Lonicera periclymenum* | R |
| Yarrow | *Achillea millefolium* | R |
| Creeping cinquefoil | *Potentilla reptans* | O |
| Lungwort | *Pulmonaria sp.* | O |
| Bristly ox-tongue | *Picris echioides* | R |
| Ribwort plantain | *Plantago lanceolata* | R |
| Greater plantain | *Plantago major* | R |
| Meadowgrass | *Poa sp.* | O |
| Selfheal | *Prunella vulgaris* | R |
| Cherry | *Prunus sp* | R |
| Cherry Laurel | *Prunus lauroceracus* | R |
| Cultivated pear (conference) | *Pyrus communis* | R |
| Oak | *Quercus sp.* | R |
| Bramble | *Rubus fruticosus agg.* | R |
| Elder | *Sambucus nigra* | R |
| Dock | *Rumex sp.* | R |
| Soapwort | *Saponaria officinalis* | R |
| Common Ragwort | *Senecio jacobaea* | R |
| Snowberry | *Symphoricarpos albus* | R |
| Feverfew | *Tanacetum parthenium* | R |
| White clover | *Trifolium repens* | O |
| Nettle | *Urtica dioica* | R |
| Ash | *Fraxinus excelsior* | R |
| DAFOR: Relative abundance within the site.<br>D=Dominant, A= Abundant, F= Frequent, O= Occasional, R= Rare. Local A= Abundant in localized patches. | | |

**Table 1: Flora Recorded during Phase 1 Habitat Survey**

## APPENDIX B

| **Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.** Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th ed.)* The Bat Conservation Trust, London. | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Suitability** | **Roosting habitats** | **Commuting and foraging habitats** |
| **None** | No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year (ie. A complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels). | No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of year (ie. No habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats). |
| **Negligible[a]** | No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however a small amount of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion. | No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small amount of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour. |
| **Low** | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions[b] and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by large numbers of bats (ie. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats[c]). | Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight paths such as gappy hedgerows or unvegetated stream, but isolated, ie. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat.<br><br>Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub. |
| **Moderate** | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions[b] and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation - the categorisation in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed). | Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight - paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens.<br><br>Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water. |
| **High** | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions[b] and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, eg. Maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site. | Continuous, high quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge.<br><br>High quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland.<br><br>Site is close to and connected to known roosts. |
| a Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).<br>b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or disturbance.<br>c .."Mass swarming events of Common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban envionments"."Ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise." | | |

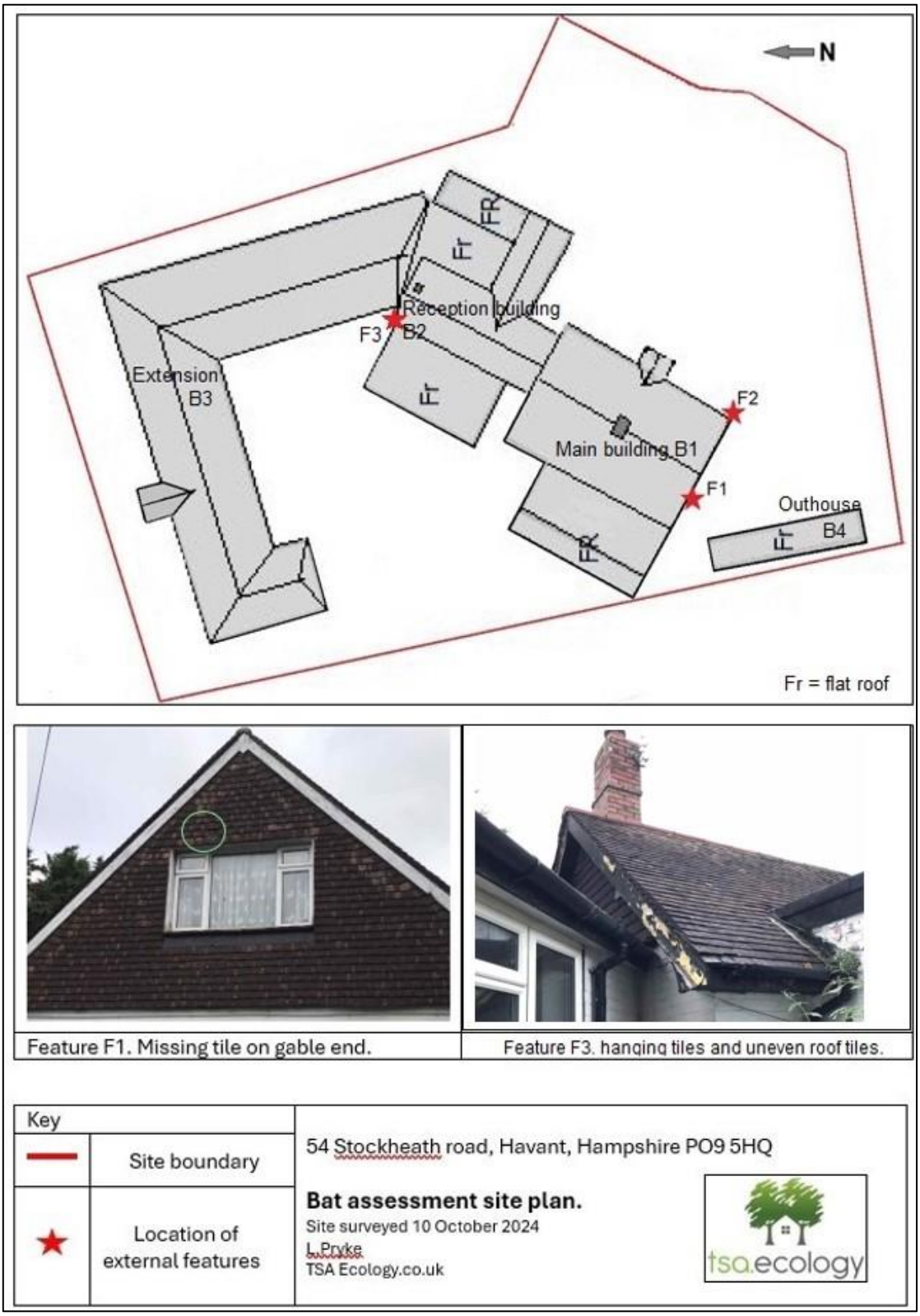


**Figure 1: Roof plan and locations of features with bat suitability**

# APPENDIX B

**Photo 1: Building 3, extension. North-facing elevation**

**Photo 2: Building 3, extension. South-facing elevation**

**Photo 3: B1, main building. South-east facing elevation**

**Photo 4: B1, main building. North-west**

**Photo 5: B2, reception building. South-east**

**Photo 6: B2, reception building**

**Photo 7: B4, outhouse exterior**

**Photo 8: B4, outhouse interior**

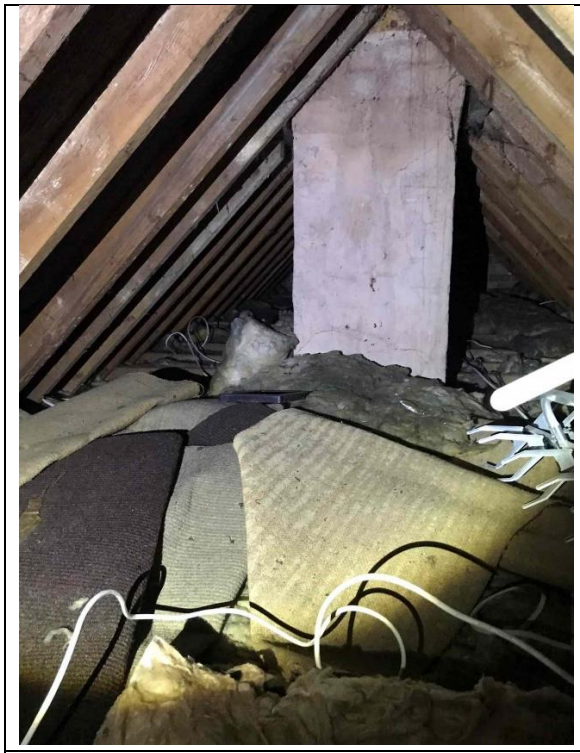

**Photo 9: B1, main building loft space**

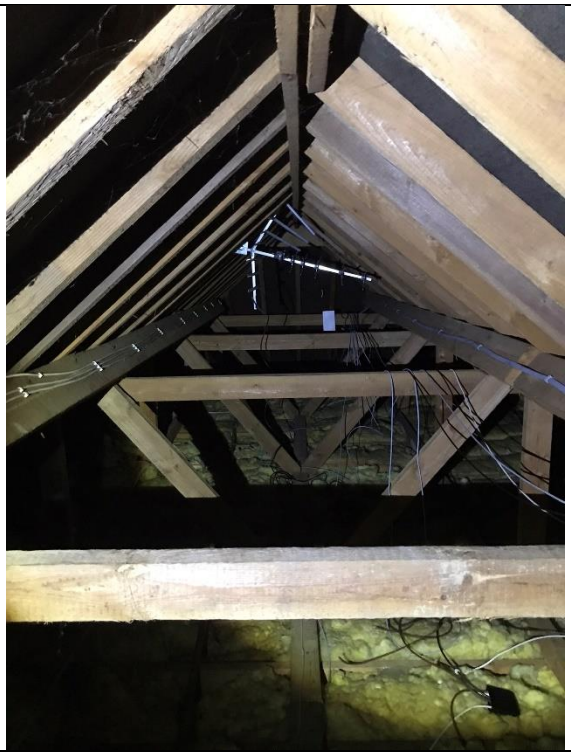

**Photo 10: B3, extension loft space**

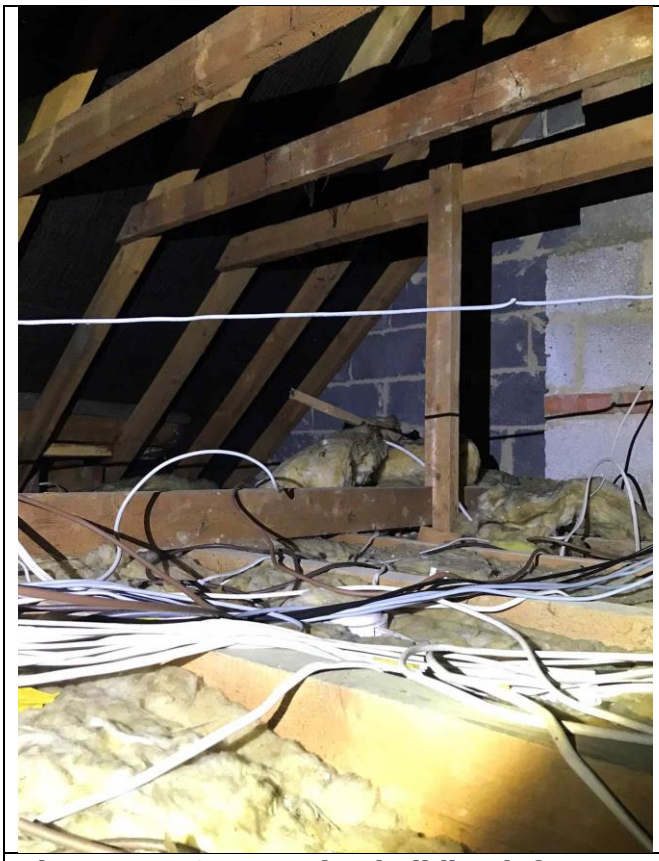

**Photo 11: B2, reception building loft space**