

Bat Activity Survey Report

Survey site:

Wintons Fishery, Folders Lane, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 0DR

Client:

Wintons Lakes Ltd

Report date:

20th October 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application for the proposal described as:

The construction of three timber cabins for overnight guest use, external timber decking areas, permeable footpaths and associated works

This report is supplementary to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report completed by Phlorum (2023).

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Draft	0.1	Mel Reid BSc (Hons) MRes AMRSB, Principal Ecologist	20/10/2025
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Updated	1.1	Mel Reid BSc (Hons) MRes AMRSB, Principal Ecologist	17/11/2025

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.
- Collins, J. (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.

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)

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1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Ltd. was instructed by Wintons Lakes Ltd to undertake Bat Activity Surveys at Wintons Fishery, Folders Lane, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 0DR (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application which describes development at the site to comprise: the construction of three timber cabins for overnight guest use, external timber decking areas, permeable footpaths and associated works (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). A plan showing the proposed development is provided in **Appendix 1**.

The aim of the Bat Activity Surveys was to determine how bats use the site for foraging and commuting in accordance with best practice guidelines and supplementary planning guidance detailed within *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins, 2023). The Bat Activity Surveys were recommended through a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) which was completed by Phlorum on 11th September 2023 (Phlorum 2023). This report found the site to have foraging and commuting value for bats, and as such recommended a series of bat transect surveys to be undertaken.

Following the results of the 2023 PEA, the Local Planning Authority (LPA), advised that they would accept a partial survey effort; with a survey to be carried out in summer and autumn. As such, only two surveys have been conducted in-line with advice from the LPA.

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference TQ 32408 17772 and has an area of approximately 3.4ha. The site is characterised by a series of fishing lakes surrounded by grassland, scrub and treelines. The site is located on the outskirts of Burgess Hill, West Sussex. The land surrounding the site to the south, east, and west is a mix of woodland, grassland, and arable fields, and the land to the north is residential. Ditchling Common is located 600m to the west of the site. A site location plan is provided in **Appendix 2**.

1.3 Scope of the Report

This report provides a description of the bat activity observed and recorded during the Bat Activity Surveys. The aim of the survey was to determine how bats use the site for foraging and commuting, including species diversity and frequency of habitat use. The report provides information on possible constraints to the proposed development as a result of bats and summarises the requirements for any mitigation proposals to achieve planning or other statutory consent and to comply with wildlife legislation. To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:

- Bat Activity Surveys of the site have been undertaken in summer (August) and autumn (September) to determine how bats use the site for foraging and commuting. This includes a walked transect complemented by the deployment of static detectors to establish a baseline of bat activity across the site.
- An impact assessment has been completed, based on the determined usage of the site by foraging and commuting bats and the anticipated impacts resulting from the proposed development.
- Recommendations for mitigation have been made to reduce anticipated impacts to foraging and commuting bats to an acceptable level.
- Opportunities for the enhancement of the site through habitat management and creation have been identified.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Walked Transect Surveys (Nighttime Bat Walkover Surveys)

Walked transect surveys were completed at the site in accordance with survey guidance (Collins 2023). A total of two walked transect surveys were completed in summer (August) and autumn (Sept). All surveys were completed at dusk, whereby surveys commenced at sunset and progressed for 2 after sunset.

The site was covered using a single transect route, which is shown on the plan in **Appendix 3**. Each walked transect survey involved two surveyors. The route focused on providing a site wide coverage of features of value to foraging and commuting bats identified through the PEA. Any bats observed/ heard were recorded. Where possible, information collected on those bats observed included time, direction of flight, use of landscape, flight characteristics, and behaviour. Bats were recorded during each survey using a combination of frequency division and heterodyne bat detectors, comprising an Echo Meter Touch 2 connected to an iPad alongside a Bat Box Duet. Notes were taken using the relevant survey sheets and printed maps to record bat activity.

The surveys were undertaken during optimal weather conditions, when wind levels were below 4 on the Beaufort wind force scale and temperatures were no lower than 10°C. The walked transect survey dates and weather conditions are shown below in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Walked Transect Survey Timings and Weather Conditions.

Transect Survey	Date	Sunset	Time Start/End	Cloud Cover (% cover)	Wind (Beaufort)	Rain	Temp (°C) Start/ End
1	27/08/2025	19:56	19:56/21:56	95	1	None	17/15
2	29/09/2025	18:42	18:42/20:42	0	1	None	18/12

2.2 Static Detector Surveys

To supplement the walked transect surveys, two automated static bat detectors (Wildlife Acoustics Song Meter Mini BAT) were deployed on site for five consecutive nights during summer (August) and autumn (Sept). The locations selected for deployment are summarised in **Table 2** below and shown on the plan in **Appendix 3**. The detectors were programmed to record from 30 minutes before sunset until 30 minutes after sunrise during each of the five nights. The dates and weather conditions during the recording periods are provided in **Table 3** below.

Table 2: Automated Static Detector Locations

Static Detector Number	Grid Reference	Description of Location
1	TQ3239317739	Treeline to southern end of the site
2	TQ3242217833	Treeline to northern end of site

Table 3: Automated Static Detector Surveys Dates and Weather Conditions

Survey	Date	Average Cloud Cover (OKTAS)	Average Wind (Beaufort)	Rainfall	Average Temperature (°C)
August	21/08/2023	0	1	None	12
	22/08/2023	0	1	None	16
	23/08/2023	0	1	None	14
	24/08/2023	0	1	None	14
	25/08/2023	0	1	None	15
September	22/09/2023	1	2	None	9
	23/09/2023	0	2	None	12
	24/09/2023	2	2	None	11
	25/09/2023	1	2	None	11
	26/09/2023	1	1	None	11
	27/09/2023	0	1	None	9
	28/09/2025	3	0	None	9
	29/09/2023	1	1	None	12

2.3 Bat Call Identification

Bat calls recorded using the automatic static detectors were downloaded and analysed to identify the bat species present. Bat calls were analysed using the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) Acoustic Pipeline Software. The BTO pipeline software identifies ultrasonic sound files through the application of algorithms that are able to identify all UK bat species. The BTO pipeline software provides a reliable species identification service facilitating efficient analysis of very large datasets. Notably, reliability of identification is quoted at 93-100% accuracy, evidenced through statistical significance. Further increasing reliability of data analysis, the BTO pipeline provides a probability of reliability; any identified bat calls that present a “low” reliability probability were removed from the data analysis to further enhance robustness.

2.4 Bat Data Analysis

To further examine variations in bat activity across the site, the total number of bat calls/ passes per hour was calculated for each location for each recording phase. To calculate passes per hour, the total number of passes recorded by each static detector across for each month was divided by the approximate total recording time. The approximate total recording time for each automated static detector was calculated by calculating the total recording time of the first recorded night for that month, multiplied by the number of nights each detector was in situ, i.e. five nights. Bar charts and a simple ranking procedure were used to outline general trends in the data and provide an assessment of which areas of the site were used most by foraging and commuting bats throughout the active bat season.

2.4 Surveyors

The surveys were designed and managed by Mel Reid BSc (Hons) MRes AMRSB, Principal Ecologist (Natural England Bat Class 2 Licence Number: 2024-12491-CL18-BAT). **MR** has over seven years’ experience undertaking professional bat surveys and is competent at designing, leading, and undertaking bat activity surveys and is proficient at large scale bat call data analysis and interpretation. The following surveyors undertook each site visit:

Table 4: Surveyor details for each siter visit

Transect Survey	Date	Surveyor Name (and Licence if applicable)	Surveyor Experience
1	27/08/2025	Vicki Clarke Lily Harman	1 year 2 years
2	29/09/2025	Rachel Cole Liz Hadland	2 years 1 year

2.3 Limitations

The weather conditions were suboptimal for a small number of recording nights during the automatic static detector survey. However, suboptimal conditions were only recorded during three nights out of thirteen throughout the surveys, i.e. where the average temperature fell below 10 degrees Celsius. However, these conditions did not persist for the entire recording period and are thus not considered to significantly impact the validity of the data. The temperatures on these nights also only dropped to just below 10 degrees, and similar levels of bat activity were still recorded. This is therefore not considered a major limitation.

3.0 Results and Evaluation

The results of the walked transect surveys and automated static detector surveys should be read in conjunction with the plan provided in **Appendix 3**, which shows the transect route, location of transect recording stops, and location of static detector deployment.

3.1 Walked Transect Surveys

Visit 1 - August

A total of three species were recorded throughout the survey including soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and noctule *Nyctalus noctule*. Soprano pipistrelles and common pipistrelles were recorded most frequently throughout the survey, alongside only a single recording of a noctule which was heard and not seen. At 20:06, a common pipistrelle was foraging in the north treeline until 20:08. At 20:11, a soprano pipistrelle was foraging in the north treeline and was continuous until 20:26. A common pipistrelle was foraging in the north treeline from 20:15 until 20:26. Common pipistrelles were foraging at 20:32, 20:34, and 20:37. Thirteen common pipistrelles were heard not seen, between 20:39 and 21:44. Four soprano pipistrelles were heard but not seen between 21:13 and 21:36.

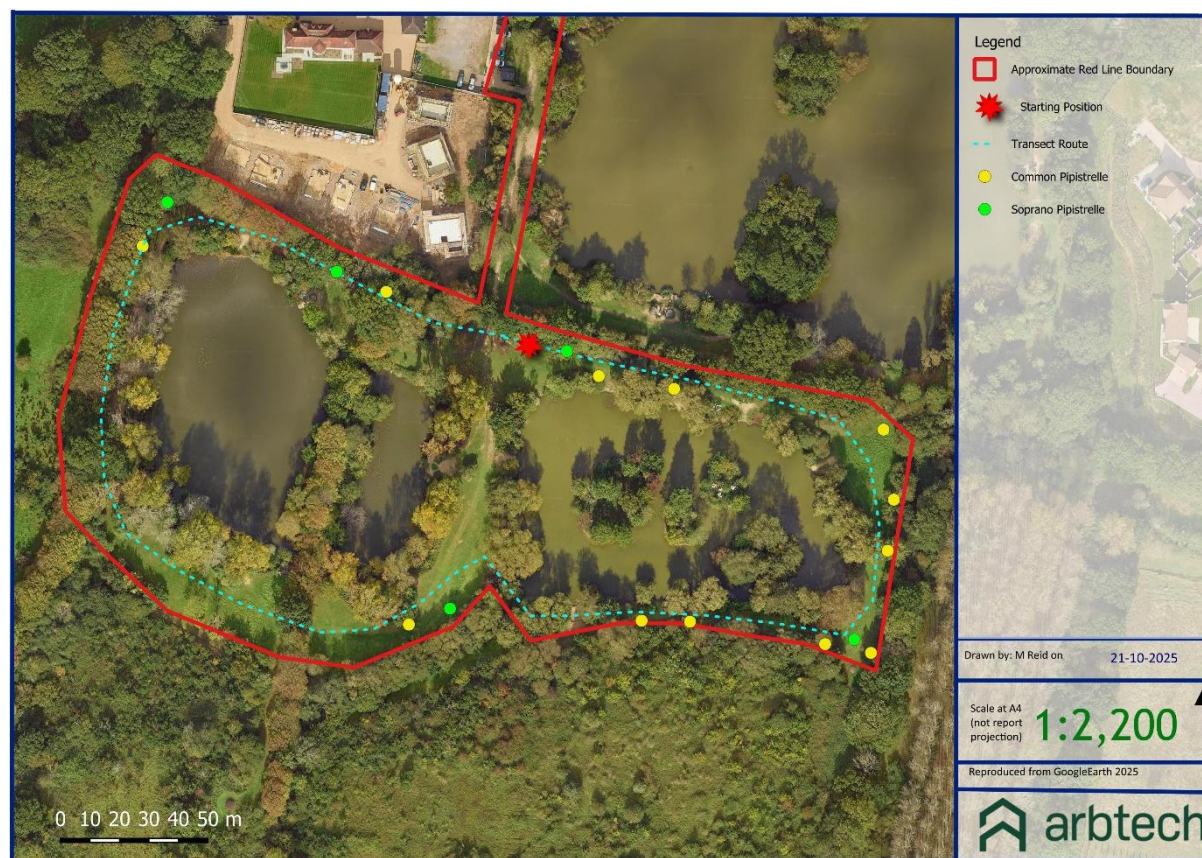
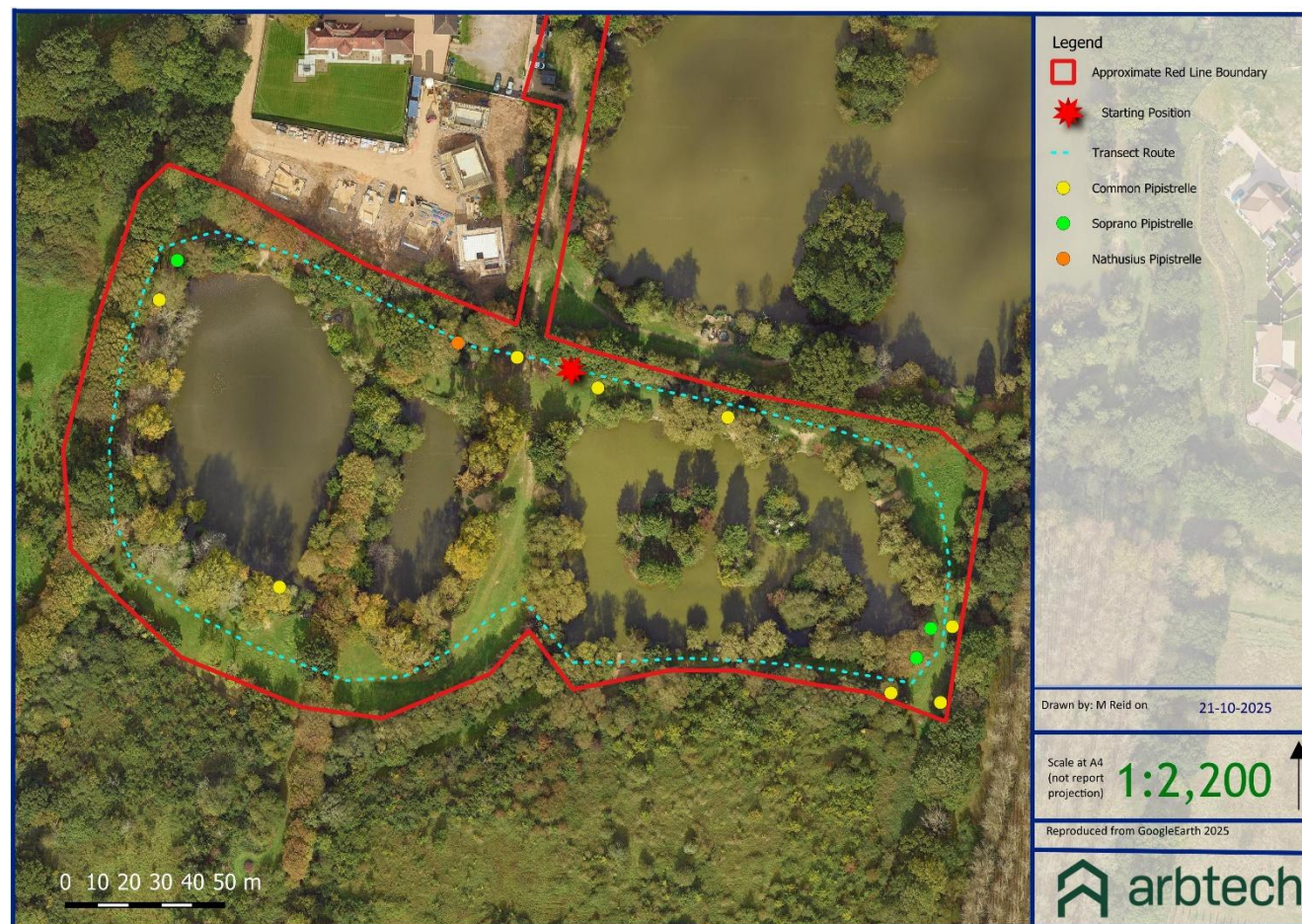


Figure 1: August Transect Survey Plan

Visit 2 - September

A total of five species were recorded throughout the survey including soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle, Nathusius's pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, noctule and brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*. The first activity seen was constant foraging along the northern treeline by common pipistrelles and Nathusius's pipistrelles at 18:42 until 19:13. At the same position, brown long eared bats were seen foraging around the same trees at 19:03. This location had further activity at 19:30 - 19:40, with foraging activity heard by soprano and common pipistrelles, but not observed. The eastern tree line boundary had consistent soprano pipistrelle foraging activity at 19:17, and again at 19:42. At 19:57 - 20:20, a common pipistrelle was seen at this location foraging around the eastern tree line using the thermal imaging camera. Activity remained consistent around the southern and western boundary, consisting of common and soprano pipistrelles from 19:23, to 20:26. Common pipistrelles were seen flying over the lakes on the thermal at 20:05 - 20:26. Noctule and brown long eared were not seen in the south at 19:47 and 20:24.

**Figure 2: September Transect Survey Plan**

Walked Transect Survey Results Overview

The following species were recorded during the walked transect surveys: common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, Nathusius's pipistrelle, noctule and brown long-eared. Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle were recorded most frequently, alongside occasional distance noctule passes, which were heard and not seen. Nathusius's pipistrelle foraging was observed on site during only the second survey.

Whilst bat activity was recorded across the site, there were notable areas where increased activity was consistently recorded during both surveys. Higher levels of bat activity were recorded along the northern and eastern treelines and at the north-western corner of the site. Although lower levels of bat activity were recorded, it is worth noting that consistent activity was also recorded along the southern tree boundary.

3.2 Static Detector Surveys

Static Detector Data Summary

A summary of the static bat detector results is provided in **Table 5**. A bar chart which shows the number of bat passes (all species) undertaken per hour for each location per survey month is provided in **Figure 11**.

Table 5: A Summary of Static Detector Survey Results

Static Detector Location	Survey Month	Bat Species and Number of Passes Per Survey					Total Number of Registrations
		Common Pipistrelle	Soprano Pipistrelle	Noctule	Brown Long-eared	Daubenton's	
1	August 2025	466	23	2	0	0	586
2		1394	232	827	0	6	2459
1	September 2025	90	23	10	3	0	126
2		556	370	39	5	12	982

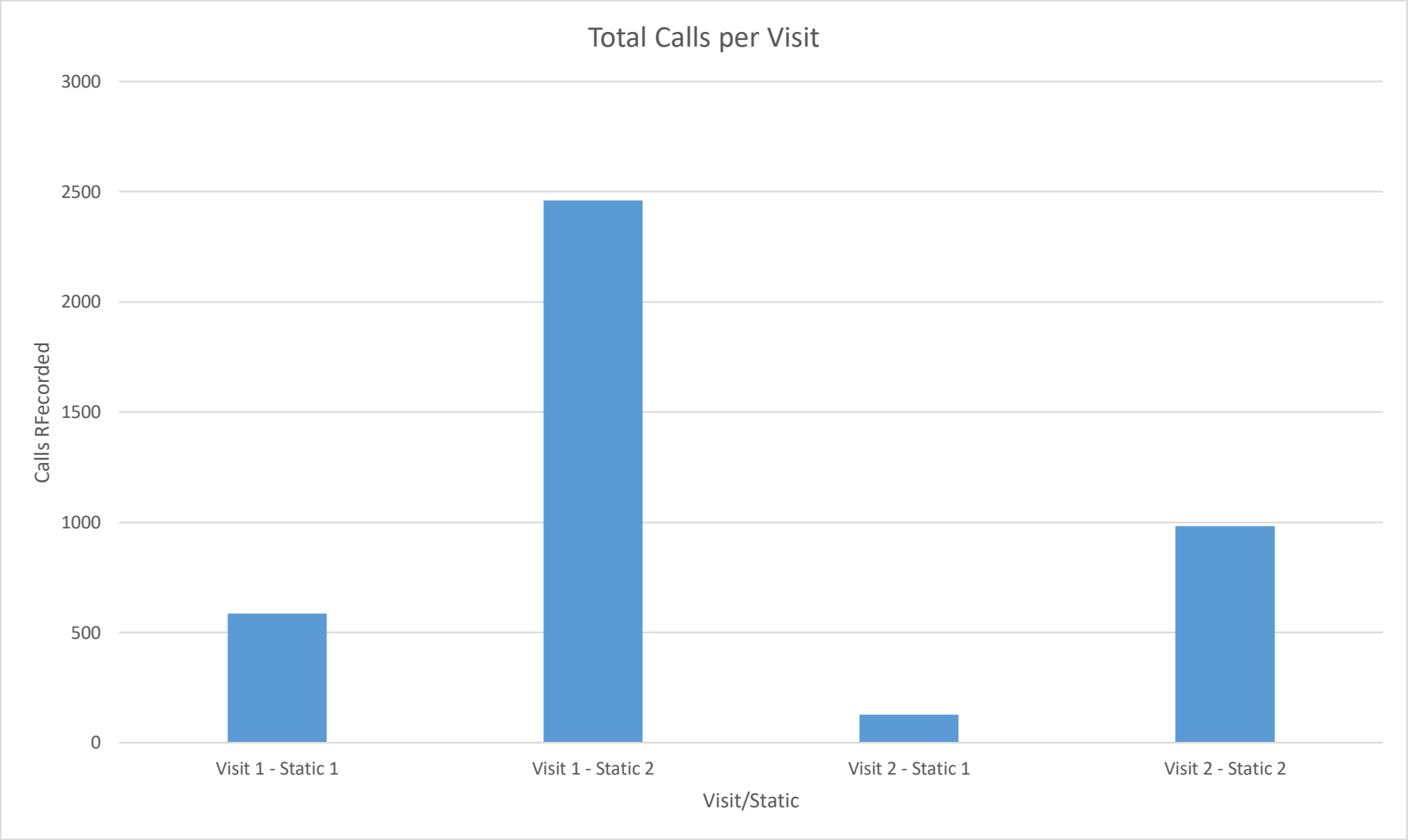


Figure 3: A bar chart showing the number of bat passes (all species) per hour at each static detector location during each survey

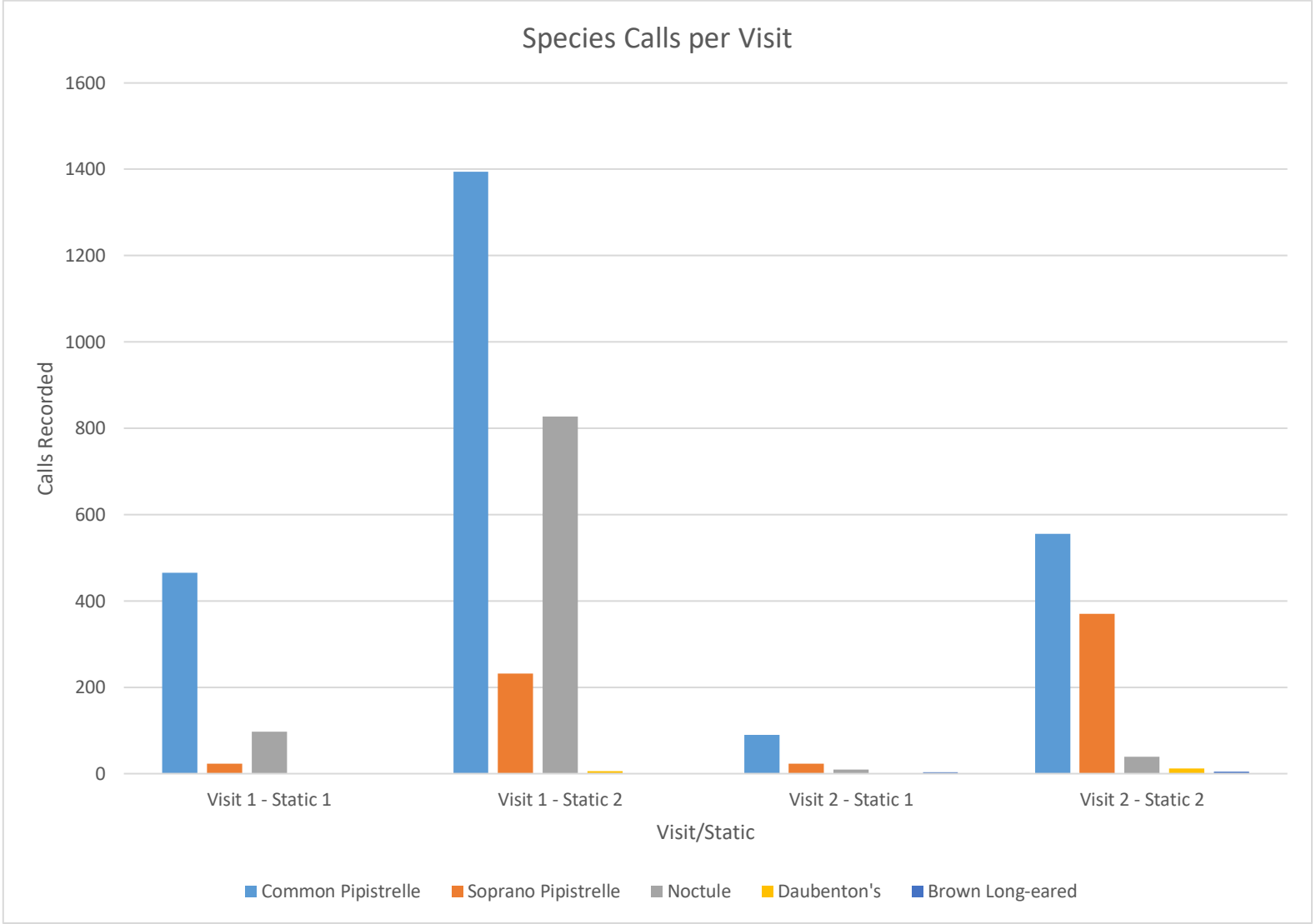


Figure 4: A bar chart showing the number of bat passes (per species) per hour at each static detector location during each survey

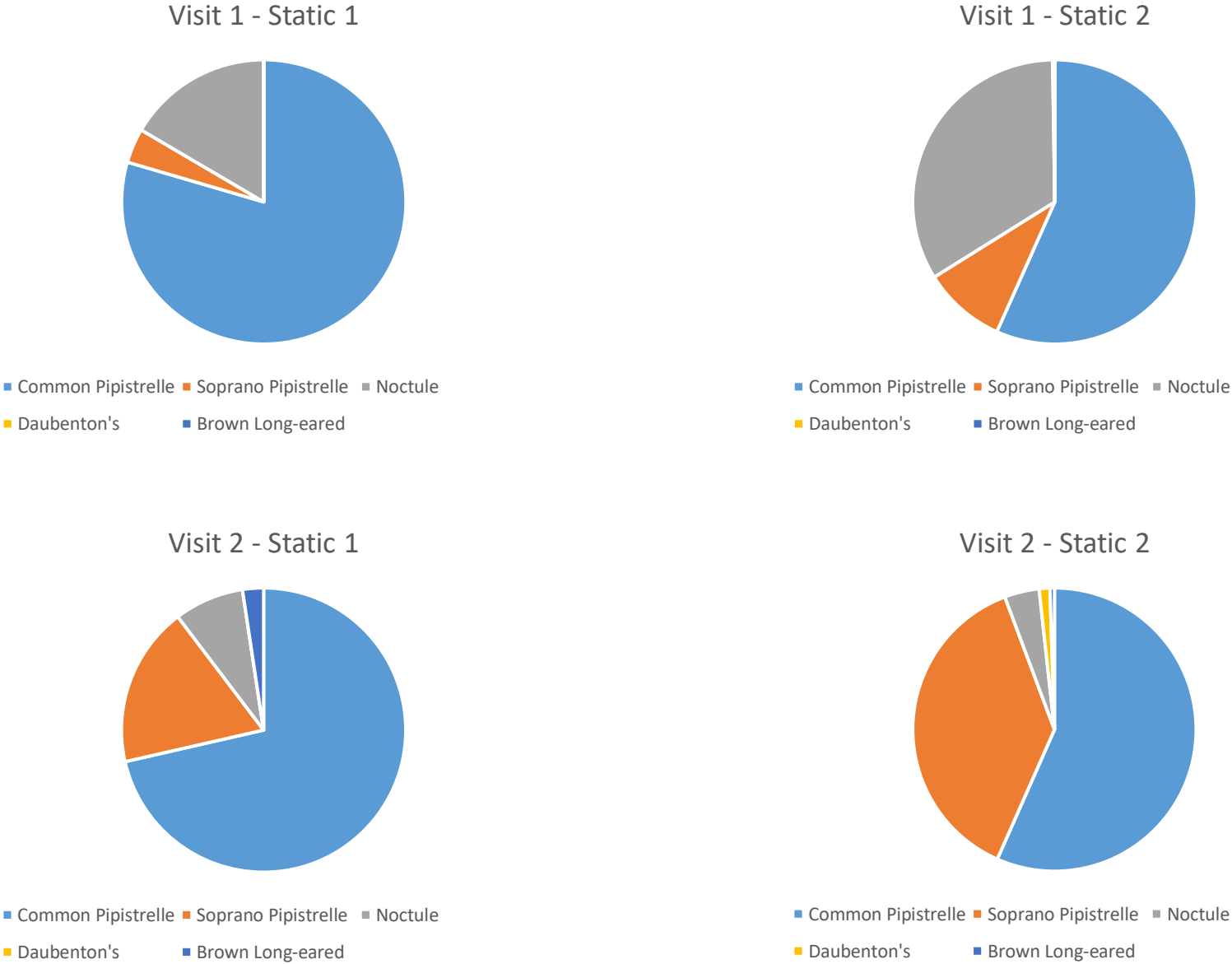


Figure 5: Pie charts showing the number of species call per hour at each static detector location during each survey

Static Detector Survey Overview

The following bat species were recorded during the static detector surveys: common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, brown long-eared and Daubentons. Common pipistrelles were the most frequently recorded throughout the survey effort (2506 passes; 60.347% of total), followed by noctule (973 passes; 23.4% of total), soprano pipistrelle (648 passes; 15.6% of total), Daubenton's (18 passes; 0.43% of total) and Brown long-eared (8 passes; 0.19% of total). As such, the vast majority of bat passes recorded throughout the year were of pipistrelles and noctules. Daubenton's and brown long-eared were recorded very infrequently and in low numbers. **Figure 4** and **Figure 5** highlight the differences between species observed across the different surveys and static locations.

The bar chart provided in **Figure 3** shows the number of bat passes by all species per hour recorded in each location during the survey period. The bar chart demonstrates that bat activity on the site was more frequent during the August survey than the September survey. September is a transitional period whereby bats generally begin to enter their hibernation phase in October. Further to this, the bar chart shows that certain locations of the site were used more frequently than others throughout the bat active period. The most bat passes were recorded at Location 2 (3441 passes), with less recorded at location 1 (712 passes).

3.3 Evaluation

The site supports a small assemblage of common species of bat, comprising five species only three of which were directly observed foraging and commuting across the site; with two of the species heard and not seen only, indicating distance commuting nearby to the site. The majority of the species recorded are common both locally and nationally, and including common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctules and brown-long eared. Whilst foraging and commuting activity recorded was dominated by species known to be common both locally and nationally including common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctules and brown long-eared, the site also supports foraging Nathusius's pipistrelle, albeit in low numbers. Nathusius's pipistrelle are nationally and local rare. Although noted on site, activity recorded was notably low indicating that the site is likely to represent a transient foraging and commuting resource for this species. As such, the site is unlikely to represent a significant resource in the context of the wider landscape. Whilst foraging and commuting activity was recorded throughout the site during the walked transect surveys, there were more apparent areas of elevated activity, predominantly along the northern and eastern treelines.

Considering the species noted during the surveys, and level of activity, the site is assessed to be of **Local Value**.

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations

Considering the results of the Bat Activity Survey, **Table 6** presents an evaluation of the value of the site for foraging and commuting bats in relation to the proposed development.

Table 6: Evaluation of the site for foraging and commuting bats.

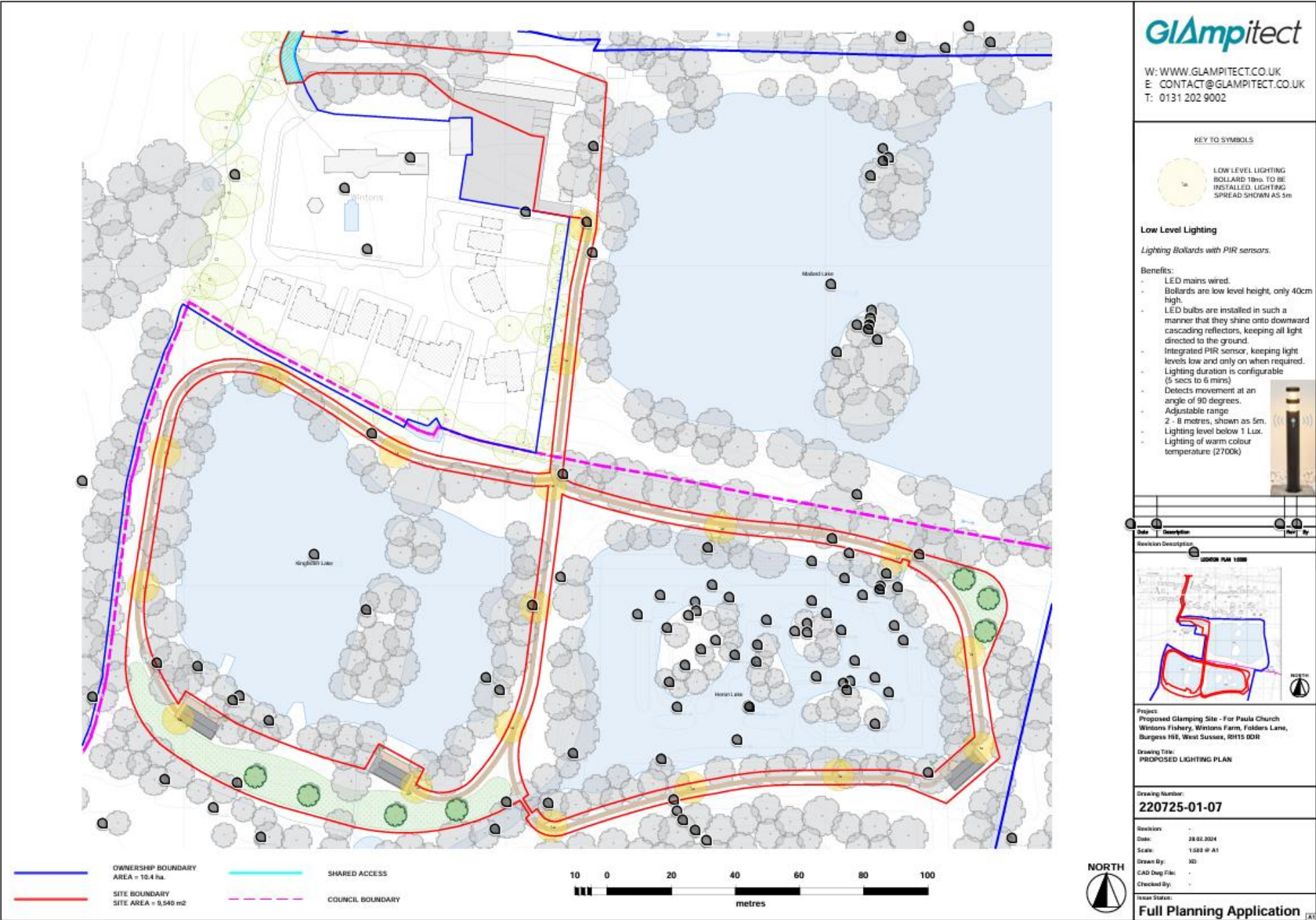
Feature	Survey Results Summary	Foreseen impacts	Proposed Mitigation, Compensation, and Enhanceemnt	Residual Impacts
Foraging and Commuting Bats	The site is assessed to be of Local Value for foraging and commuting bats.	Only two trees will be removed as part of the proposed development. As such all existing tree lines that are currently used by all species of foraging bats on site will be retained. There will therefore not be a loss of foraging or commuting habitat on site. Is it considered unlikely that disturbance resulting from the operational phase of the development, whereby indirect impacts may occur from increased artificial lighting, recreational use of the site, and noise, will occur, given that works will take place between 4-8 weeks during daylight hours only.	No further bat activity surveys are recommended. Further surveys are not considered proportionate given the findings of the active season bat activity surveys and the limited scope for impacts resulting from the development. This is predominantly due to: • The dominance of on-site activity being of locally and regionally common species; • The low frequency of Nathusius's pipistrelle activity recorded during the bat activity surveys; • The absence of any significant effects during construction works, such as increased lighting or disturbance. The proposed construction period will be between 4-8 weeks only, and will involve daylight working hours only. This will therefore have no impacts on foraging/commuting bats across the site during construction works. • The absence of long-term effects on the value of bat foraging/commuting habitat on site. There will be no habitat loss, other than the removal of low numbers of trees, which is considered insignificant due to the amount of retained suitable habitat on site. Further, current lighting and disturbance impacts from fishers will be removed, and as such there will be no increase in these sources of disturbance, with a decrease likely. A lighting plan (provided in Appendix 1) shows that proposed lighting will not impact current commuting routes or foraging areas. Therefore, long-term impacts to foraging bats are considered to be insignificant, given that the site will maintain its current viability for foraging bats.	Short term, insignificant effect during the construction and site preparation phase. No long-term residual impacts are anticipated.

5.0 Bibliography

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Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan





Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: Transect Route and Static Detector Location Plan



Appendix 4: Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

National and European Legislation Afforded to Species

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring the Secretary of State to take measures to maintain or restore wild species listed within the Regulations at a favourable conservation status.

The Regulations make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade in the animals listed in Schedule 2.

However, these actions can be made lawful through the granting of licenses by the appropriate authorities. Licenses may be granted for a number of purposes (such as science and education, conservation, preserving public health and safety), but only after the appropriate authority is satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternatives and that such actions will have no detrimental effect on wild population of the species concerned.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended) implements the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979, implemented 1982) and implements the species protection requirements of EC Birds Directive 2009/147 /EC on the conservation of wild birds in Great Britain (the birds Directive). The WCA 1981 has been subject to a number of amendments, the most important of which are through the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000).

Other legislative Acts affording protection to wildlife and their habitats include:

Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

Bats

All species are fully protected by Habitats Regulations 2010 as they are listed on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species (e.g. All bats)
- Harass a bat or a group of bats (Scotland)
- Deliberate disturbance of bat species in such a way as:
 - To impair their ability to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young;
 - To impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
 - To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place – even if bats are not occupying it at the time.

- Bats are afforded the following additional protection through the WCA as they are included on Schedule 5:
- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection
- Possess or advertise/see/exchange a bat of a species found in the wild in the EU (dead or alive) or any part of a bat

Effects on development works:

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) will be required for works are likely to affect a bat roost or an operation which are likely to result in an illegal level of disturbance to the species will require an EPSM licence. The licence is to allow derogation from the legislation through the application of appropriate mitigation measures and monitoring.

National Planning Policy**National Planning Policy Framework 2024**

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.

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.