



Earlswood Homes
Roebuck House
5 Roebuck Close
Reigate
RH2 7ER

DATE: 12th September 2025
SITE: Land at College Lane, Hurstpierpoint
REFERENCE: UES05142/01
PLANNING REFERENCE: DM/24/1139

Dear Mr Pederson,

Non-licensed Precautionary Bat Method Statement

I am writing to provide details of the required non-licensed bat method statement at Land at College Lane, Hurstpierpoint. A planning application has been granted with conditions by Mid Sussex District Council on 17th March 2025 (reference number: DM/24/1139). The application is for:

'Erection of 7 detached dwellings with new access from College Lane together with parking, landscaping and associated works.'

Earlswood Homes have commissioned United Environmental Services Ltd (UES) in August 2025 to produce this non-licensed, precautionary bat method statement to discharge condition 6 of the decision notice, which states:

'Prior to the commencement of any part of the development a Non-licensed Precautionary Method Statement for bats shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This will contain precautionary mitigation measures and/or works to reduce potential impacts to bats during the construction phase.'

The measures and/works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).'

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Previous survey information:

The proposed development is for the erection of 7 detached dwellings with new access from College Lane together with parking, landscaping and associated works. The proposals will involve the removal of several trees.

Land at College Lane was previously subject to a preliminary bat roost assessment as part of an ecological assessment undertaken by Derek Finnie Associates in March 2024 (report reference: DFA24045) during which four trees were assessed as having potential to support roosting bats due to the presence of potential roosting features (PRFs):

- T26 – Medium potential to support roosting bats
- T28, T29 and T30 – Low potential to support roosting bats.

Trees 26, 29 and 30 are set to be retained as part of the proposals; however, T28 is scheduled to be felled.

Letter objectives and structure:

This document sets out all the necessary procedures, timings and mitigation measures to avoid impacts on bats during works on site and avoid any potential breaches of protected species legislation. This report should be read in conjunction with the Ecological Assessment report prepared by Derek Finnie Associates – April 2024 (Report reference: DFA24045).

Impact assessment:

During the Ecological Assessment (report ref: DFA24045), a plum *Prunus domestica* which is scheduled to be felled to ground-level, was identified as having low potential to support roosting bats (PRF-I) due to the presence of a rot hole on the southern aspect at a height of approximately 0.7m which may provide a PRF for individual or low numbers of roosting bats (see plate 2 in the ecological assessment for PRF, see figure 1 in the ecological assessment for tree location).

No evidence of historical or current usage by roosting bats was recorded; however, bats are known to use tree roosts on a transient ad hoc basis so there is a low residual risk that bats will be present at the time that the tree is being felled.

The implementation of the mitigation measures detailed below will minimise the impact of the works on bats to negligible levels.

At present Trees 26, 29 and 30 are set to be retained as part of the proposals. If the proposals change and these trees are to be impacted by the development, additional mitigation and compensation measures will be required. This includes the requirement for further surveys of T26 which was assessed as having moderate potential to support roosting bats, and soft-felling techniques for T29 and T30. As these trees are set to be retained, they have not been discussed further within this report.

Mitigation measures:

Table 1 – Summary of mitigation requirements for T28.

Ecological Receptor	Mitigation measures
Tree 28	Tree to be subject to soft felling techniques to minimise any incidental risk of harm to bats. This involves removing branches or felling the tree in sections, without cutting through the wound on the southern aspect of the tree at a height of 0.7m (see plate 2 in the ecological assessment). The sections of the tree will then be lowered to the ground and left on site with PRFs facing upward for a period of 24 hours before removing them from site.

As a PRF is being removed, it is recommended that a compensatory bat box is provided to compensate for the loss of potential roosting opportunities, and additional bat boxes can be provided as an ecological enhancement.

Examples of bat boxes that could be affixed to retained trees on site include:

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

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

It should be noted that once bat inhabits a bat box, they may only be disturbed by a licensed bat worker.

Any external lighting must be directed away from installed bat boxes, which may require the use of cowlings or relocation of the lighting or bat box. Furthermore, inappropriate lighting can sever commuting corridors, degrade foraging habitat and deter bats from roosting. As such, any external lighting in use during the construction works or the operational phase of the development should be designed to avoid light spill onto retained trees. See Appendix 1 for further guidance on external lighting with regards to bats.

Conclusion:

Provided that the mitigation measures detailed above are adhered to with regards to T28, the risk of harm to bats will be reduced to negligible levels. As such, this non-licensed precautionary bat method statement is considered sufficient to discharge Condition 6.

If the proposals change and Trees 26, 29 and 30 will be impacted by the development, additional mitigation and compensation measures will be required, which will be determined a suitably licenced bat ecologist.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact myself or another member of staff at UES.

Yours sincerely,

Nathaniel Foley MSci
Graduate Ecologist
United Environmental Services Ltd.

Appendix 1 – Lighting guidance

Lighting scheme in relation to bats

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

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

UV characteristics:

Low

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

High

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

Street lighting

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

Security and domestic external lighting

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

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

Appendix 2 – Statutory and planning context

Ecological assessments

Ecological assessments play an important part within the planning context; they include an initial assessment which highlights any specific interests of a site. From the initial site assessment, the surveyor assesses the suitability of habitats within the site to support protected species and makes recommendations for further survey works if required. The following paragraphs provide a brief interpretation of the legislative protection that is relevant to the findings of this report.

Bats

In the United Kingdom, all species of bat and their roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the “Habitats Regulations”). The Wildlife and Countryside Act is the domestic implementation of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention) and was amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture a bat
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection (even if the bat is not present at the time)
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any live or dead bat, any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat

Under UK law, a bat roost is *any structure or place which any wild [bat] ... uses for shelter or protection*. As bats often reuse the same roosts, legal opinion is that a roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time of the activity taking place.

Penalties for offences include fines of up to £5000, plus up to six months imprisonment, for each offence committed.

If an activity is likely to result in any of the above offences, a licence can be applied for to derogate from the protection afforded. These licences must provide appropriate mitigation and are issued by Natural England.

A Natural England mitigation licence application requires a Mitigation Method Statement and, in many cases, a Reasoned Statement of Application. The Mitigation Method Statement contains details of the proposed mitigation works. The Reasoned Statement needs to provide a rational and reasoned justification as to why the proposed development meets the requirements of the Conservation (National Habitats & c.) regulations 1994, namely Regulations 44(2)(e), (f) or (g), and 44(3)(a).

The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) provides guidance on the interpretation of the law in relation to the natural environment and development.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 lists the following bat species as species of principle importance under Section 41:

- Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*
- Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*
- Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*
- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*
- Greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

Section 40 requires every public body in the exercising of its functions ‘have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity’ (all biodiversity and not just section 41 species and habitats); therefore making these bats a material consideration in the planning process and requiring a detailed ecological bat survey before planning permission can be granted.

Planning policy

National Planning Guidance is issued in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF). The most relevant section is 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Key relevant principles stated in 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment are;

- 187.** Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats, and hedgehogs;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
- 192.** To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity⁶⁸; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation⁶⁹; and
 - b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity
- 193.** When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
 - b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
 - c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁷⁰ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
 - d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.