

United Environmental Services Ltd

1 Booths Park,
Chelford Road,
Knutsford,
Cheshire
WA16 8QZ

www.ues.org.uk

enquiries@ues.org.uk

01565 757788



BAT PRESENCE / ABSENCE SURVEY

At

Building 2

Resolution House
317-319 Palatine Road
Manchester
M22 4HH

NGR: SJ 83065 90320

Prepared for:	James Maxey, Express Solicitors
Written by:	Noah Fulton, UES Graduate Ecologist
Approved by:	Kathryn James, UES Ecology Project Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'K James'.

Date:	25 th July 2023
UES reference:	UES03550/04



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A bat scoping survey of Resolution House (Buildings 1 and 2), 317-319 Palatine Road, Manchester was undertaken by United Environmental Services (UES) Ltd in March 2023 (UES03550/02). Building 1 was assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats, and as such no further surveys or mitigation measures were required with regards to bats. Building 2 was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats, and as such, a single presence / absence survey was undertaken by UES in May 2023.

The objective of this survey was to establish whether or not bats are using the building on site to roost, and if so to assess the type and importance of roosts in order to inform the planning process. The surveys were carried out to recognised guidelines, timings and weather conditions, with particular reference to Natural England and Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) publications. No confirmed development proposals have been submitted to UES at this time.

The areas surrounding Resolution House provide broadly low suitability habitat for foraging and commuting bats. The site is situated in a suburban area and is surrounded by a dense network of well-lit and busy main and access roads, alongside other areas of hard standing on all aspects. Areas of greenspace are present in the form of amenity lawned gardens, woodland and a river that will provide some invertebrate communities on which bats can forage. However, they are fragmented from the site by the adjacent suburban landscape.

Building 2 presents a low number of potential roosting features (PRFs) in the form of a large cavity in the brickwork, located on the north aspect. The feature was inspected with an endoscope, but it could not be fully discounted. Internally, PRF's are limited to gaps in the breezeblock ceiling within the brick-built roof access building, which could be accessed via ventilation grids on the southern aspect.

Three species of bat were recorded during the survey: common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. The level of activity was very low with noctules, common pipistrelles and a soprano pipistrelle heard but not seen distantly commuting.

No bats were found to be roosting within Building 2. Therefore, no further survey or mitigation work is required for the development to proceed, with regards to bats.

This report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 5, which provide visual representations of the survey results and statutory and planning context. This report should also be read in conjunction with the bat scoping survey that was prepared for the site (see report reference UES03550/02).



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author, surveyors and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Noah Fulton BSc, UES Graduate Ecologist. Other surveyors include:

- Tom Kenwright BSc MSc ACIEEM, UES Senior Ecologist. Tom is licensed by Natural England to disturb, take and handle all species of bats under licence number 2023-11076-CL18-BAT (level 2).
- Paula Llewelyn, UES Sub-contractor

All surveyors have the knowledge, skills and experience identified within CIEEM's "Competencies for Species Survey: Bats" (2013), or were under the supervision of a surveyor with the required competencies.

1.2 Survey objectives

UES was commissioned in March 2023 to conduct site surveys which include the following activities:

- Conduct internal and external building inspections to look for field signs of bats
- Confirm bat presence or likely absence by conducting emergence and re-entry surveys of the building
- Assess the type and importance of the roost(s), if present
- Recommend appropriate mitigation and compensation, if applicable

1.3 Proposed development

No confirmed development proposals have been submitted to UES at this time.

1.4 Structure of the report

This report sets out the methodology, results, and recommendations in relation to a specific bat survey. Recommendations are in line with statutory legislation and planning policy objectives.

The report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 5, which give visual representations of the survey results.



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

All surveys were carried out to recognised guidelines, timings and weather conditions, with particular reference to Natural England and BCT publications (see references for further information).

The habitats on site and in the surrounding area were assessed during a walkover survey and through studying aerial photographs, in order to gauge their suitability to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.

2.2 Building inspections

The building on site were searched both externally and internally for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in BCT guidance (Collins, 2016). The inspections were undertaken as part of the bat scoping survey that was completed on 29th March 2023 by Tom Kenwright and Bethan Beeston (see report reference UES03555/02).

2.2.1 External inspection

The external inspection of the building was carried out from ground level using binoculars, and also using ladders and an endoscope to investigate suitable gaps. The objective of the survey was to find and record any signs of bat use, for example:

- Bat droppings
- Feeding remains
- Grease staining / urine marks
- Corpses or skeletons

The bat signs listed above are visible from the outside of a building. The following areas were searched, where present:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| • Roof and ridge tiles | • Gaps under felt |
| • Lead flashing | • Cracks / holes in woodwork or behind cladding |
| • Eaves | • Gaps in brickwork and mortar |
| • Boxed soffits | • Air bricks |
| • Fascia and barge boards | • Grills |
| • Window sills and panes | • Vents |
| • Walls | |

2.2.2 Internal inspection

The internal inspections covered all of the accessible rooms and roof spaces within the building.

Bats regularly utilise specific areas within roof spaces, which were searched for any field signs of bats using high-powered torches and an endoscope, where considered necessary by the licenced ecologist. The following features were searched, where present:



- Roof beams and junctions
- Gaps under felt
- Dividing walls
- Chimney breasts
- Gaps in brickwork and mortar
- Cracks / holes in woodwork
- Floor or other surfaces on which droppings could accumulate

2.3 Emergence and re-entry surveys

Potential roost access points were identified during the inspection of Building 2. These points were covered by a surveyor during the dusk emergence period.

Bat echolocation, flight and habitat characteristics were recorded where possible, in order to determine the species. The level and type of bat activity was also recorded to establish how bats are using the site.

2.3.1 Equipment

BATLOGGER M bat detectors and recorders were used during the survey. This device records bat echolocation calls across the full spectrum, with a sensitivity range of 10 – 150 kHz. The integrated heterodyne live monitoring also allows the observer to hear the echolocation calls in real time, with automatic tuning. The recordings are individually time/date, GPS and temperature stamped, and are of high enough quality to produce time expansion quality sonograms.

2.3.2 Weather conditions

Table 1 - Weather conditions and survey timings

DATE	SURVEY TYPE	TIMINGS	SUNSET / SUNRISE	TEMP.	WIND	RAIN	CLOUD COVER
24/05/23	Emergence	21:01 – 22:46	21:16	13°C	Very light breeze	None	40%

2.4 Survey limitations

The survey was undertaken at an appropriate time of year and under appropriate weather conditions; no survey limitation were encountered.



3 RESULTS

3.1 Habitat assessment

Resolution House is situated in the suburban area of Northenden, south of Manchester. The habitats present on site include two commercial buildings with hardstanding and associated car parking.

The immediate surrounding area (<0.5km) is suburban, comprising commercial units and linked residential properties and gardens. The M60 motorway lies approximately 260m to the east of site and may act as a barrier to movement, separating the site from higher quality habitats to the north and east. However, the River Mersey lies approximately 135m to the east of site and may provide a vegetated commuting corridor linking areas of woodland present in the immediate surrounding area, such as Kenworthy Lane Woods and Riverside Park, and higher quality habitats to the east of the M60.

The wider surrounding area (<2km) is similar in composition. Northenden is bounded by the M60 to the north and east, the A5103 to the west, and Wythenshawe, Sharston Industrial Area and the M56 to the south. A number of local nature reserves are present within 2km of site, such as Wythenshawe Park, Stenner Woods, Gatley Carrs and Chorlton Water Park. However, they are all segregated from site by motorways or busy main roads, which are likely to act as a barrier to movement.

In summary, the area has low quality habitat for foraging and commuting bats. The buildings present locally are likely to support a number of alternative roosting features.

3.2 Building inspections

3.2.1 External inspection

Building 2 is a two-storey commercial building (photograph 1-4) with a brick-built roof access building, which extends onto the rooftop (photograph 5). The flat roof is bitumen lined with concrete coping stones to the periphery all of which are well fitted. No PRF's were identified on the roof (photograph 6). However, there are two ventilation grids on the south elevation of the brick-built roof access structure which potentially could allow access into this building internally. There is a small single storey extension to the north of the building which extends to the rear. All connecting points to the adjoining property on the northern aspect are well maintained and no PRF's were identified (photograph 7).

The west aspect of the building is predominantly glazed with UPVC windows and doors which are well maintained. The remaining external walls are in good condition, any gaps were discounted as being too small or too exposed, with the exception of a damaged brick which has formed a crevice that leads into a wall cavity on the north aspect of the building (photograph 8). The gap in the brickwork was inspected using an endoscope and no evidence of bats was found within the cavity; however, it could still offer roosting opportunities for a small number of bats (photograph 9). There is a security light located directly above this PRF within the brickwork. There is no motion sensor on the security light which suggests that it may be on throughout the duration of the night.

No bat droppings or other field signs of bats were found during the external building inspection.



3.2.2 Internal inspection

Building 2 is currently utilised as an office space which is fully operational with staff working there on a regular basis. The internal area is a mixture of open plan and well-lit connecting rooms, each with a false ceiling and no loft space (photograph 10). PRF's within Building 2 are limited to the brick-built structure which extends onto the rooftop, allowing access to the roof. It comprises an unlined breezeblock ceiling with gaps throughout creating small cavities suitable for use by roosting bats (photograph 11 & 12). The internal area of the roof access structure is not used on a regular basis by the staff and is usually left undisturbed. There were a lot of cobwebs within this area which suggest a lack of bat activity inside. Access into this roof structure for bats is possible via the ventilation grids on the south elevation (photograph 11).

No bat droppings or other field signs of bats were found during the internal building inspection.

3.3 Activity summary

Table 2 – Bat activity summary

DATE	SURVEY TYPE	SPECIES	NOTES
24/05/23	Emergence	Noctule	A low number of noctule passes were recorded but not seen throughout the survey.
		Common and soprano pipistrelles	A low number of common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle passes were heard but not seen commuting across the site.



4 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Evaluation of results

The areas surrounding Resolution House provide low quality foraging and commuting habitat for bats. The immediate surround area is suburban, comprising residential and commercial buildings that will provide some alternative roosting opportunities for bats. However, the site is bordered by an extensive network of well-lit and busy main and access roads with areas of greenspace limited to intensively manicured amenity gardens. Areas of higher quality habitat are present in the form of woodland and a river to the north-east, however, they are bisected from the site by areas of hardstanding.

Building 2 presents a number of potential roosting features which could be used by bats. Such as such as gaps in the brickwork and in the breezeblock ceiling within the brick-built roof access building. Having said this, no field signs of bats, such as droppings, were found during the building inspections.

Three species of bat were recorded during the bat presence / absence survey: common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and noctule. Activity was generally very low, with the occasional noctule and common pipistrelle pass. A single soprano pipistrelle was also heard in transit. All bats were heard not seen.

No bats were recorded roosting in Building 2 on site.

4.2 Mitigation and compensation measures

As no bats were found to be using Building 2 to roost, no further mitigation or compensation measures are required with regards to bats.



5 CONCLUSION

Resolution House is situated in an area that presents low quality foraging, roosting and commuting opportunities for bats. The site is bordered on all aspects by extensive areas of hard standing with very few suitable commuting corridors or areas of greenspace.

No field signs of bats, such as droppings, were found during the building inspection. Furthermore, no bats were recorded roosting in the building on site, despite the favourable conditions.

As no bats were found to be using Building 2 on site to roost, no further mitigation or compensation measures are required with regards to bats.



6 REFERENCES

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2013). *Competencies for Species Survey: Bats*.

Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (2021). *National Planning Policy Framework*.

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*. (3rd ed.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). *The Bat Workers Manual*. (3rd ed.) JNCC



APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site plan



317-319 Palatine Road, Manchester

Site plan

— Building 2

● Surveyors



Appendix 2 – Aerial photographs



317-319 Palatine Road, Manchester

Close aerial photograph

— Building 2





317-319 Palatine Road, Manchester

Wide aerial photograph



Site location



Appendix 3 – Photographs



Photograph 1 – west aspect of the building (front).



Photograph 2 – east aspect of the building (rear).



Photograph 3 – south aspect of the building.



Photograph 4 – north aspect of the building and location of external PRF.



Photograph 5 – view of brick-built roof access building southeast of roof.



Photograph 6 – view from south to north across roof, showing good condition.



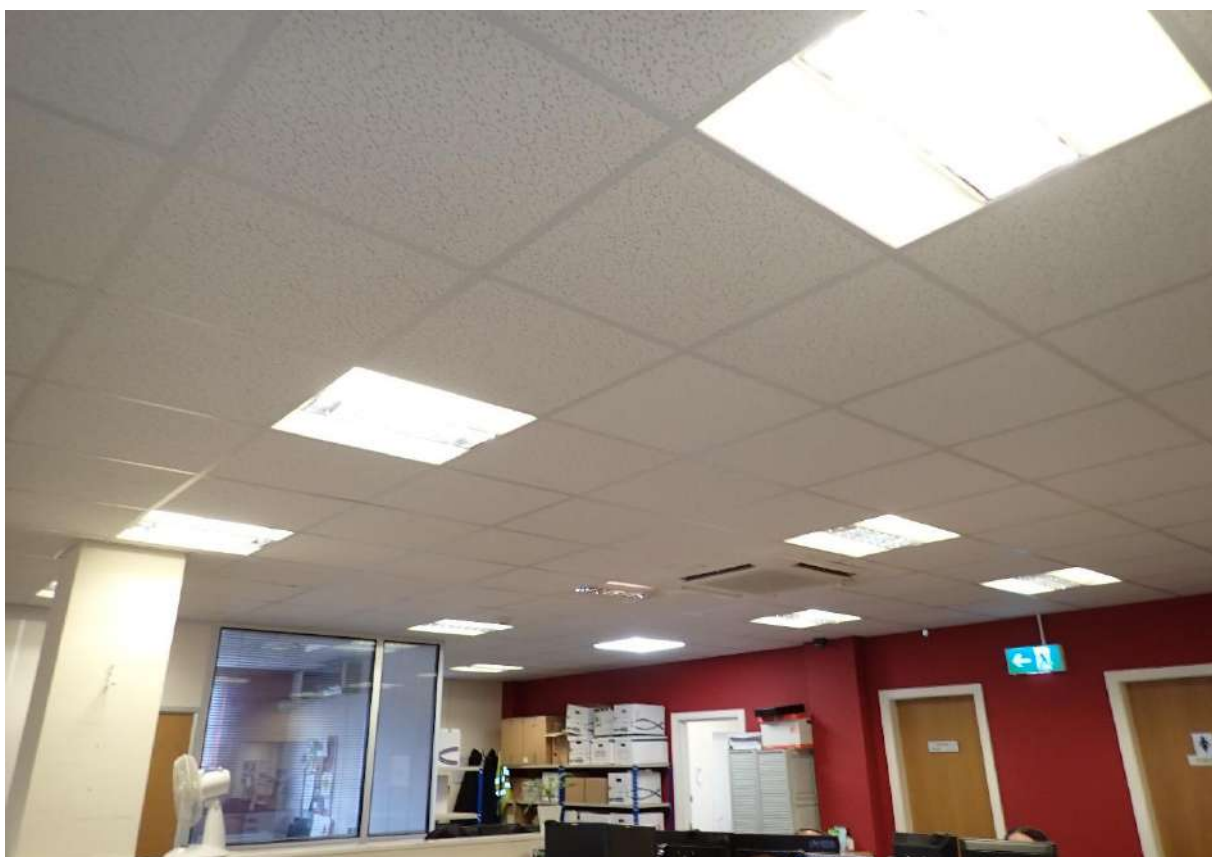
Photograph 7 – flat roof on northern aspect, ajointed to adjacent building



Photograph 8 – wall cavity PRF on north aspect.



Photograph 9 – close up of wall cavity PRF.



Photograph 10 – example of false ceiling within the building.



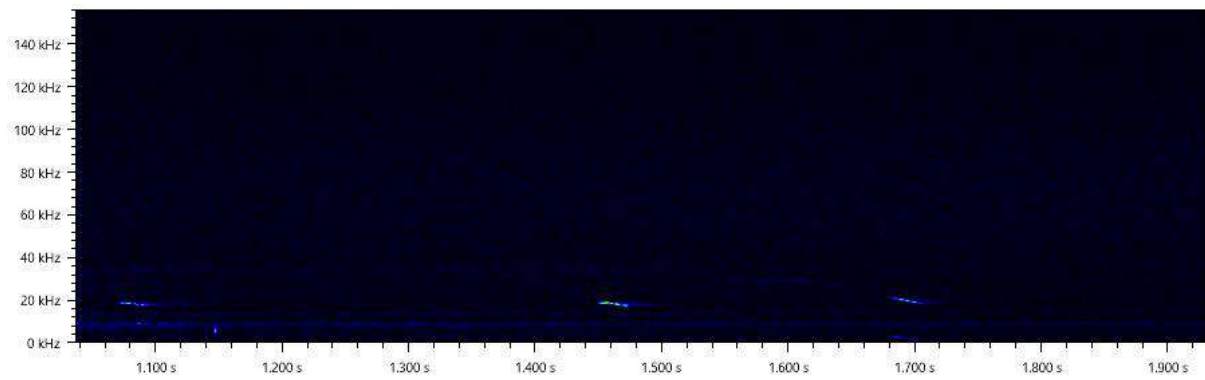
Photograph 11 – view from north to south within the roof access building.



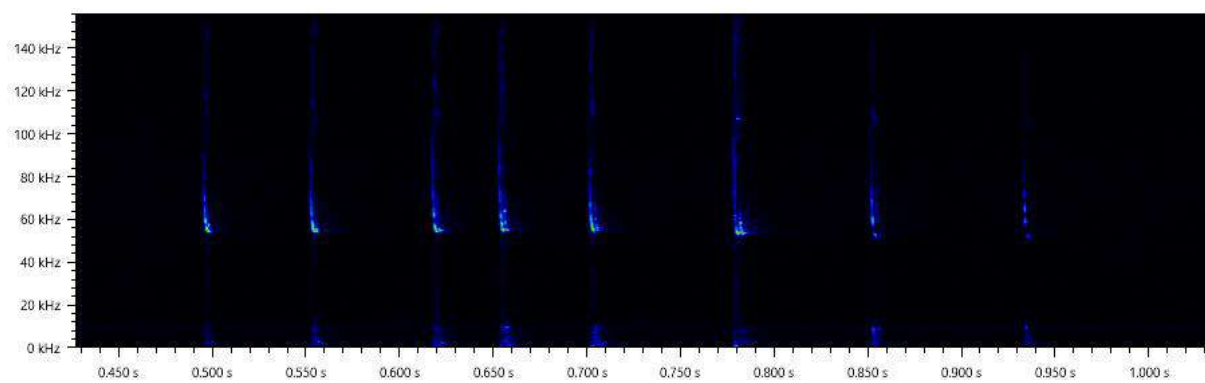
Photograph 12 – showing gaps between the blocks in roof access building.



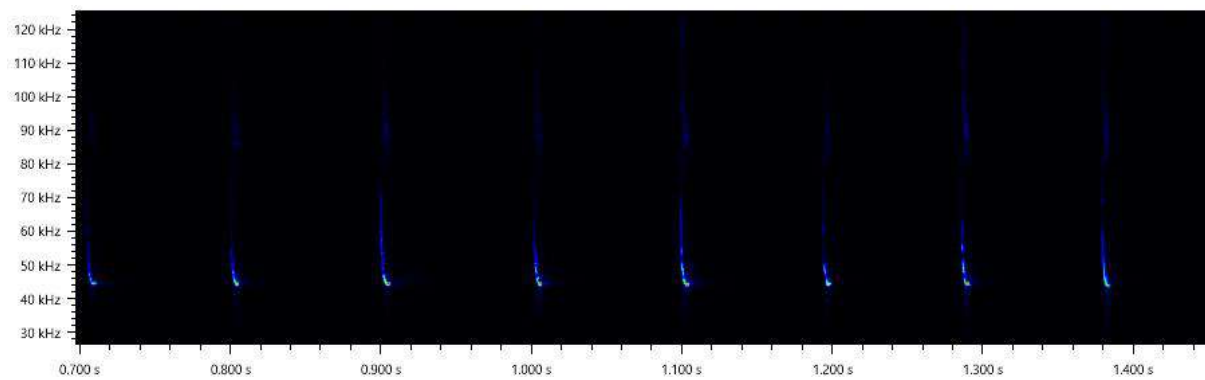
Appendix 4 – Results



Sonogram 1 – Noctule commuting across the site at 21:30 on 24th May 2023.



Sonogram 2 – Soprano pipistrelle commuting across the site at 21:44 on 24th May 2023.



Sonogram 3 – Common pipistrelle commuting across the site at 22:45 on 24th May 2023.



Appendix 5 – 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 2021 (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 2021 (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;

- 174.** 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;
 - 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.
- 179.** 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 biodiversity⁶¹; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation⁶²; 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
- 180.** 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 reasons⁶³ 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.