

Bat Survey: Preliminary Roost Assessment

42 Church Street

Ribchester, Preston

July 2026

Prepared for: ASC Electrical Energy Solutions

Report prepared by: Verity Webster BSc (Hons) MSc CEcol CMIEEM



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 7th June 2026 a Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken at 42 Church Street, Ribchester, Preston.
- The building was assessed to determine the suitability for roosting bats. The building is considered to have negligible suitability for bats. No further survey work is considered necessary. Reasonable avoidance measures are recommended during works to minimise the risk of harm to itinerant bats.
- The proposals provide the opportunity to enhance the site for bats and recommendations for this have been made.

Verity Webster
Ecology and Protected Species Consultancy



1. Introduction

1.1 Application Site

- 1.1.1. This report details bat survey work at 42 Church Street, Ribchester, Preston, PR3 3YE. National grid reference SD64923533.
- 1.1.2. ASC Electrical Energy Solutions commissioned Verity Webster Ltd to undertake the bat survey work to inform the planning application.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 The objectives of the Preliminary Roost Assessment are to determine:
- The suitability of the buildings on site to support a bat roost.
 - Whether bats are currently using the buildings, or have done in the past.
 - The potential status of any roost present.
 - How bats might be using the site and the potential species present.
 - The potential impacts of the proposals on any potential roost present or on bats using the site.
 - The requirement for further survey work and/or mitigation.
 - How any impacts might be avoided, mitigated and/or ameliorated, including advice on European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) application if required.
 - The potential for biodiversity net gain on site.
- 1.2.2 The format and content of this report follow that required by the European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence application where appropriate.

1.3 Proposals

- 1.3.1 The proposals comprise the repair of the roof on the northeast elevation and installation of solar panels.

1.4 Ecologist

- 1.4.1 The Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken by Verity Webster. Verity is a licensed bat surveyor (Bat Survey Class Licence WML CL18 (Class 2) Registration number: 2015-13858-CLS-CLS).
- 1.4.2 Verity has worked as an ecological consultant since 2007. She has undertaken preliminary bat assessments and further bat emergence/activity surveys for a large variety of projects and schemes, producing the required impact assessment and subsequent mitigation schemes/method statements when necessary.



2. Site Location

- 2.0.1 The survey site is located in the village of Ribchester, approximately 7km northeast of the outskirts of Preston town centre. The village is small and surrounded by open countryside encompassing pasture, woodland and arable land. The River Ribble weaves southwest to northeast approximately 260m to the southeast. Boyce's Brook, a tributary to the River Ribble weaves northwest to southeast approximately 130m to the north of the survey site.
- 2.0.2 The survey site is located off the B6245 which runs along the northeast boundary. Houses with gardens surround the property.
- 2.0.3 The survey site is considered to be in a location with high suitability for bats.

Figure 1: Ordnance survey map showing the location of the proposed development site.

Figure 2: Aerial image showing the proposed development site and immediate surroundings



3. The Survey Site

3.0.1 The survey site comprises a two storey house.

The Building

3.0.2 The house is a two storey and end of terrace. It is constructed of stone with pitched, slate roof. There is a wo-storey extension to the rear (southwest), an adaptation to the original cottage, also with a pitched, slate roof, and two small single-storey extensions to the northwest and southwest of this.

3.0.3 The building is rendered on the southeast elevation and there is a high gable. The slates are mortared directly onto the wall. On the northeast and southwest elevation there is a wooden soffit at the eaves.

3.0.4 There is also a gable on the rear extension (southwest facing), which is also rendered. The slates are mortared directly onto the wall.

3.0.5 Internally the loft void is approximately 3m to the apex with exposed beams. The rear (southwest) half is lined with plastic and bitumen, but the front (northeast) half is not lined.



The northwest elevation of the building



4. Legislation

Full details of relevant legislation and planning policy can be found in Appendix A.

4.1 UK and EU Legislation

4.1.1 Key legislation regarding the protection of bats:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW), 2000
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

4.1.2 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2018, it is a criminal offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
- Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

4.2 Planning Policy and Legislation

4.2.1 Under the NERC Act 2006, planning authorities are obliged to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species on site before they make a decision on the planning permission.

4.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) encourages Local Planning Authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Chapter 15, Para 180 of NPPF states: *"The planning system 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...***
- 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"***.

Para 181 states: *"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites;*

allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a

strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of

natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."

Para 185 identifies that plans should do the following to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity:



- 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 biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and***
- b) ***Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and peruse opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”***

Para 186 states that “when determining planning applications, local authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) ***if significant harm to biodiversity from a development cannot be avoided...,adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused”***

- 4.2.3 The local planning authority has a responsibility, therefore, to obtain all information regarding the potential for protected species on a site prior to making a decision about a proposal.



5. Survey Methodology

- 5.0.1 The Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken in accordance with currently accepted guidance: Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

5.1 Desk Study

- 5.1.1 Data sources used to establish background information about bats and their likely presence in the locality:
- Magic Map, Natural England (2016)
 - Bing Maps (2017)
- 5.1.2 Satellite mapping, Ordnance survey, road map, habitat and designated site data from Magic Map (Natural England, 2014) was used to assess the value of the surrounding habitat for bats in the area at a landscape scale (5km), including any potentially important habitat corridors (linear habitat features), feeding grounds or potential roost opportunities, such as large expanses of woodland. The features and habitats immediately surrounding the site (local area) were also assessed at a finer scale as these influence the likely presence of bats within the survey site.

5.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 5.2.1 An internal and external inspection of the building was undertaken during daylight to determine the suitability for bats and establish, if possible, whether bats are using the building or have been in the past.
- 5.2.2 All accessible parts of the building were inspected to look for bats and signs of the presence of bats, including:
- Droppings.
 - Feeding remains including moth and butterfly wings.
 - Staining from urine or oils near crevices or holes or on timber (such as roof beams), walls, chimney breasts etc.
 - Scratch marks on walls and timber.
 - Squeaking or chattering calls.
- 5.2.3 The systematic search inside the building included inspection of beams, floors, surfaces of stored materials, loose roof insulation or felt covering, junctions between roof timbers and timbers and the walls, and crevices within brickwork. Potential access into the building was also inspected by searching for holes in insulation and any light penetration into the interior from the outside.
- 5.2.4 The assessment outside the building included inspection of all walls, windows, window sills, fascias, soffits, eaves and tiles, including a search for any crevices under tiles, under lifted lead flashing or lifted roofing felt, missing mortar, gaps in the ridge or gable end of the roofs, crevices in brickwork or under flaking paintwork or render, gaps in cladding or hanging tiles and any other potential bat roost opportunities.
- 5.2.5 Equipment: During the survey, a strong torch with directional beam was used to inspect the buildings.



- 5.2.6 As a result of the external preliminary roost assessment, the structures on site was characterised as having 'none', 'negligible', 'low', 'medium' or 'high' suitability for bats. It may also be possible to confirm the presence of a roost.
- 5.2.7 Buildings or structures typically characterised as having suitability at the following levels:
- **None:** No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year.
 - **Negligible suitability:** No obvious habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats. Modern or newly-built well-sealed structures may fall into this category. Structures that are metal clad with metal internal beams might have negligible potential if there are no favourable roosting spaces. Structures may also be unfavourable due to the level of disrepair, being subject to poor weather conditions.
 - **Low suitability:** Structures will have sub-optimal roost features with limited potential for roosting bats. Features may be used by single bats opportunistically, but do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by large numbers of bats.
 - **Medium suitability:** Structures may have a few features with potential for bats, that provide enough space, shelter, protection and other suitable conditions, or several features with limited potential for bats. It may also be that a potentially suitable structure is situated in an area with habitat that has an only low potential for foraging and commuting bats.
 - **High suitability:** Structures support at least one or more features that provide opportunities for roosting bats such that they might be used regularly, for longer periods by larger numbers of bats. These may be external features, such as lifted weatherboard or crevices in brick or stonework, or internal, such as large loft spaces with potential access. Barns, with open doorways and windows with wooden rafters and beams, may fall into this category. If a structure is close to good habitats, such as a waterway, marshland or woodland, this also increases the potential for roosting bats.
 - **Confirmed roost presence:** It is evident as a result of signs from inspection, such as droppings, or sight of bats, that a roost exists within the building. It is not always possible to ascertain the presence or absence of a roost even if some signs, such as droppings or feeding remains are found.

6. Survey Limitations

- 6.0.1 The survey was undertaken in daylight in early-July. At this time of year bats will be occupying summer roost sites. Evidence of bats on the exterior of a building may be present and evidence of the use of the interior of the building by bats, either in the current or previous seasons is likely to be present where signs (such as droppings and feeding remains) are protected from the elements.
- 6.0.2 The records data from the local records centre was not obtained to inform this assessment. In this case, the external and internal inspection is considered sufficient to inform appropriate recommendations about the need or otherwise of further survey work and, or mitigation.



7. Findings: Preliminary Roost Assessment

7.1 Suitability of the Locality for Bats

- 7.1.1 At a landscape level, the area surrounding the survey site considered to be very good for bats. Refer to Figure 2.
- 2.0.4 The open landscape provides good foraging opportunities, whilst the small village provides good potential roosting opportunities. The River Ribble and Boyce's Brook are likely to provide habitat corridors, facilitating movement of bats through the landscape, as well as providing very good foraging opportunities.
- 7.1.2 The bat species most likely to be present are common and soprano pipistrelle bat (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* respectively). Species that favour open habitats such as Leisler's (*Nyctalus leisleri*) and noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctula*) are also likely to be present, especially as they travel large distances to forage. Dubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), which forages primarily over water may be associated with nearby River Ribble and Boyce's Brook. There are also quite extensive areas of woodland in the wider landscape, so species that favour woodland are also likely to be present, such as Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*), whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*) and Brandt's bat (*Myotis brandtii*).

Data Search

- 7.1.3 Data from MAGIC Map show that there have been two granted European Protected Species Licences within 1km of the survey site; one for Natterer's bat and soprano pipistrelle (2017) and one for common pipistrelle (2019). These are both recorded as resting places for bats, so not significant roosts, such as maternity roost sites.

The Conservation Status of Bats in the Area

- 7.1.4 The conservation status of bats in the area is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The Conservation Status of Bats in the area at a Local, County and Regional Level

Species	Local	County	Regional
Common pipistrelle	Likely to be common in the area. There are records of this species in the area (10km).	Common and widespread Frequently recorded.	Common and widespread Frequently recorded across the Northwest
Soprano pipistrelle	Likely to be present due to the presence of riparian habitat.	Widespread. Frequently recorded.	Common and widespread Frequently recorded across the Northwest
Nathusius's pipistrelle	Likely to be rare in the area.	Infrequently recorded, but this may be due to low survey effort. Not yet recorded breeding in the county.	Rare across the northwest. A migratory species.



<i>Brown long-eared bat</i>	<i>Likely to be in the area. There is a recent record of this species within 10km of the site.</i>	<i>Common and widespread Frequently recorded.</i>	<i>Common and widespread Frequently recorded across the Northwest.</i>
<i>Natterer's bat</i>	<i>Likely to be in the area, although this species favours woodland habitat, which is infrequent in the landscape.</i>	<i>Scattered distribution in Lancashire.</i>	<i>Widespread and scattered across the Northwest.</i>
<i>Noctule</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Widespread and frequently recorded.</i>	<i>Common and widespread. Frequently recorded in the Northwest.</i>
<i>Whiskered bat</i>	<i>Present but likely rare</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Widespread.</i>
<i>Brandt's bat</i>	<i>Rare / absent</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Widespread.</i>
<i>Alcathoe's bat</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Widespread. Likely under-recorded.</i>
<i>Daubenton's</i>	<i>Presence is likely due to the riparian habitat present.</i>	<i>Widespread, frequently recorded near water.</i>	<i>Widespread</i>
<i>Serotine</i>	<i>Rare / absent</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Restricted to south and southwest Britain, rarely recorded in the northwest.</i>
<i>Leislars</i>	<i>Rare</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Rare, but widespread in Britain. Present in the northwest.</i>
<i>Barbastelle</i>	<i>Unlikely to be present in the area. This species is a woodland-specialist and there is a lack of this habitat present.</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Present south of a line from North Wales to the Wash.</i>

7.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

7.2.1 The building inspection and bat roost assessment was undertaken in daylight on 7th July 2026.

The Building

7.2.2 Externally, the walls of the building are in good condition, as are the soffits, with no visible gaps. However, there are numerous crevices and gaps under the roof slates.

7.2.3 The loft void has exposed beams, good for void roosting bats, and is of a size that would allow bats, such as brown long-eared bat space to openly roost and to fly prior to leaving the space. However, there was no evidence of bats (droppings or feeding remains) internally.

7.2.4 There were lots of cobwebs through the space suggesting nothing has been flying in the void recently.

7.2.5 The crevices under the slates provide potential opportunities for crevice-roosting bats such as pipistrelle species, but if bats were regularly roosting under the slates, droppings would be expected on the loft floor, having fallen through, especially on the northeast elevation where there is no internal lining.



- 7.2.6 Given the lack of evidence externally and internally, the presence of a bat roost is considered unlikely, but cannot be entirely ruled out.
- 7.2.7 The southwest elevation of the roof structure is most likely to support a roost because this elevation would warm up more fully in the sunshine. However, this elevation will not be impacted by the proposals.
- 7.2.8 The proposed repairs and solar panel installation is to take place on the northeast elevation only.
- 7.2.9 Overall, the proposals are considered unlikely to impact bats or their roosts. In this case no further survey work is considered necessary, but reasonable avoidance measures must be undertaken to minimise the risk of harm to itinerant bats.



The large loft void; the roof is unlined on the northeast elevation.



The roof on the northeast elevation



The southwest elevation of the building



Appraisal

- 8.0.1 The Preliminary Roost Assessment of the building at 42 Church Street, Ribchester, was undertaken to determine the suitability of the house for roosting bats and to determine the likely impact of the proposed works on bats.
- 8.0.2 No bats or signs of the presence of bats were found during the external or internally during inspection of the building.
- 8.0.3 Given the absence of evidence and the suboptimal nature of the northeast elevation for roosting bats, the proposals are considered unlikely to impact a bat roost and no further survey work is recommended.
- 8.0.4 Reasonable avoidance measures are proposed during repair of the roof and installation of the solar panels to reduce the potential harm to itinerant bats, which cannot be entirely ruled out.
- 8.0.5 The proposals provide the opportunity to enhance the site for roosting bats and recommendations for this have been made.

8. Recommendations

Reasonable avoidance measures

- 9.0.1 In order to reduce the risk of harm to itinerant bats to negligible the following is recommended:
- A Toolbox Talk on bats, where they might be located, what they look like, the associated legislation, how to remove roof materials safely and what to do if a bat is found must be delivered to site operatives prior to the start of works by a suitably qualified ecologist.
 - Works to the northeast elevation of the roof will be undertaken with care, but the southwest elevation of the roof must not be directly impacted. Care must be undertaken not to accidentally damage this rear elevation.
 - Works to remove the roof on the northeast (front) elevation cladding is undertaken by hand with care whilst checking for the presence of bats and evidence of bats.
 - If bats are found, or if there is any concern that there may be a roost, works must stop and an ecologist must be contacted for advice.



Enhancement

9.0.2 The proposals provide the opportunity to enhance the site for bats.

9.0.3 It is recommended that:

- One crevice-roost box is attached onto the southwest or southeast elevation of the building, for example the Low Profile Woodstone Bat Box. Alternatively, there are many alternatives at NHBS.com.



Low Profile WoodStone Bat Box

This box is durable and does not require cleaning.



9. References

- BING maps (Accessed 2026) <http://www.bing.com/mapspreview>
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Google maps (Accessed 2026) <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>
- MAGIC Map (Accessed 2026) <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>. DEFRA.



• APPENDIX A: Wildlife Legislation and Planning Policy

UK AND EU LEGISLATION

9.1. KEY LEGISLATION

9.1.1. Key legislation regarding the protection of bats:

- o Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- o The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW), 2000
- o The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006)
- o Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

9.2. WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 (AS AMENDED)

9.2.1. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is UK legislation.

9.2.2. Bats are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981. Under Section 9 of this legislation it is an offence to:

- Kill, injure or take a bat.
- Possess, a live or dead bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy any structure or place which any bat uses as shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat whilst it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a bat uses as shelter or protection.
- Sell, offer or expose for sale any live or dead bat.

9.3. COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY ACT 2000

9.3.1. Schedule 12 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, amended by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 by removing the need to prove intent to damage a roost / harm (etc) a bat or other species listed on Schedule 1 by adding the words 'or recklessly' after 'intentionally' into the wording in Section 9 of the WCA 1981. The CROW act also strengthened the penalties for offences to bats and other species listed on Schedule 5.

9.4. CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED)

9.4.1. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 in respect of England and Wales.

9.4.2. The 1994 Regulations transposed Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (EC Habitats Directive) into national law. The regulations came into force on 30 October 1994.

9.4.3. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of European Sites and European Protected Species, including bats.



9.4.4. Under the Regulations, competent authorities (ie any government department or public body) have a general duty, in the exercise of any of their functions, to have regard to the EC Habitats Directive.

9.4.5. With regard to European Protected Species (including bats), the Regulations make it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture;
- Kill;
- Disturb or;
- Trade in animals listed in Schedule 2, which include all UK bat species.

9.5. European Protected Species (EPS) Licenses and the Three Tests

9.5.1. 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, preserve public health and safety). For such a licence to be granted the appropriate authority would have to be satisfied that an application has met the three tests, which are:

- 1)- The licence may be granted "to preserve public health or public safety or for reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences or primary importance for the environment"
- 2)- There must be "no satisfactory alternative"
- 3)- The proposal "will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the species at a favourable conservation status in its natural range"

9.6. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL COMMUNITIES (NERC) ACT 2006 (PLANNING SYSTEM)

Planning Authorities: A Duty to Conserve Biodiversity

9.6.1. Under this legislation, planning authorities are obliged to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species on site *before* they make a decision on the planning permission.

9.6.2. Part 2, Section 40 confers on the planning authorities a duty to conserve biodiversity and states:

"Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of biodiversity"

Species of Principal Importance

9.6.3. Part 3, Section 41 requires the Secretary of State to "*publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitat which in the Secretary of State's opinion are of **principle importance** for the purpose of conserving biodiversity*".

9.6.4. This requirement leads to production of a list of species and habitats of Principal Importance. This list includes all UK bats.



PLANNING POLICY

9.7. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

10.7.1 Under the NERC Act 2006, planning authorities are obliged to make sure that they have all the information on the presence of protected species on site before they make a decision on the planning permission.

10.7.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) encourages Local Planning Authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Chapter 15, Para 180 of NPPF states: *"The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- b) **protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils....***
- e) **minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures"**.*

Para 181 states: *"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."*

Para 185 identifies that plans should do the following to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity:

- c) **"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 biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and***
- d) **Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and peruse opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity."***

Para 186 states that *"when determining planning applications, local authorities should apply the following principles:*



- b) *if significant harm to biodiversity from a development cannot be avoided...,adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused"***

10.7.3 The local planning authority has a responsibility, therefore, to obtain all information regarding the potential for protected species on a site prior to making a decision about a proposal.

9.8. ODPM CIRCULAR 06/2005: BIODIVERSITY AND GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

10.8.1 This document, to be read in conjunction with NPPF provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England. It makes it clear that it is the intention of the government that local authorities and developers consider protected species at the earliest possible stage in the planning process. Any planning application that is likely to affect protected species should come with details of the surveys which have been undertaken and should include, if necessary, recommendations for mitigation. Applications which do not include sufficient data should be rejected.