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Ecological Impact Assessment

The Old Library,
Church Hill,
Donhead St Mary,
SP7 9DQ

October 2025

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QUALITY CONTROL		
The information which we have prepared and provided is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.		
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This report remains valid for 2 years from date of issue. Survey data are valid for 12-18 months from the date the survey was undertaken.		

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The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Darwin Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Ms Frost to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of proposals for the building at The Old Library, Church Hill, Donhead St Mary, SP7 9DQ. The assessment was required to support a planning application for an infill extension over an existing balcony and was informed by a desk study and an internal and external building inspection.
- 1.2. During the building inspection, the building to be impacted was inspected thoroughly externally and internally, and any gaps and crevices were inspected with an endoscope. The building was assessed to have **low potential** to support roosting bats due to there being two suitable features externally.
- 1.3. A high level inspection of the two suitable features was undertaken, and no evidence of bats were found.
- 1.4. It is therefore considered that the features are not currently in use and no bats will be impacted by the proposals. Consequently, works can proceed without further surveys or licensing.
- 1.5. However, it is recommended that there is precautionary ecological supervision of the removal of the soft strip and features suitable for bats. This will need to be supervised by a bat licensed ecologist.
- 1.6. **In the unlikely event that any bats are found, all works will cease and no further work will be carried out until a licence from Natural England has been obtained.**
- 1.7. Compensation for the loss of the two suitable features include creation of a gable end access point to provide future roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling species such as pipistrelle *Pipistrellus* bats.
- 1.8. Recommendations for enhancements have also been made which will include the proposals for one ridge tile crevice feature and the installation of one external bat box on site.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Darwin Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Ms Frost to undertake an EclA of proposals for the building at The Old Library, Church Hill, Donhead St Mary, SP7 9DQ¹. The assessment was required to support a planning application for an infill extension over an existing balcony and was informed by a desk study and an internal and external building inspection.
- 2.2. The proposed drawings on which this assessment is based are provided at **Appendix 1, Proposed Plans**.
- 2.3. The internal and external building inspection followed the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines (2023). The subsequent EclA follows the CIEEM Guidelines for EclA in the UK and Ireland (2018).

Site Overview

- 2.4. The site is located in the village and civil parish of Donhead St Mary, south west Wiltshire. The village lies approximately 4km west of the Dorset town of Shaftesbury. The site comprises a two-storey residential dwelling to be impacted, connected an older thatch-roof residential dwelling which is not due to be impacted. The site is set within a grassland amenity garden, with a block of woodland directly to the west, and residential dwellings in close proximity to the north and east aspects (see **Figure 1**).
- 2.5. The wider landscape comprises further residential dwellings, pastoral and agricultural fields, and small blocks of woodland and individual trees. The A30 lies approximately 1.6km south east, and the River Nadder is approximately 420m south west (see **Figure 2**).

Scope of Assessment

- 2.6. The process of EclA aims to identify, quantify and evaluate the potential effects of development-related or other proposed actions on habitats, species and ecosystems.
- 2.7. Potential effects on the following ecologically sensitive receptors have been considered during the EclA of The Old Library:
- Statutory designated sites; and
 - On-site habitats of intrinsic importance (such as buildings or discrete habitat features).
- 2.8. The aim of this report is to:
- Identify and describe ecologically sensitive receptors within the site (such as bat roosts);
 - Classify the ecologically sensitive receptors presence (e.g. day roost, maternity roost etc);
 - Carry out an impact assessment of the proposed works and how they will directly / indirectly affect the ecological receptors identified;

¹ Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference ST 90584 24416.

- Outline the relevant legislation and protection afforded to protected species present at the site; and
- Provide avoidance, compensation, mitigation and enhancement measures recommended to avoid harm / injury to protected species.



Figure 1: Site location within the local landscape. Copyright Apple Maps (October 2025).



Figure 2: Site location within the wider landscape. Copyright Apple Maps (October 2025).

3. LEGISLATION & POLICY

General Wildlife Legislation

- 3.1. Wildlife in the United Kingdom (UK) is protected through European and national legislation, supported by national and local policy and guidance. Development can contribute to conservation and enhancement goals outlined by these various legislation and policy by retaining and protecting the most valuable ecological features within a site and incorporating enhancements to provide biodiversity net gain.
- 3.2. This section provides a brief summary of the principle legalisation and policy that triggers the requirement for preliminary and further ecological assessments in the UK. The presence of protected species within a site are a material consideration during the planning process. Preliminary and any necessary further ecological assessments provide an ecological baseline for a site and evaluation of the potential impact of proposals.
- 3.3. It is the responsibility of those involved with development works to ensure that the relevant legislation is complied with at every stage of a project. Such legislation applies even in the absence of related planning conditions or projects outside the scope of the usual planning process (i.e. permitted development projects or projects requiring Listed Building Consent only).

Bat Legislation

- 3.4. In England and Wales, all bat species and their roosts are legally protected under the European *Habitats Directive (1992)*; the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)*; the *Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)*; the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000*; and the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006)*.
- 3.5. Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, and noctule *Nyctalus noctula* bats are all species of principal importance in England under *Section 41* of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*.
- 3.6. You will be committing a criminal offence if you:
 - 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; or
 - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

- 3.7. The government's statutory conservation advisory organisation, Natural England, is responsible for administering European Protected Species (EPS) licences that permit activities that would otherwise lead to an offence.
- 3.8. A licence can be obtained if the following three tests have been met:
- Regulation 53(9)(a) - there is “no satisfactory alternative” to the derogation, and;
 - Regulation 53(9)(b) - the derogation “will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range” and;
 - Regulation 53(2)(e) - the derogation is for the purposes of “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”.

National Planning Policy

- 3.9. The *National Planning Policy Framework (2024)* aims to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity. Chapter 15 ‘Conserving and enhancing the natural environment’ details what local planning policies should seek to consider with regard to planning applications.
- 3.10. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- 187 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);
 - 187 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;
 - 187 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;
 - 188) Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and local 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;

189) Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their settings should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

3.11. Specific policies regarding habitats and biodiversity comprise:

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 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 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 of Sites 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 feature 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 reasons 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 development 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.

194) The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

a) Potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;

b) Listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and

c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.12. The local planning policy for the site is the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015). In particular, Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) provides guidelines for protection and enhancement of the natural environment and refers to the planning guidance for Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in Wiltshire, designated for the presence of nationally important bat species.
- 3.13. Wiltshire County Council (WCC), Natural England (NE) and local experts and researchers have jointly prepared the Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Planning Guidance for Wiltshire (2015). It is aimed at applicants, agents, consultants and planners involved producing and assessing development proposals in the landscapes surrounding Wiltshire's most sensitive bat roosting sites, which are protected by European wildlife legislation and applies to all types of developments that are subject to planning control.
- 3.14. The guidance gives details on how to mitigate any potential impacts on Wiltshire Bat SACs and to ensure that any potential issues are identified as early in the planning process as possible to prevent unnecessary delays to development projects. The guidance also outlines the ecological documents and plans, which should be submitted in support of planning applications, so as to ensure that the council has all the information required to undertake a reliable Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) should one be required.
- 3.15. In addition to policies relating to bat SACs, the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) includes Core Policy 51 (Landscape), which provides guidance for protecting, conserving and where possible, enhancing landscape character, including locally distinctive patterns and species

composition of natural features (such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and waterbodies). Core Policy 69 (Protection of the River Avon SAC) provides guidelines for the incorporation of measures during construction and operations to avoid and prevent pollution and to minimise disturbance effects.

Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan

- 3.16. The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan was published in 2002 and reviewed in 2008 by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and over 40 delivery partners who make up the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership. It includes habitat action plans for 11 of the most significant of the UK Priority Habitats in Wiltshire, which include woodland, wood-pasture, parkland and ancient trees, hedgerows, calcareous grassland, neutral grassland, traditional orchards, farmland habitats, built environment, standing open water and rivers, streams and associated habitats. In addition, a bat species action plan has also been included, covering all bat species found in Wiltshire, while other priority species have been included under the appropriate habitat action plans.
- 3.17. The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan species list includes species that have national priority and also species having local importance in Wiltshire including county notables. A total of 260 species have been included on the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan species list.
- 3.18. The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan aims to achieve the following:
- Enable prioritisation and define actions for priority habitats and species in Wiltshire;
 - Create a plan of action that can be delivered through a partnership of statutory, private and third sector organisations;
 - Provide a baseline of current knowledge and a tool to help monitor key habitats and species; and
 - To link objectives, targets and actions to report nationally and enable conservation work carried out in Wiltshire to contribute to national targets and reporting.
- 3.19. In 2012, a landscape scale framework for conservation in Wiltshire was developed, identifying 11 Landscape Biodiversity Areas across Wiltshire and Swindon, made up of a number of priority habitats, designated sites and other areas of conservation significance. This aims to encourage landscape scale planning for species and habitat conservation across Wiltshire.

4. METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

- 4.1. A desk study was undertaken for designated sites and bat species and habitat records within 2km of the site:
- The MagicMap website was reviewed, to obtain information on any designated sites of nature conservation interest within 2km of the site and details of any EPS licences issued within 2km;
 - The Wiltshire Council Planning Portal was searched for past and pending planning applications that may have associated ecological documents detailing results of bat surveys; and
 - Google Maps and Ordnance Survey (OS) Leisure Maps was utilised to view aerial photographs and maps to assess the ecological context of the site within the wider landscape.
- 4.2. Natural England has developed a tool to help assess the potential risks to SSSIs by proposed developments. These are known as 'Impact Risk Zones' (IRZs) and they define the area around a SSSI that could be sensitive to development, considering the particular sensitivities of the feature for which the site is designated.
- 4.3. The IRZs help inform whether a development proposal may affect a SSSI and if so, whether it is necessary for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to seek pre-application advice from Natural England. Information on the IRZs was determined from the MAGIC website to determine if the LPA is required to seek consultation for the current development.

Building Inspection

- 4.4. Director and Principal Ecologist Michael Cummings MSc MCIEEM (Bat Licence no: 2015-13903-CLS-CLS) and Assistant Ecologist Jess Marshall BSc (Hons) MSc conducted an internal / external building inspection at the site at The Old Library on the 2nd October 2025. The weather conditions at the time of the survey were dry and cloudy and approximately 13°C. The following methodology was followed:

External Survey

- 4.5. An investigation was carried out of external features with potential for use by roosting bats, such as gaps under roof and ridge tiles, gaps at soffit boxes or fascias. A search for bat droppings was made beneath each potential entry/exit point identified where accessible. The surveyor used binoculars and powerful, low-heat LED torch.

Internal Survey

- 4.6. An investigation was carried out of the roof void (including the floor and walls) for signs of bats roosting and the access potential into the roof void for bats. The surveyor looked for

bats, bat droppings, likely access points, signs of feeding, dead bats, scratch marks and staining, and made a suitability assessment of the structure of the roof.

Potential to Support Roosting Bats

- 4.7. Each building was assessed for its potential to support roosting bats as detailed in **Table 1** below which is taken from the Bat Conservation Trust 2023 guidelines Table 4.1, Table 7.1 and Table 7.2.

Table 1: Roost classification from the Bat Conservation Trust (2023) guidelines.

Category	Description of roosting habitat	Number of surveys required
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).	No further surveys
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No further surveys
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by large numbers of bats.	Single survey between May to August
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, condition and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	Two surveys with at least one survey between May to August.
High / Confirmed	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by a larger number of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts.	Three surveys with at least two surveys between May to August.

High Level Inspection

- 4.8. Part of the assessment involved the use of ladders, a torch and endoscope to investigate external crevices within the structures to gather further information about the suitability of these features to support roosting bats and look for signs of bats.
- 4.9. The inspection was carried out on 2nd October 2025 by Director and Principal Ecologist Michael Cummings MSc MCIEEM (Bat Licence no: 2015-13903-CLS-CLS).

Limitations

- 4.10. Ecological surveys are limited by factors that affect the presence of plants and animals such as the time of the year, weather, migration patterns. The survey was undertaken in October and therefore represents a valid sample of ecological evidence present on that date/season.

- 4.11. The desk study does not include data from the local environmental records centre (LERC). However, following CIEEM guidelines (2017) it is possible to conduct a robust assessment without the need of LERC data, for example for small-scale projects or on sites such as;
- A field in active arable cultivation where there is no impact on any hedges, trees or water bodies;
 - A small area of cultivated garden/amenity grassland, as above; or
 - A small urban site comprising mostly asphalt or compacted hardstanding.
- 4.12. The proposals only impact the building on site. This is a low impact, small-scale project that will not impact the vegetation on the site, and therefore the lack of LERC data is not considered a limitation to the ecological assessment of the site.
- 4.13. Many species of bat in the UK are crevice-dwelling, and bats or signs of bats can be difficult to find within a building.
- 4.14. No other limitations were encountered, or assumptions made during either the desk study or the field survey and it is considered that with the access gained and recording undertaken an accurate assessment of the site's ecological importance has been made.

5. SURVEY RESULTS

Desk Study

- 5.1. The site falls within the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB. There are two statutory designated sites within 2km of the site, these are the Gutch Common SSSI and Lower Coombe and Ferne Brook Meadows SSSI. A further search of internationally designated sites within 5km of the site found one site, this is the Fontmell & Melbury Downs SAC. These are detailed in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Statutory designated sites within 5km of the site.

Designated sites	Name and designation type	Reason for designation	Approximate distance from site
Within Site Boundaries	The site falls within the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB, which has four particularly characteristic and valuable habitat types supporting a range of rare and vulnerable species. These are chalk grassland, arable farmland and pasture, rivers and their associated habitats and woodland.		
Within 2km of Site	Gutch Common SSSI	Mosaic of inter-related habitats with wet and dry acidic woodlands, expansive areas of bracken with acidic flushes and a neutral meadow. Supports habitats and species uncommon or rare in the county.	960m north west.
	Lower Coombe and Ferne Brook Meadows SSSI	Support nationally important examples of rare fen meadow and species-rich neutral grassland communities.	900m south.
International Sites within 5km of Site	Fontmell & Melbury Downs SAC	Annex I habitats: - Semi-natural dry grassland and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (*important orchid sites) Annex II species: - Early gentian <i>Gentianella anglica</i>	3.7km south.

- 5.2. There are seven records of EPS licences within 2km of the site, and detailed in **Table 3**.

Table 3: ESPL granted for bats within 2km of the site.

Case Reference	Licence dates	Species designation	Licensable Impact	Approximate distance from site
EPSM2013-6824	06/12/2013 - 30/09/2014	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting site.	600m south.
2020-50534-EPS-MIT	01/01/2021 - 01/07/2032	Brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, lesser horseshoe, soprano pipistrelle, whiskered	Affecting and damaging breeding site, damage and destroy resting site.	965m south.
2017-32246-EPS-MIT	19/01/2018 - 12/01/2028	Common pipistrelle	Damage and destruction of resting site.	990m south west.

EPSM2009-1446	10/01/2010 - 01/10/2011	Common pipistrelle, brown long-eared, serotine, soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting site.	1.87km south west.
EPSM2013-5394	10/10/2013 - 30/09/2018	Serotine, brandts	Affecting, and destruction of breeding site, destruction of resting site	1.67km north west.
2014-5338-EPS-MIT	27/02/2015 - 31/12/2020	Soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting site.	1.67km north west.
2018-33465-EPS-MIT	27/04/2018 - 27/04/2028	Brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, lesser horseshoe, soprano pipistrelle, whiskered, serotine	Destruction of a resting site.	930m north east.

5.3. A search of the Wiltshire Council Planning Portal found one record of a recent planning application with an associated ecological report:

- PL/2022/00771: Regarding the demolition of a rear lean-to and replacement with a rear extension. During the PRA, several bat droppings were found which belonged to brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, and Natterer's *Myotis nattereri* bats. Subsequent emergence surveys recorded roosts for common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, brown long-eared, serotine, Natterer's, and soprano pipistrelle within the lean to and roof void.

5.4. There are 53 areas of priority deciduous woodland site within 2km of the application site. The closest is an unnamed patch 135m south east. This area of woodland is also registered on the National Forest Inventory (Woodland - Broadleaved). Further priority habitats within 1km of the site comprise purple moor grass and rush pasture, and good quality semi-improved grassland.

5.5. There are three areas of ancient woodland within 1km of the application site, comprising Berry Wood Copse 480m north east, Gutch Common-East 970m north west, and Oysters Coppice 425m north west.

Building Inspection

External Assessment

5.6. The buildings on site comprised a two-storey residential dwelling, and a detached thatch-roof dwelling, the latter not due to be impacted. The building was composed of concrete blocks, with a pitched roof with concrete tiles. A bitumen felt flat roof connected the older thatch roof building with the newer extension.

- 5.7. The roof tiles on the aspect to be impacted were tightly fitted with minimal gapping present, with some moss present. An end tile was inspected with a torch, with no evidence of bats found.
- 5.8. The gable end to be impacted had a wooden soffit box with minimal gaps present, with the majority covered with cobwebs. One gap lacking cobwebs and of suitable size for a bat was inspected with an endoscope, with no evidence of bats found. The soffit box on the right adjacent wall had small gaps but were not big enough to be suitable for roosting bats. Lead flashing was tightly fitted with no gaps present.
- 5.9. There was a fascia board of the flat roof building which had a suitable sized gap between the wall and the fascia. This was inspected with an endoscope and no evidence of bats were found.

Internal Assessment

- 5.10. The loft void to be impacted was T-shaped, and 3.5m (W) x 1.3m (H) x 4.5m (L). It was a traditional cut roof with timber rafters, and the felt was new and in good condition. The rafters were tight to the gable walls with lots of cobwebs, and there was no light ingress. There were lots of scattered mouse droppings, but no evidence of bats or means of access for bats.

Overall Assessment

- 5.11. The area to be impacted on the newer extension had **low potential** for roosting bats, due to the presence of two crevice features suitable for roosting bats externally. However, following the high level inspection of these features no evidence of bats were found, and have been considered as not in use.

Photographs



Image 1: Area to be impacted by the works.



Image 2: Gaps in the soffit box which were subjected to a high level inspection.



Image 3: Roof tiles.



Image 4: Roof tile being inspected with a torch.



Image 5: Fascia board of flat roof where bat feature was present.



Image 6: Fascia board feature being inspected with an endoscope.



Image 7: South aspect of building, not due to be impacted.



Image 8: Loft void to be impacted.



Image 9:Loft void to be impacted.



Image 10: Thatch roof building, not due to be impacted.

6. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Designated Sites and Priority Habitats

- 6.1. There are two statutory designated sites within 2km of the site. However, due to the small scale of the development it is not anticipated that the works will have a negative impact on designated sites or nearby priority habitats, through land take or other direct effects of development.
- 6.2. The proposals will not result in an increase in residential dwellings in the area, and therefore no recreational impacts to Fontmell & Melbury Downs SAC are expected as a result of the works.

Habitats

- 6.3. The works do not extend past the existing floor plan of the current building, and there will be minimal impacts to surrounding habitats during building works.

Status of Bats on Site

- 6.4. During the building inspection, the building on site and area to be impacted was assessed as having **low potential** to support roosting bats due to the presence of two crevice features; one on the soffit box and one on the fascia board. These features were accessed with a ladder and inserted with a torch and endoscope, with no evidence of bats found.
- 6.5. There are no confirmed bat roosts within the building impacted by the works, and no area of foraging habitat or commuting features proposed to be impacted. It is therefore considered that bats will not be impacted by the proposals.
- 6.6. **In the unlikely event that any bats are found, all works will cease and no further work will be carried out until a licence from Natural England has been obtained.**

Mitigation

- 6.7. *Precautionary Ecological Supervision:* Immediately prior to the removal of any tiles/external features all gaps and raised tiles will be inspected by a suitably qualified and licensed bat ecologist to ensure that no bats are present. Following the inspection, the removal of the tiles and lead flashing must be carried out very cautiously and under supervision by a bat licensed ecologist.
- 6.8. *Lighting:* Any new external lighting should be directed to avoid light spillage onto vegetation, particularly linear habitat features such as woodland edges or potential roosting sites within trees and buildings. Bats are sensitive to light and could potentially avoid the area if access points or the surrounding areas become lit. Appropriate lighting options will prevent a negative impact on bats potentially using the habitats on site and should be approved by a suitably qualified and licensed bat ecologist. Lighting plans should be approved and signed off by a licensed bat ecologist prior to submission, to ensure the scheme is suitable for bats.

If appropriate measures are taken to reduce light spillage from the development, it is likely that there will be no negative impacts on local bat populations.

- 6.9. See **Appendix 2** for further information on designing lighting to minimise impacts on bats.

Compensation

- 6.10. One gable end access point will be created in the new extension to compensate for the loss of the two suitable features for bats. More information about creating these features can be found in **Appendix 3**.

Enhancements

- 6.11. To increase the roosting opportunities for bats in the area, one ridge tile feature should be integrated into the new extension. More information about creating ridge tile features can be found in **Appendix 4**.
- 6.12. Additionally, at least one external bat box, such as Schwegler 2FN (or similar) will be installed on a tree on site. The location will be determined by a licensed bat ecologist to ensure likelihood of repeated use is increased. The bat boxes will be installed at a height of at least 4 m, preferably on a southern un-cluttered aspect with good connectivity to linear features such as other mature trees and hedgerows.

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The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 (UK Parliament). *The National Archives* [online] www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/39/contents *Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000* [October 2025]

APPENDICES

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Proposed Northwest Elevation
Scale - 1:100



Proposed Southwest Elevation
Scale - 1:100

Rev	Description	Drawn By	Date
Client:	Ms T Frost	Drawn By:	JF
Dwg Title:	Proposed Elevations	Checked By:	-
Project:	The Old Library, Church Hill, Donhead St Mary, SP7 9DQ	Scale	1:100 on A3
Job No.:	5287	Date:	19/09/2025
	P02	Revision:	-

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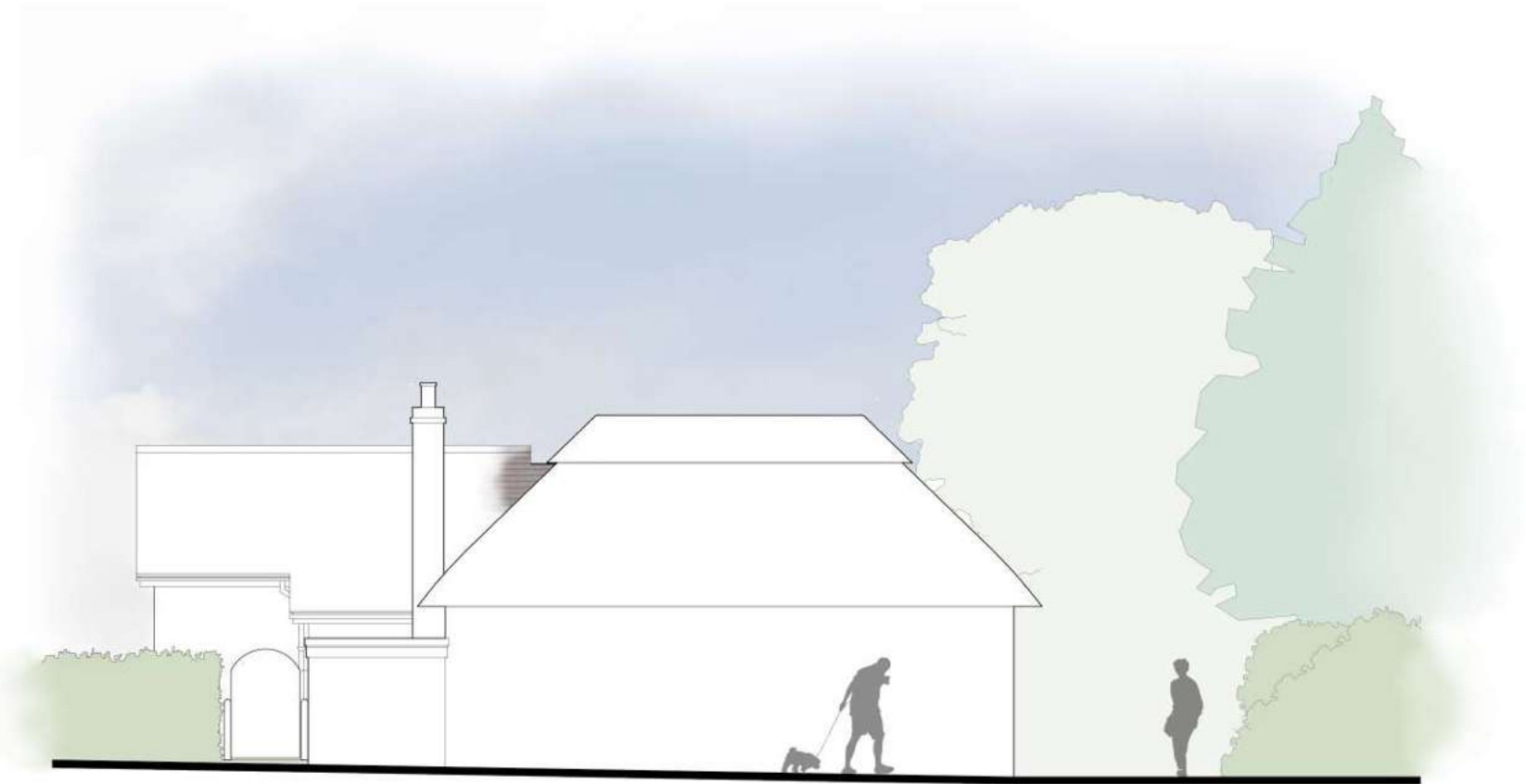
PWCR, Grosvenor House,
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Proposed Southeast Elevation
Scale - 1:100

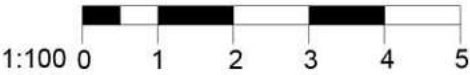


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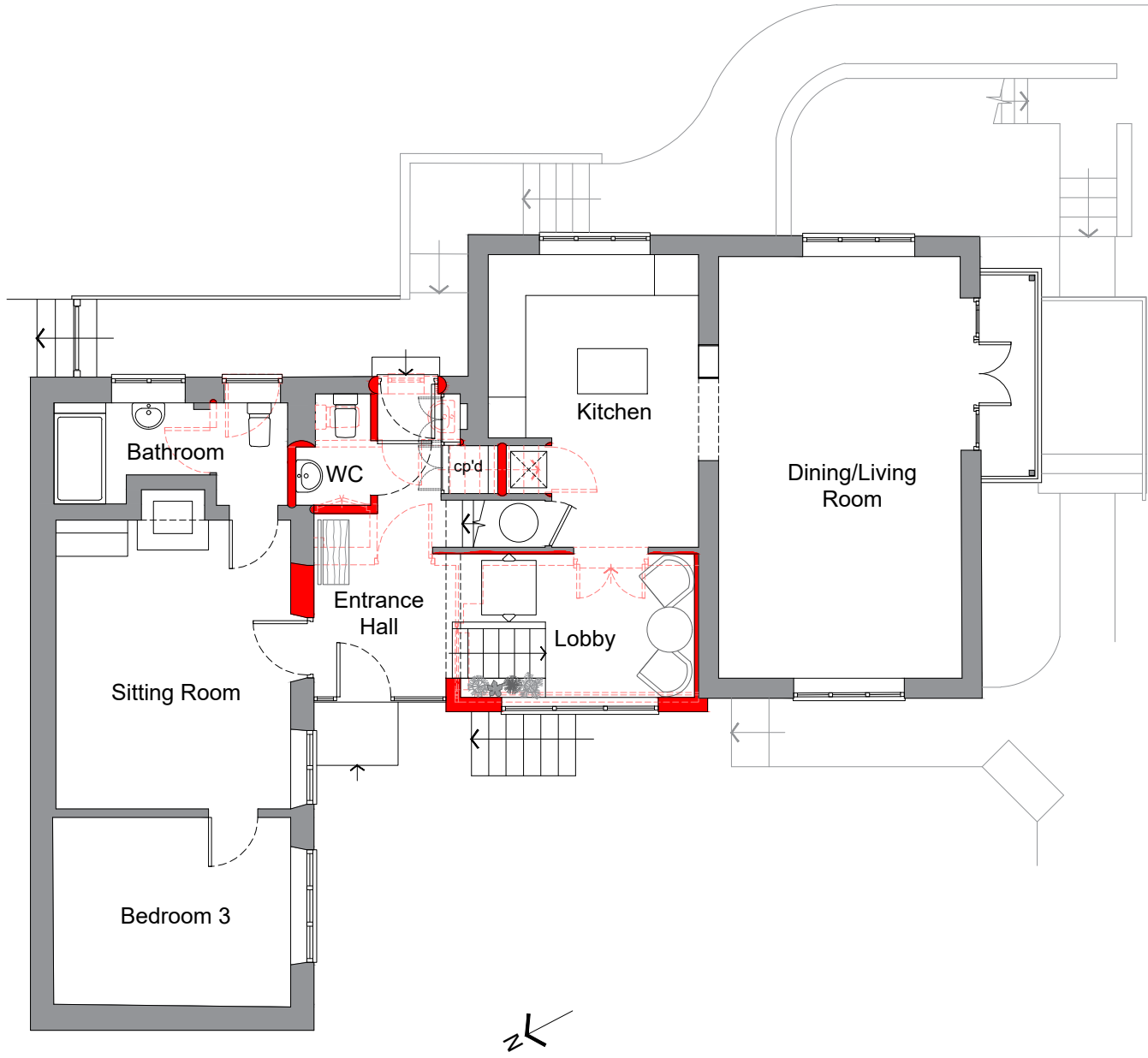
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Project:	The Old Library, Church Hill, Donhead St Mary, SP7 9DQ	Scale	1:100 on A3
Job No.:	5287	Date:	19/09/2025
	P03	Revision:	-

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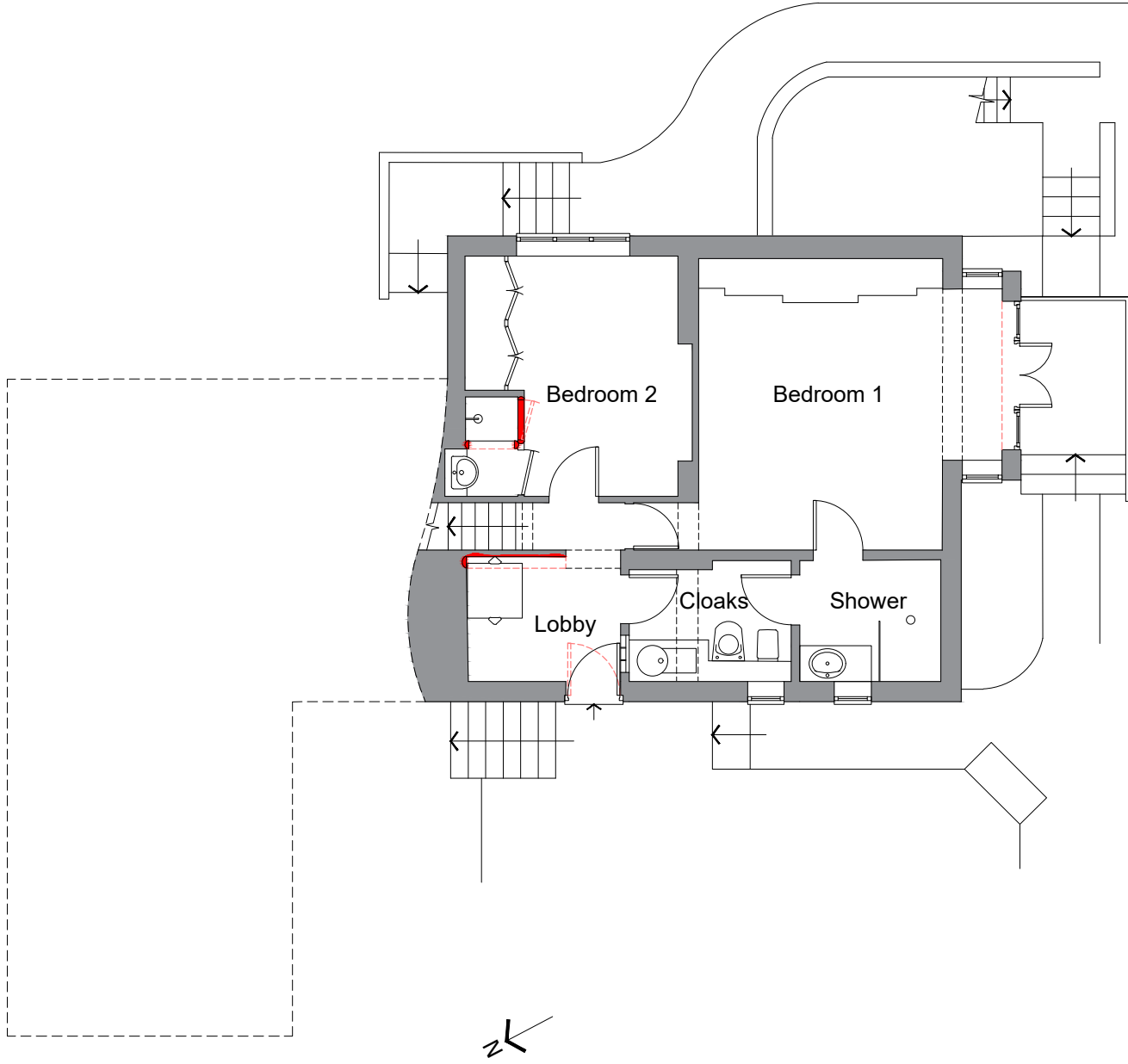
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Proposed Ground and Upper Ground Floor Plan
Scale - 1:100



Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan
Scale - 1:100

KEY

Proposed new fabric

Existing fabric

Existing fabric to remove



Rev	Description	Drawn By	Date
Client: Ms T Frost		Drawn By: JF	
Dwg Title: Proposed Floor Plans		Checked By: -	
Project: The Old Library, Church Hill, Donhead St Mary, SP7 9DQ		Scale: 1:100 on A3	
		Date: 19/09/2025	
Job No.: 5287	P01	Revision: -	



ARCHITECTS | TOWN PLANNERS



THE IMPACT OF LIGHTING ON BATS

Bats favour a dark environment for both roosting and foraging as they are adapted to low-light conditions. Artificial lighting will disturb bats if the lighting covers roost access points, flight paths or foraging habitats.

The main peak of nocturnal insect abundance occurs at dusk and a delay in emergence results in a lower foraging rate for bats.

Artificial lighting creates a 'vacuum effect' for nocturnal insects. During the night nocturnal insects use the light of the moon* to navigate. However, artificial lighting and even sky glow above cities obscures the natural moonlight as it is closer

and radiates light in multiple directions.

Some species of bats have been recorded foraging around street lights such as *Pipistrellus* species and *Nyctalus* species. However, species that are less tolerant of artificial light are at a disadvantage when foraging as insects are drawn away from these species usual foraging grounds into the zones of artificial light.

Lighting must be considered in context to any development as increased lighting may cause roost abandonment, reduced reproductive success, and reduced foraging. Mitigation to reduce the impacts of lighting for bats is therefore of great importance in bat conservation.

Table 1: Summary of predicted impact of lighting for each species/genus

Impact	High	Medium	Low
Behaviour			
Maternity roost	All species	-	-
Night roost	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> <i>Myotis</i> spp. <i>Plecotus</i> spp.	<i>Pipistrellus</i> spp. <i>Nyctalus</i> spp. <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	-
Emergence	All species	-	-
Foraging	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> <i>Myotis</i> spp. <i>Plecotus</i> spp.	-	<i>Pipistrellus</i> spp. <i>Nyctalus</i> spp. <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>
Commuting	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> <i>Myotis</i> spp. <i>Plecotus</i> spp.	-	<i>Pipistrellus</i> spp. <i>Nyctalus</i> spp. <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>
Swarming	All species	-	-
Hibernation	All species	-	-

*For more information see Warrant, E., and Dacke, M. (2016) Visual Navigation in Nocturnal insects. *Physiology*, 31, 182-196.



Sources of light that can disturb bats include; light spill via windows, sport floodlighting, car headlights, roadside lighting, security lighting, aesthetic lighting of waterways, and aesthetic illumination of buildings. Glare will affect bats over greater distance than the target area directly illuminated.

Avoidance is the most effective method, but if this is not possible the following measures should be considered.

What lighting should I use?

- Low pressure sodium lights or 'warm' LEDs
- Wavelength above 540nm
- Colour temperature below 2700K
- Shielded lights that prevent light spill above a 70 degree angle
- Passive infrared (PIR) motion sensors



What to avoid:

- Lighting roost entrances, flightpaths, and foraging or commuting routes
- Reflective surfaces beneath lighting
- High level lights
- Non-directional lighting

Lighting should be considered at an early stage allowing impacts to be minimised through the design of the site.

Key Points

- Keep lighting intensity to the minimum level required
- Limit the times that lights are on to provide some dark periods (e.g. switching installations off between midnight and 5am)
- Dim lighting according to demand
- As an alternative to lighting pathways use paving materials that reflect moonlight
- Low level lighting allows darkness to be retained within higher vegetation
- Set dark habitat buffers - lighting should always be a minimum of 25m from vegetated margins and 40m from waterbodies
- Incorporate dark corridors within the site
- Compensate for the loss of dark areas by enhancing other dark areas
- Consider building design - install internal lighting away from windows



Design Details

Note: This feature is used to ensure bats can access the loft void via the gable end

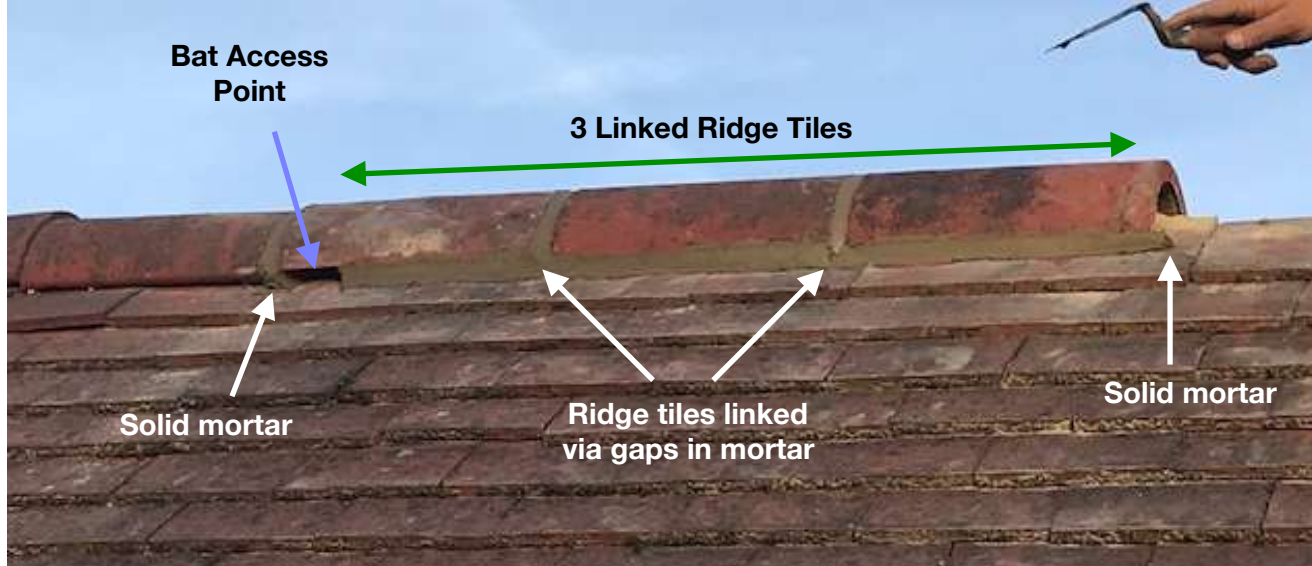


Depending on the construction of the building access needs to be created through both the external and internal layers of the wall.

External/Outer skin - This may be a small gap under hanging tiles, and wooden cladding or leaving a gap in the render adjacent to the ridge beam.

Internal skin - This is likely to require a cut in the felt for the bat to climb through and a gap at the wall top allowing the bat access into the loft void.



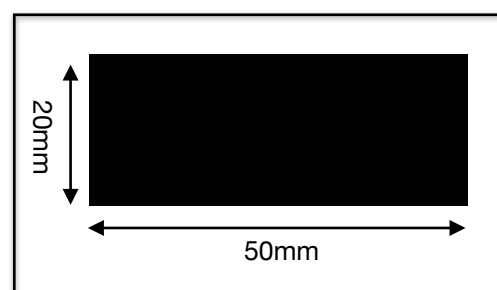


HOW TO CREATE

Note: Use three adjacent ridge tiles for one Ridge Tile Crevice Feature



1. Notch out the underside of a ridge tile measuring 20mm high by 50mm wide.



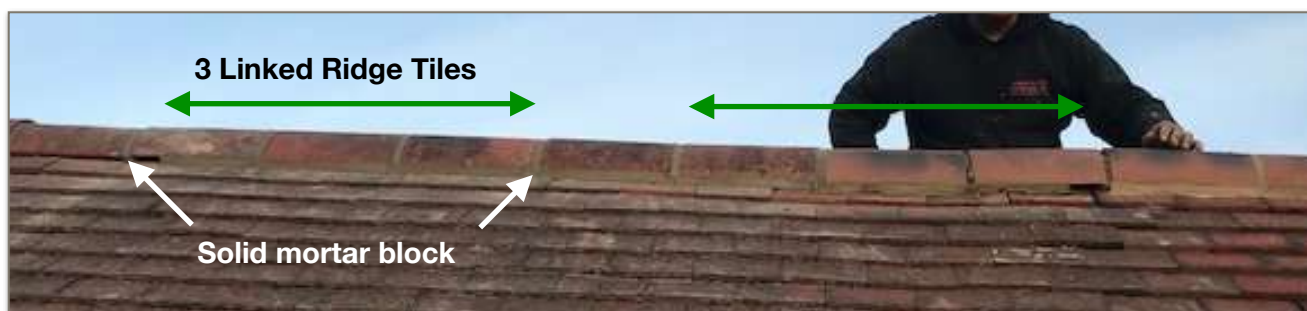
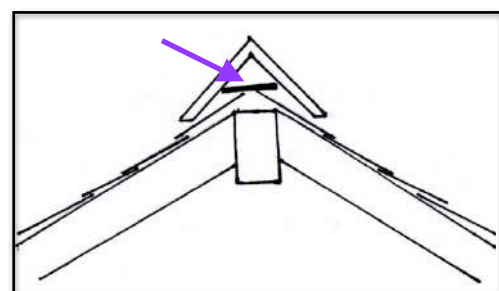
2. Or leave a gap in the mortar of the same size



3. Leave the gap mortar free when bedding the tile onto the ridge.



4. To ensure the three ridge tiles remain linked either; place a broken tile over the ridge and mortar only above the tile (left) or fill one side with mortar and leave the other side empty (do this on alternate sides to ensure the feature does not become draughty) (right).



5. At each end of the three linked ridge tiles insert a solid mortar block to reduce through draughts.