



Noon Trees, Hilmarton
Bat Activity Survey & Assessment
For Stephen & Georgina Fenna

4th June 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 Commission

Ellendale Environmental Limited was commissioned by Stephen and Georgina Fenna to undertake a bat activity survey and an assessment at Noon Trees, Beacon Hill, Hilmarton, Calne, SN11 9HT ('the site'). It is proposed construct a single-storey extension to the south-eastern elevation of the existing residential dwelling ('the target building') on the site ('the proposed development').

The bat activity survey and assessment report have been undertaken taking cognisance of previous surveys at the site, namely:

- *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Noon Trees, Hilmarton* – West Country Ecology, November 2025.

1.2 Site Details

The site is located at Beacon Hill in Wiltshire, approximately 2km south of Lyneham, at OS grid reference SU 01623 76319.

Figure 1: location plan





1.3 Bat Conservation

British bats

There are 18 species of bats resident in Britain, 17 of which are known to breed. These are from two families, namely the Rhinolophidae (the two horseshoe bat species) and the 15 species of vesper/evening bats (the Vespertilionidae). All British bats are insectivorous and locate their prey using ultrasonic calls through a biological system known as echolocation.

During summer months, female bats form nursery colonies in trees and buildings, where they raise infants. In the winter, males and females hibernate in trees, buildings and underground structures.

Conservation status of British bats

The general consensus in Britain and Europe is that virtually all bat species are declining and are vulnerable. Our understanding of population status is poor, as there is very little historical data for most bat species. Certain species, such as the horseshoe bat, are better understood and have well documented contractions in range and population size.

Given this general picture of decline, the UK Government (within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan) has designated eight species of bats as priority species (these being soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle (Wales only) greater and lesser horseshoe bats, barbastelle, Bechstein's, noctule and brown long-eared bat). These plans provide an action pathway whereby the maintenance and restoration of former population levels are envisaged.

Legal status of British bats

All bats and their roosts in England were originally protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. Subsequent amendments to the legislation for England (and Wales) has removed bats from most of the provisions of the Act; however, it remains an offence to:



- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; and/or
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place that a bat uses for shelter or protection.

All British bat species are listed in Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive and are fully protected through The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. All bat species found in England are classed as European protected species. They receive full protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended).

These regulations make it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure, or kill a bat;
- Harass a bat or group of bats;
- Disturb a bat in a roost (any structure or place it uses for shelter or protection);
- Disturb a bat while it is rearing or otherwise caring for its young
- Obstruct access to a bat roost or otherwise deny an animal use of a roost;
- Disturb a bat in a manner or in circumstances likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species; and/or
- Disturb a bat while it is migrating or hibernating.

The legislation, although not strictly affording protection to foraging grounds, does protect bat roost sites. Bat roosts are protected at all times of the year, regardless of whether or not bats are present at the time.

It's also an offence to:

- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal (whether or not deliberately or recklessly); and/or
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any wild bat (or any part or derivative of one) obtained after 10th June 1994.



Where development is proposed that would result in an offence under the Habitats and Species Regulations, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence needs to be granted by Natural England (NE) to permit an act that would otherwise be unlawful. This provides for a specific derogation from the legislation, to prevent a legal infringement occurring.

To obtain an EPS licence for development it must be demonstrated that the purpose of the act to be licensed is for:

- *“Preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”* (Regulation 55(2)(e)).

In addition, NE will not grant an EPS licence unless they are satisfied that:

- *“There is no satisfactory alternative”* (Regulation 55(9)(a)); and
- *“The action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range”* (Regulation 55(9)(b)).



2. Methodology

2.1 Overview

Survey work undertaken in relation to a proposed development needs to be conducted under a scientific/conservation licence issued by, in this case, NE. The work is normally conducted by an environmental consultant and they will advise on the necessary course of further action with respect to licences, mitigation and compensation measures.

A number of recognised survey techniques are available to the consultant, such as:

- Natural England guidelines (A.J. Mitchell-Jones [2004], *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*, English Nature. ISBN 1 85716 781 3), which provide generic technical advice on bat mitigation; and
- Hundt L (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*, 4th Edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-13: 978-1-872745-96-1.

For works which may impact bats, the developer must:

- Demonstrate that adequate surveys have been undertaken to establish the presence or absence of bats, to predict the potential impact on them, their resting sites or breeding roosts;
- Bring proposals forward that will integrate provision for bats into any design that will compensate and mitigate for any impact (if bats or their roosts are discovered); and
- Provide sufficient survey information that will support a licence application under the Habitats Directive should bats be discovered.

Where bat species are using a site, it will be necessary to mitigate the impacts of the development upon the population(s). These would include measures that remove or reduce any damaging effects on the animals or their roosts.



In most cases a package of compensation measures will be required to accommodate any loss of breeding or resting-places, and the timing of works will need to be synchronised with the life-cycles of the effected species.

This collective package of mitigation and compensation measures should allow the conservation status of the animals to be at least maintained. With careful thought, the conservation status may even be enhanced. This is usually most easily achieved by early ecological input into the project.

In the case of sites where bats are present, a development licence from NE will be required to conduct works affecting bats.

2.2 Bat Survey Licence

The activity survey was led by Stewart Parsons, Director and Principal Ecologist of Ellendale Environmental, who is a full member of CIEEM and a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv). Stewart has over 20 years' professional experience of ecological surveys across the UK and holds a bat survey licence (Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), registration number 2025-85474-CL18-BAT), with respect to the Conservation Regulations 1994. The licence is valid for all counties of England, from 1st November 2025 until 31st October 2026.

The surveys was assisted by Christopher Parsons, Associate Ecologist at Ellendale Environmental. Christopher holds a bat survey licence (Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), registration number CLS-2019-42561), with respect to the Conservation Regulations 1994. The licence is valid for all counties of England, until 31st October 2026. Christopher has over 10 years' professional experience of undertaking ecological surveys and working with bat species across the UK.

The survey was also assisted by Douglas Fraser, who has two years' experience of undertaking bat activity surveys.

2.3 Survey Objectives

On the basis of the brief provided by the client, Ellendale Environmental conducted survey work to fulfil the following needs:



- Obtain baseline information on the habitat features suitable for bat species;
- Determine the presence/likely absence of bat species within the proposed development site and any activity at or near the site; and
- Determine the type, extent and pattern of detected usage.

In practice this was achieved by a physical inspection of the target building, a search for live animals and/or other signs indicating their current or previous presence.

2.4 Survey Methodology

2] One dusk bat emergence/activity bat detector survey was undertaken on Monday 20th April 2026. The dusk survey commenced 30 minutes before sunset (sunset was at approximately 20:12) and completed 90 minutes after sunset, when all bats will normally be expected to have exited their roost sites.

In addition, ORDRO 4K Camcorder Video InfraRed Night Vision Cameras and a pair of Nightfox Red HD Infrared Night Vision Goggles were used during the survey, along with Anabat swift multi-spectrum bat detectors.

Weather was not a limiting factor in the activity survey. The conditions are summarised in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Survey weather conditions for activity survey

SURVEY DATE	TEMPERATURE (°C)	WIND SPEED (MPH)	CLOUD COVER/ PRECIPITATION
20/04/26	Start. 13.8 End 11.5	Avg. 1.6 Max. 2.1	10% cloud cover, warm & dry, with an occasional light breeze.

2.5 Constraints

The survey was not restricted, and full access was granted to the target building and surrounding land. Whilst no biological survey can guarantee that all cues and signs of protected or notable species will be recorded, Ellendale Environmental is confident that all key fauna present during the survey were noted.



3. Results

3.1 Previous Survey Results

A daytime physical survey of the target building was undertaken on 8th October 2025 by West Country Ecology¹. The external inspection found the rendered walls and the single-storey extension roof, soffits, cladding to be well-sealed with no obvious roosting opportunities for bats. Several potential roost features were identified on the two-storey section, although no external bat evidence was recorded.

Internally, the southern loft contained bat droppings beneath partial boarding and a potential eaves entry point on the east elevation; the northern loft was sealed with no evidence of bats.

The adjacent Haygrove Wood provides high-quality commuting/foraging habitat and potential tree-roosting opportunities.

Due to the evidence of bats within the target building, it was recommended that emergence surveys be undertaken to assess the level of activity within.

3.2 Bat Activity Survey

The bat activity survey was conducted in April 2026 during the optimum survey season for bats (which is March to October). The weather conditions were not limiting and were characterised by steady temperatures above 10°C and light winds.

Each surveyor was located in a static position to cover all aspects of the target building during the survey, as shown on **Figure 2**.

¹ West Country Ecology, Noon Trees_WCE-00254-V1.0.



Figure 2: showing the surveyor locations for the activity survey



Dusk survey, 20/04/26

Bat activity was first recorded at 20:32, 20 minutes after sunset, when a common pipistrelle bat was recorded emerging from the southern gable end of the target building. The bat was observed re-entering the target building at the southern gable end at 21:02.

A single serotine bat was recorded passing the southern end of the target building at 21:02 but was not associated with the building and flew west away from the survey area.

A brown long-eared bat was recorded flying past the northern end of the target building at 21:09 towards the woodland beyond. The bat did not emerge from the building and entered the survey area from the west.



Table 2: Bat activity survey results, 20/04/26

TIME	OBSERVATIONS
20:32	A common pipistrelle bat was recorded emerging at the south side of the house, before commuting around the exterior wall and heading north-east.
20:55	A common pipistrelle bat was first heard foraging around the trees to the north-east of the house (outside of red-line boundary).
21:02	A common pipistrelle bat was recorded to the west of the target building foraging over the grassland habitat.
21:02	A serotine bat was recorded passing the southern aspect of the building. During this recording a bat was observed re-entering same location on southern gable end as it emerged from.
21:07	A serotine bat was recorded at the south of the building, but no observation made.
21:09	A brown long-eared bat was recorded flying past the northern end of the building towards the woodland beyond. The bat did not emerge from the building and entered the survey area from the west.
21:10 – End	Pipistrelle bats were recorded to the east of the target building but were not seen. The bats are assessed as being in the Haygrove Wood habitat to the east of the target building.

No other bats were observed emerging from the target building during the survey. Pipistrelle bats were recorded to the east of the target building but were not seen. The bats are assessed as being in the Haygrove Wood habitat to the east of the target building.



4. Conclusions

4.1 Conclusion

A daytime physical survey of the target building undertaken in 2025 identified bat droppings in the southern loft space and a potential access/egress location. Due to the evidence of bats within the target building, it was recommended that emergence surveys be undertaken to assess the level of activity within the building.

A single dusk survey was undertaken in April 2026. The survey was not constrained, and full access was gained to the external areas of the target building.

Bat activity was first recorded at 20:32, 20 minutes after sunset, when a common pipistrelle bat was recorded emerging from the southern gable end of the target building. The bat was observed re-entering the target building at the southern gable end at 21:02.

Figure 3: showing bat access/egress locations identified on the target building



← *common pipistrelle bats emerged from the building and returned to the roost*



A serotine bat was recorded passing the southern end of the building and a brown long-eared bat was recorded passing the northern end of the building during the survey but were not associated with the building.

Pipistrelle bats were recorded to the east of the target building but were not seen. The bats are assessed as being in the Haygrove Wood habitat to the east of the target building.

4.2 Impacts of the Development

The presence of bats has been confirmed within the target building, and a roost is present in the southern loft space. As all bat species and their roosts are strictly protected by UK law (e.g., the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981), any proposed changes require careful ecological consideration.

The proposed single-storey extension to the target building has been designed so as to avoid impacts to the confirmed roost within the loft space which will be retained. Therefore, the risks of adverse impacts on bats or any associated legal offences is very low.

No further surveys are required to inform the current proposals for the proposed single-storey extension. Precautionary working measures are recommended to cover the unlikely eventuality that any bats are found during the works.

4.3 Main Recommendations

Working near a bat roost requires immediate, strict adherence to legal protections. No works must take place on the existing lost space and roost which must remain in place for bats.

The following recommendations are made:

- Contractors should be given a briefing/toolbox talk and have a clear understanding that they must halt all works and call supervising bat ecologist if bats are encountered during the development of the extension;
- Following the toolbox talk and immediately before to the commencement of works, an inspection of the building, where the extension will be formed, will be



undertaken to confirm no Potential Roosting Features have formed since the surveys;

- If a bat is found, or the presence of bats is suspected, all work must stop immediately, and a licensed bat worker must be contacted for advice;
- Bats must not be handled under any circumstances; and
- An ecologist will assess a potential roost space (if identified/found) and inform NE of the proposed actions to be undertaken.

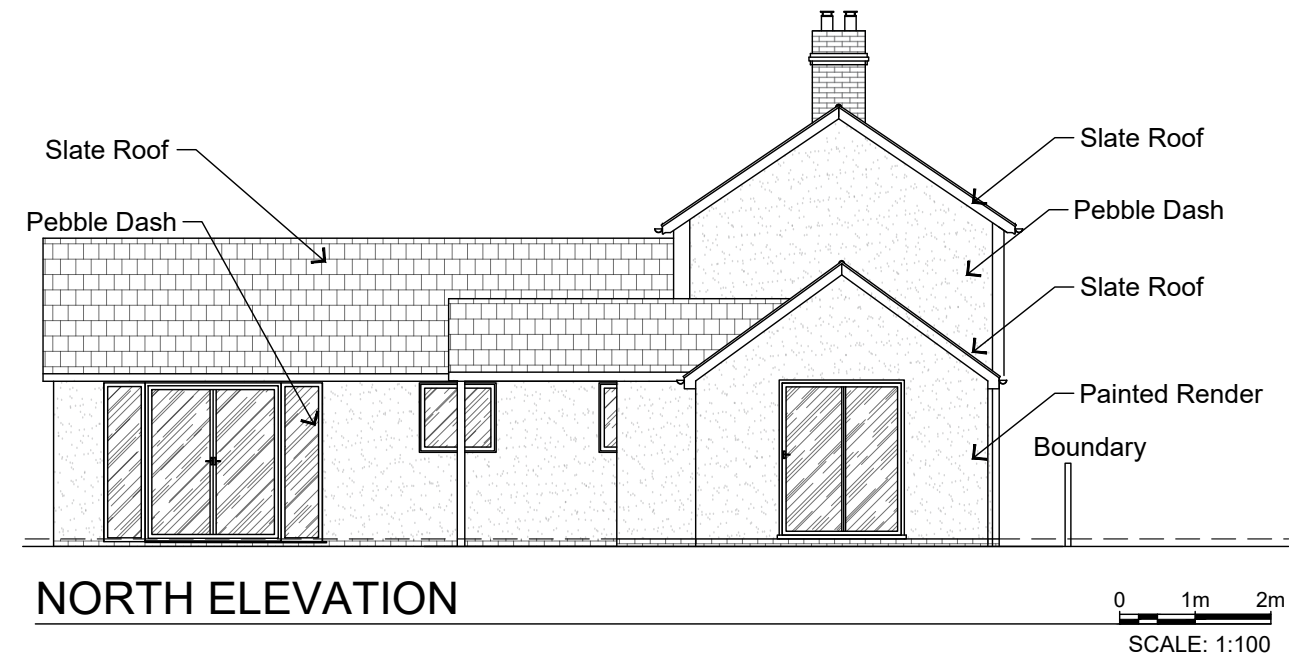
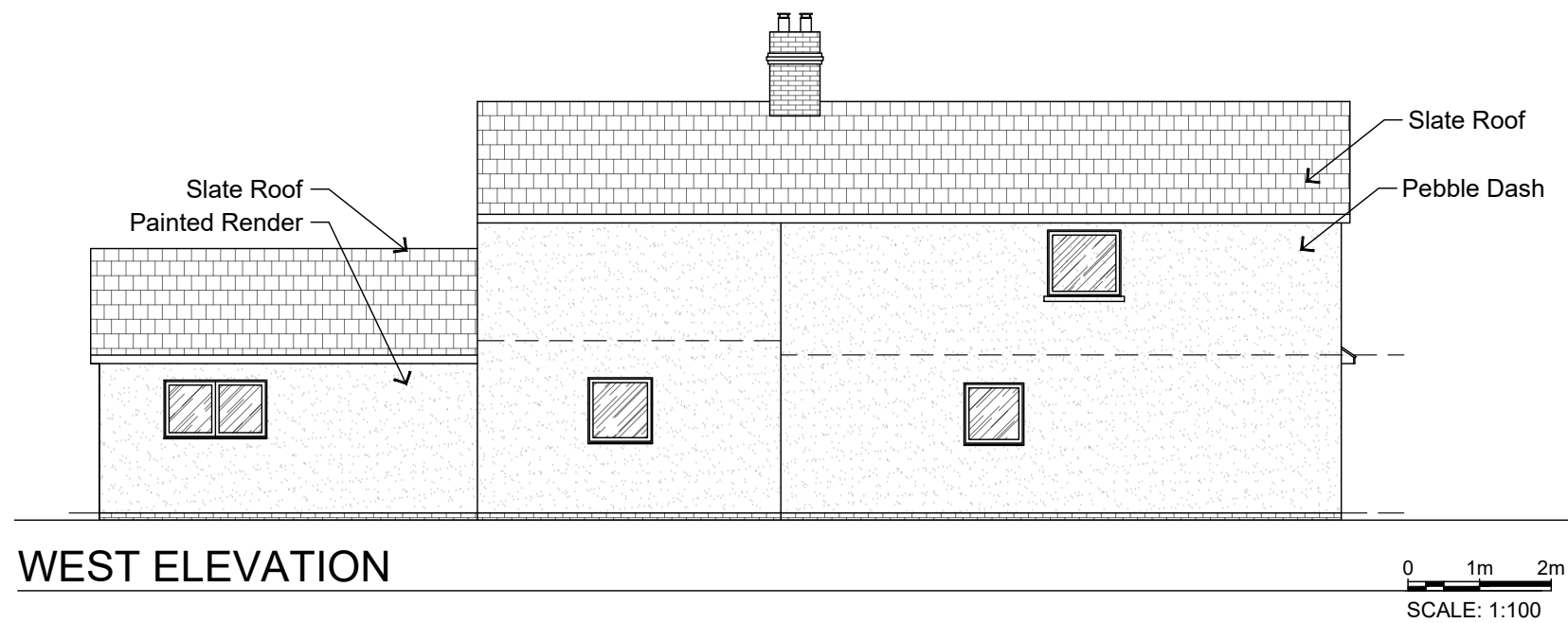
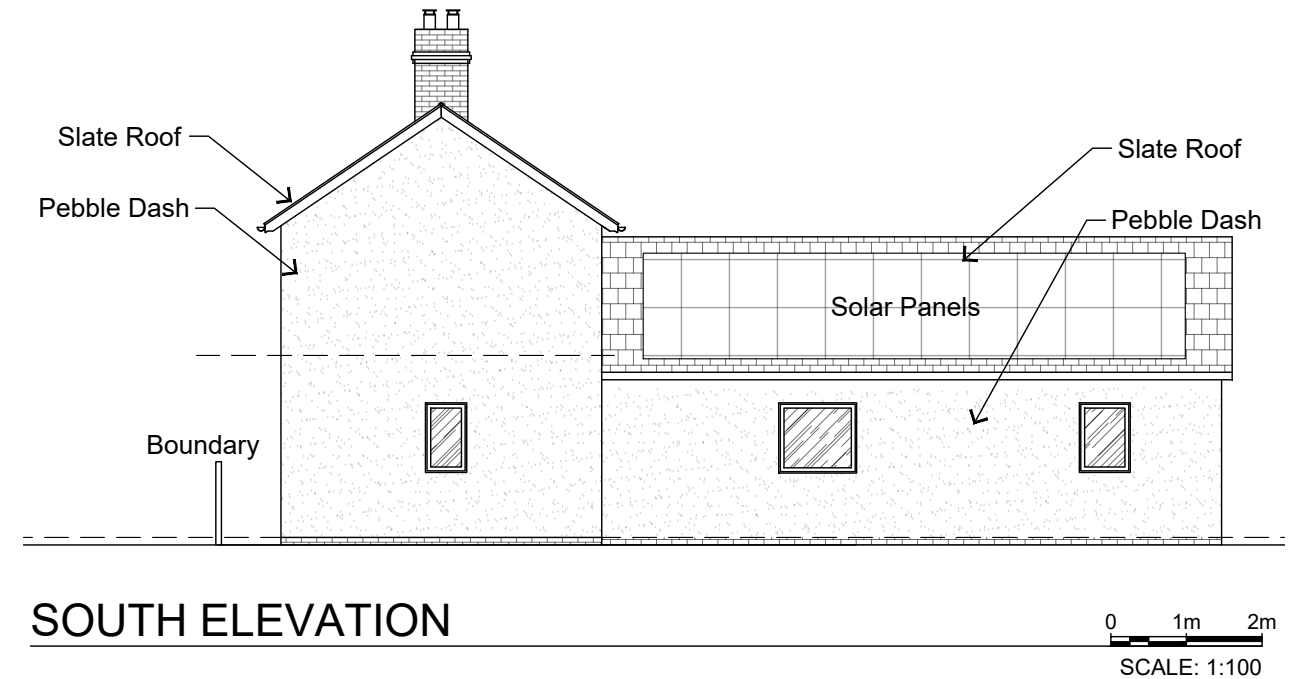
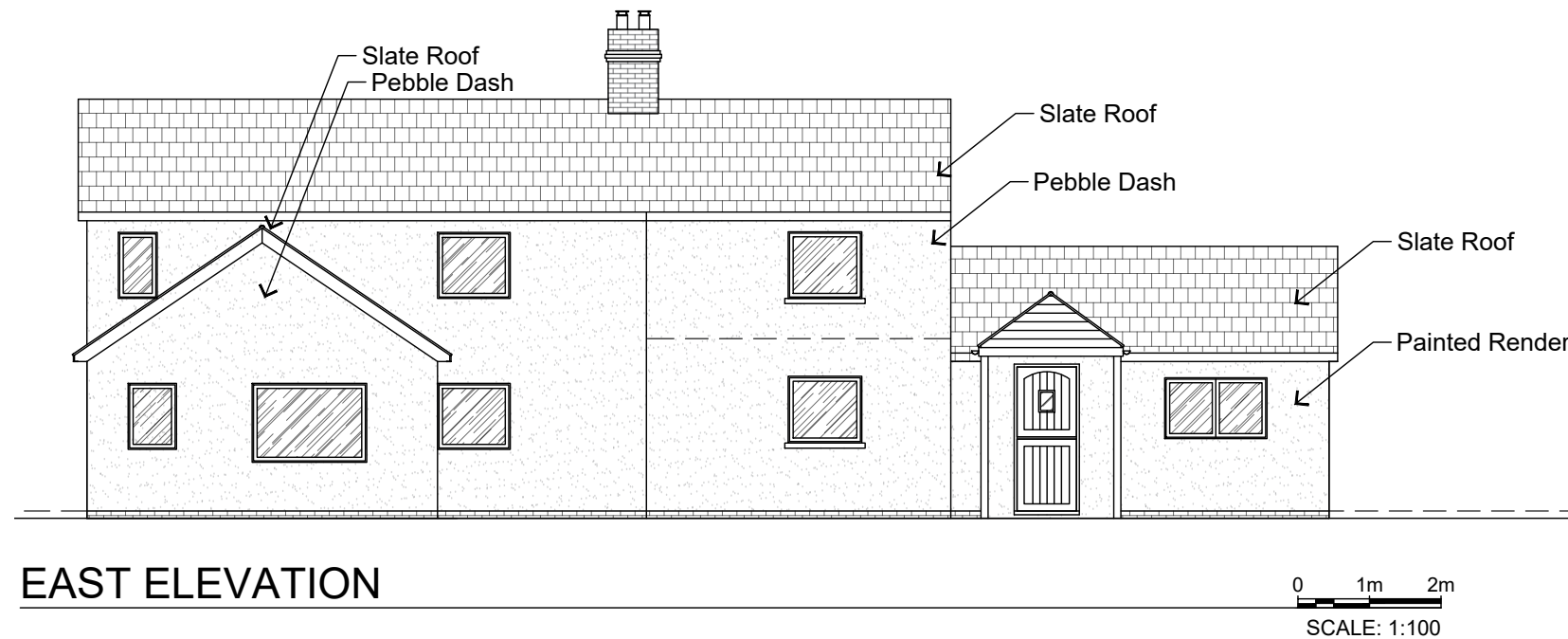
Due to the dynamic nature of a construction site, there will be different levels of illumination needed for certain tasks or stages in the construction process in order to provide a safe working environment. Some areas will require suitable task lighting while other areas will require a level of ambient lighting, such as:

- Task Lighting – Task lighting will typically be provided for construction activities and the required levels will vary depending upon the type of activity being undertaken; and
- Ambient Lighting – Ambient lighting will be constant and typically be provided to aid the safe navigation for areas such as access, footpaths, car park and contractors' compound.

New external lighting on the building/extension must avoid illuminating the bat roost and access/egress locations.



Appendix A – Proposed Plans

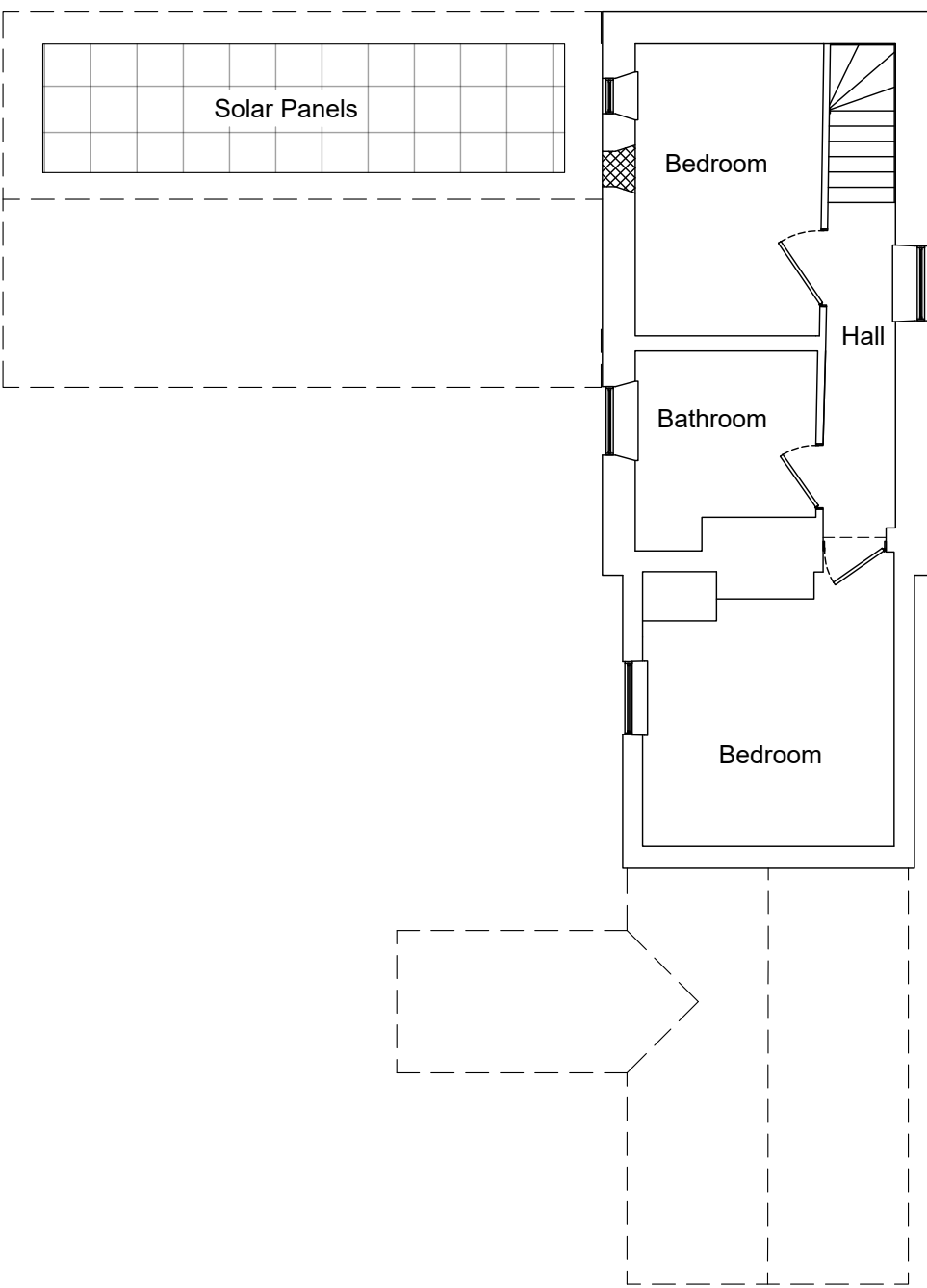


Do not scale from this drawing except for planning purposes only. All measurements to be checked on site prior to the commencement of works.

ADDRESS: Noontrees, Beacon Hill, Hilmarion, Calne SN11 9HT
DRAWING TITLE: Proposed Elevations
DRAWING NO: 011 PL 05 D
SCALE: A3 @ 1:100
DRAWN BY: PF DATE: April 2026



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Do not scale from this drawing except for planning purposes only. All measurements to be checked on site prior to the commencement of works.

ADDRESS: Noontrees, Beacon Hill, Hilmarton, Calne SN11 9HT
DRAWING TITLE: Proposed Plans
DRAWING NO: 011 PL 04 D
SCALE: A3 @ 1:100
DRAWN BY: PF DATE: April 2026