
APPLICATION NO.	19/01615/FULLS
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION - SOUTH
REGISTERED	28.06.2019
APPLICANT	Mr Robert Tylor
SITE	Martins, Horsebridge Road, Houghton, SO20 6LY, HOUGHTON
PROPOSAL	Two storey extension, garage conversion, erection of new garage, construction of detached dwelling including package treatment plant
AMENDMENTS	Amended Plans 28.08.19, 23.04.20 & 26.06.20
CASE OFFICER	Mr Paul Goodman

Background paper (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application is presented to Southern Area Planning Committee at the request of a Member for the reason that it raises issues of more than local public interest.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is within the settlement area of Houghton and to the western side of Horsebridge Road. The site of the proposed new dwelling is formed from land to the south of Martins which is to be retained and extended.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application proposes the erection of a two storey extension, garage conversion and erection of new garage to serve the existing dwelling and the construction of a detached dwelling including package treatment plant.

4.0 HISTORY

- 4.1 19/00475/FULLS - Two storey extension, garage conversion erection of new garage; construction of detached dwelling including package treatment plant. Withdrawn 17.04.2019.

5.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 **Planning & Building (Trees)** – No objection, subject to condition.
- 5.2 **Planning & Building (Landscape)** – No objection, subject to condition.
- 5.3 **Planning & Building (Conservation)** – Objection:
- In terms of the alterations to the existing property – Martins, it is now considered that, when completed, the changes should not significantly alter its impact in the street scene. Therefore there is no objection to this aspect of the proposals.

- The reduction in the height of the garage to Martins is considered an improvement.
- There is no objection in principle to a new dwelling in this location, subject to an appropriate design.
- Concerns were previously raised with regards how well the proposed building would blend into the street scene, in terms of the size in relation to the other buildings, the style of the house, and the positioning of the garage. Though the scheme has been amended, and as a building, has a greater cohesion, these concerns in relation to the blending of the new house into the street scene are still outstanding.
- The photomontages shows both buildings as pale, which makes them look bright and stark and sets them apart from the gentler, recessive palette of the surrounding area. There is a cumulative impact resulting from both being finished so pale. It is appreciated that Martins already has some render, as do other buildings in the locality (e.g. opposite), but it is not the whole building, and it is broken up and toned down with other materials, the effect is quite different.
- It is not actually clear what the finished effect of the proposed new building would be. The elevation drawings note the upper floor would be timber clad (which is not a treatment characteristic of the dwellings in this part of the village).

5.4 **Ecology** – No objection, subject to note.

5.5 **Highways** – No objection, subject to condition.

5.6 **Natural England** – Comments awaited in relation to Habitat Regulations Assessment.

5.7 **Design Review Panel** – Comment;

- The positioning and design of the garage at the front of the proposed house was one of the issues previously discussed and continued to cause much debate. There are two views to the latest scheme, one being that the single storey, flat-roofed garage was not appropriate in this forecourt and that a garage could be positioned at the side of the house. However, in this case this could some disadvantage to the proposed occupant and the single garage as designed with its front screen wall design would be well screened from the street due to the nature of the boundary planting.
- The Panel are mindful of the nature of this corner site in the street scene, with its significant tree and enclosing hedgerow and other frontage trees. The new house would be viewed on the southern approach set back within this context. The Panel felt that any new dwelling, whilst respectful of the conservation area, should reflect its time and that the form and scale of the proposed house was a fitting statement for the site. The additional sketches of alternative designs for the new house tabled at the meeting, were felt by the Panel not to add anything to the scheme.

- Indications of design quality and detail were given in the presentation and the Panel felt that crisp detailing of the clean lines of the design were important to its success, i.e. the gable, eaves, windows rainwater goods etc. As part of this, the use of quality traditional materials should be employed such as local stock bricks and plain clay tiles or a natural slate for the roof. However, although render is shown to be used for the upper storey of the front elevation the Panel felt that render should not be used for the front gable end. A traditional timber cladding may be more suitable here.
- Any external renovation of 'Matins' itself, as an example of an inter-war house, should continue to respect its particular character in this context in terms of its fenestration and maintaining appropriate materials such as tile-hanging to the front bay.

6.0 REPRESENTATIONS Expired 15.09.2020

6.1 Houghton Parish Council – Objection;

- The proposal does not comply with the requirements of the borough local plan Policy E1. It does not integrate, respect or complement the character of the area, in which the development is located, in terms of layout, scale, materials and building style.
- The flat roofed garage in front completely breaks all requirements of policy E1 and 2 as well as the main house.
- Policy E2. The application should protect, conserve and enhance the landscape character of the conservation village- it clearly does not.
- The entrance would be on a bend on an increasingly busy and fast stretch of road, which is frequently used by cyclists and walkers. This would be a danger.
- The house is to be built in a garden which is not the policy of our conservation village.
- The development is far too big for the site.
- In the last 3 years our village has taken 29 new or permission given houses, which is an excess for a small conservation village.
- 2 recent housing surveys, 1 by Action Hampshire and 1 by Houghton NDP, clearly indicate that the only requirement is for a small number of low rent properties. This does not come within that category.

6.2 14 Representations of Objection received;

- Highways safety, maintenance of visibility splays and increase in on-street parking from cumulative development in village.
- Overdevelopment by the size of the new dwelling and location of the proposed garage forward of the dwelling.
- Design details and materials do not reflect the neighbouring properties or wider village. Flat roofed garage out of character.
- Size of garden spaces for existing and proposed dwelling out of character with the village.
- Overdevelopment of the village leading to loss of green spaces.
- Loss of hedgerow and future pressure to fell protected trees.
- Impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

- Contrary to draft VDS.
- Overlooking.
- Limit changes from previously withdrawn application.

7.0 **POLICY**

7.1 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

7.2 **Test Valley Borough Local Plan 2016** - COM2 (Settlement Hierarchy), E1 (High Quality Development in the Borough), E2 (Protect, Conserve and Enhance the Landscape Character of the Borough), E5 (Biodiversity), E7 (Water Management), E8 (Pollution), E9 (Heritage), LHW1 (Public Open Space), LHW4 (Amenity), T1 (Managing Movement), T2 (Parking Standard).

8.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

The main planning considerations are the principle of development, character of the area, Houghton Conservation Area and the setting of heritage assets, highways, trees, ecology and amenity.

8.1 **Principle of development**

The application site is located within the settlement boundary for Houghton for which Policy COM2 accepts development in the form proposed, provided that it is appropriate to the other policies of the revised local plan. Such factors could include an assessment of the impact upon the character of the area, open space and development of other land. The application proposes the erection of a single new residential property and extensions to the existing dwelling. The site is not allocated for any specific use and the development would not prejudice the development of any adjacent land.

8.2 Under policy COM2 settlement boundaries for the settlements identified as major centres, key service centres or rural villages that would be sustainable locations for identified forms of development are identified. Houghton is classified as a rural village suitable for residential development in the form of windfall, affordable housing, community led development and replacement dwellings.

8.3 With regard to development in garden areas the NPPF states that “Local planning authorities should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.” The Test Valley Borough Council Revised Local Plan 2016 does not contain any policies specific to the development of gardens and each are judged on their own merits.

8.4 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. However the attached glossary clarifies that residential gardens are excluded from the definition of previously developed land.

- 8.5 As is identified above the site lies within the settlement boundary and therefore the principle of development and re-development for housing, and the extension of existing dwellings, are accepted in principle in accordance with policy COM2.
- 8.6 **Character and Appearance**
Public views of the site are available from the adjacent highways and Public Rights of Way, most notably the from the road junction opposite the site and when approaching from the south as a result of the corner location.
- 8.7 Impact on the Setting of Heritage Assets
Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historical interest which it possesses. In addition, Policy E9 of the TVBRLP requires that development preserves or enhances the historic significance and special interest of designated heritage assets. In this case whilst the existing dwelling is modern and of no particular architectural or historic interest the application site is situated within the Houghton Conservation Area.
- 8.8 Alterations to the Existing Dwelling
As is described above the existing dwelling or Martins is a modern building originally associated with the former garage site to the north which has subsequently been redeveloped for housing. As a result this corner is now characterised by a short run of modern housing.
- 8.9 The proposed extensions will be predominantly obscured from public view by the existing dwelling and reflect the scale and character of the existing property. Concern was raised by the Conservation Officer in relation to the roof height of the garage building to the rear, which is publicly visible from the access, which has now been reduced in height. Alterations to the front elevation of the property are limited to replacement render and windows, and a new timber porch.
- 8.10 The proposed alterations are considered to be in keeping with the design of the existing dwelling and would modestly improve the character of the building form public views. In this respect the proposal would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area, in compliance with Policies COM2, E1 and E9 of the TVBRLP.
- 8.11 Proposed New Dwelling
The proposed plot for the new dwelling is formed from the southern part of the garden area of Martins. Representations have raised concern that the size of the plot is too small in comparison to other family sized homes in the village, many of which are set in notably large plots. However the proposed dwelling would form a natural extension of the small run of modern dwellings formed by Martins and the redeveloped garage site to the north. The resultant plot sizes within this sequence of dwellings at the corner would be comparable and the Conservation Officer has raised no objection in principle to the development of the plot for an additional dwelling.

- 8.12 However, as is summarised in paragraphs 5.3 and 5.7 above, there is a difference of opinion between the Conservation Officer and the Design Review Panel as to the scale and design of the proposed dwelling.
- 8.13 The Conservation Officer has raised specific concern with regard to how the proposed building would blend into the street scene, in terms of the size in relation to the other buildings, the style of the house, and the positioning of the garage. The Conservation Officer has raised further concern that the submitted street scenes and photomontages shows both buildings as pale in colour, which sets them apart from the palette of the surrounding area. This is in relation to the materials in particular the proposed render but also the use of timber cladding.
- 8.14 In contrast the Design Review Panel took the view that new dwelling, whilst respectful of the conservation area, should reflect its time and that the form and scale of the proposed house was a fitting statement for the site. It is also noted that a number of other design proposals were considered by the Panel but none were considered suitable/preferable to the current scheme. With regard to materials the Panel advocated the use of timber cladding to the first floor which has been incorporated into the scheme.
- 8.15 The proposed streets scenes are considered to demonstrate a suitable level of consistency in the built form of the proposed dwelling, Martins and the adjacent detached and semi-detached properties. The addition of an additional modern dwelling to the existing street scene at this corner location is considered to be acceptable in principle and the scale appropriate to the surroundings.
- 8.16 With regard to the design details the concerns raised by the Conservation Officer regarding materials are echoed in many of the representations. However there is a diversity of designs and material pallets in the village and immediate setting. Render is prominently used on the host property and there are other examples in the village. There are numerous examples of timber clad buildings in close proximity to the highway and public views. Whilst many of these are indeed ancillary buildings there are examples of larger timber structures which have been converted to residential uses. In addition many of the more recent developments in the village have followed a similar design principle with traditional forms accentuated with modern design elements including the use of timber cladding.
- 8.17 On balance it is considered that the proposed design represents a suitable design approach to the site reflecting the historic elements of the conservation area whilst incorporating contemporary design details. In terms of the immediate setting the adjacent modern properties have a limited historic significance. It is not necessary for newer development to replicate older properties and the proposed development properly reflects its setting. As a result the proposed dwelling, alongside the alterations to the existing property, are considered to generally improve its appearance and, as a result, the proposals would have a small positive impact on the setting of the conservation area and comply with Policy E9 of the TVBRLP.

8.18 Arboriculture and Landscape Character

As is described above Martins sit within the Bossington and Houghton Conservation Area, within the curtilage of the plot, on the eastern boundary there is also a TPO tree. The closest public right of way is 185m to the north, due to a number of buildings and vegetation, there will be no views from the right of way. In recent years the development at Houghton Garage to the west of the plot has established a row of modern properties on smaller plots. The Landscape Officers advice is that the proposals put forward will not appear uncharacteristic to that of the neighbouring properties. However it is considered that the soft boundary around the perimeter of the site on Horsebridge Road should be retained so soften the impact of the development. A condition has been applied to require the submission of soft and hard landscape details.

8.19 TPO.TVBC.706 protects a prominent and visually important Lime tree in the south east corner of the site. The Arboricultural Officer raised some initial concerns with regard to the location of services routes and the construction of the proposed basement in relation to the protected tree. The application has now been supported by an amended arboricultural method statement to which the Arboricultural Officer has raised no objection subject to conditions to ensure compliance with the report during construction.

8.20 Subject to the required conditions the proposed development is considered to have no adverse impact on landscape character or protected trees and complies with Policy E2 of the TVBRLP 2016.

8.21 **Highways**

In considering the previously withdrawn application the Highways Officer raised some concerns which have now been addressed in the revised submission which is supported by a highways Technical Note (Cole Easdon Consultants Limited) and accompanying visibility plan. The Highways Officers advice is that the plan demonstrates that the minimum visibility requirements can be met, based on the results of the speed survey undertaken. The required splays are as follows;

- 2.4m x 37.4m looking left (for recorded vehicle approach speeds of 27.7mph); and
- 2.4m x 36.5m looking right, and 36.5m forward visibility to drivers turning right into the site (for recorded vehicle approach speeds of 26.7mph).

8.22 A condition has been applied to ensure the retention of the required splays. The existing dwelling will be served by the existing access and parking area to the front of the property. The proposed parking arrangement would meet the required standard and, subject to further conditions requiring the retention of parking and restricting the location of any gates, the proposed scheme is considered to have no significant detrimental impact on highways or pedestrian safety and accords with the relevant T policies of the TVBRLP 2016.

8.23 **Protected Species**

The Ecology Officer raised no objection. The application is supported by a phase 1 ecology report (Vesper Conservation and Ecology, May 2018) which includes thorough survey work for bats and a mitigation strategy. Evidence of historic bat use was found during the visual inspection, although this was limited to very old bat droppings. The building was assessed as presenting moderate roost suitability and therefore a dusk and a dawn visit was carried out. This is appropriate and in line with the Bat Conservation Trusts good practice survey guidelines. In view of the survey findings the Ecology Officer has advised that the development is unlikely to result in a breach of the law protecting bats and has raised no concerns. However the Ecology Officer has suggested that an informative note is added to any permission.

8.24 Solent and Southampton Water SPA – Solent Neutrality

There is existing evidence of high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus in the water environment across the Solent, with evidence of eutrophication at some designated sites. An Integrated Water Management Study for South Hampshire was commissioned by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) Authorities to examine the delivery of development growth in relation to legislative and government policy requirements for designated sites and wider biodiversity. This work has identified that there is uncertainty regarding whether any new housing development does not contribute to net increases in nutrients entering these designated sites.

8.25 As such, the emerging advice from Natural England is that the applicants for development proposals resulting in a net increase in dwellings are required to submit the nitrogen budget for the development to demonstrate no likely significant effect on the European designated sites due to the increase in waste water from the new housing.

8.26 With respect to the current application, the applicant has submitted information that the nutrient budget for the proposal. In support of the proposed development the applicant has submitted a proposed mitigation strategy. The proposed strategy comprises the use of a 'Bio-Bubble' treatment plant to serve both the existing and proposed dwellings. In summary the use of the treatment plant in place of the inferior septic tank arrangement for the existing dwelling currently in place would balance the nitrates resulting from the proposed dwelling. Natural England have reviewed the applicant's submission and a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been prepared and referred to Natural England. Natural England formal comments on the HRA are awaited at the time of reporting but in order to secure the use of the specifically agreed treatment plant a condition will be applied to any permission. In addition a maintenance plan for the treatment plant has been submitted and is to be secured by condition.

8.27 Subject to the required conditions, and confirmation from Natural England regarding the HRA, the development will therefore not result in adverse effects on the Solent designated site through water quality impacts arising from nitrate generation and would comply with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and TVBRLP 2016 Policy LE5.

8.28 **Water management**

The 2016 Local Plan includes a requirement in policy E7 to achieve a water consumption standard of no more than 100 litres per person today. This reflects the requirements of part G2 of the 2015 Building Regulations. In the event that planning permission was to be recommended a condition would be applied in order to address this. Subject to such a condition the proposal would comply with policy E7.

8.29 **Amenities of neighbouring properties**

Policy LHW4 of the RLP sets a number of criteria against which development proposals will be assessed in order to safeguard the amenity of existing and future residents, particularly in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy and any adverse impact in terms of loss of daylight/sunlight. The nearest neighbouring properties are the host property of Martins and Testwood House to the south.

8.30 With regard to the host property the proposed extension works have included the removal of potentially sensitive south facing openings in order to avoid any overlooking or overbearing conflict with the new dwelling. Concern has been raised with regard to the extent of the garden area proposed. Whilst this has been mainly in reference to the character of the area it is considered that the remaining garden spaces, whilst reduced, would be adequate to serve the existing and proposed dwellings.

8.31 Testwood House to the south is set back in the rear of a very large plot which incorporates numerous mature trees. As a result the rear elevation of the proposed dwelling would be situated approximately 50m from the neighbouring dwelling. The separation, in combination with the mature boundary hedgerow and tree planting, would not result in any adverse overlooking impact from the proposed dwelling.

8.32 The proposed scheme would retain appropriate separation distances and intervening vegetation on the boundaries. As a result it is considered that there will not be an adverse impact on the residential amenities of the host property or off-site neighbouring properties. In addition noise impacts can be suitably controlled during construction works. The resultant development is considered to comply with policies LHW4 and E8 of the TVBLP.

9.0 **CONCLUSION**

9.1 The proposals are acceptable in principle and would have no adverse impact on the character of the site or surrounding conservation area, amenities of neighbouring properties, highways safety or protected species. As a result the proposals comply with the relevant policies of the TVBRLP and are acceptable.

10.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

PERMISSION subject to:

1. **The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission.**

Reason: To comply with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2. No development shall take place above DPC level of the development hereby permitted until samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of all external surfaces hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To ensure the development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interest of visual amenities in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E1.
- 3. The development hereby approved shall be undertaken in full accordance with the provisions set out within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment /Method Statement ref D1829AIAb (Alderwood 31st July 2019), and its accompanying Tree Protection Plan.**

Reason: To ensure the enhancement of the development by the retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan policy E2.
- 4. Tree protective measures installed (in accordance with the tree protection condition) shall be maintained and retained for the full duration of works or until such time as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. No activities, nor material storage, nor placement of site huts or other equipment what-so-ever shall take place within the barrier.**

Reason: To ensure the avoidance of damage to existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan policy E2.
- 5. All service routes, drain runs, soakaways or excavations in connection with the development hereby permitted shall remain wholly outside the tree protective barrier.**

Reason: To ensure the avoidance of damage to existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan policy E2.
- 6. No development shall take place above DPC level until full details of hard and soft landscape works have been submitted and approved. Details shall include-where appropriate: proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas; hard surfacing materials; minor artefacts and structures. Soft landscape works shall include: planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities. The soft landscape proposals shall include details of soft boundary treatments to the outside edges of the site. The landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the implementation programme and in accordance with the management plan.**

Reason: To improve the appearance of the site and enhance the character of the development in the interest of visual amenity and contribute to the character of the local area in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E1 and E2.

- 7. The development shall not be occupied until space has been laid out and provided for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles to enable them to enter and leave the site in a forward gear in accordance with the approved plan and this space shall thereafter be reserved for such purposes at all times.**
Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy T1.
- 8. Any gates shall be set back at least 4.5 metres from the edge of the carriageway of the adjoining highway.**
Reason: In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy T1.
- 9. The development hereby approved shall be designed and built to meet Regulation 36 2 (b) requirement of 110 litres/person/day water efficiency set out in part G2 of Building Regulations 2015.**
Reason: In the interests of improving water usage efficiency in accordance with policy E7 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016.
- 10. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers:**
617.PL.211 Rev A
617.PL.BLOCK Rev A
617.PL.SITE Rev C
617.SU.001
617.SU.002
617.SU.003
617.SU.004
617.SU.005
617.SU.006
617.PL.001 Rev C
617.PL.002
617.PL.003 Rev B
617.PL.004 Rev B
617.PL.005 Rev A
617.PL.006 Rev B
617.PL.007 Rev B
617.PL.201 Rev B
617.PL.202 Rev B
617.PL.203 Rev A
617.PL.204 Rev A
617.PL.205 Rev B
617.PL.206 Rev B
617.PL.207 Rev A
617.PL.208 Rev B
617.PL.209 Rev B
617.PL.210 Rev A
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

11. The development of the new dwelling hereby permitted shall not be commenced until the 'Bio-bubble' treatment plant has been installed to service both the existing and proposed dwelling. The treatment plant shall be retained and maintained in accordance with the Bio-bubble Maintenance and Management System (LA Hally Architect, 5th August 2020) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In order to avoid adverse impact on the Solent and Southampton Water SPA by way of additional nitrates emanating from the development in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016 Policy LE5.

12. Prior to the commencement of development the access shall be constructed with the visibility splays of 2.4m by 37.4m (North) and 2.4m by 36.5m (South) in accordance with Plan 6371/202 and maintained as such at all times. Within these visibility splays notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order) no obstacles, including walls, fences and vegetation, shall exceed the height of 1 metres above the level of the existing carriageway at any time.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy T1.

13. No works pursuant to the development hereby permitted shall be undertaken outside of 08.00-18.00 hours Monday to Friday and 08.00-13.00hours on Saturdays or at any time on Sundays, Public and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To maintain the character and amenities of the surrounding local area in accordance with Test Valley Borough Local Plan 2016 policies LHW4 and E8.

Notes to applicant:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out and completed strictly in accordance with the submitted plans, specifications and written particulars for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.
2. In reaching this decision Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) has had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. TVBC work with applicants and their agents in a positive and proactive manner offering a pre-application advice service and updating applicants/agents of issues that may arise in dealing with the application and where possible suggesting solutions.

3. **Bats and their roosts receive strict legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. All work must stop immediately if bats, or evidence of bat presence (e.g. droppings, bat carcasses or insect remains), are encountered at any point during this development. Should this occur, further advice should be sought from Natural England and/or a professional ecologist.**
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