

where different surveys may be required at different times of the year and, therefore, sufficient time will be needed in order to carry out robust surveys.

- 5.247 If surveys show that a species is present and likely to be affected by the development, a mitigation plan should be provided. This should firstly aim to avoid and minimise harm to protected species wherever possible. If it is not possible to wholly avoid harm, mitigation measures should be proposed to remove the overall harm.
- 5.248 If it is not possible to mitigate any harm, compensation measures should be provided to make sure that there is no overall harm to the protected species.
- 5.249 In order to secure the implementation of mitigation and compensation plans, conditions and/or legal agreements will be necessary. These could include a requirement for ongoing monitoring to confirm no overall harm to the relevant species.

Bechstein's bat

- 5.250 The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) holds all data relating to Bechstein's bat: this will generally comprise grid-references and these may initially be at a non-specific resolution (1 km²). Where Bechstein's bat is a potential constraint, it is highly advisable that further details are sought (e.g. there may be site-specific information not normally included within a standard data request) from HBIC or the Hampshire Bat Group.
- 5.251 Where impacts to Bechstein's bat or their habitat are identified, site layouts should avoid an impact on the species (e.g. moving the built area away from the woodland). The presence of maternity roosts in particular should inform the overall site layout and factors such as lighting. The loss of roosts, especially maternity roosts, is the impact most likely to have population-level consequences for this species. The females and their young roost colonially and therefore the loss of a single roost tree can impact many tens of individuals and affect the long-term viability of the population. Therefore, impacts to Bechstein's bat breeding habitat (i.e. loss of/excessive disturbance to woodland or trees containing maternity roosts) must be avoided. .
- 5.252 If it is not possible to avoid an impact on areas used by Bechstein's bat for foraging and movement, mitigation measures should be used. This could include buffering, maintenance of flight corridors, and sensitive lighting.
- 5.253 It is strongly recommended that liaison with the Council's Ecologist and Natural England is sought early in the development process so that local information can be shared in relation to any previous or ongoing Bechstein's bat studies in the area. Information sharing between applicants/consultants will be essential in ensuring that surveys and resulting mitigation are robust and that the population is not subject to unnecessary disturbance.
- 5.254 The forthcoming Bechstein's bat Guidance sets out clear guidance regarding appropriate surveying techniques, as well as potential avoidance, mitigation and enhancement opportunities. The guidance note will continue to be updated on a rolling basis.

Figure 25: Bechstein's bat Area

