

# Bat Roost Potential Report

39 London Road

Cowplain

Hampshire

PO8 8DF

NGR: SU 69058 10897



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**Sylvatica Ecology Ltd**

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## LIMITATIONS AND LIABILITIES

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It should be borne in mind that the behaviour of animals can be unpredictable and may not conform to standard patterns recorded in scientific literature. Therefore, this report cannot predict with absolute certainty that animal species will occur in apparently suitable locations or habitats, or that they will not occur in locations or habitats that appear unsuitable.

In order to minimise the likelihood of adverse effects on protected animal species over time, it is accepted good practice, in accordance with Natural England (NE) (formerly English Nature) guidance for ecological surveys to be repeated should works be deferred for over 12 months from the date of initial survey.

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

The recommendations and information contained within this report are based on the information provided on the development works prior to the surveys being carried out. Should the development proposals change then the findings and recommendations contained within would potentially require revision.

The findings within this report do not constitute legal advice. Should this be required, then a suitably qualified professional practitioner should be contacted.

| Approved by                                    | Signed                                                                              | Contact              |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
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## 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of a bat roost potential survey carried out on 39 London Road, Cowplain, Hampshire, PO8 8DF, NGR: SU 69058 10897.
- 1.2 This survey was carried on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 using standard guidance and best practice methodology outlined in: Bat Surveys Guidelines for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines (BCT 2023).
- 1.3 There were four records of a single bat species within the historical records search. The species present was common pipistrelle. An absence of records is not necessarily indicative of an absence of bat species as an area could be under recorded. This information serves as guidance of the types of bats that may be present, locally.
- 1.4 There were two granted Natural England mitigation licences within 2km of the application site. These were both for the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long eared (*Plecotus auritus*), with serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) being present within one location.
- 1.5 There were potential features present, on the eastern face of the building, notably around the hanging tiles and around the edges of the window frame that could potentially support roosting bats. The proximity of the ancient woodland which can be considered as high value bat foraging habitat gives the conclusion that further surveys would be required on this building to ascertain if the building supports a bat roost. This building, at present conforms to the category of **moderate** potential for roosting bats. There was street lighting immediately opposite the area of hanging tiles and this could potentially limit any usage of this building for bats.
- 1.6 For moderate potential buildings the recommendations are for two emergence and/ or dawn re-entry surveys carried out between May to September (inclusive). One would be carried out between May to August (inclusive) to encompass the maternity season. If bats are present that are considered nationally, regionally and locally rare/ important, then an additional survey (totalling three surveys) would be required to inform any licence application.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

### *Aim of this Study*

- 2.1 This report presents the findings of a bat roost potential survey carried out on 39 London Road, Cowplain, Hampshire, PO8 8DF, NGR: SU 69058 10897.

- 2.2 **Figure 1: Location of Building and Surrounding Landscape**



### *Legal Status of Bats*

- 2.3 The potential presence of bat roosts within a proposed development site has to be considered as all eighteen of the UK's bat species are protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended). The WCA states that '*a person is guilty of an offence if intentionally or recklessly they disturb [a bat] while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or he obstructs access to any structure or place which [a bat] uses for shelter or protection*'.
- 2.4 Bats are also protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019. Bats are listed as European protected species under which it is an offence if;

- *a person deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species;*
- *deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species;*
- *damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.*

2.5 Disturbances of animals include in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to;

- *survive, breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young;*
- *in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or*
- *to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.*

### 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 This survey was carried on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 using standard guidance and best practice methodology outlined in: Bat Surveys Guidelines for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines (BCT 2023). **Table 1** below details the specific categories for bat potential against the features within the building. This assessment classification has been made in accordance to these criteria.

3.2 **Table 1: Criteria for the Classification of Buildings for Bats (BCT 2023)**

| Suitability       | Description of Roosting habitats                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Negligible</b> | No suitable habitat features on site to be used by roosting bats                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Low</b>        | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation)                 |
| <b>Moderate</b>   | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed). |
| <b>High</b>       | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.                                                                                                                                |

### **Bat Records Search**

- 3.3 A 2km search of bat data has been made from the National Biodiversity Network. A search of the Multi-Agency Governmental Information Centre (MAGIC) was made for previously granted Natural England Mitigation Licences within 2km of the proposed development site.

### **Lead Surveyor**

- 3.4 The survey work and reporting has been led by Richard Law BSc MRes CEnv MCIEEM FLS. Richard has been undertaking ecological survey work within the last 20 years on a number of differing locations throughout the United Kingdom for a variety of protected species, including bats (Class 2 2015-12576-CLS-CLS) reptiles, amphibians including great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) (Class 1 2016-20290-CLS-CLS) and terrestrial mammals including dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) (2015-13188-CLS-CLS) and birds including barn owl licence (*Tyto alba*) (CL29/00236). Richard is also qualified in track and sign and trailing *via* an international system of assessment ([www.trackercertification.com](http://www.trackercertification.com)).

### **Equipment Used**

- 3.5 A high-power torch (1 million candle power) was utilised to illuminate any external areas of interest, with a less intrusive head torch used for assessing internal spaces. Crevices were checked using a PCE300 endoscope. Nikon Monarch binoculars were used to further assess external areas from the ground.

## **4 RESULTS**

- 4.1 This section provides an account of the results from the survey carried out on the buildings and provide the justification for any further recommendations outlined within this report.

- 4.2 **Table 2: Weather Conditions at Time of Survey**

| Temperature | Precipitation 24hrs<br>Prior to Survey or<br>during the survey | Wind Direction | Wind Speed<br>(Beaufort Scale) | Cloud Cover |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 11.9°C      | None                                                           | SW             | 2                              | 100%        |

- 4.3 The weather conditions at the time of the survey were suitable for a preliminary bat roost potential survey. There was no heavy rain immediately prior to, or during the survey.

### Historical Records Search

#### 4.4 Table 3: Summary of 2km Radius Historical Bat Records Search

| Common Name        | Latin Name                       | Number of Records |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Common Pipistrelle | <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> | 4                 |

- 4.5 There were four records of a single bat species within the historical records search. The species present was common pipistrelle. An absence of records is not necessarily indicative of an absence of bat species as an area could be under recorded. This information serves as guidance of the types of bats that may be present, locally.

### Granted Mitigation Licences

#### 4.6 Table 4: Granted Natural England Mitigation Licences

| Licence Number | Distance and Direction | Species                                            | Type                           | Date                     | NGR          |
|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| EPSM2009-1129  | 1.2km north            | Common Pipistrelle, Brown Long Eared Bat, Serotine | Destruction of a Resting Place | 10/09/2009 to 31/12/2010 | SU 6950 1200 |
| EPSM2013-5391  | 1.3km south            | Common Pipistrelle and Brown Long Eared Bat        | Destruction of a Resting Place | 21/03/2013 to 30/09/2016 | SU 6861 0958 |

- 4.7 There were two granted Natural England mitigation licences within 2km of the application site. These were both for the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long eared (*Plecotus auritus*), with serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) being present within one location.

### Summary of Habitats Present on Site

- 4.8 The property of 39 London Road was located in a relatively urban setting, along a concourse of shops (situated along the main road) and amenities within the large urban conurbation associated with the town of Waterloo. There was a large block of woodland (The Queen's Enclosure), 50m to the south east. This was designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and it was likely to support a variety of bat species.

### Building

- 4.9 The building comprised of a ground floor shop area and a first floor comprising of what appeared to be residential accommodation. The walls were constructed out of brick with cement pointing, both of

which were in good condition. The roof was pitched and tiled, with slate tiles and three chimney blocks, the base of each was lined with lead flashing. The eastern face of the first floor was lined with hanging tiles, with some gaps and missing tiles, notably around the base of the window frame. This area was of note as it faced the area of ancient woodland to the east of the property. There were also some gaps around the lead flashing of the chimney bocks and some small gaps around the slate tiles. It was not possible to access the internal areas of the building at this time.

4.10 **Table 5: Photographs of Building and Adjacent Habitats**

|                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Plate 1: Ancient Woodland to the East</b></p>     | <p><b>Plate 2: Hanging Tiles on Eastern Face</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Plate 3: Chimney Blocks and Slate Tiles</b></p>  | <p><b>Plate 4: Western Face of Building</b></p>      |

**Summary of the Bat Roost Potential**

4.11 There were potential features present, on the eastern face of the building, notably around the hanging tiles and around the edges of the window frame that could potentially support roosting bats. The proximity of the ancient woodland which can be considered as high value bat foraging habitat gives the conclusion that further surveys would be required on this building to ascertain if the building supports a bat roost. This building, at present conforms to the category of moderate potential for roosting bats,

at this stage. There was street lighting immediately opposite the area of hanging tiles and this could potentially limit any usage of this building for bats.

## **5 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 If the proposed works are likely to cause a disturbance to the parts of the building that have been identified as having potential to support bats, then to further inform the planning application, evening emergence and dawn re-entry surveys are recommended. All of the features present within the building that are impacted by the works would have to be covered by surveyors, each of which should be experienced enough to be identify bat species using bat detection equipment. Use of night vision equipment is also recommended, as this gives the observer the ability to see features in low light conditions.

### ***Moderate Potential Building***

- 5.2 For moderate potential buildings the recommendations are for two emergence and/ or dawn re-entry surveys carried out between May to September (inclusive). One would be carried out between May to August (inclusive) to encompass the maternity season. If bats are present that are considered nationally, regionally and locally rare/ important, then an additional survey (totalling three surveys) would be required to inform any licence application.

### ***Natural England Bat Mitigation Licencing***

- 5.3 If a bat roost is found within the building and it is predicted that the bat roost is to be unavoidably and adversely affected by the development works, then a mitigation licence must be obtained from Natural England. Suitable replacement roosts would be installed, with temporary roosts installed as close as possible to any previous roost during the works and more permanent replacement roosts installed as part of the development works, if the roost is to be lost. The type of licence that would be appropriate would be determined by the outcome of the further surveys that would be required is bat are found to be present.
- 5.4 The application for a licence would also include a method statement that would incorporate mitigation measures to ensure that the favourable conservation status of the bats within the local area is maintained. Some rarer bat species require more extensive mitigation measures, but the species present(if any) is yet to be determined at this location. The licence would require the production of a method of works, which would include measures such as hand removal of the roof tiles under the supervision of a licenced ecological consultant and the removal, by hand, of any bats found to the pre-installed mitigation measures. Mitigation and compensation measures would be required. These would depend on the type of roost present. Temporary measures would be installed prior to any works, which

could take the form of bat boxes installed in trees adjacent to the building. Measures would then need to be incorporated into the new building to provide a permanent roost replacement.

## **6 REFERENCES**

BCT (2023) Bat Survey Guidelines for Professional Ecologist – Good Practice Guidelines 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

English Nature (2004) Bat Mitigation Guidelines IN13.6.

HMSO (1981) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) HMSO, London.

HMSO (2017) The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c). (as amended) Regulations 2019.

Michell-Jones, T & McLeish, A. P (2004) Bat Workers Manual, JNCC.