

TECHNICAL NOTE

Project: 108-110 Elm Grove, Hayling Island- APP/15/00950

Subject: Response to LPA Comments – Assessment of Bat Potential in Trees

Client: Churchill Retirement Living

Date: 29th October 2015

Background

Ecological Survey and Assessment Limited (ECOSA) were previously contracted by Planning Issues Limited on behalf of their client Churchill Retirement Living to undertake an extended Phase 1 survey¹ of the 108-110 Elm Grove properties proposed for the construction of 44 private sheltered apartments with associated parking and landscaping. This survey was undertaken in September 2014.

Subsequently comments received during the planning application process by Hampshire County Council (HCC) Ecology Team on 9th October 2015 raised a concern regarding the bat roosting potential of a horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* tree on the southern site boundary. Therefore, the purpose of this briefing note is to provide further information in order to address the comments made by HCC in relation to the application and, where necessary, provide further impact assessment and mitigation measures as necessary. This briefing note is based on a ground level tree assessment carried out by ECOSA in October 2015.

Bat Survey Methodology

The site was visited by Ed Venables (bat licence reference 2014-3855-CLS-CLS) of ECOSA on 23rd October 2015. During the site visit, a specific assessment was completed on four horse chestnut trees in a line on the southern site boundary (**Map 1**) proposed to be removed. The survey assessed the potential of these trees to support roosting bats based on the presence of features such as holes, cracks, splits, loose bark and ivy *Hedera helix* cladding. The survey conformed to current Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines² and the trees were graded for their potential to support bats based upon the criteria outlined in the BCT guidelines (**Table 1**).

¹ ECOSA (2015) Elm Grove, Hayling Island Phase 1 and Phase 2 Ecological Assessment Report FINAL 090215

² Hundt L (2012) *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines*, 2nd edition, Bat Conservation Trust (BCT)



Table 1 Tree visual inspection bat roost potential categories

Confirmed Roost	Category 1*	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Roosting bats known to be present based on evidence such as bats heard internally, or droppings, staining or scratch marks at entrance.	Trees with multiple, highly suitable features capable of supporting larger roosts.	Trees with definite bat potential, supporting fewer suitable features than category 1* trees or with potential for use by single bats.	Trees with no obvious potential, although the tree is of a size and age that elevated surveys may result in cracks or crevices being found; or the tree supports some features which may have limited potential to support bats.	Trees with no potential to support bats.

Survey Constraints

No significant limitations were encountered during the ground level tree assessment survey.

Survey Results

Only one of the trees surveyed is considered to have potential for supporting bat roosts as it supports two callus rolls that lead to voids and hollows suitable for bats, this is the eastern most of the four trees on the southern site boundary. During the assessment the holes within this tree were found to be cobwebbed indicating that bats have not been active within the features, furthermore, no evidence of bats was recorded from within the holes present. **Table 2** provides a BCT category for each tree in-line with current best practice guidelines.

Table 2: Ground level bat survey results

Tree Number	Species	Potential Roosting Features	BCT Category ³
1	Horse-chestnut	Loose bark, rot is present along a branch stump on the east aspect and is covered in bark sheet however it is not in current use by bats, rot is present on the ends of cut branches but no voids are present.	3
2	Horse-chestnut	Callus roll 1.5 metres (m) on south east aspect, loose bark, rot hole is present but is not deep enough to support bats and is full of debris.	3
3	Horse-chestnut	Callus roll 2m on south east aspect, loose bark, rot hole present in callus roll but not deep enough to form void.	3
4	Horse-chestnut	Two callus rolls, one 2m on west aspect, one 2m on north aspect, loose bark, hollow trunk, rot hole in north aspect callus roll leads back to small voids suitable for bats, west aspect callus roll rotted out to form hollow trunk suitable for bats. Holes heavily cobwebbed and no evidence of bats present.	1

³ Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) provides four categories (1* - 3) for the assessment of trees and their value to bats with category, 1* being the highest potential for supporting roosting bats and category 3 being trees with negligible potential for supporting roosting bats.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Three of the trees proposed to be felled were assessed as having negligible potential for roosting bats (BCT category 3) and therefore no further recommendations are required in regards to these trees and one tree was assessed as having definite potential for roosting bats (BCT category 1). It is recommended that the BCT category 1 tree should be soft felled under the supervision of an ecologist and two Schwegler bat boxes (in trees) or bat roost units (in buildings) should be installed to compensate for the loss of roosting opportunities.

It should be noted that there are other recommendations within the ECOSA extended Phase 1 ecological report¹ written previously in relation to bats. These recommendations should be followed through the construction and operational phases of the development.

In addition, within the Phase 1 report there was reference (Table 3 of the Phase 1 report) to the erection of swift *Apus apus* nest boxes at the site when house martin *Delichon urbicum* was the species recorded nesting on the building. This was an error and the recommendation is to install two Schwegler 9A house martin boxes.

Map 1 Assessment of Trees for Bat Roosting Potential

ELM GROVE, HAYLING ISLAND, HAMPSHIRE

Map 1 - Assessment of Trees For Bat Roosting Potential

Client: Churchill Retirement Living

Date: October 2015

Status: Final

KEY



Site Boundary



Horse-chestnut with Negligible Bat Potential



Horse-chestnut with Bat Roost Potential



Planning Issues Ltd (January 2015)

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