

# Medhurst, Pootings Road, Edenbridge

Bat Emergence Survey

A Report for Mr N. Knight

June 2021



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# Medhurst, Pootings Road, Edenbridge

## Bat Emergence Survey

June 2021

Controlled Copy

01 of 02

01 Mr N. Knight

02 Greenspace Ecological Solutions Ltd

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*The content of this report is the responsibility of Greenspace Ecological Solutions Ltd.  
It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to meet the client's requirements, no site survey can ensure complete assessment or prediction of the changeable onsite environment. Furthermore, should more than 12 months elapse between the date of this survey and any subsequent development, it may be necessary to consider the need for an update survey to be undertaken.*

Report Number J21002\_P2

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## 1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Client: Mr N. Knight

Site Address: Medhurst, Pootings Road, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 6SF

Attending Ecologists: Martin Rann  
Vickie Gorst

Survey Dates: 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Site Proposals: Conversion of an outbuilding into a residential dwelling with a new drive and landscaping.

Associated Planning Reference Number: Not yet submitted

Source of Relevant Documents:

| Document:                         | Source:                                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Preliminary Ecological Appraisal: | Greenspace Ecological Solutions Ltd. March 2021 |

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## 2 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Context

2.1.1 The results of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the 'Site' conducted by Greenspace Ecological Solutions (GES) in December 2020, identified the barn as having '**Low**' suitability to support roosting bats. In order to ensure reasonable effort to determine the presence/likely absence of roosting bats has been applied, GES were commissioned to undertake a single bat emergence survey of the barn.

2.1.2 The results of the emergence survey as described in this report, serve to determine the presence/likely absence of roosting bats within the Site and where present, ensure that the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of bats is maintained throughout the development and that the proposal remains compliant with existing legislation and planning policies which serve to protect bats and their roosts.

### 2.2 Site Location

2.2.1 The Site is located on the outskirts of the village of Four Elms, Kent at National Grid Reference: TQ 45628 49143.

### 2.3 Site Description

2.3.1 The Site occupies approximately 0.16 hectares (ha) and includes a single barn, set within areas of semi-improved grassland.

2.3.2 The Site is bound by Pootings Road to the south, residential dwellings to the west and agricultural land to the north and east. The wider landscape is one of agricultural land, residential dwellings with associated gardens and areas of woodland, with a network of interconnected hedgerows.

### 2.4 Policies and Legislation

#### *National Planning Policy Framework*

2.4.1 The recommendations of this report are in line with the key principles of the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) 2019](#) and [Government Circular 06/05](#).

2.4.2 In line with Policy SP11 *Biodiversity* of the Sevenoaks District Council Core Strategy Adopted February 2015 recommendations to ensure the conservation of species protected under the below legislation, as well as habitats of principal importance (HPI) listed under Section 41 (s41) of the NERC Act 2006; and the protection of designated sites and species have been included

within this report. In addition, recommendations for opportunities to enhance biodiversity within the Site have also been provided in line with the policy.

#### *Legislation*

2.4.3 All British bat species and their places of rest and shelter receive UK and European protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017 (as amended) (Habitats Regulations 2017) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended). This protection means that bats and their places of rest and shelter are a material consideration in the planning process.

2.4.4 Taken together, unless under licence, these make it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture or intentionally take a bat;
- Deliberately or intentionally kill or injure a bat;
- To be in possession or control of any live or dead bat or any part of, or anything derived from a bat;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection;
- Deliberately disturb any bat, in particular any disturbance which is likely to (i) impair their ability to survive, breed, reproduce or to rear or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or (ii) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

2.4.5 A bat roost may be any structure a bat uses for breeding, resting, shelter or protection. It is important to note that since bats tend to use the same roost sites regularly but at different times of year for different roost types, a bat roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time of destruction.

2.4.6 In addition to the above, certain species of bat are listed on Annex II of the Habitat Regulations 2017. Annex II species include greater and lesser horseshoe bats *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* and *R. hipposideros*, barbastelle *Barbastellus barbastella* and Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*. Where present, consideration to the requirement of a Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) should be given.

## 2.5 Objectives of the Survey

2.5.1 The objectives of the survey were to:

- Determine the presence of bats within the building and trees to be affected by the proposed development,
- Identify the number and species of bats, should they be present,
- Identify the entrance/exit points used by bats, should they be present,
- Evaluate the potential for bats to be affected by proposals,
- Identify any legal or policy constraints related to bats that may affect the development,
- Suggest mitigation/compensation measures that may be required,
- Assess whether a Licence from Natural England is required for the works.

## 2.6 Survey Constraints

2.6.1 During the survey, the air temperature at sunset was recorded at 9°C. Whilst this would constitute sub-optimal survey conditions (less than 10°C), given that bat activity was recorded during the survey and given that the survey was undertaken within the core maternity season, this is not considered to be a significant limitation to the assessment and therefore this survey is considered to constitute reasonable survey effort enabling an accurate assessment of the Site's use by bats.

2.6.2 There were no other constraints to the survey.

### 3 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Emergence Survey

3.1.1 A single dusk emergence survey was conducted on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The survey was completed in accordance with current best practice guidance (Collins, 2016) and to adequately observe all aspects of the building, two surveyors were deployed. For clarity, the location of the surveyors is depicted in Figure 1.

3.1.1 To account for the varying times in which different bat species emerge, evening emergence surveys commenced 15 minutes before sunset and continued for up to 1 hour and 30 minutes after sunset, or until light levels deemed the survey no longer valid.

3.1.2 A summary of the weather conditions and survey times is provided in Table 1.

*Table 1 – Survey times and weather conditions*

| Date     | Emergence or re-entry | Sunset | Start time | End time | Start weather conditions               | End weather conditions                   |
|----------|-----------------------|--------|------------|----------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 25/05/21 | Emergence             | 20:57  | 20:42      | 22:12    | 9°C, 70% cloud cover, no wind or rain. | 8.4°C, 100% cloud cover no wind or rain. |

3.1.3 To aid audible detection, surveyors were equipped with Elekon Batlogger M bat detectors. These detectors convert the inaudible echolocation of bats into a frequency audible to the human ear. All calls were digitally recorded, and the sonograms analysed using the latest version of Elekon BatExplorer.

## 4 SURVEY RESULTS

### 4.1 Emergence Survey

25<sup>th</sup> May 2021

- 4.1.1 No bats emerged from the barn during the survey.
- 4.1.2 The first bat recorded during the survey was a common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* which was recorded but not seen at 20:59 hrs, two minutes after sunset. Common pipistrelles and noctules *Nyctalus noctula* were recorded foraging and commuting within and adjacent to the Site throughout the survey.
- 4.1.3 At 22:07hrs, a single Myotis sp. was recorded, but not seen, during the survey.
- 4.1.4 Bat activity across the Site during this survey was considered to be **'Low'**.

*Table 2 – Survey results summary*

| Date     | Bats emerging or returning from/to the building | Bat species recorded commuting/foraging within the Site |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 25/05/21 | None                                            | Common pipistrelle<br>Noctule<br>Myotis sp.             |

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## 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1.1 In accordance with current good practice guidelines (Collins, 2016), reasonable effort to determine the presence or likely absence of roosting bats has been applied to the barn at Medhurst, Edenbridge.
- 5.1.1 No emerging bats or their roosts were recorded within the barn and no further consideration to the presence of roosting bats is required.
- 5.1.2 Although no bats were recorded emerging from the barn, in the unlikely event that bats or their roosts are identified during the demolition process, all works should stop and the appointed ecologist or Natural England, be consulted on the appropriate manner in which to proceed.
- 5.1.3 All external lighting should be sympathetic to the requirements of bats and should ensure no excessive lighting of the suitable surrounding habitats and vegetated borders to the south and west of the building (where possible). This can be achieved through the use of low-level bollard, directional and/or Passive Infrared (PIR) activated lighting. Further details on appropriate lighting for bats is presented in the document produced by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) in conjunction with the Institute of Lighting Professionals' (ILP) document '[Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK](#)' (2018).
- 5.2 By way of enhancement, it is recommended that the installation of bat boxes in suitable locations would increase the Site's potential for roosting bats. These boxes should be installed at a height of 3m or more or at eaves height on sunny, sheltered aspects, away from direct illumination by artificial lighting and in a location, which ensures connectivity to foraging habitats within the wider landscape. In this instance, a single integrated box such as that provided by [www.habibat.co.uk](http://www.habibat.co.uk) is recommended for within the built structure.
- 5.3 The incorporation of a wildlife-friendly planting scheme post-development using native plant species would be of benefit to invertebrates, and subsequently bats and birds.

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## 6 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust and the Institute of Lighting Professionals (BCT & ILP) 2018. *Guidance Note 8; Bat and Artificial Lighting in the UK.*

<https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

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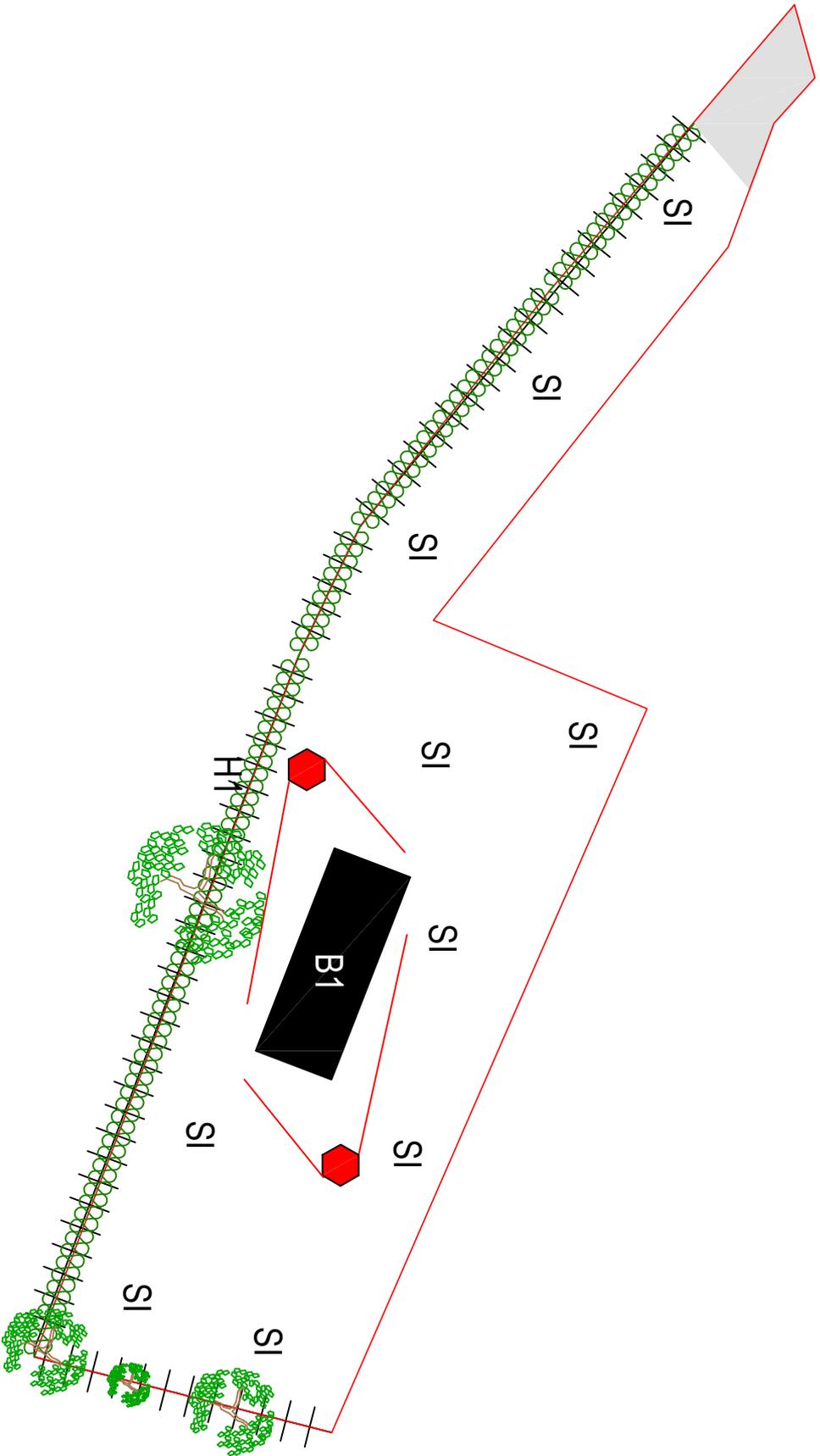
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<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/1307/contents/made>

Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) 1981. <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1377>

# Figures



- Legend**
-  Site Boundary
  -  Surveyor Locations



Job Reference : J21002\_P2

Project Title: Madhurst, Edenbridge

Figure 1: Surveyor Locations

Date : 26-05-21      Checked : CB

Drawn : TR      Approved : N/A

Status : Final      Scale : NTS