



Glaven Ecology



Dovecote Cottage Walpole St Peter

Preliminary Roost Appraisal

Prepared by
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on behalf of
Ms. E. Swinburn

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Version	Status	Changes	Date	Author
1.1	Draft	Site visit and desktop results	10/01/2022	Carolyn Smith MSc, BSc (Hons), MCIEEM
1.2	Issued	Reviewed	12/01/2022	Carolyn Smith MSc, BSc (Hons), MCIEEM

The data contained within the report are accurate to the best of our knowledge and have been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management’s Code of Professional Conduct.

The report conforms to the British Standard 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development.

We confirm that any opinions expressed are our best and professional true opinions. This report has been prepared by an ecology specialist and does not purport to provide legal advice.

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that animals and plants can migration/establish and whilst such species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on a site at a later date.

1 Summary

- 1.1 Glaven Ecology was commissioned to undertake an ecological appraisal incorporating a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) on Dovecote Cottage, Church Road, Walpole St Peter, PE14 7NS. The survey work was completed by Carolyn Smith MSc, BSc. (Hons) MCIEEM on 7th January 2022.
- 1.2 Proposals include the conversion/refurbishment of the cottage. The building was assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats.
- 1.3 No other protected species were assessed as being present on site.
- 1.4 The site sits within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone for The Wash and Islington Heronry. However, it does not fall into the categories requiring further consultation with Natural England.
- 1.5 The following recommendations have been made for protected species:

Species	Requirement for Further Surveys and Recommendations
Amphibians	<p>No further surveys required.</p> <p>As a precautionary measure the following good working practices are recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All works materials will be stored on pallets. This will prevent places of refuge being created within the construction area.• Any aggregates delivered to site should be stored in bulk-bags and placed on pallets. Again, this will prevent places of refuge / hibernacula being created within the construction zone.• All waste should be stored in skips prior to removal from site.
Bats	<p>No further surveys required.</p> <p>A precautionary approach to the works should be taken with any tiles being removed by hand only. In the unlikely event bats are found during the works, they should cease, and a licenced bat worker contacted to advise on how to proceed.</p> <p>Any external lights associated with the conversion should be of a low light level to minimise impacts on bats that might forage and commute in the vicinity.</p> <p>Warm white lights should be used at <2700k. This reduces the ultraviolet component or that has high attraction effects on insects which can lead to a reduction in prey availability for some light sensitive bat species.</p>

- 1.6 Enhancement suggestions include the installation of bat and bird boxes along with bat access tiles.

2 Introduction

2.1 Background

2.1.1 Glaven Ecology was commissioned to undertake an ecological appraisal incorporating a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) on Dovecote Cottage, Church Road, Walpole St Peter, PE14 7NS. The survey work was completed by Carolyn Smith MSc, BSc. (Hons) MCIEEM on 7th January 2022.

2.1.2 The survey and report aim to describe how the building supports birds, bats and any other protected species. It assesses potential impacts on these features as a result of the works and advises on the need for further surveys or mitigation strategies.

2.2 Site Location and Description

2.2.1 The site was located at OS Grid Reference TF 5016 1294 (Appendix 1) and consisted of a detached cottage in a state of disrepair with a pitched roof, one half to pantiles and one half to a bitumen felt lining. The cottage was set with in a gravel/tarmac driveway to the north of Dovecote House.

2.2.2 The villages of Walpole St Peter and Walpole St Andrew lay to the south, north and east with the wider environment dominated by arable land with small pockets of scattered woodland and traditional orchards.

3 Legal Protection

3.1.1 The main piece of legislation relating to nature conservation in Great Britain is The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This Act is supplemented by provision in The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (in England and Wales). This act provides varying degrees of protection for the listed species of flora and fauna, including comprehensive protection of wild birds and their nests and eggs.

3.1.2 UK wildlife is also protected under The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (which were issued under the European Communities Act 1972), through inclusion on Schedule 2. In 2010, these Regulations, together with subsequent amendments, were consolidated into The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

3.2 Birds

3.2.1 All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

3.3 Bats

3.3.1 All bat species are listed under Annex IV (and certain species also under Annex II) of the European Union's Council Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive) and are given UK protected status by Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. All UK bat species are also protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

3.3.2 This legislation fully protects bats and their breeding sites or resting places, making it an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill bats, deliberately disturb bats, damage or destroy a bat breeding or resting place.

3.4 Great Crested Newt

3.4.1 Great crested newts *Triturus cristatus* and their habitat (aquatic and terrestrial) are afforded full protection by The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Section 9, Schedule 5 and as amended) and The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994. It is an offence to:

- 1) Disturb, injure or kill recklessly a great crested newt.

3.4.2 Disturb or destroy recklessly great crested newt habitat (a breeding site or place of shelter).

3.5 Statutory Designated Conservation Sites

3.5.1 National designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (NNR), are afforded statutory protection. SSSIs are notified and protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended. SSSIs are notified based on specific criteria, including the general representativeness and rarity of the site and of the species or habitats supported by it.

4 Survey Methods

4.1 Desk Study

- 4.1.1 Records held on Magic.gov.uk on Designated Sites and granted European Protected Species Licences were reviewed in January 2022 as was the map of Norfolk County Wildlife Sites on data.gov.uk.
- 4.1.2 The NBN Atlas was searched to confirm lack of records for protected species within 2km of the site.
- 4.1.3 The types of features considered within the desk study includes designated sites, habitats and species of principal importance for conservation of biodiversity and protected species.
- 4.1.4 A quantification of the value of the building for bats was carried out using the Bat Roost Trigger Index (BRT) (Underhill-Day, 2017). The BRT Index uses a suite of 28 environmental and habitat features recorded during the PRA survey which are known to influence roost selection. This generates a numerical value, from 0 to 1, which is in turn used to assign to a corresponding roost suitability class of either negligible, low, moderate or high potential. This is used as guidance only.

4.2 Protected Species Survey

- 4.2.1 The survey was undertaken by Carolyn Smith BSc (Hons) MCIEEM (Natural England Level 1 Licence for bats [reference 2018-34461-CLS]), Great Crested Newts [reference 2017-29746-CLS-CLS] and barn owl class licence [reference CL29/00568]) on 7th January 2022.

Amphibians

- 4.2.2 The habitat was assessed for reptiles and amphibians and suitable materials were lifted to check for signs of reptiles.
- 4.2.3 One pond adjacent to the cottage was appraised for its suitability for great crested newts using the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI).

4.2.4 The HSI is an indicative tool used to rate the suitability of water-bodies for great crested newts. A total of ten characteristics and features of water-bodies, such as their size, water quality, shading and vegetation cover are assessed and classified according to prescribed criteria. These scores allow the HSI to categorise water-bodies into one of five ratings which indicate their suitability for occupation by great crested newts. The five categories are excellent, good, average, below average and poor.

Bats

4.2.5 A Preliminary Roost Assessment was completed on the building. The survey work was completed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's "Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists" (Collins, 2016). A scoring system was applied to the building using the criteria shown in Table 1.

4.2.6 The building was investigated for evidence of bat use and evaluated for bat roosting potential. The visual search for signs of bats consisted of a slow methodical search both internally and externally for actual roosting bats and their signs:

- Droppings on walls, windowsills and floors can be used to identify species;
- Scratch marks and staining at roosts and exit holes can be used to identify the presence of bats;
- Dense spider webs at a potential roost can often indicate bat absence;
- The presence of butterfly wings may be an indication of bat presence.

Table 1: Assessing the potential suitability of a development site for bats (Collins, 2016)

Suitability	Description of roosting habitats	Description of commuting and foraging habitat
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats	Negligible habitat features onsite likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats
Low	<p>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost 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</p> <p>A tree of sufficient size and age to contain potential roost features but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential</p>	<p>Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat</p> <p>Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub</p>
Moderate	A structure or tree 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)	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens
High	A structure or tree 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	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge

Birds

4.2.7 On-site habitats were assessed for their potential to support breeding (nesting) birds.

This consisted of a methodical search for actual nesting birds or their signs.

4.2.8 Table 2 shows the criteria used when assessing the likelihood of a protected species being present within the survey area:

Table 2: Criteria considered when assessing the likelihood of occurrence of protected species

Assessment Category	Criteria
Present	Species are confirmed as present from the current survey or historical confirmed records.
High	Habitat and features of high quality for species/species assemblage. Species known to be present in wider landscape. Good quality surrounding habitat and good connectivity.
Moderate	Habitat and features of moderate quality. The site in combination with surrounding land provides all habitat/ecological conditions required by the species/assemblage. Within known national distribution of species and local records in desk study area. Limiting factors to suitability, including small area of suitable habitat, some severance/poor connectivity with wider landscape, poor to moderate habitat suitability in local area.
Low	Habitats within the survey area poor quality or small in size. Few or no records from data search. Despite above, presence cannot be discounted as within national range, all required features/conditions present on site and in surrounding landscape. Limiting factors could include isolation, poor quality landscape, or disturbance.
Negligible	Very limited poor quality habitats and features. No local records from desk study; site on edge of, or outside, national range. Surrounding habitats considered unlikely to support species/species assemblage.

5 Results

5.1 Desk Study

5.1.1 No Statutory Designated sites or Non-statutory Designated sites were identified on MAGIC Maps or data.gov.uk.

5.1.2 The site sits within the SSSI Impact Risk Zones for The Wash (9500m north) and Islington Heronry (6500m east). However, it does not fall into the categories requiring further consultation with Natural England which is for *Infrastructure proposals such as helipads or airports*.

5.1.3 There were no records of granted European protected Species Licences within 2km of the site showing on MAGIC Maps.

5.1.4 There were no records of class returns for great crested newt presence within 2km of the site showing on MAGIC Maps and no amphibian records within 2km of the site were returned via a search on the NBN Atlas.

5.1.5 There were two ponds within 250m of the building, one 80m to the west and one adjacent to the building to the east.

5.1.6 The Bat Roost Trigger (BRT) assessment concluded that the building offers negligible roost suitability for bats giving a score of 0.50 (Table 3). The full results of this assessment and the 28 roost selection parameters used in the BRT Index are included in Appendix 2.

Table 3: Bat roost trigger index score and roost suitability class highlighted for the building (Underhill-Day, 2017)

> 0.7	HIGH	Three separate survey visits. At least one dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey. The third visit could be either dusk or dawn.
0.6 - 0.7	MODERATE	Two separate survey visits. One dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey.
>0.5 - 0.6	LOW	One survey visit. One dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey.
< 0.5	NEGLIGIBLE	No further surveys required. Reasonable precautionary measures applicable.

5.2 Protected species - amphibians

5.2.1 The building structure was in good condition, especially the brickwork around the base and as such provided no suitable habitat for hibernating amphibians.

5.2.2 There was one pond adjacent to the building to the east. This was heavily shaded by trees, although one large willow had recently been felled due to health and safety concerns, opening up the pond on the eastern edge. The water quality was poor, being heavily silted and full of leaf litter.

5.2.3 The pond was assessed using the Habitat Suitability Index as having below average suitability to support breeding great crested newts (Table 4).

Table 4: HSI Pond assessment

HSI Description	Assessment	HSI Value
Geographic location	Optimal	1
Pond area	350 m ²	0.5
Pond permanence	Never dries	0.9
Water quality	Poor	0.33
Shade	80%	0.6
Water fowl effect	Absent	1
Fish presence	Absent	1
Pond Density	3	0.5
Terrestrial habitat	Poor	0.33
Macrophyte cover	20	0.5
		HSI Score 0.58
		Below average

5.3 Protected Species - Bats

Foraging and Commuting

5.3.1 The habitats immediately around the site were considered to have moderate potential to support foraging and commuting bats being predominantly arable fields but with some woodland/treelines. The wider environment also offered **moderate** foraging and commuting opportunities.

Visual inspection

5.3.2 The building had a brick base with weatherboarding on the walls and a part pantile, part bitumen roof (Figure 1).

- 5.3.3 The ridge tiles appeared well sealed with some raised tiles on the front aspect, particularly at the western end. The west and eastern hipped roof was also to pantiles, but these were in relatively good condition.
- 5.3.4 The rear of the property (north aspect) had no tiles and was covered in a bitumen felt lining (Figure 2). The lining was intact with no splits or tears present.
- 5.3.5 There were hanging tiles on the turret (Figure 3) and around the windows. The tiles above the windows were generally well sealed (Figure 4) although there was some gapping to the front of the turret, but there were no signs of bat use such as staining and the majority appeared well cobwebbed.
- 5.3.6 There was flashing around the base of the turret but this appeared flush with surrounding the tiles.
- 5.3.7 There were small soffit boxes above each window, with gap at the two ends, leading into the building rather than creating crevices.
- 5.3.8 The metal window frames were weatherworn but they were tightly sealed, with no gaps between the frames and the walls.
- 5.3.9 The weatherboarding to the front aspect was painted whereas the sides and rear were untreated. Whilst weather worn the boarding was tightly sealed (Figure 5).
- 5.3.10 The brickwork, including on the chimney stacks, was in good condition with no gaps or cracks noted. The chimney stack at the rear was covered in ivy, but where visible speared in good condition.



Figure 1: Dovecote Cottage – southern aspect (front).



Figure 2: Rear view of lined roof.



Figure 3: Hanging tiles on turret.



Figure 4: Tiles above windows



Figure 3: Painted and untreated weatherboarding – tightly sealed.

- 5.3.11 Internally the building was in a bad state of repair, with very little ceiling left, making the space essentially open to the roof structure (Figure 6).
- 5.3.12 The roof was wood panel lined to the rear (under the bitumen lining - Figure 7) and felt lined at the front (under the pantiles – Figure 8). The lining in both cases was in sound condition.
- 5.3.13 The beams were narrow with no cracks or splits noted and the roof structure was cluttered (Figure 9).
- 5.3.14 Both the walls and roof were very damp in places and there was heavy cobwebbing, especially at gable ends and around the corners of the roof.
- 5.3.15 The windows to each aspect and the lack of ceiling meant that the roof area was bright and well lit.



Figure 6: Internal view – rooms open to roof structure.



Figure 7: View of roof structure – wooden lining.



Figure 8: View of roof structure – felt lining.



Figure 9: Cluttered roof structure.

5.3.16 No signs of bats such as droppings or staining were found during the visual inspection of the building. No actual bats were observed.

5.3.17 The building was assessed as having **negligible to very low potential** to support roosting bats with roosting opportunities only available under roof tiles and possibly the hanging tiles. The building was damp and the roof space bright and heavily cobwebbed.

5.3.18 The building has **negligible potential** to support hibernating bats unable to offer the stable temperatures required.

5.4 Other protected Species

5.4.1 There were no other protected species assessed as being present on site.

5.5 Survey Limitations

5.5.1 All areas of the building were accessible for survey except the turret, which was only visible internally through binoculars.

5.5.2 The pond to the west of the building was not accessible for survey, but as the building offered no suitable habitat for amphibians this was not deemed a significant limitation.

5.5.3 There were no other significant limitations.

6 Impact Assessment

6.1.1 Table 5 below summarises the potential impacts of the works:

Table 5: Impact assessment on the ecology of the site

Ecological Factor	Impact Assessment
Designated Sites and Habitats	<p>No impacts on Designated Sites are envisaged given the scale of the works.</p> <p>No other habitats of ecological significance will be impacted by the proposed works</p>
Amphibians	<p>The site building offers no suitable habitat for amphibians and the footprint of the building will not be increased during the conversion.</p> <p>The pond to the west was not accessible for survey. This was therefore subjected to the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment (Natural England, 2020) which gave a result of 'Green: Offence Highly Unlikely'. This indicates that the development activities are of such a type and scale that it is highly unlikely any offence would be committed should the development proceed.</p> <p>There are no amphibian records within 2km of the site and no significant adverse effects are predicted.</p>
Bats	<p>The field survey and desk study conclude bats are highly unlikely to be present on site.</p> <p>The works are not considered to have a significant impact upon commuting or foraging bats and there will be no severing of connectivity.</p> <p>The works will have a negligible impact on these species.</p>

7 Recommendations

7.1.1 The following species-specific recommendations are made for the site:

Table 6: Recommendations for further surveys and mitigation

Species	Requirement for Further Surveys and Recommendations
Amphibians	<p>No further surveys required.</p> <p>As a precautionary measure the following good working practices are recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All works materials will be stored on pallets. This will prevent places of refuge being created within the construction area. • Any aggregates delivered to site should be stored in bulk-bags and placed on pallets. Again, this will prevent places of refuge / hibernacula being created within the construction zone. • All waste should be stored in skips prior to removal from site.
Bats	<p>No further surveys required.</p> <p>A precautionary approach to the works should be taken with any tiles being removed by hand only. In the unlikely event bats are found during the works, they should cease, and a licenced bat worker contacted to advise on how to proceed.</p> <p>Any external lights associated with the conversion should be of a low light level to minimise impacts on bats that might forage and commute in the vicinity.</p> <p>Warm white lights should be used at <2700k. This reduces the ultraviolet component or that has high attraction effects on insects which can lead to a reduction in prey availability for some light sensitive bat species.</p>

8 Enhancements

8.1 The following enhancements are suggested for the site:

- Install two bat access tiles onto the southern aspect of the roof (to give access to crevice dwelling bats in between the tile and the lining). Something similar to the [Bat Access Tile Kit](#) would be suitable. Alternatively, two ridge access points can be created by using a spacer to create gap 20mm x 50mm in size in the mortar under the tiles.
- One bat box to be installed on the eastern aspect where there is a clear flight path for bats entering and leaving. There are two options available:
 - *Integrated bat box.* These are built into the fabric of the building and come in a variety of designs depending on the materials being used. For example, the Habibat bat box comes in a selection of designs to suit brick built buildings (Figure 3), whilst the Schwegler bat tube (Figure 4) is designed to be installed beneath a rendered surface. This makes it ideal for situations where you wish the box to be discrete as only the entrance hole will be visible. It can also be painted to match your building with an air permeable paint if desired.
 - *Wall mounted bat box.* Fixed to the external wall of a building, the [Beaumaris bat box](#) is a popular choice as is the [Schwegler 1FQ Bat Roost](#).



Figure 4: Habibat integrated bat box with brick finish.



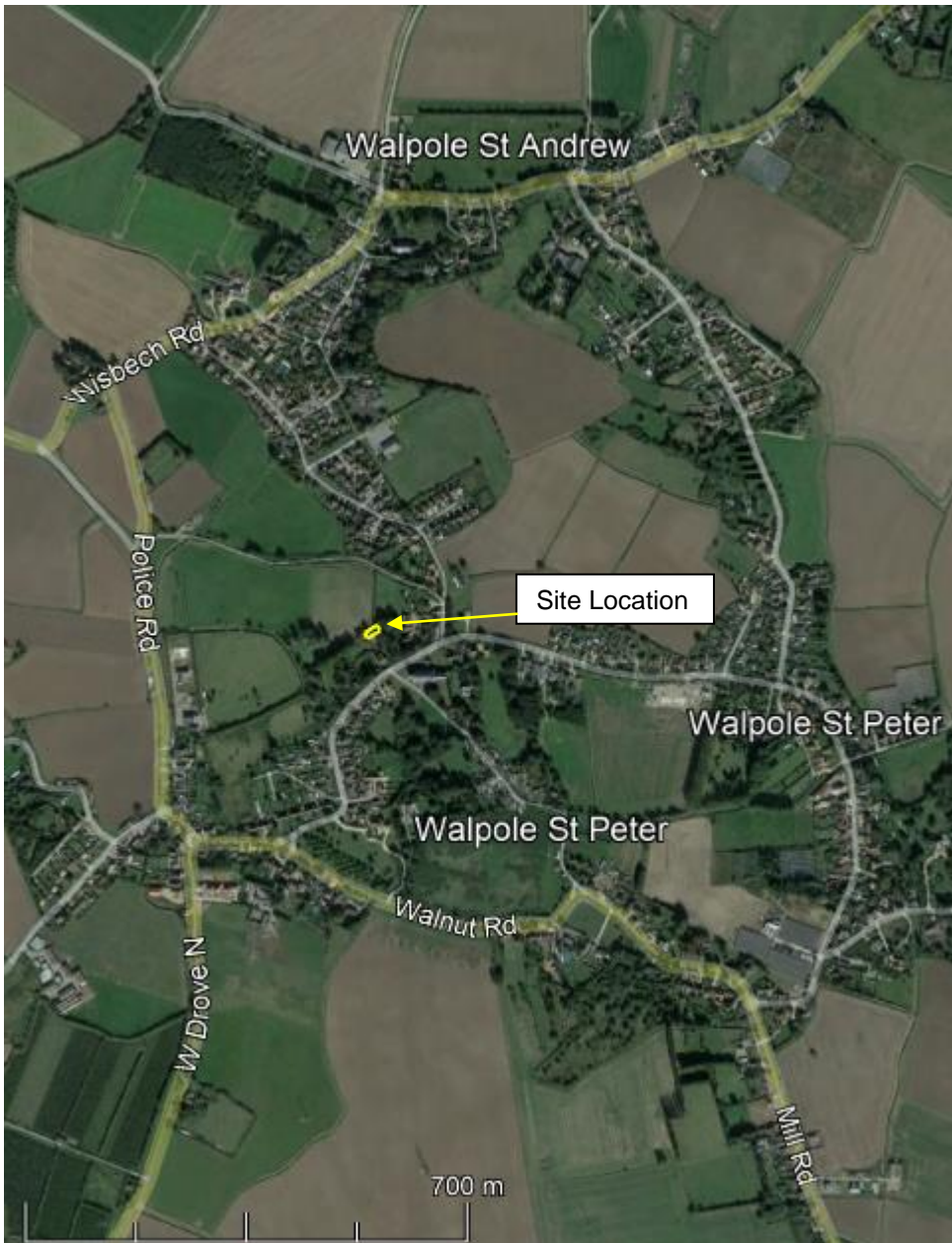
Figure 5: Schwegler 1FR bat tube and rendered finish with only the hole visible.

- Install one bird box on the northern aspect. Suitable boxes include the [Schwegler 1B nest box](#) and the [robin and wren FSC nest box](#).

9 References

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Appendix 1 – Site Location



(Source Google Earth Pro: 2022)

Appendix 2 – Bat Roost Trigger Assessment

Trigger Indices	Category	T1 Score
A) Location, habitat and environmental context		
T1: General location	Suburban or intensive farmland	0.67
T2: Foraging opportunities within 250 m	Moderate	0.67
T3: Foraging opportunities within 5 km	Moderate	0.67
T4: Commuting opportunities	Moderate	0.67
T5: Cover in vicinity of structure	Moderate	0.67
T6: External lighting in vicinity of structure	Low level	0.67
T7: Number and character of nearby buildings	Good variety of old buildings	1
T8: Structure/building exposure	Moderate	0.67
B) Exterior features and characteristics of building		
T9: Structure/building age	Old	1
T10: Size of Building	Small size	0.33
T11: Main wall construction material	Mixture of materials	0.67
T12: Condition of wall/roof pointing/render	Tightly sealed	0.33
T13: Condition of lintel/door frame features	Tightly sealed	0.33
T14: Condition of eaves/soffits/bargeboards	Some gaps or cracks noted	0.67
T15: Condition of weatherboarding/cladding	Tightly sealed	0.33
T16: Condition of lead flashing	Flashing tightly sealed	0.33
T17: Roofing material	Modern tiling or mixture	0.67
T18: Bat access potential	Several small gaps noted	0.67
C) Interior features and characteristics of building		
T19: Character of roof void/roof space	Open roof space	0.33
T20: Character and condition of roof supports	Tightly sealed timbers/supports	0.33
T21: Presence and extent of cobwebbing	Numerous cobwebs in roof space	0.33
T22: Presence and condition of roof lining	Potential cavity but very limited access	0.33
T23: Light levels in roof void/space	Light	0.33
T24: Protection from weather/wind	Intermediate protection	0.67
T25: Temperature regime	Intermediate	0.67
T26: Level of (human, animal) disturbance	Moderate	0.67
T27: Flight Space	Moderate	0.67
T28: Flying Access (Horseshoe bats)	N/A	0.33
TRIGGER INDEX SCORE =		0.50
BAT ROOST SUITABILITY =		NEGLIGIBLE