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Further Bat Survey Report

(Including Dusk Emergence & Dawn Re-Entry Surveys)

for Proposed Development of a Barn at Castle Moat House, Castle Road, Offton, Suffolk, IP8 4RN.

On behalf of:

Mr. T. Wells

July 2020

Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd.

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0 SUMMARY

- 0.1 Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd. was commissioned by Mr. T. Wells to undertake a further bat assessment (including dusk emergence and dawn re-entry surveys) for proposed development of a Barn at Castle Moat House, Castle Road, Offton, Suffolk, IP8 4RN.
- 0.2 The further surveys were required due to the discovery of potential for roosting during a daylight survey by Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd. on the 7th May 2020. The report is required for a planning application for alterations and extensions to an existing single-storey outbuilding to form a single new dwelling.
- 0.3 The additional surveys included two dusk emergence surveys on the 22nd June 2020 and 6th July and one dawn re-entry survey on the 21st July 2020. The surveys included watching the barn for any emerging or re-entering bats.
- 0.4 The surveys were undertaken during the peak survey period in suitable weather conditions by experienced ecologists.
- 0.5 The surveys identified one common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* roosting between the bargeboard and the wall of the adjacent, attached barn. The bat roost is approximately 0.5m from the ridge tiles on the barn proposed for development.
- 0.6 Whilst the attached barn is not required for works and the roost location is likely to remain accessible for bats, the proximity of the roost from the barn means that the potential for disturbance to the bat from works was considered high.
- 0.7 Therefore, in accordance with legislation protecting bats and their roosts, mitigation (detailed later in the report) and a Low Impact Natural England development site licence for bats will be required for works to proceed legally.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd. was commissioned by Mr. T. Wells to undertake a further bat assessment (including dusk emergence and dawn re-entry surveys) for proposed development of a Barn at Castle Moat House, Castle Road, Offton, Suffolk, IP8 4RN.
- 1.1.2 The further surveys were required due to the discovery of potential for roosting during a daylight survey by Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd. on the 7th May 2020. The report is required a planning application for alterations and extensions to an existing single-storey outbuilding to form a single new dwelling.
- 1.1.3 Bats are protected by law and some bat species such as soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and brown long-eared are also UK priority species. Protected and priority species are a material consideration for individual planning decisions under the National Planning Policy Framework, 2019 (MHCLG, 2019).

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Daylight Survey

- 2.1.1 Prior to and during the dusk emergence surveys and dawn re-entry surveys external inspection of the building was undertaken. The daylight assessment for bats included searching for signs and evidence of activity and potential for roosting.
- 2.1.2 Equipment available for use during the survey included a ladder, high powered torch, digital camera, binoculars and a video endoscope.
- 2.1.3 The survey methods followed English Nature Bat Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature, 2004) and Bat Conservation Trust Best Practice Guidelines, therefore considerations were:
- the availability of access to roosts for bats;
 - the presence and suitability of cracks, crevices, tiles, soffits, hollows, ivy growth and other places as roosts;
 - signs of bat activity or presence, such as; bats themselves, droppings, bat grease marks, bat scratch marks, bat urine spatter and bat prey remains.

2.1.4 The availability of access to roosts was assessed based upon the presence of holes large enough to allow entry to bats and lack of cobwebs and dirt.

2.1.5 The outsides of the building were inspected for gaps, cavities, access points and crevices, and any signs of bats in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust and Natural England (English Nature) guidelines (English Nature, 2004).

2.2 Dusk Emergence & Dawn Re-entry Bat Surveys

2.2.1 The additional surveys included two dusk emergence surveys on the 22nd June 2020 and 6th July and one dawn re-entry survey on the 21st July 2020. The surveys included watching the barn for any emerging or re-entering bats.

2.2.2 The surveys were undertaken on each occasion by the following experienced ecologists:

- 22nd June 2020: Roger Spring BSc MCIEEM (licensed to survey for bats level 2) and Rebecca Cattell MSc BSc (Hons) GradCIEEM.
- 6th July 2020: Roger Spring BSc MCIEEM (licensed to survey for bats level 2) with the aid of an infrared video camera (Hawke Nite-Eye 2000).
- 21st July 2020: Tommy Root BSc ACIEEM (licensed to survey for bats level 2) and ecologist James Pickerin BSc (Hons) GradCIEEM (licensed to survey for bats- level 2)

2.2.3 The surveys were undertaken during the peak survey period in suitable weather conditions following Natural England and Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines.

2.2.4 Equipment used during the survey included an Echo Meter Touch 2 PRO bat detector (James Pickerin), a Peersonic bat detector (Tommy Root), Batbox Griffin bat detector (Roger Spring) and Batbox Duet attached to a Zoom H2 digital recorder (Rebecca Cattell). Bat recordings were analysed using BatSound V4 software.

2.2.5 Surveyors were positioned around the building watching potential exit/entry locations in areas proposed to be impacted by works.

2.2.6 The surveyors used bat detectors and observation, to record any bats exiting or re-entering the building, as well as commuting and foraging activity around the site.

2.2.7 The emergence surveys commenced approximately 15 minutes before sunset and continued for approximately 90 minutes.

- 2.2.8 The dawn re-entry surveys commenced approximately 90 minutes before sunrise and continued until just after sunrise.

3 RESULTS AND RISK

3.1 Site Description & Location

3.1.1 The site was an existing outbuilding used for general storage. The building was constructed with flint walls on the north elevation and also in a central dividing wall, these walls were also double layered. The remainder of the walls were brick. The building supported a pitched, lined, slate roof, with a mix of modern and older style timber frame and joinery. The outbuilding was attached to a double-storey residential dwelling to the east.

3.1.2 The buildings were located within a rural hamlet, located south of the village of Offton, surrounded by a small woodland, wooded moat, grassland, and arable agriculture.

3.2 Protected & Priority Species

Daylight inspections

3.2.1 Internally, the outbuilding was split into several compartments: the northern half, south-east quarter and south-west quarter. The northern section was found to support a number of crevices in and around brick and flintwork, in addition to 'joins' with the eastern abutting wall. Furthermore, approximately 10 bat droppings were found on this eastern gable wall beneath the join to the eastern building.

3.2.2 Externally, despite modern repairs, the flint wall supported suitable crevices for roosting bats. Additionally, potential access for bats to the building interior was observed in several places over the building.

Dusk Emergence & Dawn Re-entry Bat Surveys

3.2.3 The night surveys revealed a maximum count of 1 x common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* roosting between the bargeboard and wall of the attached adjacent barn. The roost was located approximately 0.5m above the height of the ridge tiles of the barn (see Photograph 1 in Appendix 2). No other bat roosts were discovered associated with the building.

3.2.4 Low levels of foraging/commuting by common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* was noted around the barn. No other bat species were recorded.

Species Status of Roosting Bats

- 3.2.5 Common pipistrelle bats are the most common and widespread bat species in the UK. The estimated population size of common pipistrelle is approximately 2,430,000 bats. (Bat Conservation Trust, 2020).

4 DISCUSSION OF RISK AND LEGISLATION

4.1 Protected Species

Bats

- 4.1.1 Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 and under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Some bats are also UK priority species. A summary of the offences likely to be relevant to development are:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or take a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection, whether bats are present or not;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection;
- Deliberately disturb a bat anywhere.

- 4.1.2 One common pipistrelle bat was discovered roosting externally on the adjacent, attached barn. The risk of disturbance to the roost and roosting bat was high given the proximity to the site (approximately 0.5m from the ridge).

- 4.1.3 Therefore, without mitigation, works are highly likely to infringe the legislation protecting bats and their roosts. Therefore, to prevent harm to bats, mitigation, detailed below, is required. The roost will remain available for the bat throughout the works and beyond completion, therefore no alternative roosting habitat is required for compensation.

- 4.1.4 Natural England would need to issue a development site licence (Low Impact Licence) for the development to proceed legally. The bat licence will only be granted following planning approval. Based on previous similar sites, Natural England are likely to grant the licence for the proposed works with mitigation provided as detailed below.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Mitigation

5.1.1 Mitigation necessary for the prevention of harm to bats and maintenance of the ecological functionality of the site for bats include:

- Development works should commence when night weather conditions are above 7C to prevent encountering hibernating bats;
- A Toolbox Talk should be provided to contractors by a bat licensed ecologist before works commence on the possible presence of bats and legislation protecting bats. The roof works close to the adjacent barn should be undertaken by hand under supervision by a bat licensed ecologist.
- Minimisation of use of external lighting on and around the site. Any necessary external lighting should use warm white LED lamps with hoods to direct the light downward and prevent horizontal or vertical light spillage. Any external lighting should be on sensors with short timers and be sensitive to large moving objects only, to prevent passing bats from switching them on.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 One bat was discovered roosting under a badge board on the adjacent attached barn. The roosting location will remain available for bats throughout the development and beyond. However, the risk of disturbance to the roost and bats was high

6.2 The site is low in conservation value at a local level.

6.3 Mitigation has been included in the report and should be followed to prevent harm to bats during development. Alternative roosting habitat is not required.

6.4 The mitigation is highly likely to be approved by Natural England. A development site licence will be required from Natural England before works commence, though following the granting of planning permission.

7 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2016) *Bat Surveys- Good Practise Guidelines, 3rd Edition*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Bat Conservation Trust website. *www.bct.org.uk*. Accessed 2020.

English Nature (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines Version 2004*. English Nature, Peterborough.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019). *National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019*. Fry Building, London.

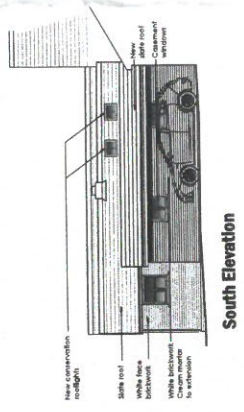
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Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd. (2020). *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*. Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd., Clare, Suffolk.

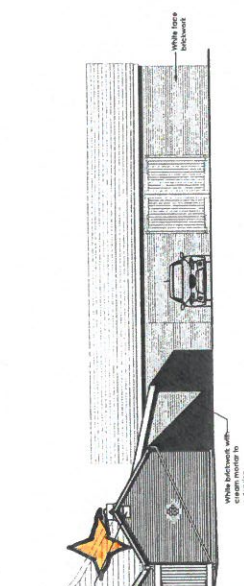
8 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1: Figures

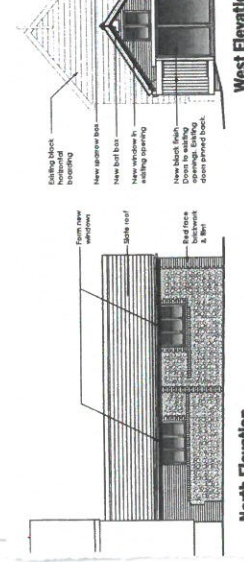
Figure 1: Bat roost discovered (Yellow Star).



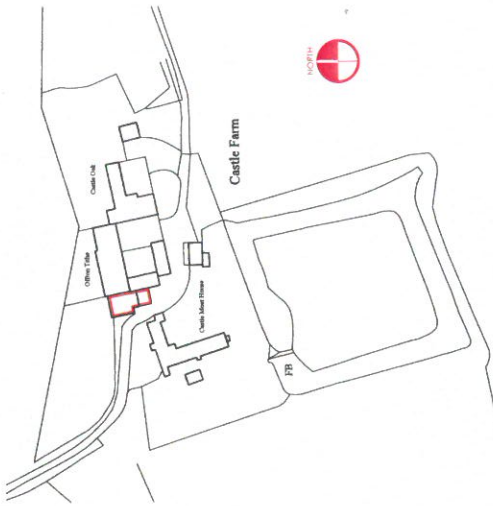
South Elevation



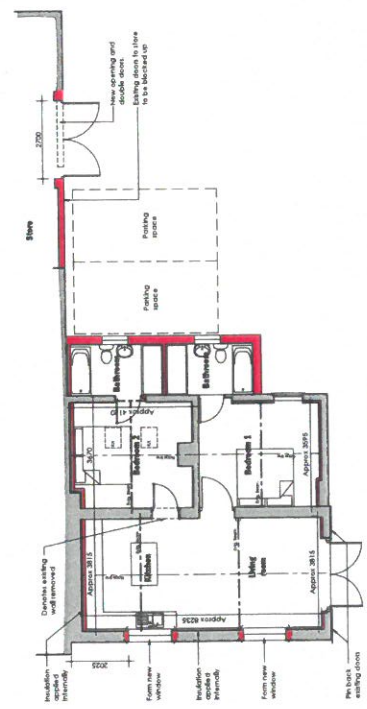
West Elevation



North Elevation



Site Location Plan



Floor Plan as Existing

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Client: Mr Tim Wells

Project: Alterations and extensions to existing single storey outbuilding to form new dwelling at: Castle Moor House, Castle Road, Clifton, Suffolk, IP8 4RN

Drawing: Plans & Elevations as Proposed

Date: May 21, 2020 11:00 AM A2 Drawn: BP

Job No: 5424 **Drawn to:** 4 **Revision:** A

8.2 Appendix 2: Photographs

Photograph 1: Location of roosting common pipistrelle (yellow star).



8.3 Appendix 3: Tables

Table 1: Dusk emergence survey results (Surveyor Roger Spring watching the northern and western elevations). 22nd June 2020.

Survey start: 21.00

Survey end: 22:45

Weather: start 19C, end 16C, dry, 10% cloud, wind: 0.5 (on Beaufort scale).

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
21.52	1 common pipistrelle	Bat observed flying from adjacent barn in southerly direction
22.07	1 common pipistrelle	On pass detected not seen.
22.16	1 common pipistrelle	Bat detected and observed flying north of the barn
22:26	1 common pipistrelle	Bat detected and observed flying north of the barn
22:38	1 common pipistrelle	Bat detected and observed flying from south to north across the site

No other bat observations or recordings

Table 2: Dusk emergence survey results (Surveyor Rebecca Cattell watching the southern and western elevations). 22nd June 2020.

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
21.52	1 common pipistrelle	Bat observed emerging from the bargeboard on the adjacent attached barn flew in southerly direction
22.07	1 common pipistrelle	Detected and observed foraging south west of building
22.22	1 common pipistrelle	Detected and observed foraging south west of building
22:25	1 common pipistrelle	Bat detected not observed
22:27	1 common pipistrelle	Bat detected not observed
22.32	1 common pipistrelle	Bat observed a detected flying east to west across site.
22.44	1 common pipistrelle	Bat observed a detected flying west to east across site.
No other bat observations or recordings		

Table 3: Dusk emergence survey results (Surveyor Roger Spring watching the southern and western elevations). 6th July 2020.

Survey start: 21.10

Survey end: 22:50

Weather: start 18C, end 18C, dry, 90% cloud, wind: 0.5 (on Beaufort scale).

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
21.32	1 common pipistrelle	Bat observed emerging from the bargeboard of the adjacent barn 0.5m from ridge of barn and flew south
21.37	1 common pipistrelle	Flying south of barn.
22.06	1 common pipistrelle	Flying south and west of barn.
22.15	1 common pipistrelle	Flying south and west of barn.
22:16	2 common pipistrelles	Flying south and west of barn.
22.36	1 common pipistrelle	Flying south and west of barn.
No other bat observations or recordings		

Table 4: Infrared camera (watching northern elevation). 22nd June 2020.

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
22.06-end	Likely common pipistrelle	Occasional passes observed of foraging bats, though no emergences.

Table 5: Dawn re-entry survey results (Surveyor James Pickerin north-west of building). 21st July 2020.

Survey start: 03:30

Survey end: 05:17

Weather: start 9C, end 8C, dry, 0% cloud, wind: 0.5 (on Beaufort scale).

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
03:45	1 common pipistrelle	Bat detected but not observed
04:16	1 common pipistrelle	Bat detected and observed flying around the building repeatedly before not being seen
No other bat observations or recordings		

Table 6: Dawn re-entry survey results (Surveyor Tommy Root – observing south and west sides of the building). 21st July 2020.

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
03.46	1 common pipistrelle	Unseen, detected only.
03.47	1 common pipistrelle	Seen & detected – flew up to east side apex of the building then flew back south
03.58	1 common pipistrelle	Seen & detected – flew from north to south (west of building)
04.16	2 common pipistrelles	Seen & detected – flew from north to south (west of building)
04.19	1 common pipistrelle	Seen & detected – re-entered under bargeboard of adjacent barn close to ridge tiles on barn.
04.24	1 common pipistrelle	Unseen, detected only.