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CONSULTING

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**Building at Spooners**

**The Heath**

**Woolpit**

**Suffolk**

## **Nocturnal Bat Survey Report**

**ANGLIA DESIGN LLP**

VERSION 2

Final

17 May 2023

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## 1. Introduction

BiOME Consulting Ltd was appointed by Anglia Design LLP (in February 2023) to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)<sup>1</sup> in relation to proposed demolition of a bungalow and associated garage located at Spooners, The Heath, Woolpit, Suffolk (*'the site'*) (TL985615) (Photograph 1, Figures 1 & 2).

**Photograph 1.** Bungalow – south aspect



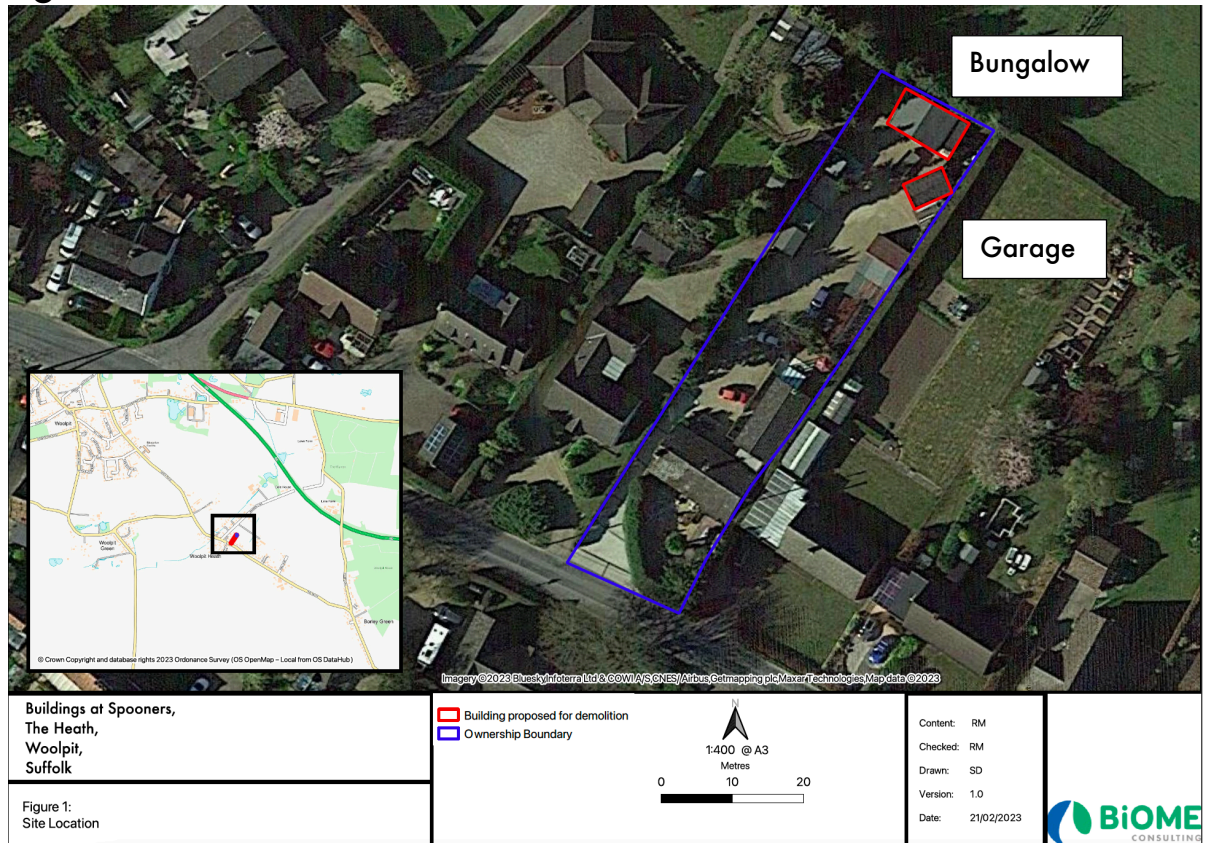
This survey recorded a deceased Common Pipistrelle on a window ledge of the bungalow, below what was considered to be an occasionally used day roost of likely a single bat within the window frame/broken vent (**Photographs 2 & 3**). No other bat evidence or Potential Roost Features (PRFs) were recorded in association with the bungalow. Consequently, a minimum of two nocturnal emergence/return to roost surveys of the bungalow were recommended to provide further information on the status of roosting bats within the bungalow. The nocturnal survey work has now been completed and forms the basis of this report.

The garage was assessed to be of negligible value to roosting bats and no further survey work was considered necessary.

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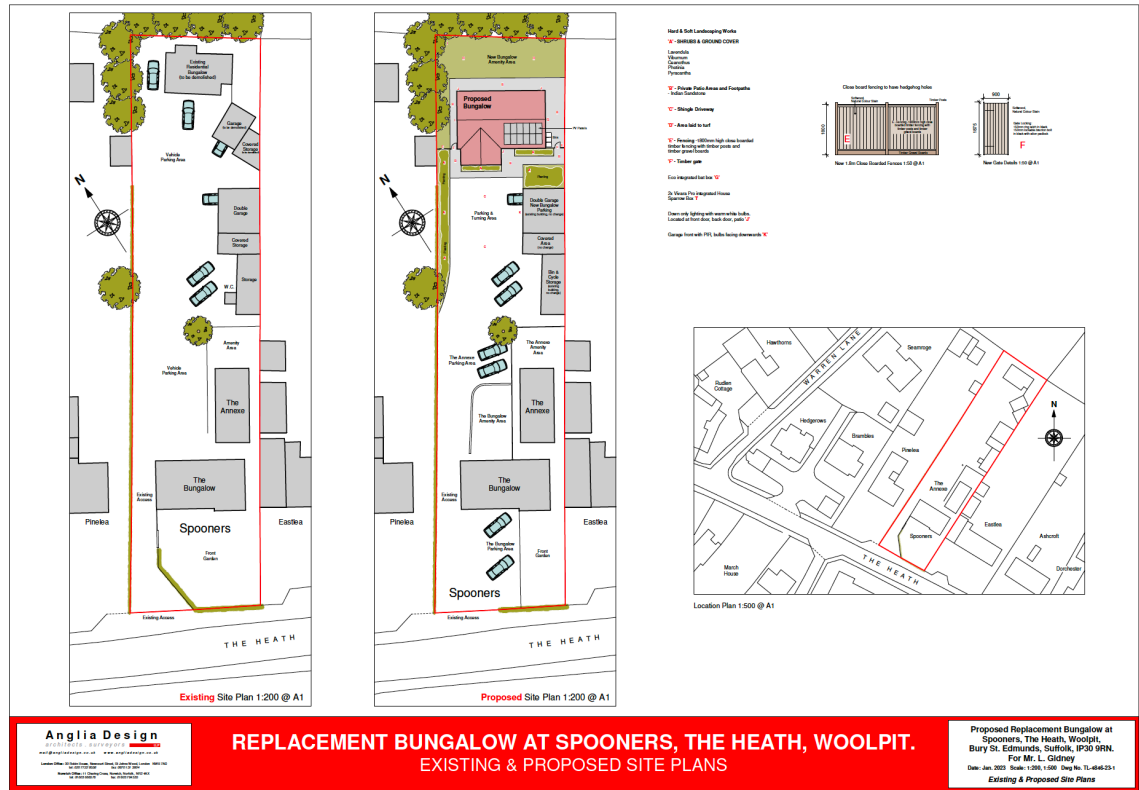
<sup>1</sup> BiOME Consulting Ltd (2023). Buildings at Spooners, The Heath, Woolpit, Suffolk – Preliminary Roost Assessment Report

**Figure 1. Site Location**





**Figure 2. Site Plans**



**Photograph 2. Deceased Common Pipistrelle**



**Photograph 3.** Common Pipistrelle droppings around window frame (with broken vent visible above)



## 2. Legislative Context

### 2.1. Bats

All British bat species are fully protected at national and European levels, through their inclusion in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)<sup>2</sup> and in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010<sup>3</sup>. Under this legislation, it is an offence to deliberately kill, injure or take a bat as well as intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or resting place used for shelter or protection by a bat or disturb an animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

Four species of bat, Greater Horseshoe Bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, Lesser Horseshoe Bat *R. hipposideros*, Bechstein's Bat *Myotis bechsteinii* and Western Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, are included on Annex II of the Habitats Directive<sup>4</sup>, which requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation to ensure the maintenance of favourable conservation status (and these are therefore generally considered as perhaps the most important UK species). Seven bat species are listed as Section 41<sup>5</sup> priority species; Barbastelle, Bechstein's Bat, Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, Brown Long-eared Bat *Plecotus auritus*, Greater Horseshoe Bat and Lesser Horseshoe Bat.

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2 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

3 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

4 Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

5 Of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006



## 3. Methodologies

### 3.1. Field Surveys

#### 3.1.1. Suitably Qualified Ecologist Details

The nocturnal surveys were managed by Richard Moores BSc (Hons) MCIEEM, Natural England (NE) bat licence no. 2015-12259-CLS-CLS and 2015-12257-CLS-CLS and completed by David Bratt and William Moores, both of whom are experienced nocturnal bat surveyors.

#### 3.1.2. Nocturnal Surveys

Two nocturnal bat surveys of the building were completed in line with good practice guidance<sup>6</sup> to assess the presence/likely absence of roosting bats in the building. To ensure coverage of all potential bat access points/roost features, each survey was completed by a single surveyor located watching the front elevation of the bungalow (Figure 3 – orange oval).

Figure 3. Surveyor Location



<sup>6</sup> Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn.). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

Surveyors were equipped with electronic bat detectors (Batlogger M or EchoMeter Touch Pro) and sound files were analysed with appropriate bat analysis software (Kaleidoscope) once the surveys were completed, if required. In addition, infra-red cameras were used during both surveys, with cameras positioned on the southwest of the building and the footage reviewed following the surveys.

The nocturnal bat surveys were undertaken in weather conditions considered appropriate for surveys of this kind (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Nocturnal bat activity survey information

Date	Sunset/Sunrise	Surveyor	Time		Cloud	Wind (Beaufort/Direction)	Temp (°C)	Precip.
			Start	Finish				
03/05/2023	20.19	DB	20.05	21.49	0/8	Still	12	Nil
17/05/2023	05.01	WM	03.30	05.10	2/8	Still	10	Nil

### 3.2. Limitations

The findings presented in this study represent those at the time of survey and reporting, and data collected from available sources. Ecological surveys are limited by factors which affect the presence of plants and animals, such as the time of year, migration patterns and behaviour.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. Nocturnal Surveys**

#### **4.1.1. 3 May 2023**

No bats were recorded roosting in the building during the survey.

A single Common Pipistrelle was recorded intermittently between 20.50 and 21.00 and then again at 21.23 and 21.28. No other bats were recorded.

#### **4.1.2. 17 May 2023**

No bats were recorded roosting in the building during the survey.

A single Common Pipistrelle flew through to the west at 04.23. No other bats were recorded.

## **5. Conclusions and Required Actions**

### **5.1. Bats**

#### **5.1.1. Results Summary**

Following PRA and two nocturnal bat surveys the bungalow has been confirmed to support a single day roosting Common Pipistrelle (found deceased during the PRA – no bats were recorded roosting during the two nocturnal surveys).

General bat activity in the area was low.

#### **5.1.2. Natural England Licencing**

The confirmation of a bat roost within the bungalow to be demolished means that a licence from Natural England will be required to enable the proposed works to proceed lawfully. Given the identified roost is of low conservation status, the site can be registered under the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) scheme through a Registered Consultant (RC). Following submission of appropriate forms, the application takes up to ten working days to be assessed by Natural England.

#### **5.1.3. Timing of Works**

There are no restrictions with regards to when (e.g. certain months of the year) works can take place, although it would be best practice to avoid low winter temperatures when bats may be in torpor (pipistrelles can use the same roosts year-round although it is considered that the building is not likely to support any bats through the winter). A BMCL can only be obtained a maximum of four months prior to the start of works to the area of the roost and the licence covers a maximum timeframe of six months (i.e. works to destroy/modify the roost must be completed in six months, NOT that the project must be completed within this six-month window). All permissions are required to have been obtained before the site can be registered under the BMCL scheme.

#### **5.1.4. Supervision of Works**

Works in the area of the roost will need to be supervised by an RC (or accredited agent). Prior to works commencing, the RC would provide a 'toolbox talk' to those contractors on site in which details of e.g. best working practices and what to do in the event of discovering a bat will be discussed.

During supervised works to the area of the roost the RC would capture any bats that do not fly away and move them to a temporary bat box (erected on a nearby tree prior to works commencing).

These works (when capture/handling and exclusion of bats is possible) should ideally take place in conditions suitable for bats to be active (spring-autumn inclusive). However, works can also be undertaken in the winter as long as weather conditions allow (sunset temperature of at least 8°C on preceding 2+ days).

#### **5.1.5. Compensation**

Although there is no requirement for any compensatory roosting features to be installed under the BMCL scheme (favourable conservation status is maintained without any compensation), there may be a requirement in the conditions set out by the Local Planning Authority. Should this be the case, it is recommended that a single integrated bat box (e.g. Istock type C) is built-in to the new dwelling, ideally on the southern elevation.

#### **5.2. Report/Survey Validity**

The findings of this PRA report are considered valid for up to 12 months from the date of this report<sup>7</sup>. If further survey work is delayed beyond May 2024, updated bat survey work may be required.

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<sup>7</sup> CIEEM (2019). *Advice Note on The Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys* [online] available at: <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>