

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Of the

Land to the Rear of Rose and Crown Pub, Elmsett, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP7 6PA

Carried out for:

Wilkinson Planning

1st

Prepared by:

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Contents

Executive summary	2
<i>Overview</i>	2
<i>Results</i>	2
1. Background to Commission	3
<i>Aims of Study</i>	3
<i>Site Description</i>	3
<i>Relevant Legislation</i>	5
2. Methods.....	6
<i>Desk Study</i>	6
<i>Field Survey</i>	6
<i>Survey Limitations</i>	6
3. Results	7
<i>Data Search</i>	7
<i>Field Survey Results</i>	7
4. Conclusions & Recommendations.....	10
5. References	11
Appendix I: Figures.....	12
.....	12
Appendix II: Desk Study.....	13
Appendix III: Relevant Protected Species Legislation.....	14

Executive summary

Overview

Abrehart Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Wilkinson Planning to carry out a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of land to the rear of Rose and Crown Pub, The Street, Elmsett, Suffolk, IP7 6PA. The current proposals are for the erection of two single storey dwellings (following the demolition of a storage shed).

A Preliminary Ecological Assessment was undertaken on the 7th August 2023 by Eco-Planning UK. It concluded a PRA was required on the single storey storage shed to the east of the Rose and Crown Pub this was set on hardstanding and

A Preliminary Roost Assessment was carried out on the 1st of November 2023 by Sorrel Kiamil of Abrehart Ecology Ltd.

Results

The habitats recorded on and adjacent to the site included:

- Buildings
- Hardstanding
- Tree lines
- Residential gardens

Features within the storage building provided low potential habitat for roosting bats.

1. Background to Commission

- 1.1 Abrehart Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Wilkinson Planning to carry out a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of a proposed development at land to the rear of Rose and Crown Pub, The Street, Elmsett, Suffolk, IP7 6PA. (central grid reference TM 05649 46641; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The survey was recommended to ascertain if the building is being/or has potential to be used by bats, and to comply to the biodiversity requirements for developments.

Aims of Study

- 1.3 This report provides results and recommendations based on a bat roost inspection of one building at the Site. The aim of this study was to:
 - Assess the suitability of the building to support roosting bats;
 - Identify the presence of any evidence of roosting bats, where reasonably possible; and
 - Determine, where possible, the likely type of roost present, if any.

Site Description

- 1.4 The storage shed is located east of the Rose and Crown Pub off The Street, Elmsett a village in Suffolk. The shed was being used by the Rose and Crown pub as storage. It was part of a wider site of amenity grassland and hardstanding with multiple things such as caravans stored.
- 1.5 The wider landscape has good linear hedgerows and streams (excellent bat foraging and commuting habitat) amongst agricultural land, grassland, and large blocks of woodland (potential foraging and roosting habitat) (see Figure 1).

MAGiC

PRA Map

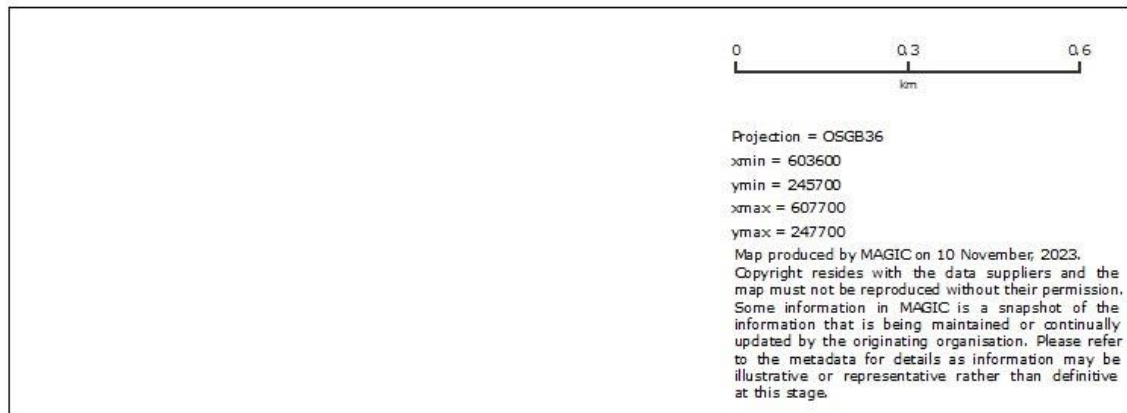
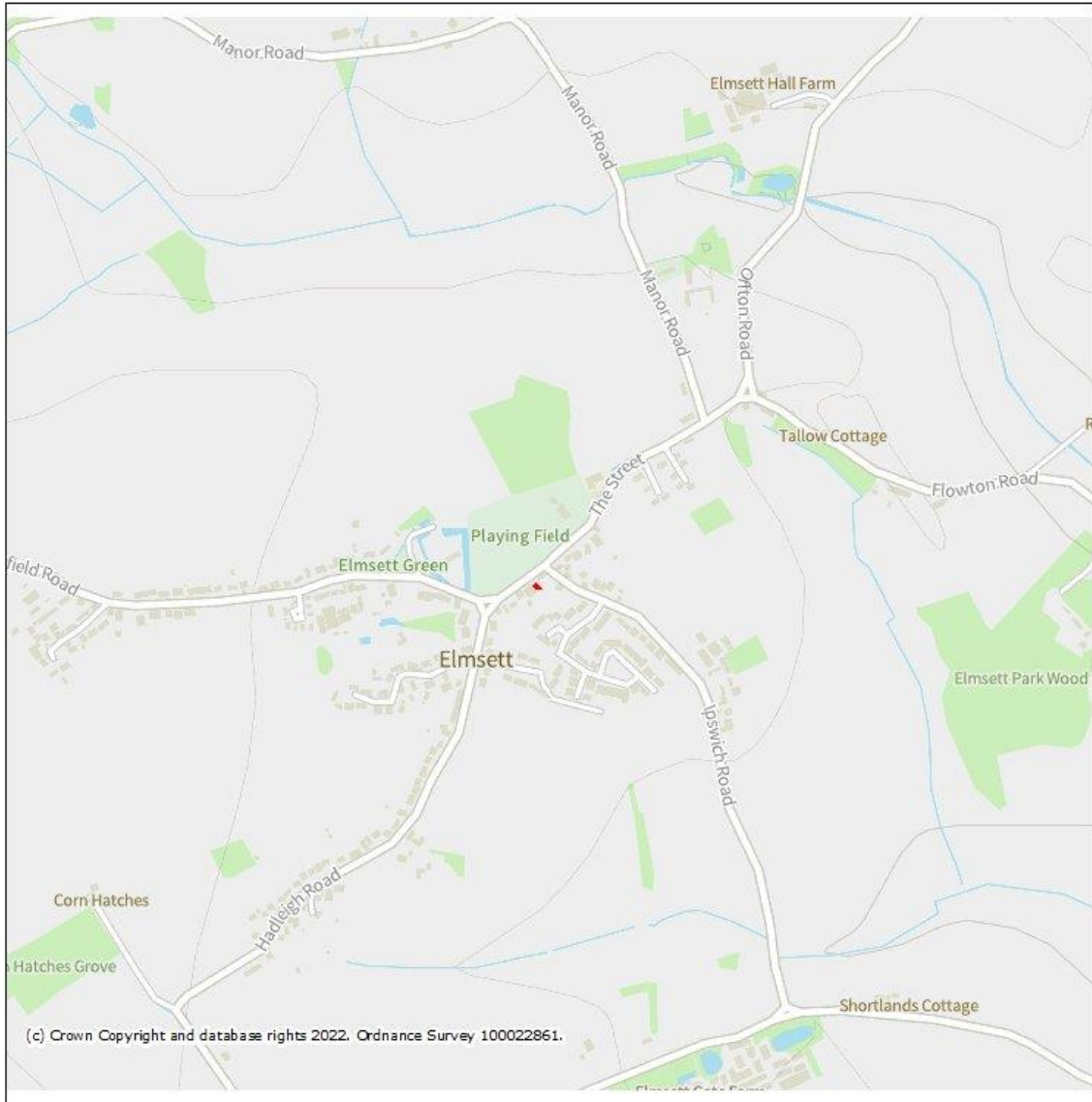


Figure 1. Site location

Relevant Legislation

- 1.6 All bat species and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly:
- capture, injure or kill a bat;
 - kill or harm a bat;
 - disturb a bat; and to
 - destroy or obstruct access to a bat roost.
- 1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 places responsibility on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity in and around developments. Section 40 of the NERC Act requires every public body to “have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”. Biodiversity, as covered by the Section 40 duty, is not confined to habitats and species of principal importance but refers to all species and habitats. However, the expectation is that public bodies would refer to the Section 41 list (of species and habitats) through compliance with the Section 40 duty.
- 1.8 Appendix IV details legislation which protects species and groups relevant to the site (bats and birds).

2. Methods

Desk Study

- 2.1 Data obtained from the Suffolk Biological Information Services (SBIS) were used to conduct a standard data search¹ for any information regarding statutory and non-statutory sites and records of protected and priority species within a 2km radius of the site. The data were received on the 10th of November 2023.
- 2.2 A 7km radius search for conservation areas part of the National Site Network, including Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsars was undertaken using MAGIC (<http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/>).
- 2.3 MAGIC was also searched for any granted Natural England Mitigation Licences within 5km of the site.

Field Survey

- 2.4 A Preliminary Roost Assessment was carried out by Sorrel Kiamil BSc MSc (Great Crested Newt and Hazel Dormouse License) on the 2nd of November 2023 in accordance with standard best practice methodology for roost assessments set out by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT). Weather conditions during the survey were 100% cloud cover, a light breeze (Beaufort Scale 1), a temperature of 9°C, and good visibility for external areas of the building.
- 2.5 The building was surveyed externally for its suitability to support roosting bats according to Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023). The buildings were systematically searched for potential bat roost features (PRFs) and any evidence of roosting bats such as fur staining, urine splashes, droppings, smoothness at entry points and feeding remains. A torch and binoculars were used to investigate accessible features where necessary.

Survey Limitations

- 2.6 There were no limitations to this survey.




3. Results

Data Search

- 3.1 The standard data search returned seven records, including serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) bats within 2km of the site. There were no roosts identified.
- 3.2 A data search of Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) for Granted European Protected Species Applications revealed that there were three approved bat mitigation licences within 5km of the Site, the nearest approved licence was from approximately 485m to the north of the site for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*).
- 3.3 There is one statutory designated site within 2km of the proposed development; Elmsett Park Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): Elmsett Park Wood is a small ancient wood occupying a low hilltop site in south Suffolk. The soils are boulder clays overlain by a thin layer of sands. A very wide range of woodland types are present and with an equally diverse ground flora the site is considered to be one of the richest small woods in Suffolk.
- 3.4 There are no National Site Network conservation areas (Ramsar, SAC, or SPA) within 7km of the site.

Field Survey Results

- 3.5 The survey was carried out externally and internally of the building. This was an outbuilding being used as storage for the pub.
- 3.6 It was of brick construction with a clay pan tile roof and timber beams and door. There was no lead flashing around the chimney, and many of the tiles, beams, bricks and ridge tiles were broken and missing. To the south was extensive roofing damage around the chimney, internally some areas here were being held up with metal support poles to stop the roof collapsing.
- 3.7 No bat field signs were observed internally or externally. All surfaces were searched for and only a few mouse droppings were observed.
- 3.8 Multiple potential roost features (PRFs) and ingress points were identified including cracked brickwork, missing mortar in multiple areas, multiple areas of access internally. However, many of the internal features can be viewed as negligible; due to exposure. This will be summarised below:

		<p>View of the building showing the south and west of the building. There are multiple areas of damage to the south of the building particularly around the chimney. With multiple cracks in the brick work on the southern wall.</p>
		<p>Multiple areas of missing mortar and broken and missing tiles around the chimney.</p>
		<p>North face of the building with lifting tiles, missing mortar in the brick work and crack in the timber.</p>
		<p>Around the building was gaps under all the tiles and beams.</p>



There was no lining under the tiles and multiple gaps throughout, with gaps along the ridge and throughout the roof. This had left multiple areas of timber wet due to exposure.

The southern section of the roof had collapsed and was being held up with multiple poles and timber slats.

4. Conclusions & Recommendations

- 4.1 The data search revealed only seven returns and only three Natural England mitigation licences within 5 km of the Site.
- 4.2 Due to the lack of evidence of bats, the exposed internal features causing damp timbers and lack of features due to neglect that could support maternity or hibernation roosts. Internally the building was light and exposed to winds. Therefore it is recommend that one bat survey is undertaken as it is low potential. The building was considered to be a simple structure and so this survey should be designed or led by a level 2 bat licenced ecologist (not requiring level 3 or 4) and carried out to BCT Guidelines. The survey should be carried out between May and August.
- 4.3 As an old bird nest was observed to prevent infringing legislation which protects all nesting birds, it is recommended that any building clearance is carried out outside the breeding bird season (which runs from March to September) or following a nesting bird survey by a suitably experienced ecologist.
- 4.4 It is considered that there will be no significant long-term impacts to the conservation status of protected species in the area if the proposed development follows precautionary methodologies and recommendations for wildlife listed above.

5. References

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

JNCC (2010) *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey: a technique for environmental audit* (revised reprint)
JNCC: Peterborough.

Preliminary Ecological Assessment, Rose and Crown Pub, Eco-Planning UK, August 2023

Web references

<http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

Appendix I: Figures



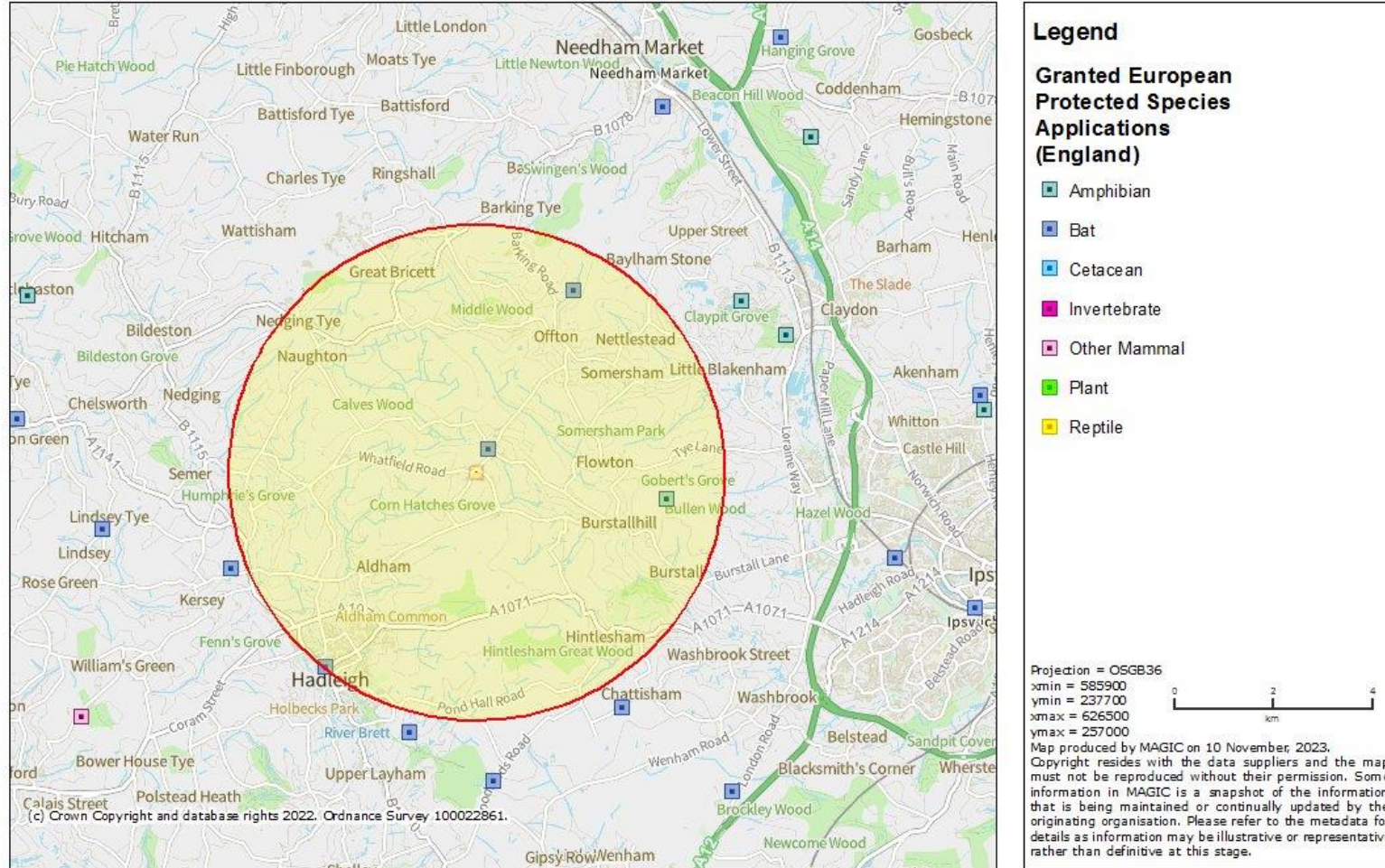
Building surveyed – Red outline boundary, Areas of neglect and damage giving lots of exposure.

Appendix II: Desk Study

Natural England Bat Mitigation

MAGIC

NE mitigation licences



Licences – within 5km

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Appendix III: Relevant Protected Species Legislation

Species	Legislation	Protection
<p>Bats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) (as amended) ▪ Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (1981), Schedule 5 (as amended) ▪ Wild Mammals Act (1996) 	<p>It is an offence to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intentionally kill, injure or take any bat ▪ Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat ▪ Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a bat roost
<p>Birds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (1981 (as amended) 	<p>It is an offence to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird ▪ Intentionally take, damage or destroy nests in use or being built ▪ Intentionally take, damage or destroy eggs <p>Species listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA (1981) are afforded additional protection, making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb such species at, on or near an active nest</p>