



JM ECOLOGY

**MR AND MRS STYCHE
71 MAIN STREET
LOWDHAM
BAT SURVEY REPORT**

Project Code: JME_1970

Document reference: JME_1970_BR_01_V1

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OCTOBER 2023

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Table 4.1: PBRA Summary



1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.1 This Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) has been undertaken on behalf of Mr and Mrs Styche for the proposal at 71 Main Street, Lowdham. It has been produced to inform proposed extension of the property including re-roofing to tie-in the extension with the wider property.

Site Context

- 1.2 The Site is located off Main Street, Lowdham. The building is set within hardstanding and adjacent to a residential garden comprising amenity lawn, fruit trees, ornamental planting and hedges. The surrounding land supports, residential properties with dissecting roads, trees and hedgerows. Beyond this is predominantly agricultural land.

Figure 1.1: Site Context



Purpose of Report

- 1.3 The purpose of this assessment is to provide detail on the features which were assessed in terms of suitability to roosting bats. Scoping for nesting birds was a secondary objective of the survey.



2. LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Bats

- 2.1 British bats are fully protected within UK Law under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) through their inclusion in Schedule 5. Under the Act, they are protected from:

Intentional or reckless killing, injury, taking;

Damage to or destruction of or, obstruction of access to any place of shelter, breeding or rest;

Disturbance of an animal occupying a structure or place;

Possession or control (live or dead animals);

Selling, bartering or exchange of these species, or parts of.

- 2.2 This law is reinforced by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. These Regulations also prohibit:

the deliberate killing, injuring or taking of bats;

the deliberate disturbance of any bat species in such a way as to be significantly likely to affect:

- o their ability to survive, hibernate, migrate, breed, or rear or nurture their young; or
- o the local distribution or abundance of that species.

damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place;

the possession or transport of bats or any other part of.

- 2.3 In addition, seven British bat species are listed as Species of Principal Importance (SPI) under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006. These are barbastelle (*Barbastellus barbastellus*), Bechstein's (*Myotis bechsteinii*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), greater horseshoe (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*) and lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*).

- 2.4 The Wild Mammals Act 1996 (as amended) also affords protections to wild mammals.

Birds

- 2.5 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is the principal legislation affording protection to UK wild birds. Under this legislation all birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence, with certain exceptions, to recklessly or intentionally:

Kill, injure or take any wild bird;

Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built;

Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

- 2.6 For birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Act, it is an offence to disturb any bird while it is building a nest, is at or near a nest with young; or disturb the dependant young of such a bird.



- 2.7 Species listed in Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive 1994 are required to have special conservation measures taken to preserve their habitats and sites to be classified as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) where appropriate.



3. METHODOLOGY

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

- 3.1 A Site survey was undertaken in October 2023 by a competent surveyor who has a BSc (hons) in biological sciences and is a full member of CIEEM (MCIEEM). The lead is also registered to use a level 2 personal bat licence (2016-26529-CLS-CLS), acts as the named ecologist on numerous mitigation licences and is one of a small number of consultants nationwide registered under the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (RC210); all of which further demonstrates their competence to lead this type of work.
- 3.2 The aim of the visit was to gather baseline survey data on the building and adjacent land in respect of roosting bats. In addition, the methodology was extended to include a search for incidental evidence of nesting bird. The survey and reporting were complete in accordance with best practice (Collins, 2023 & CIEEM 2017 and 2019).
- 3.3 Whilst not a primary consideration of this survey surveyors scoped for the potential presence of nesting bird presence within the surveyed structure.

Zone of Influence

- 3.4 The 'zone of influence' for a project is the area over which ecological features may be affected by changes as a result of the proposed project and associated activities.
- 3.5 For bats, the zone of influence may extend beyond the Site boundaries as far as 30km depending on the proximity of International Sites designated for bat species and if those qualifying species occur on the project Site. For this Site however, the zone of influence is unlikely to extend far beyond the ownership boundary.

Assessment of Effects

- 3.6 In order to assess the significance of effects, ecological features that could potentially be affected by the development have been identified and the potential effects quantified (e.g. extent, magnitude and duration).
- 3.7 For this assessment a 'significant effect' is an effect that either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives or for biodiversity in general. Conservation objectives may be specific (for a designated site) or broad (for a national/local nature conservation policy) or more wide-ranging (enhancement of biodiversity) (CIEEM, 2019).
- 3.8 Only where significant effects are predicted has mitigation been proposed. Additionally, precautionary measures have been included and these are detailed within this document for robustness. The potential for mitigation and enhancement measures were then considered to avoid, reduce or compensate for any significant adverse effects, where possible in accordance with the principles of the mitigation hierarchy (CIEEM, 2019).
- 3.9 The current guidelines identify various bat species/roost characteristics and their associated habitat features likely to be important to bat conservation. In the context of bat work these include:



Bat roost size and class;

Bat species that are rare or uncommon, either internationally, nationally or more locally, including those that may be seasonally transient;

size of bat population, particularly large populations of bat species or concentrations of species considered uncommon or threatened in a wider context;

bat species on the edge of their range, particularly where their distribution is changing as a result of global trends and climate change;

ecosystems and their component parts, which provide the habitats required by bat populations and/or assemblages; and

habitat connectivity and/or synergistic associations;

Significance Criteria

- 3.10 Significance of effects is defined using geographical context. Which is adapted on a project by project basis to suit the location of the assessment to accommodate regional variation in species/habitat distribution. These include international, national, regional, county ; and, local.

Limitations

- 3.11 Despite efforts made during the field survey to provide a comprehensive account of the site, it is important to acknowledge that no investigation can guarantee complete characterisation and accurate prediction of the natural environment. Moreover, it is crucial to recognise that habitats are dynamic entities prone to changes, including the potential colonisation of species subsequent to the surveys complete as part of this report.
- 3.12 In line with standard guidance, the results and recommendations within this report are valid for one year from the date of survey, assuming there are no significant changes to the survey Site or its immediate surroundings. Updated survey work may be required to support any future planning applications outside of this time period.
- 3.13 Specific guidance on the valid period of ecological survey data can be found at:

<https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>



4. BASELINE DATA

Bats

4.1 A Summary of the survey results are provided below under Table 4.1

Table 4.1: PBRA Summary

Building	Description	Potential Roosting Features	Bat Roosting Potential	Further Survey Required
B1	<p>Two storey residential property with a hipped slate roof and single glazed windows and doors. To the north the building supports a connected single storey lean to extension finished with slate.</p> <p>Internally the building is furnished as a residential property with loft void supported fibrous insulation in between first floor ceiling joists. The roofs timbers were exposed with mortar backed slate and no underlining.</p>	<p>Gaps on southern aspect of roof in association with hipped tiles;</p> <p>Approximately 30 bat droppings found in the loft potentially pipistrelle and brown long-eared bat droppings ;</p> <p>The building was unlikely to be suitable for hibernating bats.</p> <p>See photos at the end of this report for location of potential roosting features and bat droppings.</p>	Confirmed Roost	Yes

Foraging

4.2 A significant assemblage of foraging bats was considered unlikely on-Site owing to the residential setting (artificial lighting and human disturbance pressures). However, impacts to those individuals that do likely utilise the Site or the better suited adjacent habitats cannot be ruled out as a result of any new artificial lighting installed as part of the development. Where new lighting is installed, in the absence of mitigation, a minor adverse effect on local foraging bats is likely.

Nesting Bird

4.3 No nesting birds were seen during the survey and nests were considered unlikely (not impossible) in association with the building itself. Surrounding shrubs and trees could support nesting birds.

4.4 In the absence of mitigation bird nests could be destroyed and individual birds could be killed or injured (or disturbed when nesting) during construction. This would be a potentially minor adverse effect at a local level.



5. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Roosting Bats

- 5.1 **B1 was assessed as a confirmed roost. As such a suite of three nocturnal surveys is recommended between May and August** in support of the scheme, with the aim of characterising the roost in accordance with best practice. Following completion of the survey work it is likely a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence application will be required to legitimise the development.

Foraging Bats

- 5.2 Any new lighting associated with the proposal should follow best practice guidelines outlined in Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK (2023) to maintain suitable foraging habitats in surrounding land. No artificial light spill should occur towards buildings, trees or hedgerows (both on and off-Site).
- 5.3 Where no new lighting is installed or a bat friendly lighting strategy is implemented effectively potential adverse effects are reduced to negligible levels.

Nesting Bird

- 5.4 As all species receive legal protection during nesting, it is advised any facilitate vegetation clearance and demolition activities should be complete outside the nesting season between November and February (inclusive). Where this is not possible such work should be preceded by a nesting bird check conducted by an ecologist. Active nests found at any time will remain unaffected until all chicks have fledged.
- 5.5 With the mitigation proposed above risk of potential minor adverse effects on nesting bird are reduced to negligible levels.



6. REFERENCES

- Bat Conservation Trust (2023) Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK – Guidance Note 08/23.
- British Standards Institution (2013) BS42020:2013 Biodiversity – code of practice for planning and development. BSI Standards Ltd, London.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2019) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. CIEEM, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017) Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing. CIEEM, Winchester.
- Collins J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021) National Planning Policy Framework.
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside Website <http://www.magic.gov.uk/>



APPENDIX 1: SITE PHOTOS

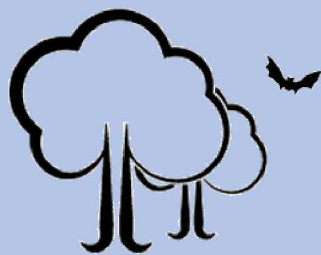
Building 1











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