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Bat Survey Report

(Including Dusk Emergence Survey)

for Proposed Development at Belldown, Old London Road, Copdock, Suffolk. IP8 3JD.

On behalf of:

Mr & Mrs Tyler

October 2023

Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd.
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0 SUMMARY

0.1 Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd. was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Tyler to undertake a bat survey including dusk emergence survey for proposed development at Belldown, Old London Road, Copdock, Suffolk. IP8 3JD. Proposed development includes: roof works, extension to the rear, window replacement and other alterations.

0.2 The daylight survey was conducted on the 27th July 2023 with the dusk emergence bat survey on the 15th August 2023. Both surveys were undertaken by experienced ecologist Roger Spring BSC MCIEEM (bat survey licence number 2015-15553-CLS-CLS). During the dusk emergence survey a second surveyor was used to ensure adequate coverage of the building (experienced ecologist Tommy Root BSc (Hons) ACIEEM- licensed to survey for bats- level 2).

0.3 The daylight survey consisted of an internal and external inspection of the building, searching for potential for roosting and access for bats, as well as signs and evidence of bats. The assessment followed Natural England (English Nature) and Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Guidelines. The dusk emergence survey included surveyors positioned around the building at dusk to cover all potential bat roosting opportunities. The surveyors used bat detectors and an infrared video camera to watch for any bat emerging from the building.

0.4 The site includes a detached, three-storey, brick, period property with pitched, tiled roof and dormer windows. The site is positioned in a rural location with low density residential housing and arable farmland the dominant land use. Old London Road to the east and Elm Lane to the south both have streetlighting which spills into the site.

0.5 No signs or evidence of bat activity was discovered during the daylight inspection, though low potential for roosting was noted around lifted roof tiles and a gap in the soffits on the north east corner of the building.

0.6 No other protected species issues- nesting birds etc. were found.

0.7 The dusk emergence survey discovered low numbers of foraging common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and serotine bats. No bat roosts were found, no bats were observed emerging from the building. All bats were recorded well after sunset indicating they had flown into the site from roosts away from the site.

0.8 Therefore, the risk of presence and impact to bats, bat roosts or local bat conservation was considered negligible. Further bat surveys or mitigation were considered unnecessary. However, to minimise any residual risk of impact, precautionary measures, detailed later in the report, should be followed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd. was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Tyler to undertake a bat survey including dusk emergence survey for proposed development at Belldown, Old London Road, Copdock, Suffolk. IP8 3JD. Proposed development includes: roof works, extension to the rear, window replacement and other alterations.

1.1.2 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, 2023 (MHCLG, 2023).

1.1.3 CIEEM guidelines indicate that ecological surveying typically remains valid for between 12 and 18 months (CIEEM, 2019).

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Daylight Survey

2.1.1 On the 27th July 2023 a daylight 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 outside and inside of the building was 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 Bat Survey

2.2.1 The following survey was undertaken:

- Dusk emergence survey on 15th August 2023 Roger Spring BSc MCIEEM & Tommy Root BSc (Hons) ACIEEM (both licensed to survey for bats- Level 2).

2.2.2 The survey was undertaken in optimal weather conditions at a suitable time of year following national standards for bat surveying. No dawn re-entry surveys were considered necessary. Recent guidance by The Bat Conservation Trust (May, 2022) questions the efficacy of dawn surveys recommending a transition away from dawn surveys encouraging the use of dusk emergence surveys supported by infrared cameras.

2.2.3 Equipment used during the survey included a Peersonic Pro bat detector (Tommy Root) and Batbox Griffin bat detector (Roger Spring). Bat recordings were analysed using BatSound V4 software. The survey was supported by the use of an infrared video camera which was reviewed subsequently, checking for any late emerging bats.

2.2.4 Surveyors were positioned around the building watching potential exit/entry locations.

2.2.5 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.

2.2.6 The emergence survey commenced approximately 15 minutes before sunset and continued for approximately 90 minutes.

3 RESULTS AND RISK

3.1 Site Description & Location

3.1.1 The site includes a detached, three-storey, brick, period property with pitched, tiled roof and dormer windows. The site is positioned in a rural location with low density residential housing and arable farmland the dominant land use. Old London Road to the east and Elm Lane to the south both have streetlighting which spills into the site.

3.2 Protected & Priority Species

Daylight Inspections

3.2.1 No signs or evidence of bat activity were discovered during the daylight inspection, though low potential for roosting was noted around lifted roof tiles and a gap in the soffits on the north east corner of the building.

3.2.2 No other protected species issues- nesting birds etc. were found.

Dusk Emergence Bat Surveys

3.2.3 The dusk emergence survey discovered low numbers of foraging common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and one serotine pass. No bat roosts were found, no bats were observed emerging from the building.

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 Even though low potential for roosting was discovered around roof tiles and a gap in the soffits on the north east corner of the building. Surveys have failed to find signs or evidence of bat activity. The streetlighting adjacent to the site likely reduces the suitability of the site for bats, particularly more light sensitive bats, such as brown long-eared. It was also noted that the first bats recorded were well after sunset indicating that the bats flew into the site from roosts located further away.

4.1.3 Overall, the risk of presence and impact to bats, bat roosts or local bat conservation was considered negligible. Further bat surveys or mitigation were considered unnecessary. However, to minimise any residual risk of impact, precautionary measures, detailed below, should be followed.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Precautionary Measures

Bats

5.1.1 To minimise any residual risk of impact to bats, the following precautionary measure should be undertaken:

- Roof works should include hand removal of roof tiles. If at any point bats or evidence of bats (droppings etc.) are found works should stop and an ecologist called for advice.

- Any additional external lighting should be warm white LED (<3000k) direct downward and on PIR sensors.

5.2 Enhancements

5.2.1 By undertaking the following recommended biodiversity enhancements, the site will be improved for local wildlife and provide a net-gain in accordance with national planning policy (NPPF, 2023).

5.2.2 The following will increase the potential bat roosting opportunities on the site and enhance the ecological value of the site for local wildlife:

- 1 x Beaumaris Bat Box (or similar).

5.2.3 The bat box should be installed high (just below the new roof) on the western elevation closest to the north of the building to avoid the light spilling into the garden from adjacent streetlights.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 No signs or evidence of bats roosting at the site were found.

6.2 Therefore, the risk of significant impact or harm to bats, bat roosts or local bat conservation was considered negligible. Further bat surveys or mitigation were considered unnecessary. However, to minimise any residual risk of impact, precautionary measures, detailed in the report, should be followed.

6.3 By following the biodiversity enhancements, the ecological value of the site would be increased for the benefit of local wildlife in accordance with national planning policy.

7 REFERENCES

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

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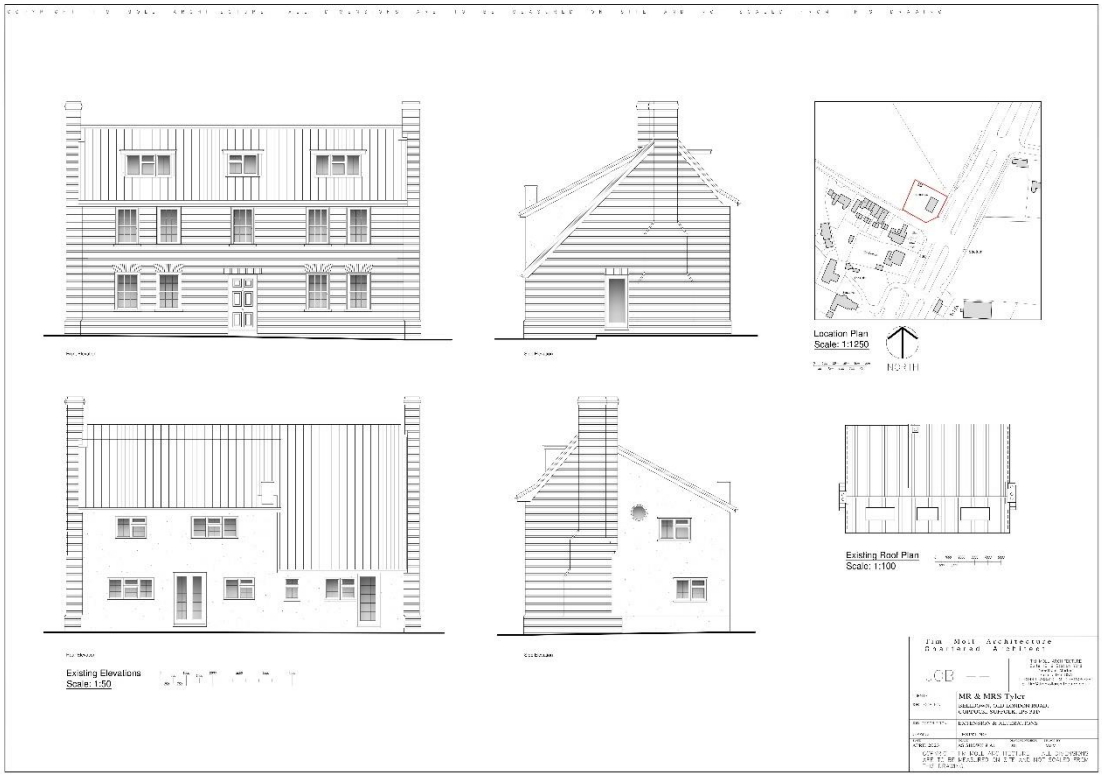
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005). *Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System*. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, London.

8 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1: Figures

Figure 1: Site Location Plan.



8.2 Appendix 2: Tables

Table 1: Dusk emergence survey results (Surveyor Roger Spring – Surveying Southern and west elevations) at Belldown. 15th August 2023.

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
21.06	1 common pipistrelle	Seen & detected foraging briefly in rear garden
21.22	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass
21.26	1 serotine	Detected only – one pass
21.30	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass
21.33	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass
21.33	1 serotine	Detected only – one pass
21.38	1 soprano pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass

Start time: 20.10. End: 22.00.

Weather: 20C (start) 18C (end), 50% cloud, wind: still, dry.

Table 2: Dusk emergence survey results (Surveyor Tommy Root – surveying north and east elevations) at Belldown. 15th August 2023.

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
21.12	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass
21.17	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass
21.24	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass
21.28	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass
21.28	serotine	Detected only – one pass
21.40	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass

8.3 Appendix 3: Photographs

Photograph 1 – Dusk emergence bat survey at Belldown.

Photograph by Roger Spring 2023

Photograph 2 – Loft inside Belldown.

Photograph by Roger Spring 2023

Photograph 3 – Eastern elevation at Belldown.

Photograph by Roger Spring 2023

Photograph 4 – Western elevation at Belldown.

Photograph by Roger Spring 2023

Photograph 5 – Gap in soffits at north east corner at Belldown.

Photograph by Roger Spring 2023