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Further Bat Survey Report

(Including Dusk Emergence Survey)

for Proposed Development at Dillacks Farm, Colchester Road, Assington. CO10 5LT.

On behalf of:

Mr & Mrs Day

November 2023

Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd.

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Contents

0	SUMMARY	3
1	INTRODUCTION	4
1.1	Background	4
2	METHODOLOGY	4
2.1	Daylight Survey	4
2.2	Dusk Emergence Bat Survey.....	5
3	RESULTS AND RISK.....	5
3.1	Site Description & Location.....	5
3.2	Protected & Priority Species	6
4	DISCUSSION OF RISK AND LEGISLATION.....	6
4.1	Protected Species	6
5	RECOMMENDATIONS	7
5.1	Precautionary Measures.....	7
5.2	Enhancements.....	7
6	CONCLUSION	8
7	REFERENCES	8
8	APPENDICES	9
8.1	Appendix 1: Figures.....	9
8.2	Appendix 2: Tables	11
8.3	Appendix 3: Photographs.....	12

Figures & Photographs

Figure 1: Site Location Plan.....	9
Figure 2: Proposed development.	10
Table 1: Dusk emergence survey results (Surveyor Roger Spring – Surveying northern and eastern elevations) at Dillacks Farm. 29th August 2023.	11
Table 2: Dusk emergence survey results (Surveyor James Francis – surveying south and west elevations) at Dillacks Farm. 29 th August 2023.....	11
Photograph 1 – Dusk emergence bat survey at Dillacks Farm.	12

0 SUMMARY

- 0.1 Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd. was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Day to undertake a dusk emergence survey for proposed development at Dillacks Farm, Colchester Road, Assington. CO10 5LT. The survey was required due to the discovery of low bat roosting potential in a cartlodge during a daylight Preliminary Ecological Appraisal on the 19th July 2023 by Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd.
- 0.2 The survey was undertaken by experienced ecologist Roger Spring BSC MCIEEM (bat survey licence number 2015-15553-CLS-CLS) accompanied by Ecologist James Francis BSc GradCIEEM.
- 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. No signs or evidence of bats were found during the daylight inspection, though low potential for roosting bats was noted around roof tiles. 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 single-storey, period, timber frame and brick outbuilding and attached cartlodge with a pitched, tiled roof. The structure is linked to a covered area attached to the main house. The building is set in a courtyard with barns to the west and south and main house to the north.
- 0.5 Surrounding habitats included the A134 to the north, mature gardens to the east and south with a nearby pond. Beyond the immediate surroundings habitats were dominated by arable land.
- 0.6 The dusk emergence survey discovered low numbers of foraging common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats. The adjacent barns and the house do support roosting common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats, though no bat roosts were found associated with the cartlodge.
- 0.7 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 Day to undertake a dusk emergence survey for proposed development at Dillacks Farm, Colchester Road, Assington. CO10 5LT. The survey was required due to the discovery of low bat roosting potential of a cartlodge during a daylight Preliminary Ecological Appraisal on the 19th July 2023 by Skilled Ecology Consultancy Ltd.
- 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 19th 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 29th August 2023 Roger Spring BSc MCIEEM (licensed to survey for bats- Level 2) & Ecologist James Francis BSc GradCIEEM.

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 Echo Meter Touch 2 PRO bat detector (James Frances) 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 single-storey, period, timber frame and brick outbuilding and attached cartlodge with a pitched, tiled roof. The structure is linked to a covered area attached to the main house. The building is set in a courtyard with barns to the west and south and main house to the north.

- 3.1.2 Surrounding habitats included the A134 to the north, mature gardens to the east and south with a nearby pond. Beyond the immediate surroundings habitats were dominated by arable land.

3.2 Protected & Priority Species

Daylight Inspection

- 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.

Dusk Emergence Bat Surveys

- 3.2.2 The dusk emergence survey discovered low numbers of foraging common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats. Two common pipistrelles were observed and recorded emerging from under roof tiles on the adjacent house and one common pipistrelle bat was observed emerging from an adjacent barn. A brown long-eared bat was suspected to have also emerged from the adjacent barn and flew into the cartlodge for temporary foraging.
- 3.2.3 No bat roosts were found associated with the cartlodge.

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. Surveys have failed to find signs or evidence of bat roosts in the cartlodge. The adjacent house and barn do support roosting bats and occasionally bats enter the cartlodge for foraging in the early evening. No signs of a feeding perch (such as moth wings etc.) were found.

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 in the cartlodge 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

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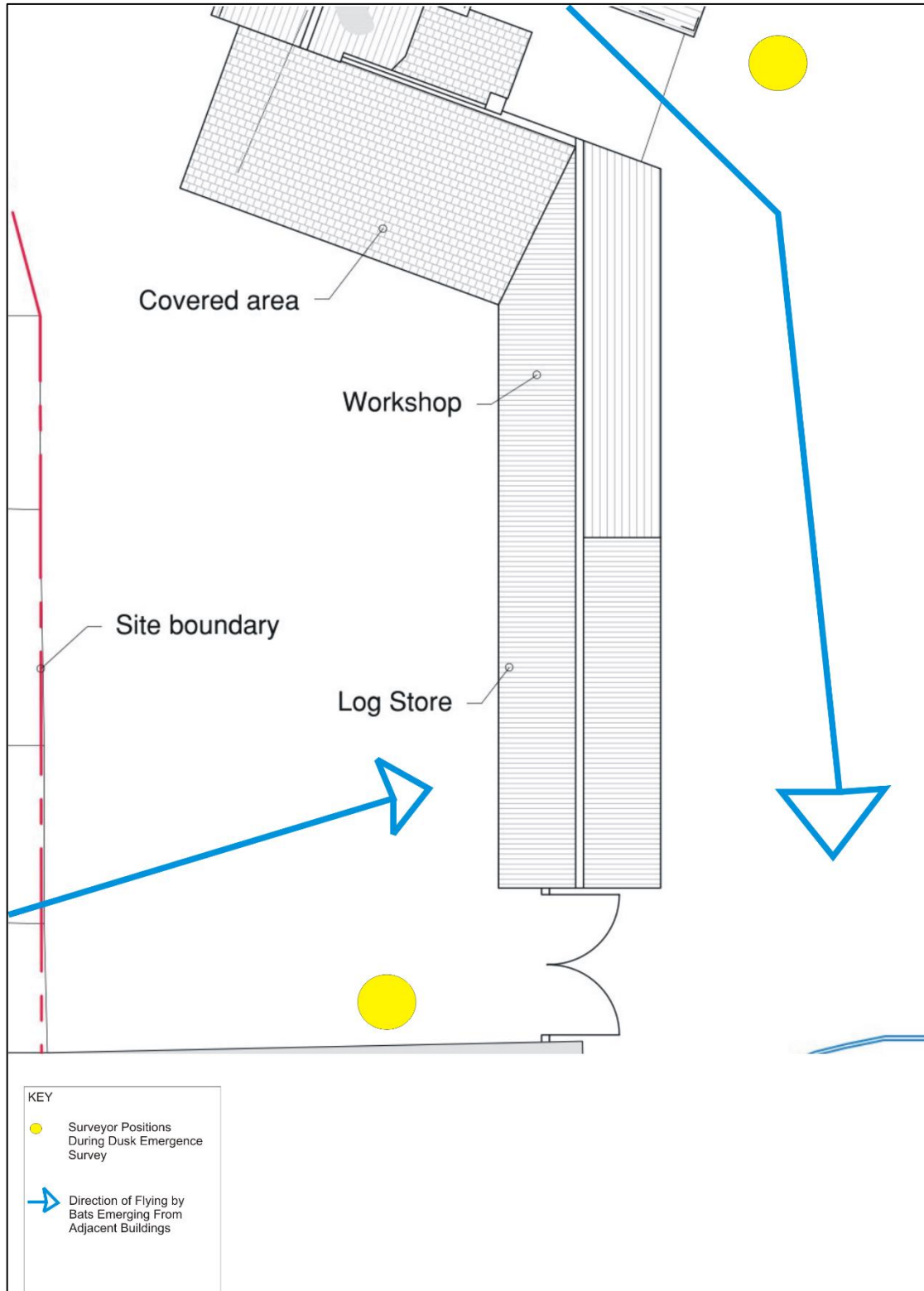
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8 APPENDICES

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 northern and eastern elevations) at Dillacks Farm. 29th August 2023.

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
19.51	1 common pipistrelle	Seen & detected emerging from the adjacent house and flying adjacent to the cartlodge from north to south
20.04	1 common pipistrelle	Seen & detected emerging from the adjacent house and flying adjacent to the cartlodge from north to south
20.08	1 common pipistrelle	Flying east of cartlodge
20.23	1 common pipistrelle	Commuting north to south across the site
20.27	1 common pipistrelle	Foraging east of cartlodge
20.32	1 common pipistrelle	Foraging east of cartlodge
20.37	1 common pipistrelle	Foraging east of cartlodge
20.46	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass

Start time: 19.40. End: 21.20.

Weather: 18C (start) 18C (end), 100% cloud, wind: still, dry.

Table 2: Dusk emergence survey results (Surveyor James Francis – surveying south and west elevations) at Dillacks Farm. 29th August 2023.

Time	Bat Species	Activity on the Site
19.59	1 common pipistrelle	Seen & detected emerging from the adjacent barn to the west
20.00	1 common pipistrelle	Foraging in the courtyard west of the cartlodge
20.11	1 common pipistrelle	Flew over the cartlodge from east to west
20.17	1 common pipistrelle	Commuting over site in the south
20.24	1 common pipistrelle	Commuting over site from east to west.
20.26	1 common pipistrelle	Detected only – one pass
20.28	1 common pipistrelle	Commuting west to east
20.30	1 common pipistrelle	Commuting east to west
20.34	1 Brown long-eared	Likely emerged from adjacent barn and flew into the cartlodge with flying in and out for a minute

20.34	1 common pipistrelle	Commuting east to west
20.43	1 Brown long-eared	Entered courtyard from over gate to the east
20.50	1 common pipistrelle	Foraging south of cartlodge
21.06	1 Brown long-eared	Foraging south of cartlodge

8.3 Appendix 3: Photographs

Photograph 1 – Dusk emergence bat survey at Dillacks Farm.



Photograph by Roger Spring 2023