



Bat Building Inspection Report

6 Benett Avenue, Hove

December 2023

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6 Benett Avenue, Hove

15/12/2023

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Non-technical Summary

Phlorum Limited was commissioned by Graham Philps to carry out a bat building inspection (BBI) (often referred to as a Preliminary Roost Assessment - PRA), in relation to 6 Benett Ave, Brighton and Hove, Hove BN3 6UR (hereafter referred to as "the site").

Current proposals are for a ground floor extension. The survey area extended over approximately 340m².

The main findings of the survey are as follows:

- 🌿 The survey area comprised the building on site. The building was a brick building with a mansard roof which consisted of a pitched tiled roof with a flat concrete middle. It was a single storey, with a split level at the rear and a conservatory to the east.
- 🌿 Proposals involve the renovation of the building with an extension proposed at the south.
- 🌿 Overall, the building was assessed to have **negligible** suitability to support roosting bats.
- 🌿 Details regarding construction phase and bat-sensitive lighting measures are provided in the recommendations section of the report.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 Phlorum Limited was commissioned by Graham Philips c/o Sonny Medcalf to carry out a bat building inspection (BBI) (often referred to as a Preliminary Roost Assessment - PRA), in relation to 6 Benett Ave, Brighton and Hove, Hove BN3 6UR (hereafter referred to as "the site"), prior to development.
- 1.2 It is understood that current proposals are for a two-storey rear extension and new pitched dormers to roof.
- 1.3 This report provides an assessment of the status of bats within the site, providing information on their presence/likely absence and distribution. Potential impacts of the proposed development are identified and measures to mitigate the effects of the proposed development on bats are discussed in outline.

Site Description

- 1.4 The site is located at 6 Benett Ave, Hove BN3 6UR. The site is located within the residential urban area of Hove. The wider area is surrounded by residential buildings and gardens. Hove Park sits approximately 100m to the southwest which contains small parcels of priority habitat deciduous woodland.
- 1.5 The survey area comprised the building on site. The building was a brick building with a mansard roof which consisted of a pitched tiled roof with a flat concrete middle. It was a single storey, with a split level at the rear and a conservatory to the east.
- 1.6 The National Grid Reference for the centre of the site is TQ 28712 06845. The survey area extended over approximately 340m².

2. Methodology







Data Search

- 2.1 Records for bats within a 2km radius of the site were obtained from the Local Records Centre (SxBRC, 2023).

Personnel

- 2.2 The BBI was carried out by Livia Dry, an ecological consultant with over 2 years' professional experience undertaking ecological surveys, including bats. The survey took place mid-morning on the 7th December 2023. The weather conditions during were mild and wet, with grey overcast skies.

Bat Building Inspection (Preliminary Roost Assessment)

- 2.3 The inspection of Building was carried out on 7th December 2023. The survey was undertaken in accordance with good practice guidelines (Collins, 2023).
- 2.4 The interior and exterior of the structures were inspected closely with the aim of identifying the presence of bats and any secondary evidence together with any potential roost sites. Secondary evidence includes droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and oil and urine staining.
- 2.5 The external inspection comprised a detailed search of all accessible architectural features for bat droppings, urine staining, scratch marks, staining around suitable crevices and feeding remains.
- 2.6 In accordance with current standing advice issued by Natural England (2015), the following types of bat roosts were considered during the assessment:
-  Day Roost - where individual bats, or small groups of males, rest or shelter in the day
 -  Night Roost - where bats rest or shelter at night between foraging in the active period, but rarely during the day
 -  Feeding 'Perch' Roost - where bats hang to eat or catch their prey or rest at night between feeding sessions.
 -  Hibernation Roost - where bats are found during winter. These roosts typically comprise a stable environment where bats can enter torpor; these areas are normally of a constant temperature.
 -  Transitional or Occasional Roost - where individual or small numbers of bats gather at a temporary site before and after hibernation.
 -  Maternity Roost - where female bats give birth and raise their young.

- Satellite Roost – an alternative roost found in close proximity to the main nursery roost colony and used by a few individual breeding females to small group of breeding females through the breeding season.

Constraints

Data Search Constraints

- 2.7 It is important to note that, even where data is held, a lack of records for a defined geographical area does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of ecological interest; the area may be simply under-recorded.

Bat Survey Constraints

- 2.8 Bats are mobile animals which can move roost sites throughout the year. However, where undisturbed, it is generally possible to find secondary evidence of bats throughout the year.
- 2.9 It is considered that the surveys were sufficiently rigorous to assess the ecological value of the site for the purposes of this assessment.

3. Results

Data Search

- 3.1 The data search returned records (post 2010) for at least 6 different species of bat within 2km of the site, including member of the genera pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus*), noctule (*Nyctalus*), long-eared (*Plecotus*), serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) and *Myotis*. The closest specified roost was a common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) maternity roost identified in 2006 which sat approximately 1.5km to the northeast.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

The building

External Survey

- 3.2 The BBI/PRA involved a detailed external inspection of the building in order to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate any evidence of bats. This included searching the ground, beneath windowsills, windowpanes, walls, and assessing the brickwork and roofing (such as if any gaps were present under the roofing felt).
- 3.3 The building was noted to be currently a residential home in the urban area of Hove. One streetlight was present within 20m of the front of the building. Outdoor lights were present at the back of the building (See Appendix A, Photographs 1-2).
- 3.4 The roof of the building was a mansard roof which consisted of a pitched tiled roof with a flat concrete middle. Drainage points were seen at the back of the building to allow water runoff. The tiles surrounding these drainage points were flush against each other and no points of egress were noted. The small extension at the back of the building to the south, built previously had a flat roof with roofing felt. The conservatory to the east of the building was also in good condition with no damage and no points of egress noted.
- 3.5 Lead flashing surrounding the chimney appeared to be flush and with no signs of egress noted (See Appendix A, Photograph 4).
- 3.6 No potential access points were seen when assessing the external structure. Tiles were flush against each other. No tiles appeared to be damaged or missing. No gaps in the roofing felt were noted. Bricks appeared to be in good condition with no cracks noted.
- 3.7 Gaps between downpipe and wall were also inspected. The pipes were a considerable distance away from the wall (See Appendix A, Photograph 2). There were multiple mesh ventilation holes noted under the eaves of the building. Each one was inspected. None were noted to be missing or broken (See Appendix A, Photograph 3).

- 3.8 No evidence of bats such as droppings, evidence of feeding or urine stains were found during the external survey.
- 3.9 The adjacent residential buildings also appeared to be in good condition with no damage to walls or roofing noted.
- 3.10 The external assessment of the building assessed the roosting potential for bats to be **negligible**.

Internal Survey

- 3.11 Internally the loft space was inspected. Lights which had previously been installed into the roof space lit the area. These lights were then turned off to check for any light spilling in, this could indicate gaps or entry points. **No light spilling was noted.**
- 3.12 The roof space was open with access to all corners and areas.
- 3.13 The roof space appeared to be used frequently for storage (See Appendix A Photograph 7).
- 3.14 No evidence of bat specimen, droppings, urine stains, feeding remains, or odour were noted. Ridge beams and other beams appeared intact and in good stable condition with no evidence of scratch marks or use by bats were noted. Spider webs were present scattered throughout the space. Ridge and hip beams were flush and clean with no evidence of use by bats noted. Roof lining was in good condition with no marks or rips noted (See appendix A, Photographs 7-9).
- 3.15 The floor held no evidence of urine stains, droppings, or other evidence of bats. Insulation was inspected and appeared in good condition. Boards were placed in areas where access was needed, and storage used. These appeared in good condition with no marks or stains, or evidence of bats noted.
- 3.16 The internal assessment of the building assessed the roosting potential for bats to be **negligible**.

4. Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion

- 4.1 The site is located at 6 Benett Ave, Brighton and Hove, Hove BN3 6UR. The site a building on site. The BBI carried out on 7th December 2023.
- 4.2 The survey area comprised the building on site. The building was a brick building was a mansard roof which consisted of a pitched tiled roof with a flat concrete middle. It was a single storey, with a split level at the rear and a conservatory to the east.
- 4.3 The site is located at 6 Benett Ave, Hove BN3 6UR. The site is located within the residential urban area of Hove. The wider area is surrounded by residential buildings and gardens. Hove Park sits approximately 100m to the southwest which contains small parcels of priority habitat deciduous woodland.
- 4.4 The building was considered to have **negligible** potential to support roosting bats.

Recommendations

- 4.5 Bats receive protection under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- 4.6 Due to the assessed **negligible** potential for suitability to support roosting bats a precautionary approach to works should be adopted in order to safeguard any potential bat roosts within the onsite building.
- 4.7 It is recommended that any works to demolish/renovate the onsite buildings commence outside of the hibernation period when bats are considered least vulnerable. The hibernation period is taken to run between mid to late November and mid-March, weather dependant.
- 4.8 A suitably experienced ecologist should oversee the start of the building works. On arrival to the site the ecologist will re-inspect the building to look for evidence of roosting bats. An on-site assessment can then be made by the ecologist regarding the status of any roosts present.
- 4.9 The ecologist will then discuss the different stages of the proposed works with the on-site contractors. The ecologist may need to return to the site to oversee certain stages of the works.
- 4.10 If considered necessary following consultation with the on-site contractors, the ecologist will guide the start of the works.
- 4.11 The ecologist should be kept informed throughout the construction phase and an ecological watching brief may be required to oversee certain phases of the redevelopment for example, the ecologist may need to oversee any ground excavation works to ensure noise levels will not impact the off-site roost etc.

- 4.12 If bats are subsequently found to be present during the remainder of the work, activities should cease immediately, and advice sought from a suitably experienced ecologist.

Habitat Enhancement/Retention

- 4.13 Additional roosting opportunities could be incorporated into the final design to enhance the site for roosting bats post works. This could include the installation of at least two bat boxes such as the Schwegler 1FF bat box located on surrounding mature trees within the site. These should be orientated with a southeast or southwest aspect and located at least 3m from ground level.

Bats and Lighting

- 4.14 Different species of bat have been found to react differently to night-time lighting however research has found that generally, all species of bats are sensitive to artificial lighting and that excessive lighting can delay bats from emerging, thus shortening the time available for foraging, as well as causing individuals to move away from suitable foraging grounds or roost sites, to alternative dark areas (Jones, 2000). Bats can also become isolated from their foraging grounds if the linear features they use for commuting are suddenly illuminated, creating a light barrier (Fure, 2006).
- 4.15 The current site sits within a residential area close to Hove park and is partially lit at night with a street light roughly 20m away to the north. There are also small outdoor lights on the exterior of the building. The development should serve to maintain the site's current value for foraging bats and to minimise indirect impacts from lighting associated with the new building. This can be achieved by following accepted best practice (Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management 2006, Institute of Lighting Professionals 2018, Bat Conservation Trust, 2014):
- The level of any artificial lighting including flood lighting should be kept to a minimum, particularly around the site boundaries;
 - LED lights are a preferred option to low pressure sodium lights or high pressure sodium or mercury lamps. LED lights do not emit UV radiation, towards which some insects are attracted, drawing them away from bat foraging areas in the surrounding landscape;
 - all lights should be directed at a low angle with minimal light spillage wherever possible;
 - ideally the site boundaries should be kept dark, preferably at bat emergence (0-1 hour after sunset) and during peak bat activity periods (e.g. 1.5 hours after sunset and 1.5 hours before sunrise);
 - Artificial lighting should not directly illuminate any potential bat commuting areas such as boundary features. Similarly, any newly planted linear features or buffer areas around the site boundary should not be directly lit; and

- If security lights are required, then they will be set on a Passive Infrared (PIR) sensor and timer so that the light is only emitted for the short time period required.

5. Conclusions

Conclusions

- 5.1 The site is located at 6 Benett Ave, Hove BN3 6UR. The site comprises of a driveway, building, and back garden. The proposed development is for a two storey extension at the rear with new pitched dormers to roof. The site is located within the residential urban area of Hove. The wider area is surrounded by residential buildings and gardens. Hove Park sits approximately 100m to the southwest which contains small parcels of priority habitat deciduous woodland.
- 5.2 The survey area comprised the building on site. The building was a brick building with a mansard roof which consisted of a pitched tiled roof with a flat concrete middle. It was a single storey, with a split level at the rear and a conservatory to the east.
- 5.3 Due to the **negligible** assessed potential for roosting bats construction phase and bat sensitive lighting measure are recommended.



6. References

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Appendix A Photographs

Photographs

Photograph Number and Feature	Photograph of Feature
1. Showing back of building.	 <p>7 Dec 2023 10:08:03 6 Benett Avenue Brighton and Hove England</p>
2. Previous extension at the back of the building. Roofing felt and brick. Main building tiles and brick. No gaps or access points seen.	 <p>7 Dec 2023 10:09:01 6 Benett Avenue Brighton and Hove England</p>

- 3. Mesh ventilation holes noted.



- 4. Front of the building where Lead flashing can be seen and external lights.



5. Front of building.



6. Front and side of building



7. Inside roof spacing.
Note frequent use by residents for storage and lights fixed.



8. Inside roof spacing



9. Wood in good condition, storage noted and insulation.

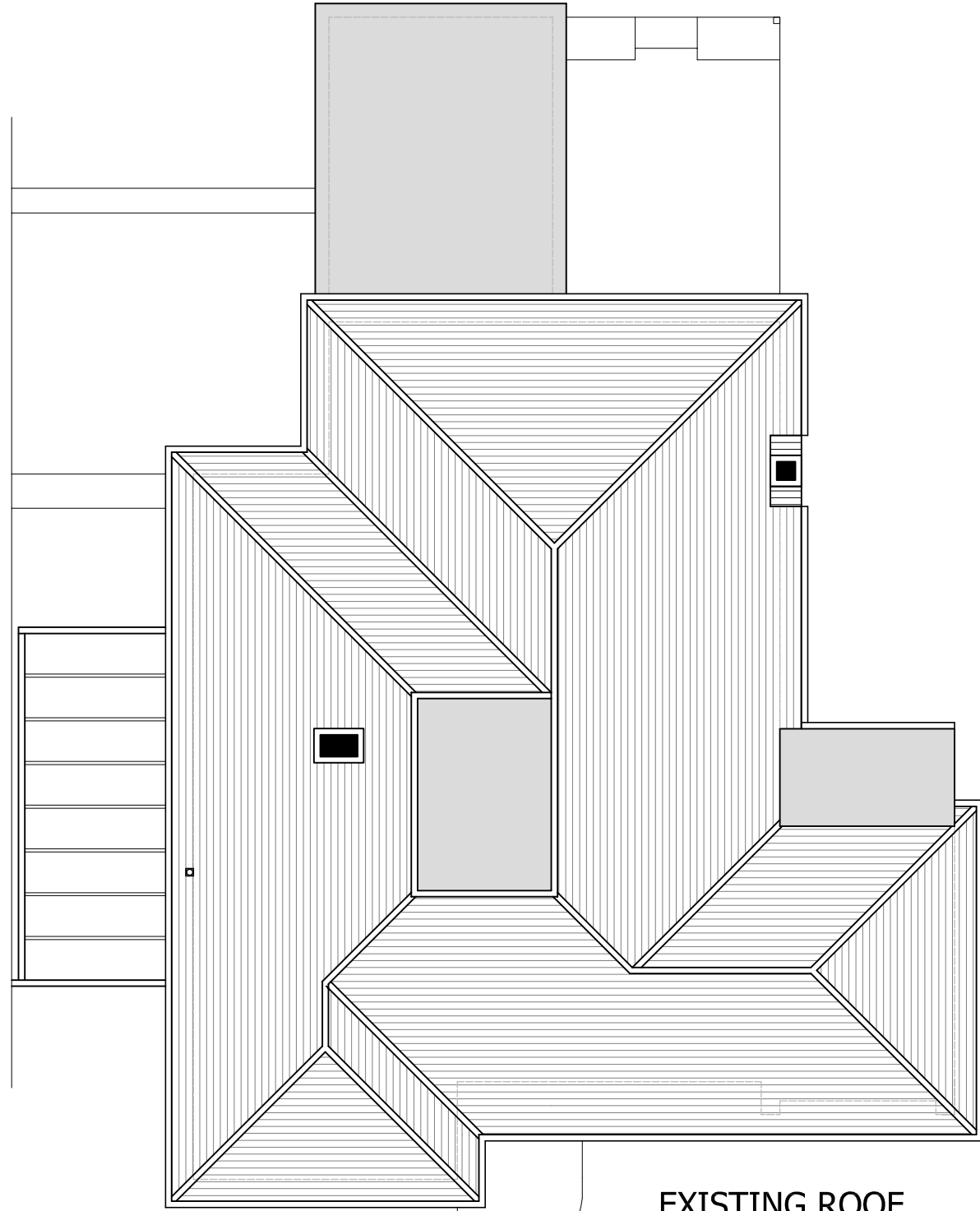




Appendix B
Building Layout



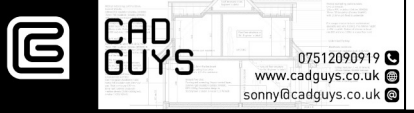
EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN
scale 1:100



EXISTING ROOF PLAN
scale 1:100



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Project
6 BENETT AVENUE, BRIGHTON, BN3 6UR

Drawing Title
Existing Plans

Date
SEP-2023

Scale
1:100/A3

Project No.
CG-288

Drawing No.
PL/02

Drawn by/Checked by
SM

Rev	Date	Details
A	080923	Initial drawings sent out for review
B	220923	Minor amendments

Dimensions to be verified on site by contractor prior to commencement of work

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Appendix C

Legislation

Legislation

This section contains information pertaining to the legislation and planning policy applicable in Britain. This information is not applicable to Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands. Information contained in the following appendix is provided for guidance only.






Species

The objective of the EC Habitats Directive¹ is to conserve plants and animals which are considered to be rare across Europe. The Directive is transposed into UK law by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) (formerly The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) and The Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) implements the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and also implements the obligations set out for species protection from the Council Directive 2009/147/EC (formerly 79/409/EEC) on the Conservation of Wild Birds (EC Birds Directive) in Great Britain.



Various amendments have been made since the Wildlife & Countryside Act came into force in 1981. Further details pertaining to alterations of the Act can be found on the following website: www.opsi.gov.uk. Key amendments have been made through the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act (2000) and Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

There are a number of other legislative Acts affording protection to species and habitats. These include:

-  Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000;
-  Deer Act 1991;
-  Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
-  Protection of Badgers Act 1992; and
-  Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

Bats

Bats are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This act protects individuals from:

-  intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level);
-  intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection; and

¹ Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.

- 🌱 selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale

In addition, all species of bat are fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- 🌱 deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species (all bats);
- 🌱 deliberate disturbance of bat species as to impair their ability:
 - (i) to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young; and
 - (ii) to hibernate or migrate.
- 🌱 deliberate disturbance of bat species as to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species;
- 🌱 damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place; and
- 🌱 keeping, transporting, selling, exchanging or offering for sale whether live or dead or of any part thereof.

A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence issued by Natural England will be required for works liable to affect a bat roost or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake activities listed above. A licence is required to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and monitored.

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