

AEWC Ltd

Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants

Bat Survey Report

Welling United Football Club

**Park View Road
Welling
Bexley
DA16 1SY**

Brigitte de Coriolis

23-011
July 2023

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Summary

- AEWCLtd were commissioned by HCUK Group on behalf of their client to undertake detailed bat survey at Welling United Football Club, Park View Road, Welling, DA16 1SY at grid reference TQ 47137 75611 to help inform the proposed development of the site.
- This report details the results of the survey, which was carried out on 27th June 2023 by Brigitte de Coriolis, a Natural England licensed bat ecologist.
- The site comprises a football pitch and associated buildings with overgrown vegetation around the southern boundaries of the site.
- A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal carried out on 2nd May 2023 by Brigitte de Coriolis identified Building 2 to have low potential to support roosting bats due to the presence of gaps at the fascia on the eastern elevation.
- The proposed development plan involves extensive refurbishment to the existing site, which will include the demolition of Building 2 to facilitate the construction of the new club and hospitality facilities.
- Building 2 was considered to have low potential to support roosting bats, however **bats were not found during the emergence survey carried out on 27th June 2023 and, as such, there are no known constraints regarding these species and the proposed development.**
- **Bats are highly mobile species and therefore may turn up on sites at any time. Should bats, or evidence of bats, be identified during the works the procedure in section 6 of this report must be followed.**
- Lighting can have notable negative impacts on commuting bats, that are known to be present locally. There is potential for lighting during and post-development to cause indirect disturbance at the southern boundary of the site. Lighting of the woodland adjoining the southern boundary must be avoided. **Any proposed new pitch and security lighting must be sensitively designed in accordance with the Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance note 8: ‘*Bats and Artificial lighting in the UK*’ which can be downloaded for free from the ILP website.**

This report has been prepared by AEWCLtd, with all reasonable skill, care and diligence within the terms of the Contract with the client. We disclaim any responsibility to the client and others in respect of any matters outside the scope of the above. This report is confidential to the client and we accept no responsibility of whatsoever nature to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at their own risk.

The information and data which has been prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Professional Guidance and ‘Code of Professional Conduct’ issued by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 AEWCLtd were commissioned by HCUK Group on behalf of their client to undertake detailed bat survey at Welling United Football Club, Park View Road, Welling, DA16 1SY to help inform the proposed development of the site.
- 1.2 The bat surveys and report writing were carried out in accordance with Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines (Bat Conservation Trust, 2016).
- 1.3 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal carried out on 2nd May 2023 by Brigitte de Coriolis identified Building 2 to have low potential to support roosting bats due to the presence of gaps at the fascia on the eastern elevation.
- 1.4 Further survey was therefore required to ascertain whether bats are present at the site, characterise roosts and determine whether bats represent a constraint to the proposed development.
- 1.5 This report details the results of the bat survey and outlines recommendations in relation to bats and the proposed development of the site.

Aims and objectives

- 1.6 The objectives of the survey were to:
 - Identify whether bats are present using the building on site;
 - Estimate the size and status of any existing bat roost within the building;
 - Determine the potential impacts on any bat roost from the proposed development schedule; and
 - Provide information for use in the design and development of ecological mitigation and enhancement measures where appropriate.

Site Location

- 1.7 Welling United Football Club, Park View Road, Welling, DA16 1SY at central grid reference TQ 47137 75611. The site is located in the town of Welling in Southeast London, along the A207 Park View Road. The surrounding landscape comprises residential properties with small amenity gardens and some light industry to the west and north, further sports facilities to the east and Danson Park immediately to the south which provides areas of woodland, parkland and open water. See Figure 1.



FIGURE 1: SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE SITE

1.8 The site comprises a football pitch and associated buildings with overgrown vegetation around the southern boundaries of the site. See Figure 2.



FIGURE 2: SHOWING BUILDING 2 SUBJECT TO SURVEY WITHIN THE SITE BOUNDARY.

Legislation

- 1.9 All species of bats are listed on *Schedule 5* of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* which affords them protection under *Section 9*, as amended. They are also protected under the *Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*. In combination, this makes it an offence to:
- intentionally kill, injure or take (capture etc.);
 - possess;
 - intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy, obstruct access to any structure or place used by a scheduled animal for shelter or protection, or disturb any animal occupying such a structure or place; and
 - sell, offer for sale, possess or transport for the purpose of sale (live or dead animal, part or derivative) or advertise for buying or selling such things.
- 1.10 A roost is defined as ‘any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection’. As bats tend to reuse the same roosts, legal opinion is that a roost is protected whether or not bats are present.
- 1.11 Any disturbance of a bat occupying a roost can lead to prosecution. Disturbance can be caused by noise, vibration and artificial lighting. Penalties for breaking the law can include fines of £5,000 per bat, imprisonment and the seizure of equipment.
- 1.12 Furthermore, seven bat species (barbastelle, Bechstein’s, noctule, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared, lesser horseshoe and greater horseshoe) are also Species of Principal Importance in England under *Section 41* of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*.

Development proposals

- 1.13 The proposed development plan involves extensive refurbishment to the existing site, which will include the demolition of Building 2 to facilitate the construction of the new club and hospitality facilities.



FIGURE 3: SHOWING THE PROPOSED PLANS.

2 Methods

Daytime Assessment

- 2.1 A detailed bat building inspection was undertaken on the 2nd May 2023 by Brigitte de Coriolis, a Natural England licensed bat ecologist. Full details can be found within the associated AEWCC Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report dated May 2023.

Emergence Surveys

- 2.2 The evening emergence survey was conducted on 27th June 2023, a time of year when bats are active and maternity colonies should be present. Conditions were good for the bat survey with warm weather, and any bats present were likely to be active. The emergence survey began a minimum of 15 minutes before sunset and finished a minimum of 1 and a half hours after sunset on each survey.
- 2.3 Batlogger M bat detectors were used for taking time-expanded recordings of any bats when they may emerge from the buildings. These recordings were analysed on Elekon bat analysis software that facilitates species identification.
- 2.4 Professional Canon XA night vision video cameras were used as night vision aids (NVA's) alongside surveyors to film areas of the buildings with the assistance of external infra-red lamps to ensure suitable lighting to accurately identify if bats emerge

from the building. Cameras were deployed on tripod stands to view areas with bat roosting potential. Footage was reviewed at an appropriate speed on a computer after the survey to ensure any bat emergences and bat emergence points were recorded. Where necessary footage was slowed down to ensure the exact emerge point could be identified.

- 2.5 One surveyor and one professional night vision camera was used for the emergence survey (Figure 4). The surveyor and camera were positioned to get a good all-round view of the building with a particular focus on the eastern elevation where potential roost features were identified present.

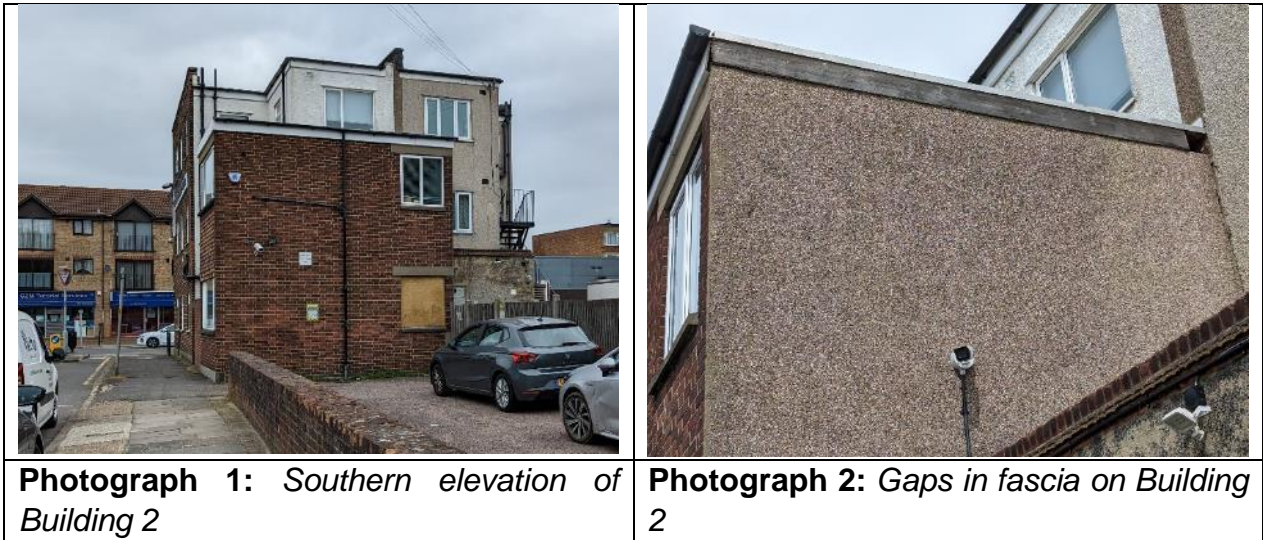
3 Constraints/Limitations

- 3.1 Bats are difficult to locate in large structures, with so many potential roosting areas, particularly in inaccessible areas such as large buildings, finding the exact roosting site can be difficult, especially male/single bat roosting sites. It should be noted that it is not always possible to identify bat presence by examining externally around buildings as poor weather conditions may have washed away droppings which were deposited on exposed surfaces.
- 3.2 Bats can have seasonal use of buildings and being so mobile may arrive and start using a site after it has been surveyed, or roost somewhere else during the period it was surveyed. For this reason, bats may potentially be present but remain undetected, particularly during daytime assessment.

4 Results

Daytime Assessment

- 4.1 Building 2 is a double-storey block of flats with a flat bituminous roof attached to the southern elevation of Building 1. The brick walls are part-rendered in pebbledash and there is a section of modern hanging tiles on the western elevation between the lower and upper windows.
- 4.2 The hanging tiles are even and tight-fitting and the fascias flush with the wall on the southern and western sides. On the eastern elevation, the gaps are present in the fascia at both corners which could provide access for bats to roost. No access to the rear of the building was possible to enable close inspection of these crevices with a torch or endoscope.



Emergence Surveys

- 4.3 **27th June 2023** – Weather conditions were good for the survey (21°C and overcast with a slight breeze) and any bats still present were likely to be active. The survey recorded two common pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) commuting past the eastern elevation of the building from south to north. No bats were recorded to emerge from Building 2, and the survey recorded no other bat activity.
- 4.4 A diagram showing the locations of the surveyor and night vision camera during the evening survey can be seen in Figure 4 below.



FIGURE 4: SHOWING POSITIONS OF THE SURVEYOR AND NIGHT VISION CAMERA DURING THE JUNE EMERGENCE SURVEY.

5 Evaluation, Conclusions & Recommendations

- 5.1 Initial observations consider the local area suitable for bats. The site connects directly to Danson Park at the southern end which provides areas of woodland, parkland and open water, good foraging habitat for a range of common bat species. Trees and buildings within the local area additionally offer roosting opportunities.
- 5.2 Building 2 was considered to have low potential to support roosting bats, however **bats were not found during the emergence survey and, as such, there are no known constraints regarding these species and the proposed development.**
- 5.3 **Bats are highly mobile species and therefore may turn up on sites at any time. Should bats, or evidence of bats, be identified during the works the procedure in section 6 of this report must be followed.**
- 5.4 Lighting can have notable negative impacts on commuting bats, that are known to be present locally. There is potential for lighting during and post-development to cause indirect disturbance at the southern boundary of the site. Lighting of the woodland adjoining the southern boundary must be avoided. **Any proposed new pitch and security lighting must be sensitively designed in accordance with the Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance note 8: ‘Bats and Artificial lighting in the UK’ which can be downloaded for free from the ILP website.**
- 5.5 Additional work lighting which may be required must be positioned to ensure that it shines onto the area of works with minimal spread into the wider area.

6 Procedure to follow in the event a bat is found on site.

- 6.1 Bats are present within the vicinity of the site and may be found at any location on, in or around the buildings. Bats are protected species, and these procedures must be followed to avoid committing an offence.
- 6.2 If a bat is found at any location around the site DO NOT TOUCH unless necessary for the safety of the bat.
- 6.3 If the bat was uncovered in a roosting location carefully replace covering ensuring the bat is not crushed or harmed. If this is not possible cover the animal with a loose covering.
- 6.4 Stop all work at that area and the immediate vicinity. Work may continue at other areas around the site.
- 6.5 Call the AEWCLtd bat licensed project ecologist Brigitte de Coriolis 07545130203, call the office on 08452 505585, or licensed ecologists Daniel Whitby 07764813002 or Annika Binet 07528 956486.

7 References

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