

Bat Risk Assessment

**23 Fawkham Avenue, New Barn,
Longfield, Kent DA3 7HS**

Report to:
Mr. Daniel Burnham

23rd February 2024



Responsibilities:

This document has been prepared for the titled project and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority by the author.

Biological Data:

It is our intention to supply biological data to Kent and Medway Biological Recording Centre, unless directly instructed in writing not to do so by the commissioning client.

Length of Time Report is Valid:

This report can be considered valid for 2 years from the date of the site visit.

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SUMMARY

A Bat Risk Assessment of 23 Fawkham Avenue, Longfield, DA3 7HS, was undertaken in February 2024. The survey was undertaken in support of a planning application for a loft conversion and extension of the existing dwelling, and demolition of an existing outbuilding.

No evidence of bats or significant roosting potential was recorded in any parts of the buildings to be impacted.

No further survey work for bats is required.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location

The focus of this report is 23 Fawkham Avenue, Longfield, DA3 7HS. The site contains a single two storey dwelling, three outbuildings (one of which will be demolished) and an underground bunker which will not be impacted.

1.2 Proposed Works

The proposed scheme relates to extension of the dwelling, loft conversion and demolition of a single outbuilding.

No trees will be impacted as part of the proposals.

1.3 Aims of the Study

To inform the planning application, the following was undertaken:

- Bat Risk Assessment.

The objectives of the assessment were to:

- Identify the presence or potential presence of bats within the site;
- Identify the requirement for targeted bat surveys;
- Identify the need for bat mitigation licensing; and
- Make recommendations for any mitigation and or enhancement measures that may be required.

1.4 Legislation

Information on legislation relating to bats is shown in Appendix 1.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Building Inspection

The building inspection followed the survey guidelines recommended in The Bat Workers' Manual (Mitchell-Jones, 2004) and the Bat Conservation Trust's Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023).

Features and evidence of bat use and potential considered when assessing the buildings included:

- Roof and wall construction;
- Any bat droppings and/or staining on external walls;
- Scattered or accumulated bat droppings (identified by their dry, powdery texture when compressed) within the interior of the buildings or around entrances to potential roosts;
- Oily staining, scratch marks and/or urine staining around entrances to potential roosts;
- Places where cobwebs have been swept away;
- The presence of live or dead bats; and
- Features that have the potential to be bat roosts or to provide access to roosting opportunities within the buildings. These include missing tiles, cavities in woodwork or masonry and any crevices within the buildings.

No trees will be impacted as part of the proposals.

2.2 Personnel

The survey was conducted on 21st February 2024 by licenced ecologist Kate Baldock (Class Survey Licence WML CL18 - Bat Survey Level 2) registration number 2015-12362-CLS-CLS, and Dr Lee Brady. Kate has 19 years of bat survey and mitigation experience.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Surrounding Habitat

The ownership boundary comprises a dwelling and outbuildings, in a large garden with mature trees (which are covered by a TPO). The site is located in a densely populated area (See Figure 1), with some potential for roosting and foraging bats.

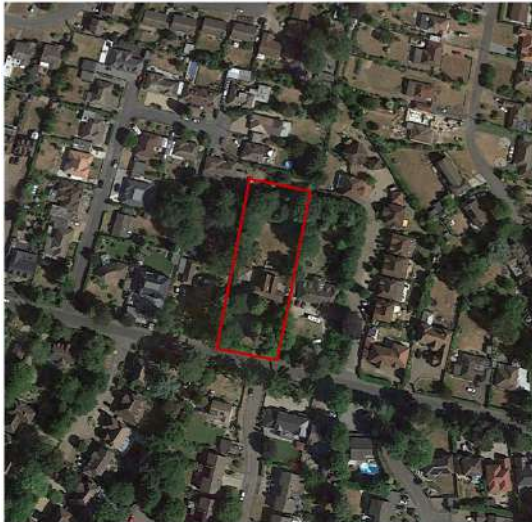


Figure 1 – Site and Surrounding Habitats

3.2 Buildings

Buildings within the site are shown in Figure 2.

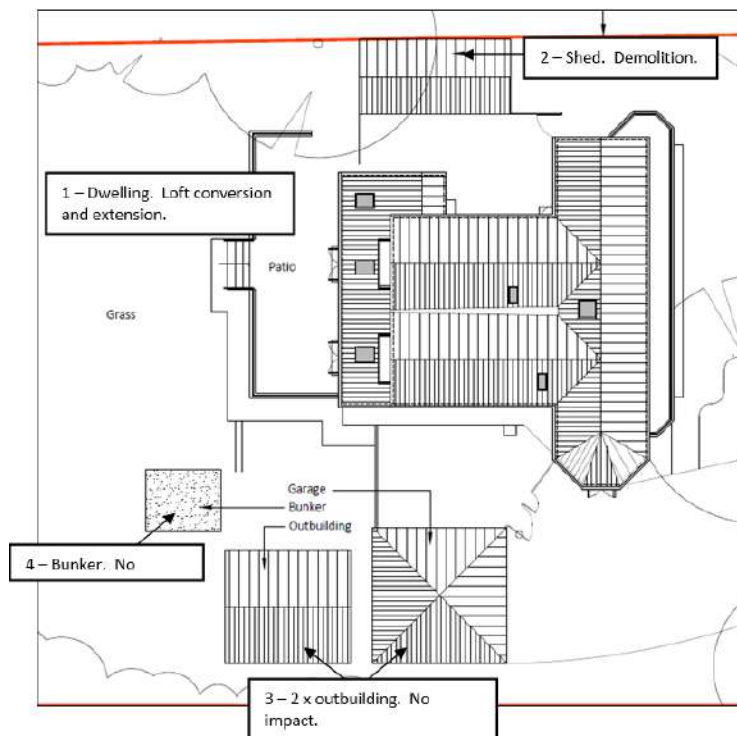


Figure 2 – Buildings within the site

Building	Description	Bat evidence?	Bat roosting suitability
Building 1 Dwelling	<p>A two storey brick/rendered building with three pitched roofs, with tightly fitting clay tiles. Wooden soffits are in a good condition with no apparent gaps.</p> <p>Internally there are 3 loft voids, which are lined with breathable membrane, have thick floor level insulation and exposed rafters. Each void has a single window. No light ingress was noted, and the voids are all very clean suggesting they are tightly sealed with no exposure to external elements.</p> <p>Internally and externally, the two storey parts of the building are in an excellent condition.</p> <p>A single storey extension is present at the northern extent. This has a sloping clay tile roof, with a small number of warped/loose tiles. This will not be impacted.</p>	None	<p>The areas of the dwelling that will be impacted by the proposals have negligible suitability for roosting bats.</p> <p>The small number of warped tiles on the northern single storey roof have low potential for small numbers of bats. However, this roof will not be subject to direct or indirect impacts and is not considered further in this report.</p>
Building 2 Shed	A single storey wooden weatherboarded shed with tightly fitting roof tiles.	None	No evidence of roosting bats and negligible suitability.
Buildings 3 2 x outbuildings	Two outbuildings, which were not assessed in detail as they will not be impacted by proposals.	N/A	N/A Building will not be impacted.
Building 4 Bunker	An underground bunker with limited potential for hibernating bats. Building will not be impacted.	None	N/A Building will not be impacted.

4 PHOTOGRAPHS



Southern elevation of B1 Dwelling.



Northern and western elevations of B1 Dwelling, showing the 3 pitched roofs, the northern single storey extension and B3 outbuilding which will not be impacted.



Eastern elevation of B1 Dwelling.



North facing view of the double pitch of B1 Dwelling, taken from the loft void window in the southern void. The roof tiles are in an excellent condition with no gaps.



One of the loft voids in B1 Dwelling. It is in an excellent condition, with no bat evidence and no light ingress which could indicate bat access points.



B2 Shed. The building is in an excellent condition with no potential roosting features for bats.

5 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Limitations

No significant limitations to the inspection were noted. A robust inspection of the buildings was undertaken with no access restrictions.

5.2 Potential Impacts

The buildings within the site are not considered to have significant potential to support roosting bats. Therefore, the proposals are not anticipated to impact the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of bats in the area as a) no roosts will be affected; and b) no fragmentation or isolation of habitat is likely to result.

6 CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Further Survey

If the proposed development does not proceed within 2 years of the date of the site visit, it is recommended that an updated Bat Risk Assessment is undertaken, to confirm if the results of the current survey are still valid.

6.2 Recommendations

a) During work

In the unlikely event that any bats and/or evidence of bats are found during the building, work must stop and an ecologist should be contacted for the most appropriate course of action, which may require a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence from Natural England.

b) Post work

Enhancement

- A single bat box (Kent Bat Box or similar) should be placed on a retained tree on the site boundary. This should be at least 4m high and not illuminated by artificial lighting.

Lighting

It is recommended that any lighting is designed to minimise impacts on foraging/commuting bats.

If external lighting is required, this should be low or zero UV, which is preferred to reduce attraction of insects to lighting and therefore to reduce the attraction of foraging bats (and hence their predators) to these areas.

Lighting should be directed away or shielded from adjacent hedgerows and trees, to allow bats safe foraging routes where they will not be visible to predators.

7 RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*. 4th Edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London, UK.

English Nature (2002). *Bats in roofs: a guide for surveyors*. English Nature, Peterborough, UK.

Gunnel, K., Murphy, B. & Williams, C. (2013). *Designing for Biodiversity: A technical guide for new and existing buildings*. RIBA, UK.

APPENDIX 1 - Legislation

Bats

All species of British bat are listed on the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and are listed as European Protected Species on the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

In Britain all bat species and their roosts are legally protected, by both domestic and international legislation.

In summary, it is an offence to:-

- Deliberately take , injure or kill a wild bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats (disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong).
- Damage or destroy a place used by bats for breeding or resting (roosts) (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat of a species found in the wild (dead or alive) or any part of a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.



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For more details please contact:

Dr. Lee Brady, *Calumma Ecological Services*,
13 Woodside Cottages, Dunkirk, Faversham, Kent ME13 9NY

Tel/Fax: 01227 751408

info@calumma.co.uk

www.calumma.co.uk