

Stockbridge Surgery, Stockbridge
Preliminary Roost Assessment
Stockbridge Surgery

November 2023



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Prepared by:	Daniel Ahern Home Farm House, Tidworth SP9 7BE Email: [REDACTED] Telephone: [REDACTED]
Project manager:	Beth Dean
Primary Author	Daniel Ahern
Field team:	Daniel Ahern, Mike Tennick

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Contents

Executive Summary!..... 4!

Introduction!..... 5!

1.1! Introduction!..... 5!

1.2! Site Location and Description!..... 5!

1.3! Development Proposals!..... 5!

1.4! Survey Objectives!..... 5!

1.5! Quality Assurance!..... 6!

Methodology!..... 6!

2.1! Preliminary Roost Assessment!..... 6!

2.2! Desk Study!..... 6!

2.3! External Inspection!..... 6!

2.4! Internal Inspection!..... 6!

2.5! Bat Roost Assessment..... 7!

2.6! Equipment!..... 7!

2.7! Limitations !..... 7!

Results!..... 8!

3.1! Preliminary Roost Assessment!..... 8!

3.2! Desk Study!..... 8!

3.3! Bat Inspection Survey!..... 8!

Discussion and Recommendations!..... 9!

4.1! Discussion!..... 9!

4.1.1! Desk based assessment results!..... 9!

References!..... 10!

Photographs!..... 10!

Legislation and Policy!..... 11!

Bats..... 11!

Breeding Birds!..... 11!

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Introduction

1.1. Introduction

In September 2023 Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Stockbridge Surgery to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), also known as a bat inspection survey, of Stockbridge Surgery in Stockbridge in Hampshire.

1.2. Site Location and Description

Stockbridge Surgery, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', is situated in the village of Stockbridge, (NGR SU 35826 35018). An aerial photo view of the site can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Red line boundary for the Site.



1.3. Development Proposals

The current proposal consist of the following:

- § Add a single storey extension on the western elevation of the existing building.

1.4. Survey Objectives

The objectives of the bat inspection survey comprise the following:

- § Assess the building within the survey area for the potential for bats to use it to roost.

1.5. Quality Assurance

All ecological surveys are led by Ecologists who are members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) at the appropriate level. By joining the CIEEM staff sign up to a professional code of conduct.

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Methodology

2.1. Preliminary Roost Assessment

An internal and external bat inspection was undertaken on 17th October by Daniel Ahern (Natural England licence: 2020-44508-CLS-CLS) and Mike Tennick BSc. The inspection followed methods described in the Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines (third edition) (Collins; 2016).

2.2. Desk Study

A desk study was carried out with the aim of supplementing the field survey results by collating and reviewing existing ecological information relevant to the site and the local area.

Bat European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) records from within 2km of the site were obtained from the MAGIC website, in addition details of designated sites, within 7.5 km of the site, relating to Annex II bat species were also obtained from the same website.

2.3. External Inspection

The exterior walls and roof of the building were viewed from ground level. Features that provide potential bat access points or roosting places were noted and referred to as potential roost features (prf). Features that were looked for include:

- cracks/holes in mortar;
- gaps between ridge tiles and ridge and roof tiles;
- gaps in soffit boxes;
- gaps under wooden cladding; and
- gaps around the eaves.

Areas where bat droppings may accumulate, such as on the ground, ledges, window sills and walls, were also inspected.

Any features that may potentially be used by bats were identified and any evidence of bat activity, as listed below, were noted.

2.4. Internal Inspection

The internal inspection comprised a thorough search of the roof void with reference to Figure 2 below for a floor plan, for evidence indicative of past or current use by roosting bats. Direct evidence of bat presence may include:

- live bats or bat corpses;
- droppings;
- bat sounds;
- scratch marks;
- urine stains; and
- clean, cob-web free gaps around potential entrance points.

Potential access points and roosting sites were also noted.

In any roof voids, a systematic search for evidence of bat presence was undertaken concentrating on roof beams, ceiling joists and exposed surfaces.

Any evidence was recorded.

2.5. Bat Roost Assessment

The findings of the internal and external surveys inform an assessment classifying the bat roost potential it has. The different classifications are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Bat Roost Assessment Classifications

Classification	Description
NEG LIG I B L E	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be roosting bats
LOW	A structure with one or more potential roost sites which could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide the space, shelter or protection, appropriate conditions suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by larger numbers of bats, (ie unlikely to be suitable for hibernation or maternity).
M O D E R A T E	A structure with one or more potential roost sites which could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection conditions and suitable surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
H I G H	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and suitable surrounding habitat.
C O N F I R M E D	Evidence of bats roosting in the building or site recorded, bats, their droppings or feeding remains.

2.6. Equipment

The following equipment was available to use during the survey:

- § close-focusing binoculars;
- § P7 Lenser torch;
- § camera;
- § Depstech endoscope.

2.7. Limitations

The data provided by the online resources were not exhaustive. It is possible that other roost sites not included in the data search occur within the vicinity of the proposed development site.

The internal and external inspection survey provides a snapshot of conditions at the time of survey. Bats are mobile creatures that will move into and out of areas.

The details within this report will remain valid for a period of 12 months from the date of issue.

Results

3.1. Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.2. Desk Study

Statutory Conservation Sites

Records of Special Areas of Conservation relevant to Annex II bat species within 7.5km of the Site are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Statutory Designated Sites.

Name	Area (ha)	Designation	Description	Distance & direction from the Site
Statutory sites				
Mottisfont Bats	196	SAC	Mixed woodland	6925m south

Key

SAC – Special Area of Conservation

Bat Species

Records of bat EPSL within 2km of the Site are presented in Table 3 below recorded within the last 30 years.

Table 3: Bat EPSL Records within 2km of the Site

EPSL Reference	Species named
2019-38824-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle, serotine
2019-40457-EPS-MIT	soprano pipistrelle
EPSM2010-1699	brown long-eared, soprano pipistrelle
2014-5182-EPS-MIT	brown long-eared, common pipistrelle
2019-43660-EPS-MIT	soprano pipistrelle
2016-26871-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle
EPSM2013-5958	common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, natterer's
2014-2600-EPS-MIT	brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle
EPSM2010-2434	common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, natterer's

3.3. Bat Inspection Survey

The results of the building inspection are set out in Table 4, below.

Table 4: Bat inspection External & Internal Survey Results

Building	External description	Internal description
Building 1 – Stockbridge Surgery	<p>A single storey, brick-built detached building surrounded hard standing and some am planting.</p> <p>The building had a complex, dual pitch roof hipped at the ends. This was clad with concrete tiles. No prfs were recorded in the roof.</p> <p>The soffits were open on approximately 40% of the structui</p> <p>The other soffits were uPVC seam sealed.</p> <p>The brickwork was in good condition with no prf recorded.</p>	<p>There were two discrete roof voids, a eastern and a western one.</p> <p>The western roof void was k empty with a part boarded floor. underside of the roof was visible throughout and lined with type 1f fe</p> <p>Natural light could be seen a southern eaves of the western void, where the soffits were</p> <p>Approximately 150 bat droppings were recorded across the floor of western void. These were from a brown long-eared bat.</p>

	No evidence of bats was externally.	A well established jackdaw nest recorded at the northern end c western void. The eastern roof void was l. empty with a part boarded floor. The underside of the roof was visi throughout, it was lined with tyf felt. No natural light could be within this roof void. No evidence of bats was recc inside the eastern roof void.
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Results of the bat roost assessment are set out in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Bat Roost Potential for the Buildings Surveyed

Building	Bat Roost Potential	Reason	Recommendations
Building 1 – Stockbridge Surgery	CONFIRMED ROOST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open soffits at the southern end of the western roof void. Approximately 150 droppings from brown long-eared bats recorded on the floor of the western roof void. Absence of PRFs found in the eastern roof void. No evidence of bats recorded in the eastern roof void. 	Static bat monitoring to confirm whether the western roof void is a hibernation roost

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Discussion and Recommendations

4.1. Discussion

4.1.1. Desk based assessment results

The desk-based assessment confirmed that the Mottisfont SAC relating to bats was located c6925m to the south of the Site. Nine EPSLs were found within 2km of the site. The licences covered brown long eared, common pipistrelle, natterers, serotine and soprano pipistrelle.

It is not believed the proposed development will have a significant impact on the status of the SAC or the known local roosts.

4.1.2. Survey results – Preliminary Roost Assessment

Evidence of brown long-eared bats was found in the western roof void of Building 1. It believed they are accessing the roof void via the open soffits at the southern end of the structure.

A well established jackdaw nest was recorded at the northern end of the western roof void.

No evidence of bats or birds was recorded in the eastern roof void. This correlates with this part of Building 1 having seam sealed uPVC soffits and the roof cladding being in very good order.

4.2. Recommendations

Complete two static monitoring surveys of the western roof void, to confirm whether brown long-eared bats are using this as a hibernation roost. Each survey should last for at least 7 days and take place during January and February.

References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Photographs

Photo 1 – southern elevation of building 1, open soffits highlighted.



Photo 2 – scattered brown long-eared bat droppings in the western roof void.

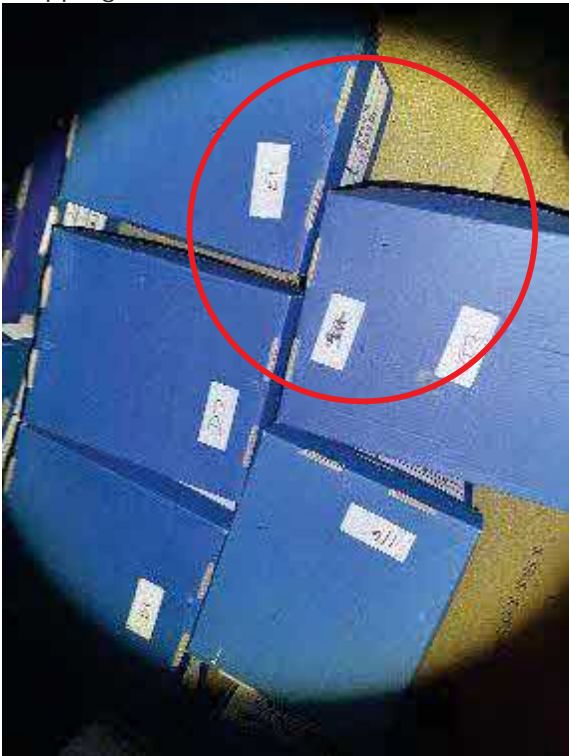


Photo 3 – jackdaw nest at the northern end of the western roof void



Photo 4 – underside of the roof in the western roof void



Legislation and Policy

Bats

All species of bat found in the UK are listed under Schedule 5 of *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended 2018) and are afforded protection under Section 9(1), Section 9(4)(b&c) and Section 9(5) of the Act. Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally or recklessly:

- § Kills or injures any bat;
- § Disturbs any bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- § Obstructs access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection.

Bats are afforded additional protection through their inclusion on Schedule 2 of *The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017* (as amended). Under Part 3 of this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he:

- § Deliberately captures, injures or kills a bat;
- § Deliberately disturbs a bat; or
- § Damages or destroys a bat breeding site or resting place.

Disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce, rear or nurture their young, migrate or hibernate. It also includes any disturbance likely to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species. Consequently, attention should be given to dealing with the modification and development of an area if aspects of it are deemed important to bats, such as flight corridors and foraging areas.

Breeding Birds

Wild birds, their nests and eggs, are afforded protection under Section 1(1) of *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally:

- § Kills, injures or takes any wild bird;
- § Takes, damages or destroys the nest of a wild bird included in Schedule ZA1;
- § Takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or
- § Takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird.

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