

BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT

MAYBANK FARM, PETERSFIELD ROAD, MONKWOOD, ALRESFORD, HAMPSHIRE, SO24 0HB

FINAL REPORT

October 2023

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Report conditions

Report title	Bat Roost Assessment – Maybank Farm, Monky	vood		
Client	Jemima Green			
Report status	Final			
Survey date	11 th August 2023, 27 th August 2023 and 18 th Se	otember 2023		
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Executive Summary

- This bat roost assessment report has been prepared in order to support a planning application for the proposed demolition and construction works at Maybank Farm, Monkwood.
- A preliminary roost assessment survey was undertaken on the 11th August 2023.
- The preliminary roost assessment confirmed the presence of moderate suitability roosting features on the dwelling including gaps under the roof and hip tiles and missing mortar under the ridge tiles. Evidence of bat activity was recorded internally in the form of approximately ten long-eared bat type droppings which were scattered throughout the void.
- In order to confirm the presence/absence of roosting bats, characterise bat roosts, assess the
 extent that they may be affected by the proposed works and develop a proportionate and
 appropriate mitigation strategy, further survey work in accordance with Natural England
 standing advice and the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional
 Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition) was required for the dwelling. The
 recommended survey effort for structures with moderate roost suitability is two
 presence/absence surveys.
- Two presence/absence surveys comprising dusk emergence surveys were undertaken during August and September 2023.
- The surveys have confirmed the presence of a brown long-eared bat roost within the structure.
- The demolition of the property will result in the destruction of the identified brown long-eared bat day roost. As such, a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence will be required to enable the development to proceed lawfully under a derogation from the Habitat Regulations 2017. The site falls within the remit of the Bat Mitigation Class Licence.
- A mitigation strategy has been designed that would ensure the maintenance of the favourable conservation status of bats. In summary, this comprises the provision of replacement roost opportunities which are proportionate to the scale of impact and the removal of roost features by hand, under the supervision of a licenced bat worker to ensure that individual bats are not killed or injured.
- With the implementation of precautionary construction avoidance measures, impacts on designated sites and other protected species will be avoided.
- Information regarding the length of time the findings from this report are valid for can be found in section 13.
- Provided the recommendations set out in section 5 are followed, the planning authority can be confident that the development would accord with relevant planning policy, legislation and caselaw.





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1. Introduction

1.1 Report purpose

This report presents the findings of the bat roost assessment undertaken of the bungalow at Maybank Farm, Monkwood (central grid reference: SU 66391 30876).

1.2 **Description of proposal**

The current proposal is for demolition of the existing bungalow and construction of a new house, detached garage and annex.

1.3 Report context

Hebden Design Studio have prepared a planning application on behalf of Jemima Green (the Applicant) for proposed works at Maybank Farm, Monkwood. Phillips Ecology have been instructed by the Applicant to undertake an ecological assessment to support this application, which is to be submitted to East Hampshire District Council.

1.4 Survey area

The survey area comprised the existing dwelling, and its immediate surrounds.

1.5 Limitations

Due to the interior roof void being unboarded and its limited size, it was not possible to observe the entire space. No other limitations were encountered during the survey. Despite this limitation is it still considered that a robust assessment of the property has been undertaken.

1.6 Relevant documents

The relevant proposal plan used to inform this assessment is presented in Appendix 1.



2. Survey Methodology

2.1 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Methodology

2.1.1 Surveyor

The survey was carried out by Connor Hill of Phillips Ecology.

2.1.2 Survey area

The survey area comprised the bungalow at Maybank Farm, and its immediate surrounds which will be modified by the proposed demolition and construction works. The survey area extended to all areas of the bungalow that will be modified by the proposed works in such a way that bats or their roosts could be impacted (directly or indirectly). Therefore, the survey included the entirety of the structure.

2.1.3 Survey date

The survey was carried out during the daytime on the 11th August 2023.

2.1.4 Survey description

The survey did not depart from the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition) which states that "A preliminary roost inspection survey is a detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of a structure to look for features that bats could use for entry/exit and roosting and to search for signs of bats".

The external features of the structure which will be modified by the proposed works in such a way that bats or their roosts could be impacted (directly or indirectly) if present, were systematically inspected in detail to compile information on potential and actual bat access points and roosting places such as lifted or broken roof materials, loose brickwork and open eaves. This included a thorough search for evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings, urine splashes and fur staining.

The interior of the building was inspected in order to identify potential or actual access points and roosting places and to record any evidence of bat activity or bats themselves.

2.1.5 Survey equipment

Survey equipment comprised:

- High-powered torch
- Ladders

Camera

Binoculars

2.1.6 Weather conditions

Weather during the survey can be described as: dry, 100% cloud cover, still and 20°C. The weather conditions did not hinder the ecologist's ability to carry out the survey effectively.



2.1.7 Assessment methodology

The suitability of the building for supporting bat roosts will be assessed against the guidelines within Table 1 which have been adapted from the BCT Good Practice Guidelines.

Table 1	Suitability	, assessment	guidelines
			3

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
Negligible	Structure has no reasonable likelihood of supporting roosting bats i.e. no suitable roosting features present.
Low	A structure which could be used opportunistically by individual bats i.e. one or more potential roost sites which do not provide sufficient space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions (e.g. temperature, light, humidity) and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats.
Moderate	A structure which could be used by bats but is not likely to support a roost of high conservation status (e.g. maternity roost). This structure would support features which exhibit suitable size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat for roosting bats.
High	A structure which is obviously suitable for supporting larger numbers of bats, on a regular basis and for longer periods of time.

2.2 Emergence and Re-entry Survey Methodology

2.2.1 Surveyor/s

The surveys were led by Connor Hill and Trevor Codlin a level 2 licenced bat surveyor (CL18) and supported by suitably experienced bat surveyors Duncan Gilmartin, Olivia Rodrigo, Sarah Perryman, Rebecca Phillips and Lucie Poole.

2.2.2 Survey area

The survey area comprised entirety of the dwelling. This enabled survey coverage of all suitable access/egress and roosting features which were recorded during the preliminary bat roost assessment and will be affected by the proposal.

2.2.3 Survey date

The date and timings of the emergence surveys are presented in Table 2. The emergence surveys commenced 15 minutes prior to sunset and continued for at least 1.5 hours after sunset.



Table 2 survey dates and timings

Survey type	Date	Start	Finish	Sunset/sunrise
Emergence	27/08/2023	19:51	21:36	20:06
Emergence	18/09/2023	18:58	20:43	19:13

2.2.4 Survey description

The emergence surveys were undertaken in accordance Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition). Four surveyors were positioned in order to provide sufficient coverage of all potential access/egress points when stationary. All emergences, re-entries and general activity were recorded during the course of each survey. Recordings were later analysed using Sonobat bat call analysis software to confirm species identification.

2.2.5 Survey limitations

No limitations were encountered during the course of the surveys.

2.2.6 Survey equipment

Survey equipment comprised:

- Wildlife Acoustics EMT 2 Pro
 Pettersson D240X and Edirol
- Elekon Batlogger M detector
 Infrared NV camera

2.2.7 Weather conditions

Weather conditions during the surveys are provided in Table 3:

Table 3 emergence and re-entry weather conditions

Survey	Date	Precipitation Temperature		Wind		Cloud Cover			
		Start	Finish	Start	Finish	Start	Finish	Start	Finish
Emergence	27/08/2023	Nil	Nil	16.0℃	15.0 <i>°</i> C	BF 0	BF 0	80%	100%
Emergence	18/09/2023	Nil	Nil	14.0 <i>°</i> C	13.0 <i>°</i> C	BF 3	BF 3	0%	0%



3. Survey results

3.1 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

3.1.1 Building description relevant to bats and their roosts

The structure comprises a single-storey painted brick-built bungalow which rises to a multi-pitched and hipped roof clad with machine cut concrete roof, ridge and hip tiles (Figure 1). The building is oriented north to south. Three hipped extensions extend from the main structure, one to the southeast, one to the west and one to the north (Figure 2). The eaves extend beyond their wall plates and are enclosed with uPVC fascia and barge boards with adjoining guttering. Three pitched and hipped dormer windows clad with the same concrete tiles are located on the southern roof face (Figure 3). The windows and doors are set in uPVC frames which are tight-fitting to the surrounding brickwork.

Internally, the bungalow extends into the roof forming a second floor. A roof void exists along the eastern side eaves of the main building and extends south through the roof pitch of the hipped extension (Figure 4). The roof is lined with heavy-duty bitumen felt and features spun fibreglass insulation on the floor. Moderate cobwebbing is present throughout.



Figure 1 - northern elevation and extension



Figure 2 – northern and western hipped extensions



Figure 3 – southern elevation and extension with dormer windows



Figure 4 – roof void inside the southern extension



An account of suitable access/egress features and recorded evidence of bat activity is given in table 2.

Table 4 –	The	bungalow	recorded	features	and activity
	1110	bungalow	10001000	icului co	and douvity

	Suitability	Evidence		
Exterior	The following suitable access/egress	No evidence of roosting activity was		
	and roosting features were recorded	recorded externally during the		
	externally during the survey:	survey.		
	- Gaps under/slipped roof tiles			
	(Figure 5).			
	- Gaps under hipped tiles (Figure 6).			
	- Missing mortar under ridge tiles (Figure 7).			
Interior	The following suitable access/egress	The following evidence of roosting		
	and roosting features were recorded	activity was recorded internally		
	internally during the survey:	during the survey:		
	 Central ridge beams suitable for roosting bats. 	- A small number of long-eared type droppings (approximately ten) were scattered throughout the roof void (Figure 8).		





Figure 7 – missing mortar under the ridge tiles



Figure 8 – long-eared type bat dropping inside the void



3.1.2 Site grounds

The immediate surrounds of the building comprise hardstanding, managed lawn, hedgerows and scattered trees. Beyond this, Monkwood comprises a mosaic of residential properties with associated gardens, arable farmland, permanent pasture, small blocks of woodland and mature hedgerows. In this context, the habitats within the footprint of the proposal are considered unexceptional for foraging and commuting bats, however, given their location within a landscape which is suitable for commuting and foraging bats, it is likely that bats will commute and forage through the site.

3.2 Emergence and Re-entry Surveys

3.2.1 Visit 1 - 27th August 2023 – Dusk Emergence Survey

During the course of the emergence survey carried out on the 27th August 2023, one bat was recorded emerging from the property. This comprised a brown long-eared bat which was recorded as it emerged from beside the dormer windows on the southern elevation at 20:52.

Prior to the emergence, a single common pipistrelle bat was recorded commuting north to south over the house and then foraging off site at 20:06. At 20:32, a noctule *Nyctalus noctula* was recorded foraging high over the site. At 20:52, a common pipistrelle bat was recorded foraging off site. A serotine was recorded in the distance at 21:11 and 21:14 before it commuted over the house from east to west at 21:15. At 21:29, a brown long-eared foraged from south to north through the garden.

3.2.2 Visit 2 – 18th September 2023 – Dusk Emergence Survey

During the course of the emergence survey carried out on the 18th September 2023, no bats were recorded emerging from the house. The first recorded bat comprised a common pipistrelle which was recorded foraging in the distance at 19:53. At 20:06 a common pipistrelle bat foraged across the garden. The last recorded bat was a common pipistrelle which foraged through the garden at 20:36.

3.3 Other protected species

During the course of the surveys, no evidence of breeding birds was recorded. However, the bungalow is considered to support nesting opportunities.



4. Discussion and Assessment of Impacts

4.1 Bat roost assessment and potential impacts

The preliminary roost assessment confirmed that the dwelling supports moderate roost suitability i.e. a structure which could be used by bats but is not likely to support a roost of high conservation status (e.g. maternity roost). This assessment was based on the nature of the identified potential access and roost features on the bungalow and interior evidence of roosting long-eared bats.

On the basis that the bungalow was considered to support moderate suitability for roosting bats, there was considered to be a reasonable likelihood that bats would be present and affected by the proposed demolition works which will impact the features detailed in Table 2.

The phase 2 surveys have confirmed that the roof of the property supports a brown longeared bat day roost.

The bat mitigation guidelines identify that summer (non-maternity) roosts used by individuals / small numbers of more widespread species such as the species recorded within the house are of low conservation status.

In the absence of avoidance measures, if bats are present then works to the house are likely to result in the destruction of any roosts present at that location, possible damage / modification to any roosts present elsewhere, and possible killing, injury or disturbance of any bats present.

The application site supports a small number of foraging and commuting common pipistrelle and serotine bats. Increasing lighting could impact this behaviour which would indirectly impact roosts.

4.2 Relevant legislation and policy

Circular 06/2005 identifies that applicants should not be required to provide information on protected species unless there is a reasonable likelihood that they will be present and affected by the proposed development. The site is considered to support habitats with suitability and potential for protected species and these may be affected by the proposed development. Therefore, the proposal triggers 'reasonable likelihood' under the Circular.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations) may apply should protected species be confirmed on site.

In the case that a European protected species is found to be present and impacted by the proposal, the local planning authority will be required to engage with the Habitat Regulations. Permission will be granted unless:

a) the development is likely to result in a breach of the Habitat Regulations, and

Maybank Farm, Monkwood



b) is unlikely to be granted an EPS licence from Natural England to allow the development to proceed under a derogation from the law (under licence).

When considering whether Natural England would not be unlikely to grant a licence for the identified impact, the local planning authority must consider the three tests which are set out in the Habitat Regulations:

1. the consented operation must be for 'preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment'; (Regulation 53(2)I)

2. there must be 'no satisfactory alternative' (Regulation 53(9)(a)); and

3. the action authorised 'will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range' (Regulation 53(9)(b)).

Case-law (Morge vs. Hampshire County Council) has clarified that planning authorities are able to grant permission for developments that would cause a breach of the Regulations is likely (i.e. in the case of this proposal, destruction of a bat roost), provided that sufficient information is provided to give the planning authority assurance that the relevant EPSM licence is not unlikely to be grant–d - i.e. planning authorities also have a duty to assess planning applications against these tests.



5. Recommendations

5.1 Requirement for further surveys

Where there is a reasonable likelihood that a protected species will be present and impacted by the proposed development, planning authorities require further surveys to properly assess development proposals against relevant planning policy. An assessment into the requirement for further surveys is presented below, however, in summary, all further surveys considered necessary have been undertaken.

It is important that planning decisions are informed by current ecological survey data. Due to this, there is a limited time frame that phase 1 and phase 2 surveys are valid before becoming outdated. This time frame can vary depending on any changes in project circumstances or plans but it is generally considered that phase 1 ecological surveys are valid for a period of 18 months (CIEEM, 2019). Projects that take place over longer periods than 18 months might be required to carry out further ecological surveys to ensure planning authorities have the necessary up-to-date information to make well informed, evidence-based decisions.

5.1.1 Bats

In order to provide robust confirmation on the presence and status of bat roosts and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development as required by Circular 06/2005, further survey work in accordance with Natural England's standing advice and the BCT Good Practice Guidelines was required.

In accordance with these guidelines, further survey effort took the form of two presence/absence surveys undertaken during the bat active season. No further surveys in respect of roosting bats are considered necessary.

The affected areas of habitat are not of significant value as a foraging or commuting resource. Therefore, further survey is considered unnecessary for understanding impacts on foraging and commuting bats beyond the presence/absence surveys, subject to the proposed sensitive lighting scheme set out below.

5.1.2 Breeding birds

Subject to the precautionary mitigation measures set out in Section 5.2.2, no further surveys are considered necessary.

5.2 Mitigation strategy

5.2.1 Licensing

As this work will result in the destruction of the identified bat roost, an EPSM licence will need to be obtained from Natural England before the proposed roof modification works commence. A licence can be applied for once planning consent has been obtained for the proposed works. Provided the development can pass the three 'derogation' tests discussed above, Natural England will grant the relevant licence to allow the developer to legally carry out the work that would otherwise be illegal – i.e. to destroy a bat roost and disturb / take bats. The site falls within the remit of the BMCL licence.



5.2.2 Destructive search mitigation strategy

- The destructive search of the roof will be carried out during the active season i.e. works will take place from mid-March to late-October, inclusive. A toolbox talk will be given to contractors prior to the roof material stripping works commencing. The toolbox talk will provide an introduction to the legal protection afforded to bats, the status of bats at the site including likely species and roosting locations, evidence to look out for and the protocol which will be followed if a roosting bat is identified. Appropriate signage will be provided and displayed on site to inform contractors of the required protocol when working where a bat roost has been recorded.
- The destructive search works will be led by a licensed bat worker, accompanied by construction contractors. There will be no disturbance of identified roost features without the supervision of a bat worker. This is because during the proposed stripping period bats, if present, bats may be very difficult to locate and easily be overlooked by contractors.
- Immediately prior to the tile stripping works commencing, inspections of the identified roost feature will be carried out by a licensed bat worker, using an endoscope where required, to check for the presence of roosting bats. Any bats encountered and accessible will immediately be transferred to a holding bag before being placed within the previously erected bat box within the site grounds.
- Following this, the roof materials will be carefully removed by/under the supervision of the licensed bat worker using hand tools. The works will be carried out from a suitably erected scaffold or mobile elevated work platform.
- Any bats which are found during the destructive search works will be captured by the licenced bat worker with the use of thin gloves or a hand net. The bat will immediately be transferred to a holding bag before being placed within the previously erected bat box within the site grounds. Any injured bats will immediately be taken into care.
- Once the licensed bat worker is satisfied that the roosts have been safely removed, the contractors can complete the conversion works.
- If a bat is found during unsupervised works, all works will cease and the supervising bat worker will be contacted immediately.

5.2.3 Provision of new roosting sites

- One Schwegler 2F bat box or similar will be installed at 3 metres on a mature tree located within the site grounds. This will provide an alternative roost site whilst the proposed redevelopment works are undertaken and provide compensation for the lost roost on completion of the works.
- Modified ridge tiles -.Access to the existing void of the new structure will be created by leaving a gap in the mortar line below two ridge tiles. A batten measuring at least 20mm high by 50mm long will be inserted into the wet mortar and removed in order to create a gap of sufficient size.



• Traditional roof membrane - modern breathable membranes can be extremely harmful to bats, causing them to become entangled and die, while the bats make the membrane ineffective as they damage it. Traditional bitumen membrane should be used instead. Natural England will refuse bat licence applications where modern breathable membranes are proposed. See https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/non-bitumen-coated-roofing-membranes for more information on the current research into this.

5.2.4 Advisory notes:

Lighting

In order to limit any effects on any foraging and commuting bats, external lighting should be limited to only that which is absolutely necessary for safety purposes, both during the construction phase and once the proposals are complete. The following lighting measures will likely be required:

- Construction works between March and October should be undertaken during daylight hours only to avoid disturbance to bats that may forage and commute through or near the site.
- Lighting to the completed development should be as low brightness as possible, kept at a low level and directed away from the site boundaries. Lighting on sensors should not be so sensitive that foraging bats trigger them.
- All lighting must follow the Bat Conservation Trusts and Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance on bats and artificial lighting (BCT, 2018).

5.2.1 Breeding birds

Care should be taken that the development does not disturb breeding birds. The bird nesting season is taken to be March to August inclusive. Any removal of suitable nest habitat will either need to be undertaken outside of this period or else checked to ensure that no nesting birds are present. If occupied nests are present then the nest must not be removed and works around the nest can only recommence once the nest becomes unoccupied of its own accord.

5.3 Enhancements

The delivery of biodiversity enhancement on development sites is promoted by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Where opportunities exist it is best practice to provide enhancement features which encourage greater biodiversity within development sites in accordance with the NPPF and the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities under the NERC Act.

Options for enhancing biodiversity within the site which are proportionate to the scale of the development include:

• The provision of new bat roosting opportunities, in the form of one bat box. This should be installed on the new dwelling or surrounding trees as high as possible,



at least 3m above ground. An integral lbstock Bat Box B Brick Slip Front or similar would be appropriate for the new building. The bat box is an integral bat box with a brick-effect panel leaving just the access slot visible following installation.

• The provision of bird nesting opportunities in the form of two swift boxes installed at eave level on new dwelling.



6. Conclusion

The preliminary roost assessment confirmed that the dwelling supports moderate suitability for roosting bats. Therefore, further survey effort was recommended to confirm the presence/absence of roosts, characterise any bat roost/s, assess the extent bats may be affected by the proposed alterations. In accordance with Natural England standing advice and BCT Good Practice Guidelines, two presence/absence surveys for the bungalow were undertaken during August and September 2023. This survey work has confirmed that the house supports a brown long-eared bat day roost.

The proposals will result in the loss of the identified brown long-eared bat day roost and as such a Natural England EPSM licence will be required in order for the proposed works to proceed. A mitigation strategy has been designed that would provide alternative roosting opportunities within the proposal which are proportional to the scale of impact. The mitigation strategy also sets out recommended timings and methods to be followed during the development.

Opportunities for ecological enhancement have been suggested for the site.

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Appendix 1 – Proposal plans for dwelling





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