

Bat Emergence Survey Report

The Lodge, Preston Road, Gosmore, Hertfordshire

Client: Mrs M. Evans

212025

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Natrix Ecological Limited

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Introduction

Planning permission is sought for change of use and modifications to The Lodge, Preston Road, Gosmore, Hitchin, Hertfordshire (hereafter the Site). Natrix Ecological Limited was instructed by Melanie Evans (hereafter The Client) to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA). This was undertaken in response to guidance from North Hertfordshire District Council LPA regarding the structure, age and location of the property.

A PRA was undertaken on 21st May 2025, with internal and external inspections of both the garage and the main house. No evidence of the presence of bats was found. However, there were several potential roost features (PRF) in the fabric of the main building, which was assessed as being of **low** potential for roosting bats

Methods

Following the identification of PRF on the building, it was determined that one survey should be undertaken, with surveyors covering both relevant aspects.

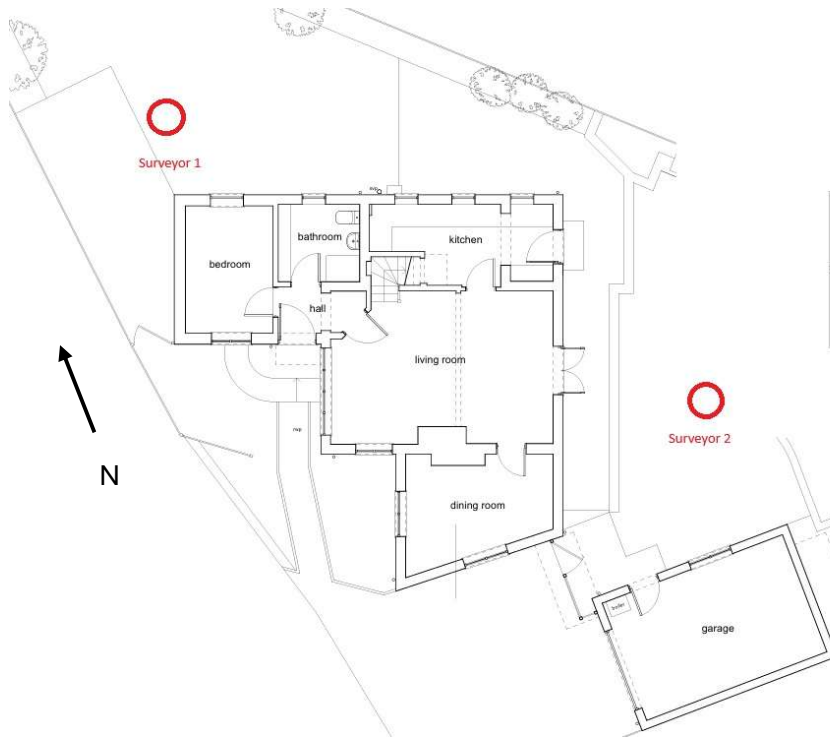
The survey was undertaken on 23rd July 2025 by experienced surveyors, David Willis and Penelope Taganyi-Airs. using the following equipment:

- 1x Echometer EM2 Touch bat detector with android recording device (Lenovo)
- 1x Echometer EM2 Touch bat detector with iPhone recording device
- 2x Nightfox Whisker Night Vision Aids (NVA) recording in infrared (one per surveyor, with additional) mounted on stable tripods
- 1 x Nightfox Whisker used as supplementary NVA(Garden)
- 2x Nightfox IXB5 infrared torches

In accordance with survey guidelines the survey commenced 15 minutes prior to sunset and continued for 1.5 hours after sunset. The survey details are as follows:

- Sunset time: 21:04
- Survey start time: 20:49
- Survey end Time: 22:34
- Start temperature: 19.5 C
- End temperature: 17.0 C
- Wind: 0
- Cloud cover (Oktas): 4





Plan 1: Surveyor locations

These locations allowed for good viewing of potential roost features identified during the PRA. Ultrasonic recordings were analysed using kaleidoscope software or on the device. NVA footage was reviewed using in VLC Media Player.

Limitations

Emergence surveys such as this offer a sampling of bat activity on and around the Site. They do not offer a comprehensive account of bat habitation and activity, which is beyond the scope of the survey effort.

Conditions on the evening of the survey were optimal for bats, in terms of season, weather and temperature. This was evidenced by the number of bats observed during the survey period.

There was some restriction to the NVA field of view on position 2. The NVA was accordingly slightly repositioned during the survey and observation supplemented with a handheld NVA (see methods).

Legislation

Bats are legally protected under British legislation the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). For full details regarding the legal protection afforded to bats, please see the Bat Conservation Trust website (see References).



Results

Both surveyors recorded bat activity throughout the course of the evening. As identified in the PRA, the linear features provided by the trees were by bats. Bat activity commenced at 21:15 with common and soprano pipistrelle seen and heard by both surveyors.

Most activity appeared to be bats moving approximately east-west along linear features.

Careful attention was paid to the PRF identified on the building throughout the course of the survey. In particular, the shiplap panels and the holes in the brickwork. However, the entirety relevant aspects of the building were monitored.

Ambient bat activity consisted of commuting passes and foraging. Commutes took place primarily along the lane in front of the house, with foraging to the rear of the property and in the neighbouring gardens. The adjacent building is a much older listed building. Activity appeared to be concentrated there. It is speculated that this might offer preferable roosting opportunities for bats in the area.

Suspected emergence sightings were not confirmed through review of footage. However, upon this review two bats were identified emerging from potential roost features during the emergence survey.

These bats have been identified as common pipistrelle and emerged at 21:25:15 and 21:25:33. These bats were recorded emerging from the herringbone brickwork under the eaves on the north aspect of the aspect.

It is suggested that these bats were emerging from day roosts, rather than any more substantial void which would have allowed larger groups of bats to emerge. Examination of the lost space during the PRA showed no signs of bat activity.

Conclusion

This Site is located in good bat habitat and has superficial PRF on the exterior. These would seem to provide opportunities for day roosting by a number of bat species, most particularly pipistrelle. This survey has confirmed the presence of roosting bats.

Examination of the interior loft space during the PRA found no signs of ingress by bats.

The Client intends to commence work on the garage some years prior to making alterations to the main house. The garage is of negligible potential. This work is unlikely to cause any disturbance to bats using the structure in the ways described above. There is no indication that such works would involve damage to PRF on the house.

This notwithstanding, the highly transitory nature of many bat species means that it is not possible to completely dismiss this possibility as features may be used infrequently. This is particularly relevant to this site as there may be some delay before works take place.



As precautionary measures for work on the garage, the following mitigation should be enacted:

- Prior to the commencement of demolition/building works, the building should be subject to a repeat inspection by a qualified ecologist for the presence of bats
- the identified potential roost features (lifted roof tiles and barge board) shall be subject to hand stripping
- In the unlikely event that bats or evidence of bats are found, all works must be paused and the potential for impacts and need for EPS licencing will be reassessed.

As bats were recorded commuting and foraging at the site, the proposed development must incorporate sensitive lighting practice in line with Bat Conservation Trust guidelines (see link in references). This should include all lights pointed downwards and away from any potential bat roosting features and natural habitats (particularly treelines, mature trees and hedgerows).

References

Bat Conservation Trust. *Bats and the law*. [Online]

<https://www.bats.org.uk/advice/bats-and-the-law#:~:text=In%20Britain%2C%20all%20bat%20species,injure%2C%20or%20kill%20a%20bat.>

Bat Conservation Trust. *Bats and artificial lighting at night*. Guidance Note 08/23. [Online]

<https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

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



Appendix 1: Summary of bat activity

Time	Species	Heard/Seen/Activity	Surveyor location	Notes
21:05	Common pipistrelle	Seen and heard	2	Foraging in garden
21:15	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	2	Foraging in garden (E-W)
21:16	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	2	Over house (N-S)
21:21	Pipistrelle sp.	Heard not seen	1	Foraging
21:21	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	1	Commuting
21:25:15	Common pipistrelle	Emergence	1	From brickwork to forage. North aspect.
21:25:33	Common pipistrelle	Emergence	1	From brickwork to forage. North aspect.
21:30	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	1	Initially assumed emergence.
21:32	Common pipistrelle	Seen and heard	2	Commute through garden
21:34	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	2	Foraging
21:52	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	2	Foraging in garden
21:56	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	2	Foraging behind garden
22:06	Common pipistrelle	Heard and seen	2	From Preston Road across garden
22:13	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	2	Foraging behind garden
22:16	Common pipistrelle	Seen and heard	2	Flying over house from garden. South to north
22:21	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	2	Ongoing common pipistrelle foraging behind garden



Appendix 2: Darkest point photographs



Darkest point: Position 1



Darkest point: position 2