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Ecological reports are limited in shelf life, Natural England usually expect reports for licenses to be no more than 12 months old and therefore should the project not proceed within 12 months of this report an updated survey should be undertaken in order to check for changes that may have occurred on site.

Martin O'Connor Dip, BSc (Hons), PGCert, CBiol, MRSB
Bat license level 3 and 4
martin@cherryfieldecology.co.uk
07950279790

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# Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

## 0.0 None Technical Summary

### 0.1 Background -

The survey follows national guidelines Collins (2016) allowing for a day-time inspection and recommendations for further surveys if considered necessary. If a deviation from the guidelines has been made this will be detailed in the Method Section.

The following report details the findings and recommendations for the site of 22 The Avenue, Hertfordshire, AL6 0PP.

The client commissioned Cherryfield Ecology to undertake a PRA as the proposals include for demolishing the two buildings and replacing with new dwellings.

### 0.2 Results and Findings -

The site consists of two buildings, one dwelling and a barn type building. No bats or evidence was found in either building and neither had potential to support bat roosts.

### 0.3 Impact Assessment and Recommendations -

No impacts foreseen.

No further surveys are considered necessary, however sensible precautions are given in section 4 of the report.

## 1.0 Introduction

The client, BMG Ltd, has commissioned Cherryfield Ecology to undertake a PRA for the site of 22 The Avenue, Hertfordshire, AL6 0PP. Planning permission is being sought to demolish both buildings and replace these with new dwellings.

This survey has checked all buildings, trees (from ground level only) or structures due to be affected by the proposals for bats, signs of bats or features known to be used by bats e.g. crevices, gaps or holes that cannot be checked for a variety of reasons.

The inspection was conducted on the 05/05/2017.

The survey can only ever provide a 'snap shot' of the site at the time of the survey and circumstances may change following this report. Health and Safety restrictions or obstructions may limit the ability to find evidence.

Biological records have been requested to give the report context and allow a study of the surrounds. The information is often sensitive and therefore a synopsis is provided and the full data released separately for verification.

The survey can be conducted year round, however it can be limited due to bad weather and in the winter, when bats are not active, thus evidence and bats are often not found. During these periods habitat value (likely presence) becomes more important to the assessment of the site.

Summary of legislation and National Planning Policy that protects bats in England:

- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended.
- Countrywide and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
- National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF").
- Circular 06/05.

This legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats.

- Deliberately disturb bats, whether at roost or not.
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts.
- Possess or transport a bat or any part of a bat, unless acquired legally.
- Sell, barter or exchange bats, or any part of a bat.

A bat roost is well-defined by the legislation as the 'resting place' of a bat. However, the word roost is used to describe this resting place and is generally accepted as the word describing were a bat or bats rest, feed or sleep.

## 2.0 Methods

The survey follows the national guidelines Collins (2016) and the following equipment is available for the inspection (it may or may not all be used):

- Torches (e.g. LED Lensar type).
- Ladders (Standard 4m telescopic surveying ladder).
- Endoscope where holes, cracks and crevices are accessible.
- Mirrors as above (extendable and movable mirror face).
- Binoculars (Pentax close focus).
- Thermometer/hygrometer.
- Camera.
- Sample bags for collecting dropping and feeding evidence (should this be found).

The assessment allows for a detailed inspection of the site looking for bats, evidence of use by bats e.g. droppings/feeding remains and features known to be used by bats for roosting e.g. gaps, crevices and holes. Trees are assessed from ground level only and may require climbed surveys of holes, cracks and crevices.

Biological records data is ordered from the local records centre to provide context and background information. As the data is often sensitive a synopsis is provided and the full search released separately for officer verification.

If a deviation from the guidelines has been made the reason and justification will be explained below: -

*No deviation from the standard guidelines has been made for this survey.*

**Limitations**

This survey provides a snap -shot of the site at the time of the survey(s) only. Bats are highly mobile and can and do turn-up from time to time unexpectedly. All care has been taken to ensure the results and recommendations are suitable to the context of the development and the information gathered on surveys.

Table 1: Roosting features (likelihood) of bat presence assessed against Collins (2016) guidelines *Source: Adapted from Collins (2016) pp 35, Table 4.1.*

| **Likelihood of bat presence (Habitat Value)** | **Features that bats can and will use, regardless of evidence being present.** |
|---|---|
| **Confirmed Bat Presence** | Bats are found to be present during the survey.<br>Evidence of bats is found to be present during the survey. |
| **Higher likelihood of bat presence.** | Pre-20th century or early 20th century construction.<br>Agricultural buildings of traditional brick, stone or timber construction.<br>Large and complicated roof void with unobstructed flying spaces.<br>Large (>20 cm) roof timbers with mortice joints, cracks and holes.<br>Entrances for bats to fly through.<br>Poorly maintained fabric providing ready access points for bats into roofs, walls, bridges, but at the same time not too draughty and cool.<br>Roof warmed by the sun, in particular south facing roofs.<br>Weatherboarding and/or hanging tiles with gaps.<br>Low level of disturbance by humans.<br>Bridge structures, follies, aqueducts and viaducts over water and/or wet ground. |
| **Moderate and Lower likelihood of bat presence.** | Modern, well-maintained buildings or built structures that provide few opportunities for access by bats.<br>Small, cluttered roof space.<br>Buildings and built structures comprised primarily of prefabricated steel and sheet materials.<br>Cool, shaded, light or draughty roof voids.<br>Roof voids with a dense cover of cobwebs and no sections of clean ridge board.<br>High level of regular disturbance.<br>Highly urbanised location with few or no mature trees, parkland, woodland or wetland.<br>High levels of external lighting. |
| **Negligible likelihood of bat presence.** | No features suitable for roosting, minor foraging or commuting. |

**Notes on using this table**

1 The features listed here may not be indicative of use of the site by bats during winter or spring.

2 Pre-1914 buildings may present the greatest likelihood of providing roost space for bats due to their design, materials used and age. Pre-1990 buildings, especially when close to good foraging habitat, and with favoured features such as cavity walls and soffits, also have a high likelihood of providing roost sites for some bat species.

3 Post-1990 buildings are generally less likely than older buildings to house roosts; however, some modern designs provide access to suitable roosting spaces for bats. Pipistrelles in particular occupy modern buildings and built structures providing that there are suitable access gaps (> 8mm) and provided the structure has appropriate characteristics for roosting.

# 3.0 Results

The following section details the results of the desk study, inspection and survey, it includes MAGIC information, biological records data and map/aerial photo information. The results detail the building, structure or tree (numbered for reference) description of any evidence found and habitat value if no evidence has been located.

## 3.1 Desk Study

The desk study is centred on Grid Ref - TL239175 and postcode - AL6 0PP.

Table 2: Weather records -

| | |
|---|---|
| Temperature | 15C |
| Cloud cover | 0 |
| Precipitation | none |
| Wind | 1/8 |

## 3.2 Magic:

The following statutory sites have been located on the 2km search (see Figure 1) -

- There are no SSSI's in the search area.
- A single EPS license has been issued in 2016, located approx. 19km to the southeast of the site. It was issued for common pispitrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and soprano pipistrelle *P. pygmaeus*.

MAGIC 22 The Ave, AL6 0PP

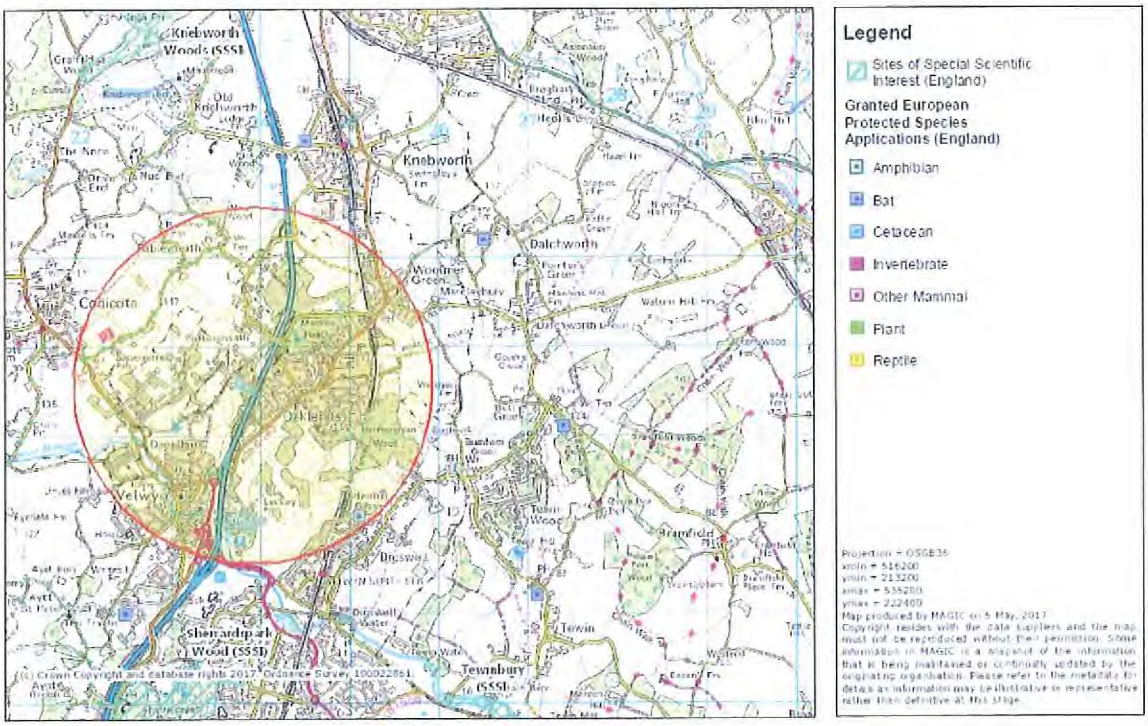


Figure 1: Magic search

### 3.3 Biological Records Data:

A 2km data search of existing records for protected species and nature reserves has been commissioned, below details the results and site context:

Biological records have been ordered from Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre (HERC, 2017). There are 45 bat records for the general. Unfortunately the grid references are of four figure only and therefore identifying any meaningful information from these is impossible. The species include common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and several *Myotis* species.

### 3.4 Site Location and Surrounds:

The site is located in Hertfordshire, Welwyn and is surrounded by low density housing in the immediate local. Table 3 details the commuting, feeding and habitat features in a 1km radius of the site.

Table 3: Habitat features suitable for bat use

| Feature | Description |
|---|---|
| Water course | There are no water-courses within the search area. |
| Water bodies | There are no water-bodies within the search area. |
| Woodland | Secondary woodland is found to the northeastern boundary running along the A1 (M) road. Small copses are located in the wider area. |
| Linear e.g. hedgerows | Garden hedging and field boundaries are located in the general area, some of these lead to and from the site. |
| Pasture/arable/grassland | Gardens and some arable and grazed fields are found in the general area. |
| Other | n/a |

### 3.5 Building, Tree or Other Structure

The following section details the structures reference, description, bats located, evidence located and likelihood of bat presence (see Figure 12 for site plan).

Building/tree/structure reference - B1 and B2

### 3.6 Description

#### 3.6.1 General

The site consists of two buildings. B1 (the main house) is located towards the main road and is currently a dwelling. The second building, (B2), is found to the rear of this and is situated within a separate yard. A former stable block it is now used as storage.

#### 3.6.2 External

B1 - Is a circa 1950/60's detached dwelling in a dormer bungalow design. It is gable ended and rendered. Two cross gables are found running over the roof, creating a cross shape from above. The walls are rendered from ground level to eaves. The cross gables are clad in a tongue and groove timber. The roof is covered in a clay tile. All soffits, window and door frames are of plastic and have recently been updated. A chimney is

found to the front elevation and two small dormer windows, at the rear two Velux's are found. A single storey conservatory is located to the rear and a single storey flat roofed garage to the side (see Figures 2 to 5).




Figure 2: Front elevation




Figure 3: Rear elevation, with conservatory




Figure 4: Example of gable end




Figure 5: example of the garage

B2 - Is a rectangular single storey building. Built from breeze block and single skinned it is rendered from the ground to the eave. A timber and rubber fascia is found. The roof is covered in a metal sheeting (see Figures 6 to 7).




Figure 6: Example of front elevation




Figure 7: Side elevation

### 3.6.3 Internal

B1 - A single loft space is found above the living area. It is insulated to the ceiling/floor level with a thick layer. The tiles are lined and insulated to the underside. The water-tank and associated systems are found here (see Figure 8 to 9).




Figure 8: Example of insulation on tiles




Figure 9: Example of loft area

B2 - Internally the building is vaulted with no lining to the metal sheeting. The building has been split into three separate units all of which are currently empty. Expanding foam has been used to insulate the ends of the wall plate (see Figures 10 to 11).




Figure 10: Example of one unit




Figure 11: Further example of internal area

### 3.7 Bats, Evidence or Likelihood of Bat Presence

No bats found in either building.

No evidence of bats found in either building.

B1 - Small gaps were found around Velux's and at one gable end. These were checked with an endoscope and no evidence or bats were found in them.

B2 - No suitable roosting features were found.

### 3.8 Supplementary Observations

No other protected species found.




Figure 12: Site plan

## 4.0 Conclusions, Discussion and Recommendations

The following section details the conclusions, discussion, potential impacts and recommendations in the context of the proposed works.

Building/tree/structure reference - B1 and B2

### 4.1 Conclusion and Discussion

The development will involve demolishing the current buildings and replacing these with new dwellings. No bats, evidence or suitable roosting features were found in or on either building. These are therefore considered to have a negligible potential to support roosting bats.

### 4.2 Potential Impact

None foreseen in either building.

### 4.3 Recommendations

Although it is unlikely that bats will be present, they do turn-up from time to time in unexpected places, therefore the following will be observed when works begin -

- No time restrictions to the works are considered necessary.
- If a bat is found at any time, work must stop, and further advice sought from a bat ecologist.
- If works do not proceed within 12 months of this report an update will be required to check for material change.

### 4.4 Potential Mitigation

N/A

## 5.0 References

Collins, J. (ed), (2016), Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition, BCT, London

Google Earth, (2017), Located on site postcode, online

MAGIC, (2017): Magic maps, EPS licences and designated sites, online http://www.magic.gov.uk/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fMagicMap.aspx, accessed as report date.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004), Bat Mitigation Guidelines, English Nature, Peterborough

Records: Herts Environmental Records Centre, (2017) Records Data, HERC