

APPLIED ECOLOGY

Kate Redfern

Sandon Bury Farm Ltd

29 May 2025

Dear Kate,

Re: Old Sextons, Rushden Road, Sandon, Buntingford, Herts, SG9 0QY

Background

I am writing to confirm that I completed a preliminary roost assessment (PRA) of the above property on 16 May 2025 to inform proposals to restore the building including re-roofing and rendering work to external walls. I am an ecologist and licenced bat worker with over 30 years professional experience¹. The building has a grid reference of TL 32200 34491.

Survey approach

The survey was completed in line with best practice bat survey guidelines Collins (2023)², using binoculars and a high powered torch to look for evidence of bats and potential bat roost features (PRFs) about the exterior of the property and within the roof void. The survey was completed in the main bat active season following a period of prolonged dry weather meaning that bat droppings stuck to the exterior of the property would have been expected to be visible.

Findings

No evidence of bats was present on the exterior of the property in any location. Two old small bat droppings were present on the floor of the loft near to the loft hatch, but full survey access beyond the loft hatch was not possible due to health and safety concerns regarding the integrity of the ceiling.

PRFs were present on the exterior of the building in the form of gaps below naturally bowed and lifted clay roof tiles; and a verge gap at the gable apex on the east end of the building.

In overall terms the building was assessed as a structure with moderate bat roost suitability – i.e. could support small numbers of bats but no evidence to indicate that it could support a large or important roost.

Photos of the exterior of the building and its loft space taken on the day of the survey are provide below for reference purposes.

¹ Holds three separate licences pertaining to bat survey: WML-CL18; WML-CL21; and WML-CL32 and has been a registered bat roost volunteer visitor for Natural England (WML-CL15). Holds class licences in relation to badger (WML-CL35) and great crested newt (WML-CL09 & WML-CL33), hazel dormouse (WML-CL10A), and native crayfish (WML-CL11)

² Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.





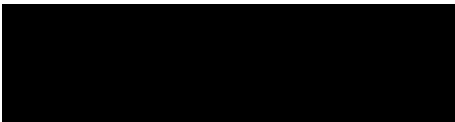
Recommendations

Bat roost emergence survey work completed in the period May-August would be required to verify bat roosting use of the building. In the absence of such survey, I recommend that the work to re-roof the building is completed in manner to reduce the possibility of causing harm to bats as follows:

- Roofing / scaffold Contractors to be briefed (tool box talk) at the start of the project by a licenced bat worker to maintain a watching brief for bats as part of the roof strip, and to contact the LBW in the event that a bat is found.
- All roof tiles to be removed by hand while a watching brief for bats is maintained.
- Start scaffold construction and re-roofing works during the autumn (October-November or April) when bats are active but maternity roosts and vulnerable young dependent bats will not be present

- i.e. avoid blocking/disturbing the roof during the period May-September when maternity roosts may be active;
- Similarly, do not start work to the roof in the winter months (December-March) when bats could be hibernating below roof tiles, and would be particularly vulnerable to disturbance.
- Ensure that any replacement roofing felt is bat friendly i.e. use a traditional 1F felt, or a breathable membrane that has passed a snagging propensity test and is deemed to be “bat safe” by Natural England.
- Ensure that existing roof tiles (which are naturally bowed) or similar clay tiles are used for the replacement roof covering to provide continuous opportunity for crevice roosting bats to access spaces below the roof tiles in the long-term.
- Ensure that the roofing work is completed and scaffolding removed before the end of April to allow bats full access to the roof during the period when bats may be supporting dependent young (May-Sept).

Yours sincerely,



Dr Duncan Painter CEnv MCIEEM

Director

On behalf of Applied Ecology Ltd

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