TECHNICAL NOTE:
PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

Santolina
9A Nine Mile Ride
Finchampstead

Report for:
DWS Projects Limited
Scammell House
9 High Street
Ascot
Surrey
SL5 7JF

INTRODUCTION

Overview

In accordance with your instructions, AA Environmental Limited (AAe) carried out a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the above site on Thursday 21 May 2026. The purpose of the survey was to assess the presence or likely absence of bats utilising the building and provide appropriate mitigation measures, as necessary. A series of photographs has been attached for reference.

The proposals are to modify and modernise the existing property. The works will largely be restricted to the existing built footprint so that the majority of the garden area and established trees and vegetation will remain unaffected by the works.

LEGISLATION

Currently there are 17 species of bat known to breed in the UK. All species and their roosts are protected under Regulation 41 of *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. As a signatory to the *Bonn Convention (Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe)* the UK is also required to protect their habitats. This legislation makes it illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats or to obstruct access to, damage or destroy bat roosts and protection from damage or disturbance of important feeding areas. Under the law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

METHODOLOGY

Baseline Data

As certain baseline data is now readily available on the internet, the Multi-agency website (www.magic.defra.gov.uk) was consulted to determine whether any part of the site or nearby habitats have been statutorily or otherwise designated and a review of Google Earth's satellite imagery (http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/index.html) was completed to determine past land uses of the site and surrounding land.

Walk-over Site Survey

A visual survey of the site was completed to record any evidence of bats or features that could provide potential roosting opportunities following the guidelines provided by the Bat Conservation Trust[1] and by an experienced and licensed ecologist[2]. A thorough internal and external examination of the building was carried out, with any potential access points inspected for evidence of bats. All internal roof voids/spaces were accessed to check for any evidence of bats.

The surrounding habitat was also surveyed to identify any important features such as mature trees with suitable features for roosting bats and any established lines of vegetation that might provide important flightlines.

[1] Collins, J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
[2] The lead surveyor was Alan Beaumont, MSc BSc (Hons) MCIEEM – 2025-85745-CL18-BAT.

Evidence of bats is usually detected by any one or more of the following signs:

- the presence of bat droppings, which tend to accumulate under established roost sites or at roost entrances;
- the accumulation of large numbers of moth wings, which have been discarded by feeding bats;
- areas of staining by urine or from fur rubbing; and
- the presence of bats themselves or their corpses.

The visual survey was facilitated by the use of binoculars, ladders, powerful torches (1M candlepower) and a Ridgid Micro CA-350 Inspection Camera endoscope. A heterodyne bat detector (Pettersson D230) was utilised to record any bat calls during the inspection.

In accordance with good practice, the site was checked for any evidence of other protected species or species of particular note.

RESULTS

Baseline Data

According to the Multi-agency website, there are no statutory ecological designated sites located on the site. The nearest statutory ecological designated site is Longmoor Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located approximately 0.28 km to the north-east and site lies within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone[3]. The nearest Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI) is an area of Deciduous Woodland, also noted in the National Forest Inventory, located adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. The site is located within a Network Enhancement Zone 2[4].

Google Earth imagery shows that the site has remained largely unchanged since at least 1999, comprising the existing buildings, with associated hardstanding and vegetation.

Site Description (Photographs 1 - 4)

The site is located off Nine Mile Ride in Finchampstead and centred at National Grid Reference: SU 778648. The site comprised the existing buildings, with associated hardstanding and vegetation. It is bordered by Nine Mile Ride to the east and west, and residential properties to the north and south.

The property was a masonry constructed bungalow, with a multi-pitched engineered concrete tiled roof. Plastic soffits/fascias were also present. There were also two chimney stacks on the roof, with lead flashing around the bases. Internally, the roof space was lined with a bitumen-based felt and insulated with mineral wool. There was a single-storey extension at the rear of the property, which housed an indoor pool, which had a fibreglass roof with a series of skylights. Internally there was no separate roof space recorded.

Hardstanding areas included patio areas, courtyard, driveway and paths. The garden area included lawns, paddocks and ornamental planting with some established trees.

Bats

No evidence of bats was recorded during the external inspection of the building. The plastic soffits/fascias were in good condition and well-sealed. The roof tiles were in good condition with no obvious access points

[3] The proposals are for minor works to the existing property; the nature of development does not meet any criteria which would trigger further consultation with Natural England (available at: https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0121254211121&notes=11401&location=477925,164842%20%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre).

[4] Land connecting existing patches of primary and associated habitats which is less likely to be suitable for creation of the primary habitat.

recorded. During the internal inspection, a few individual bat droppings[5] were recorded on the north-western gable wall of the property.

The site itself, comprising a well-maintained residential plot located within a residential area, provides only limited foraging opportunities for bats. No established trees will be affected by the works.

Other Wildlife

Apart from a few common species of birds, either recorded on the site or flying overhead, no other species of any note were recorded.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposals are to modify and modernise the existing property. The works will largely be restricted to the existing built footprint so that the majority of the garden area and established trees and vegetation will remain unaffected by the works.

There are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposals. The site of overall limited ecological value, with the majority of the species recorded described as common or abundant and found in similar places across much of Britain, with the property confirmed to be used by common pipistrelle considered to be an occasionally used day roost only.

Although it is acknowledged that further surveys are required in order to confirm this initial assessment, a range of measures can be implemented on the site to minimise disturbance and maintain roosting opportunities for bats in the long-term, as detailed below. The further follow-up surveys will include a re-check of the building and activity surveys at the appropriate time of year and during suitable weather conditions (optimal time is May through to August). The results of the additional surveys would confirm the status of the bat roost and provide the further details required to support a bat licence application to Natural England[6].

In order to provide alternative/enhanced roosting opportunities for bats, two bat boxes (x2 Chillon Woodstone Bat Box, or equivalent) could be installed on suitable trees on site. The boxes would be positioned in accordance with best practice and installed as soon as possible and prior to any works. In addition, two bat tubes (Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box B, or equivalent) could be installed onto the property.

Typical precautionary measures could also be implemented during the works, as detailed below:

- all site operatives will be given a toolbox talk on the possibility of encountering bats and the legal protection they and their roosts are afforded (copy of a toolbox talk has been attached at Appendix B for reference);
- prior to any works, the building will be carefully re-checked by a licensed bat worker/accredited agent for any roosting bats;
- initial works will be carried out with great care. All tiles (roof, ridge) will be lifted and removed by hand, lifting them clear with two hands rather than lifting the front and rolling the tile backwards which may crush any bats beneath;
- tiles will also be checked underneath before being stacked or discarded, as bats sometimes cling to the undersides of tiles; and
- a similar soft strip of other features that bats can utilise for roosting (such as lead flashing and soffits/fascias) will be completed.

Should any bats be encountered during this initial check and soft strip, they will be caught by hand by the licensed bat worker/accredited agent, checked thoroughly for any indication of damage before being placed in a bat bag. The bat will then be placed in one of the bat boxes already installed on the site. The box will

[5] Confirmed by DNA analysis to be common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), copy of the report has been attached at Appendix A for reference.
[6] A licence application can only be submitted once planning has been granted.

have the hole loosely blocked with a piece of cloth to prevent any bats escaping, which will be removed at dusk to allow any bats to move off after dark. Should any injured or severely underweight bats be located, remedial measures will be taken, including seeking appropriate care of the bat and providing additional food in the form of mealworms.

Common pipistrelles are considered to be common and widespread throughout Great Britain. Population estimates in Great Britain are around 3,040,000[7]. In Great Britain, the common pipistrelle Field Survey trend has increased significantly since the baseline year of monitoring (1999). The index shows no significant change over the last five years. The Roost Count index is not considered a reliable measure of population change for common pipistrelle. The population of common pipistrelle in Great Britain is considered to have increased in the long-term (since 1999) and to have been stable in the short-term (since 2017)[8].

Day roosts of individual bats of the more common species are considered of Site importance (in accordance with Table 3.2 Bat Mitigation Guidelines[9]). The level of mitigation as detailed above is in line with that provided within Table 5.1 of the Bat Mitigation Guidelines, which states for roosts used by individual bats of common species that are to be destroyed:

Flexible (in terms of timing and type)

In addition to the above specific mitigation measures, a series of generic mitigation measures, as detailed below, will be implemented to reduce any impact the re-development proposals may have on local wildlife. There is also an opportunity to implement some enhancement measures to increase the nature conservation value of the site in the long term in accordance with Government guidance as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024[10].

It should be noted that all species of wild bird and their nests are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Although no bird nesting material was recorded during the survey with very limited areas of potential nesting habitat to be removed/affected, a check should be carried out prior to any works to ensure there are no active nests present.

In order to protect any nearby established vegetation, suitable fencing may be required at certain locations to reduce the possibility of any damage that could be caused during the works. To minimise accidental damage, any overhanging branches should be pruned back to suitable live growth points. All works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced specialist contractor and should conform to current industry best practice, i.e. BS 3998: 2010 '*Tree Work - Recommendations*'. The retention and protection of the existing vegetation will help to maintain existing commuting/foraging routes currently utilised by bats and other wildlife.

Any new boundary treatment should be designed to promote permeability of the site to minimise fragmentation and allow free movement of wildlife throughout the site, for example by strengthening/enhancing the existing boundary vegetation, planting up a series of new hedgerows and/or installing post and rail fences. These measures will strengthen habitat connectivity and provide additional foraging habitat, cover and nesting opportunities. If close boarded fences are required for security reasons these should be minimised and raised slightly off the ground (c. 150-200 mm) to allow animals to pass underneath.

Although the works are restricted with limited opportunities to implement any enhancement measures, a series of wildlife boxes (such as bird and hedgehog boxes) could be installed onto the site to provide enhanced nesting/sheltering opportunities. Any boxes installed should be positioned in accordance with good practice.

[7] Mathews F., Kubasiewicz L.M., Gurnell J., Harrower C.A., McDonald R.A. & Shore R.F. (2018). *A Review of the Population and Conservation Status of British Mammals. A report by the Mammal Society under contract to Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage*. Natural England, Peterborough.
[8] Bat Conservation Trust, 2024. The National Bat Monitoring Programme Annual Report 2023. Bat Conservation Trust, London.
[9] Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2025). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Version 1.2.* Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.
[10] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London.

The effects of lighting on plants and animals are difficult to assess, but it is thought that lighting can adversely affect invertebrates, birds and bats. As the site already experiences some lighting from on-site sources there should be no change in current light levels from the proposed works.

As proportionate mitigation is available and deliverable, along with a range of enhancement measures to ensure that there would be no adverse impact on bats and local wildlife that are using the site, there are no over-riding ecological constraints to the re-development proposals that would preclude planning permission being granted at this stage, subject to appropriately worded conditions.

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Photograph Record Sheet

Photograph 1: Showing the front of the property and well-sealed concrete roof tiles.

Photograph 2: Showing the rear of the property and indoor swimming pool extension.

Photograph 3: Showing the attic space within the property.

Photograph 4: Showing the internal gable wall, where individual common pipistrelle droppings were found.

Rev.	Details	Drawn / Chkd.	Date

PROJECT

Santolina
9A Nine Mile Road
Finchampstead

TITLE

Photograph Record Sheet

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Scale	Date	Drg No.	Rev.
NTS	17.06.26	263175/01	

Drawn	Chkd.
NAB	ARB

Appendix A
DNA Test Report

Folio No:	2081-2026
Purchase Order:	263175-NB
Contact:	AA Environmental Ltd
Issue Date:	11.06.2026
Received Date:	29.05.2026

Biological Report

Technical Report

SureScreen Scientifics

Folio No: 2081-2026
Purchase Order: 263175-NB
Contact: AA Environmental Ltd
Issue Date: 11.06.2026
Received Date: 29.05.2026

SureScreen Scientifics

Biological Sample Analysis

Summary

Most biological materials (tissue, feces, hair, blood, etc.) contain small amounts of DNA from the organism of which it originated. Using molecular methods such as PCR (polymerase chain reaction) and DNA sequencing, SureScreen Scientifics are able to analyze an unknown sample to determine which species the sample originates from our methods are optimized for the detection of species including bats (over 92% of bat species worldwide can be identified including all 18 UK bat species), mammals; bees, wasps & hornets; birds; fish; plants (from roots, leaves, stem and even dried wood) and many more species.

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Sample Type	Species Name	Match(%)
B26 0395	Santolina		Bat Dropping	Common pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus)	97.78

Genetic Sequence
GACTAGTTCCACTAATAATTGGAGCCCCTGACATGGCATTTCCTCGTATAAATAATATAAGTTTCTGACTCCTACCT
CCTTCTTTTCTACTACTACTAGCCTCGTCTATAGTAGAAGCGGGAGCGGGTACAGGCTGAACAGTCTACCCCCCTC
TAGCAGGAAACCTAGCACACGCAGGAGA

Matters affecting result: none
Reported by: Chelsea Warner

Approved by: Consuela Sopronyi

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SureScreen Scientifics

Methodology

Once samples have arrived in the laboratory, the DNA is isolated using a commercial DNA extraction kit. Using PCR, DNA (if present within the sample) is amplified using universal molecular markers designed to amplify a short fragment of the DNA of the target species group (i.e. mammal, fish, arthropod, reptile, plant etc.). If amplification is successful, the resulting DNA sequence is revealed using a process known as Sanger Sequencing in order to obtain the genetic sequence of the mitochondrial gene within the sample. The sequence results are aligned against a library of known reference sequences using bioinformatics software, which enables us to determine which species the DNA sequence from the sample matches with, informing the species identity and sequence similarity (match %).

If the initial analysis is unsuccessful, the entire process is repeated up to two additional times with a fresh reserve sample (if available) in order to obtain a species identification. If no DNA is detected after three attempts, then we can be confident that any further analysis of the sample will likely also fail to result in species identification.

Interpretation of Results

Sample Type:

The sample you send to us can come from a variety of sources. Fecal, dropping, urine, hair, blood, carcass (skin, flesh, bone), gamete, plant matter or unknown biological material all contain DNA that we can test for in order to identify the species of origin.

Genetic Sequence:

The unique DNA sequence obtained from the sample.

Match (%):

How closely matched the DNA sequence from your sample is to the sequences within our reference database. This can be interpreted as a score of result accuracy, with the maximum score of 100% indicating an exact match of the sample to the indicated species' reference sequence. Lower scores (80-99%) indicate some variation between the sample and reference sequence, likely due to natural variation between individual genetic sequences and/or systematic variations generated through the sequencing process. Scores below 80% similarity should be interpreted with care and can indicate part degraded or part contaminated samples.

Inconclusive Result:

Degraded sample:

DNA is degraded and we are unable to determine species identification due to degradation of sample DNA. This can happen either before sample collection (old samples, exposure to UV etc.) or after sample collection if stored for long periods before analysis or not handled correctly.

Inhibited/contaminated sample:

We are unable to determine species identity due to contamination or the suspected presence of large quantities of PCR inhibitors. Contamination sources can originate from other species which could have come into contact with the samples, or human contamination during sample collection.

Alternative Result:

Sometimes, for targets such as bat dropping analysis, other mammalian species such as rodents are detected. We find this to be a common occurrence as some bat droppings can be similar in appearance to rodent droppings. Although sometimes unexpected, repeat analyses in these cases would likely return the same results.

Appendix B
Toolbox Talk (Bats)

TOOLBOX TALK:
BATS

Key Contacts

AA Environmental Ltd, Units 4-8 Cholswell Court, Shippon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6HX

Tel: 01235 536042

Did you know?

- Bats are the worlds only flying mammal.
- There are 17 species of bat known to be breeding in the UK, 6 of which are endangered or rare and 6 are classed as vulnerable.
- Bats can be found across the country in urban and rural locations.
- They are often sighted at dusk as they leave their roost, flying around hedgerows, woodland and waterbodies, feeding on insects.
- Throughout the year bats will often change their roost, depending upon the season.
- Usually a pregnant female will only have one baby a year, this makes colonies vulnerable to population decline.
- During the winter bats hibernate and may not wake up, even if disturbed. Therefore it's important not to work on sites with bats during these months.
- Bats may not use the same roost throughout the year, however they are legally protected with or without a bat occupying them.

Identification

- You may find bats in any number of places, they tend to prefer dark, quiet spots with good shelter, such as holes and cracks in trees, roofs and walls of buildings, under bridges, old tunnels and in caves.
- Signs of bat presence include discarded moth wings, staining around crevices and small mouse like droppings which crumble easily.

Legislation

- All bats and their roosts are protected by UK and European Law. This makes it **illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats** or obstruct access to, damage or destroy their roosts and protects important feeding areas from damage or disturbance.
- Under law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

Site Controls

- There is always a **risk** that bats, as they move between different roost sites and occupy new roosts, could be encountered during site works.
- **If any bats are encountered during works the following controls must be applied to avoid breaking the law:**

1. If bats are discovered/suspected works must stop **immediately** with any bat left in-situ and AAe immediately contacted (contact details above).
2. If any injured bats are found during the works AAe would care for them and where possible be released in the same location once recovered.
3. During works staff must wear gloves in case of accidental contact with bats.
4. Any roof tiles will be lifted straight up, rather than being rolled over, minimising the risk of harming bats which may be sheltering underneath.
5. Areas must be fully checked for any bats or their evidence prior to filling any gaps and repointing any brickwork.
6. Any lighting must be installed must avoid illuminating vegetation and or bat boxes/access points.

These controls have been put in place to protect all site operatives from breaking the law. You're not expected to be able to identify bats or their presence so remember, **if in doubt shout and contact the relevant person.**

Brown long-eared bat.

Lesser horseshoe bat in rail tunnel.

Common pipistrelle bat.