
**Land to the Rear of 20 & 22 Station Road
Twyford**

Report for:
Citroemec Limited
Unit 3
East Heath Avenue
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG41 2PR

INTRODUCTION

AA Environmental Limited (AAe) has been instructed by Citroemec Limited to carry out an updated ecological survey of the above site. Although a previous ecological survey has been carried out on the site by AAe in 2019, it was considered best practice to carry out a follow-up survey to update the previous findings and to record any changes that may have occurred during the intervening period. This information will serve to assess the ecological impact of the proposals and identify any ecological constraints and/or mitigation measures that may be required. A series of photographs has been attached for reference.

The proposals are to construct a single dwelling, with associated hard and soft landscaping, requiring the demolition of the existing workshop.

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

A review of AAe's previous report (dated November 2019) was carried out to obtain baseline data. In addition, 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

The recent follow-up survey was completed on Thursday 29 July 2021, with particular attention was paid to record the presence of bats that may be using the site or present in adjacent habitats, in accordance with the following survey methodology:

A visual survey of the site was completed to record any evidence of bats or features that could provide potential roosting opportunities. The survey was carried out following the guidelines provided by the Bat Conservation Trust¹.

¹ Collins, J. (ed) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

A thorough internal and external examination of the existing buildings was carried out, with any potential access points inspected for evidence of bats. All internal roof voids/spaces (where present) were accessed to check for any evidence of bats.

In addition, 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.

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 D200) was also used during the inspection to record any bat calls.

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

RESULTS

Baseline Data

During the previous ecological survey completed by AAe (2019), no evidence of bats or other protected species was recorded during a careful internal and external inspection of the workshop, with the building, due to construction type and condition (lacking any roof voids/spaces and/or suitable crevice dwelling opportunities) assessed to provide **negligible** roosting opportunities for bats. In addition, the site, dominated by the building and hardstanding, lacking any established vegetation and located in a built-up area, provided very limited foraging opportunities for bats.

According to the Multi-agency website, there are no ecological statutory designated sites located on or adjacent to the site. The nearest statutory designated site is Alder Moors Local Nature Reserve (LNR), located approximately 1.9 km to the south-west. There are no Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) located on or adjacent to the site, with the nearest being an area of Deciduous Woodland, located approximately 0.1 km to the south-west of the site.

According to the Multi-agency website, there was a single record of a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) for bats being granted within 1 km of the site, located 0.2 km to the north-west and allowing the destruction of a breeding site and resting place for brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) bats (reference EPSM2010-2250).

Google Earth Imagery shows that the site has remained largely unchanged since at least 2002, being dominated by the existing workshop with associated hardstanding.

Site Description (Photographs 1-4)

The site is located off Brook Street in Twyford, Reading, Berkshire, centred at National Grid Reference: SU 789758 and covers less than 0.1 of a hectare. The site comprised the existing workshop, with associated hardstanding. It is bordered by Brook Street to the north, with residential properties and associated gardens to all other sides.

The site conditions remained the same as previously recorded, with no significant changes. The building was a single-storey, block and masonry constructed workshop, with the low single pitched roof. The workshop appeared to be originally two separate buildings with one roof covered with bitumen felt and the other with corrugated metal sheets. Timber barge boards were present at each elevation, with a timber framed window at the front of the workshop. Internally, there was no separate roof void present with the roof unlined and uninsulated, with expanding foam used to seal any gaps between roof and wall.

The site was dominated by the existing building and associated hardstanding areas, with no established vegetation present.

Bats

During the follow-up internal and external visual inspection of the workshop, no evidence of bats was recorded, with the building conditions having remained unchanged during the intervening period. The building due to construction type and condition (lacking any roof voids/spaces and/or suitable crevice dwelling opportunities) was assessed to provide **negligible** roosting opportunities for bats.

The site, dominated by the building and hardstanding, lacking any established vegetation and located in a built-up area, provides very limited foraging opportunities for bats.

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.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposals are to construct a single dwelling, with associated hard and soft landscaping, requiring the demolition of the existing workshop. There are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly or indirectly affected by the proposals. The site is of low ecological value with no evidence of protected species recorded.

Although there are considered to be no ecological constraints to the proposals, with the site remaining unchanged since the previous survey visit, a series of specific and generic mitigation measures, as detailed in the previous report and reiterated below for ease of reference, should be implemented to reduce any impact the 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) 2021².

Although no evidence of bats was recorded with the building assessed to provide **negligible** roosting opportunities, all site operatives should be made aware of the legislation protecting bats and in the unlikely event of any bats being encountered, then works should stop immediately and Natural England or AAe contacted so that appropriate advice can be provided.

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 active or old bird nests were recorded during the survey a check should be carried out prior to the works to ensure there are no active nests present.

In order to protect any nearby adjacent 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'.

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London.

As part of the proposals, soft landscaping will be carried out. Where any new planting is proposed it should aim to use native species, but where this is not practicable then species of known value for wildlife can be used. In particular, flowering plants will be of benefit to invertebrate species and shrubs and trees may provide nesting opportunities for birds once they become established.

A series of bird/bat boxes could be incorporated into the new build to provide enhanced nesting/roosting opportunities. Any boxes installed should be positioned in accordance with good practice.

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. Although the site is located in a well-lit area and currently experiences high levels of lighting, in accordance with good practice, any lighting to be introduced should be designed to minimise light spillage and pollution and not directed onto any bird/bat boxes installed.

The recommendations provided above try to pre-empt any issues that may arise as well as provide some mitigation and enhancement measures. I trust this is of interest to you and provides the Local Planning Authority with enough information to determine the application but let me know if further clarification is required.

Author:
Alan Beaumont
BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM
Director of Ecology
E alan.beaumont@aae-ltd.co.uk

Office:
AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon
Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX

Company No. 8474322
E info@aae-ltd.co.uk
T 01235 536042
F 01235 523849

Photograph Record Sheet



Photograph 1: Showing the front and side elevations of the workshop.



Photograph 2: Showing the rear elevation of the workshop.



Photograph 3: Showing the interior of the workshop, with an unlined roof.



Photograph 4: Showing the flat roof of the workshop.

Rev.	Details	Drawn Chkd.	Date
PROJECT			
Land to the rear of 20 & 22 Station Road Twyford			
TITLE			
Photograph Record Sheet			
 AA Environmental Ltd Units 4-8 Cholswell Court Shippon Abingdon Oxon OX13 6HX T: 01235 536042 F: 01235 523849 info@aae-ltd.co.uk www.aae-ltd.co.uk			
Scale	Date	Drg No.	Rev.
NTS	19.08.21 HRS	193423/01 ARB	