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Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS)

Survey site:

Hatchgate End, Hatchgate Lane, Cockpole Green, Wargrave, Berkshire, RG10 8NE

Client:

Nicholas Hart

Report date:

13th June 2024

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application for the proposal described as:

“Demolition of dwelling and construction of a new dwelling.”

This report is supplementary to the Preliminary Roost Assessment report completed by Arbtech Consulting Ltd (2024).

BERS survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: BERS Methodology and Legislation – 2024.

This report is an addendum to and must be read in conjunction with the Preliminary Roost Assessment completed by Arbtech Consulting Limited (2024) for the same site address. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.	
Executive Summary	
A day roost of one brown long-eared bats has been previously identified within the two loft voids of B1, with an access point at the ridgeline near the central chimney (identified in 2017 and 2018 by Windrush Ecology). Subsequent survey effort by Arbtech in 2022 has found no significant changes to the site, although no bat emergences were observed. To update the report, an additional survey has been conducted in 2024, detailed in this document: no significant changes were noted during either the internal inspection or the dusk emergence survey.	
The site surveys were designed and managed by Dr James Fielding PhD BA (Hons) PGCert (merit), Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2019-41480-CLS-CLS.	
See surveyor locations in the BERS plan in Appendix 1.	
<i>Limitations</i>	A short shower of rain occurred between 21:23 and 21:40. The survey was extended to account for this. The rain ended rapidly, which means the shower will only have delayed, rather than prevented, any emergences. Therefore, in conjunction with the extended survey and IR coverage, this was not assessed to be a major limitation.

Field Survey	
Dusk Emergence Survey	
Building B1	
<i>Building inspection prior to survey</i>	The interior loft voids were inspected prior to the dusk bat survey. No significant changes were noted to the loft void and no fresh droppings were noted within the loft void.

Surveyor and position		Lead Surveyor 1 – Dr James Fielding, four years of bat survey experience – surveying the north and eastern elevations Surveyor 2 – Athena Allen, three years of bat survey experience – surveying the southern and eastern elevations Position 3 - 1 unmanned camera (supervised from position 2) – surveying the southern elevation					
Weather (start/end)		Temperature (°C): 15 Relative humidity (%): 91 Cloud cover (%): 100 Wind (m/s): 1 Rain: 0mm			Temperature (°C): 10 Relative humidity (%): 87 Cloud cover (%): 100 Wind (m/s): 2 Rain: 2mm		
Equipment used		Echometer Touch, Magenta. Nightfox Whisker IR camera, Nightfox Pro XB5 IR torches					
Results							
Date of survey	Start, end and sunset time	Species and numbers	Roost type	Structure reference	Roost location	Access points	Dimensions and explanation of roost location
04/06/2024	20:55-23:00 21:14	No emergences (single brown long-eared bat previously noted).	Day roost	B1	Brown long-eared roost in both internal loft spaces	The ridge, near the chimney stack, of the dwelling’s south-eastern half (data from 2018).	BLE void dimensions.
Surveyor observations							
Surveyor 1		No emergences were observed. The first recorded bat was a common pipistrelle which was heard-but-not-seen at 21:31. At 21:36 a common pipistrelle flew from the north, close over the rooftiles, and then towards the surveyor. This was reviewed by IR and confirmed to			N/A		

	<i>not</i> be an emergence. A noctule flew high over the site at 21:40, moving from south to north. At 21:51 a common pipistrelle flew high over the building from the west to east At 22:09 a common pipistrelle flew over the site. Heard-but-not-seen bat calls repeated at 22:13, 22:22 and 22:31. No further bat activity was seen during the survey.	
<i>IR position</i>	This footage recapitulated the results of surveyor 1. Review of the footage at 21:31 was used to discount the close flyby of a common pipistrelle at 21:36 and confirm that it did not emerge from B1.	
<i>Surveyor 2</i>	No emergencies observed. The first bat was a common pipistrelle which flew east from in front of the house over the driveway at 21:30. Five more common pipistrelles were encountered throughout the survey, four of which were heard not seen (HNS), and one which circled in front of the south-west elevation several times foraging and then flew south. A noctule was HNS at 21:59. The final bat was an HNS common pipistrelle at 22:31.	N/A

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<i>IR position</i>	The view of the southern elevation did not note any emergences.	 An infrared photograph of a brick building at night. The building has a gabled roof and a brick chimney. A white fence is in the foreground, and some foliage is visible on the right. A yellow timestamp '08/08/2023 22:52:04' is in the bottom right corner.
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Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations	
<i>Survey Results Summary</i>	A day roost of one brown long-eared bats is identified within the loft of B1, as evidenced by droppings found within the loft void in 2017, 2018 (Windrush Ecology Ltd, 2018) and 2022 (Arbtech Consulting Ltd, 2022), and a brown long-eared bat being found within the first (southern) loft space on the 19th September 2017 and on the 6th June 2018 (Windrush Ecology Ltd, 2018) and the emergence of a brown long-eared bat from the ridge near the chimney stack on the same evening. Further MCC & dusk and dawn re-entry surveys were conducted by by Arbtech in 2022 (05/05/2022, 02/06/2022 and 02/08/2022) and 2024 (04/06/2024) but no emergences were observed. No emergences or significant material changes to this roost were determined by this set of surveys. The MCC found the building to be in the same condition with bat droppings present in the loft void. However, no emergences were recorded. Therefore the site is concluded to support a day roost of a single BLE, used only occasionally. This roost is considered to have low conservation value, in line with the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature, 2004).
<i>Impact Assessment</i>	The proposed development will result in the demolition of the dwelling. This will destroy the bat roost. This may also result in disturbance, death or injury to bats. The new development will not involve significant changes in lighting.
<i>Recommendations</i>	An EPSL application to Natural England will be required to legally permit the proposed works. Due to the number of roosts and species present (one of low conservation value), the site is eligible for a Bat Mitigation Class License (BMCL). The BMCL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season (May to September) and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission. The BMCL will include the following measures: The installation of one cavity-style bat box at the site (one bat box per species) prior to works commencing to form a receptor site for any bats found during the works. These boxes may be installed on buildings or trees but must be in an undisturbed location and will need to be maintained in this location post-development. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.

	• The provision of a toolbox talk to contractors, by the Registered Consultant or an Accredited Agent, to inform them of the presence of bat roosts. • A pre-commencement inspection of any roost features by the Registered Consultant or an Accredited Agent using a torch and an endoscope (this may be via ladders, scaffolding or a mobile elevated platform). • The removal of bat roost features by hand under the supervision of the Registered Consultant or an Accredited Agent (where it is not possible conclude absence of bats during the pre-commencement inspection). • Avoiding the use of unnecessary lighting, particularly at night, or implementing a low impact lighting strategy to avoid illumination of retained or newly created roosts or roost features. • Avoiding excessive noise or vibration disturbance e.g. from power tools or radios, within close proximity of retained or newly created roosts or roost features.
<i>Enhancements</i>	The installation of a minimum of one additional bat box (for a total of two) on mature trees around the site boundaries or on retained buildings will provide additional roosting habitat for bats e.g. 2F Schwegler Bat Box (trees) 1FF Schwegler Bat Box (trees) 2FN Schwegler Bat Box (trees) Beaumaris Bat Box (buildings) Vivara Pro Woodstone Bat Box (buildings) Or a similar alternative brand. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.

Version control

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Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Dr James Fielding PhD BA (Hons) PGCert (merit), Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2019-41480-CLS-CLS.	13/06/2024
Final	1.0	Dr James Fielding PhD BA (Hons) PGCert (merit), Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2019-41480-CLS-CLS.	13/06/2024

Appendix 1: BERS plan



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