

PRELIMINARY ROOST APPRAISAL (PRA) REPORT

7th February 2024

Hacketts, High Street, Bursledon,
Southampton, SO31 8DL

On behalf of: Sandra Hoare

Agent/planner: Darryl Howells Planning
Consultancy

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This report has been prepared to identify the presence of protected species and habitats within the site, where this falls within the scope of the agreed works.

This report has been produced using all reasonable skill and care, and a Quality Assurance (QA) review process has been conducted prior to issue of this report.

SURVEY DATA LIFESPAN AND VALIDITY:

Survey data can be considered valid for 18 months from the survey date in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Advice note (CIEEM, 2019) due to the presence of and/or potential for mobile species to be present within the site.

It must be noted that update surveys will be required in the event a Natural England mitigation licence is required. In the event roosting bats are present, the licence application must be informed by up to date survey data from the then current bat survey season (May to August). An update building inspection will also be required within 3 months of the application.

The results of the surveys and this assessment are representative at the time of the surveys taking place.

ABR Ecology Ltd cannot accept responsibility for third party data supplied within this report.

This document has been prepared in accordance with CIEEM's Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (CIEEM, 2017).

At the time of writing, standard methodologies have been used which are accepted by Natural England and other statutory bodies. No responsibility will be accepted where standard methodologies change and where Government, national bodies and industry subsequently modify standards.

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Contents

Non-technical summary	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Methodology	6
3. Results	9
4. Conclusions, mitigation and biodiversity enhancements	11
5. References	14
Appendix A: Proposed plans	15
Appendix B: Relevant legislation and planning policy	16
Appendix C: Photographs	18
Appendix D: Biodiversity enhancements	19

Non-technical summary

- ABR Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Sandra Hoare to undertake a Preliminary Roost Appraisal (PRA) at Hacketts, High Street, Bursledon, Southampton, SO31 8DL to advise on the presence/absence of bats at the property.
- This report was requested to support a householder planning application for the *“second floor extension and remodelling of the existing exterior, following the removal of the existing roof”*.
- The PRA was undertaken on the 23rd January 2024 by Natural England class 1 licensed bat ecologist Sophie Morris and assistant ecologist Georgia Linter. The survey revealed no evidence of bats in the form of droppings, staining or the presence of bats internally and the external assessment of the property revealed the building held **‘negligible potential’** for roosting bats due to a lack of suitable access points and roosting provisions.
- The building does not hold the potential to support roosting bats and so no further works are required. However, should 18 months pass without works taking place (and/or any material change occur to the building or roof), this report will no longer be valid and an update site visit to reassess the building would be required.
- There are bat records within 1km of the site. A ‘bat-friendly’ lighting strategy is detailed in Section 4 to ensure the proposed works do not impede foraging and commuting bats which may be using the gardens and general surrounding area.
- There are known records for hedgehogs and great crested newts within proximity of the site. A mitigation strategy has been provided in Section 4 of this report to ensure no species are harmed.
- To ensure the application is compliant with The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local planning policy, two ‘Woodstone Build-in Invisible Swift Boxes’ will be provided. This is detailed in Section 4 of this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 ABR Ecology Ltd were commissioned Sandra Hoare to undertake a Preliminary Roost Appraisal (PRA) at Hacketts, High Street, Bursledon, Southampton, SO31 8DL (central grid reference: SU 48838 09379) to advise on the presence/absence of bats at the property. This report was requested to support a planning application for the *“second floor extension and remodelling of the existing exterior, following the removal of the existing roof”*.
- 1.2 The PRA was undertaken on the 23rd January 2024 by Natural England class 1 licensed bat ecologist Sophie Morris and assistant ecologist Georgia Linter. Proposed elevations are provided in Appendix A.

Site context

- 1.3 The application site comprises a residential property consisting of a detached house in Southampton, Hampshire within a semi-urban area. The immediate surrounding landscape comprises residential properties, gardens and mature trees. A railway line is located to the immediate southeast of the site boundary. The wider surrounding landscape comprises good quality semi-improved grassland and pockets of deciduous woodland. The river Hamble is located approximately 210m east of the property comprising intertidal mudflats, saltmarshes and reedbeds. The surrounding landscapes are considered to provide good foraging opportunities and commuting corridors for bats.

Aims and scope of PRA survey and report

- 1.4 This PRA is a detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of a structure to look for features that bats could use for entry/exit for roosting and to search for signs of bats. The aim of the survey is to determine the **ACTUAL** and **POTENTIAL** presence of bats and the need for further survey and /or mitigation. *In many cases it is not possible to inspect all areas of a structure where bats may be present, and therefore an absence of evidence does not equate to absence of a bat roost.*
- 1.5 This report is based on the results of the PRA, which was principally aimed at determining if a bat roost is present within the property and/or whether the building hold ‘potential’ to support roosting bats in line with The BCT Good Practice Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2023).
- 1.6 This report aims to establish whether the proposed works hold the potential to impact on roosting bats and identifies whether there is a requirement for further bat activity (emergence) surveys. This report aims to assess the level of survey effort in relation to the impacts predicted upon the bat roost(s) and the structure, which may in turn inform the need for a bat European Protected Species (EPS) licence or Bat

Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) to allow the works to proceed lawfully following planning approval.

Relevant planning policy and legislation

- 1.7 Full details of relevant planning policy and legislation are provided in Appendix B of this report; the following policy and legislation in respect of biodiversity is applicable to this application:
- *The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 – Section 15*
 - *The Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan – Policy DM11 ‘Nature Conservation’*
 - *The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*
 - *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) – Section 1 and Schedule 5*
 - *The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 – Sections 40 and 41*
- 1.8 ***It is the responsibility of the applicant(s) to ensure that the proposed development proceeds in full compliance with legislation, national and local policy, and in accordance with all conditions of the obtained planning consent(s).***

2. Methodology

Desktop data search

- 2.1 Hampshire Bat Group (HBG) (HBG, 2024) was contacted to provide any records of bats and any bat roosts within a 2km radius of the application site. These records were used to inform the assessment of the site in its potential to support roosting bats and identifying any potential cumulative impacts on bats from the proposed development.

Preliminary Roost Appraisal (PRA)

- 2.2 Natural England class 1 licensed bat ecologist Sophie Morris and assistant ecologist Georgia Linter undertook the PRA of the property on site. Timing and weather conditions for the survey are provided in the table below:

Survey date	Time of survey	Surveyor(s)	Equipment used	Weather conditions		
23/01/2024	11:00am	Sophie Morris and Georgia Linter	High-powered torch, mirrors, sealable bags, FFP3 face masks, gloves, extendable ladder, endoscope, binoculars	Temp:	Okta cloud cover:	Beaufort wind force:
				9°C	8/8	4/12

- 2.3 The survey was undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Good Practice Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2023). A thorough search for evidence of bats was undertaken in any internal loft spaces or voids and on any external features of the building, notably any windowsills, walls, floors and flat surfaces. Evidence of roosting bats include:
- Presence of live/dead bats;
 - Bat droppings - distinguished from rat/mouse droppings by their crumbly texture;
 - Staining from fur around access points; and
 - The presence of feeding remains, such as insect wings and casings.
- 2.4 The building was identified as a 'confirmed' bat roost if evidence of roosting bats was recorded. If bat droppings were present, a sample of droppings were collected using sealable bags and sent to Swift Ecology Ltd for DNA analysis to confirm the species of bat present.
- 2.5 All ecologists who conduct PRA surveys have had training in working at heights, manual handling, in-house training by a suitably experienced person in the use of ladders and emergency first aid at work to ensure legislation is being followed.

- 2.6 Most native bats in the UK are crevice-dwelling species, with bats roosting in remote areas, such as between tiles and membrane, behind cladding, at wall tops, in cavities, soffits and behind lead flashing, to name a few examples. Evidence of these species is often concealed and/or inaccessible due to the remote nature of the roost. Therefore, where no evidence of roosting bats was recorded, an assessment on the availability of potential roosting areas and bat access points around the building was, as well as the quality/availability of surrounding bat habitat, was conducted. The building was then assigned a category based on a sliding scale of 'none' to 'high potential', in accordance with the BCT Guidelines (Collins, 2023):

Bat roosting potential	Description
'High'	A structure with one of more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis & potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions (temperature, humidity, height above ground level, adverse light levels, or high levels of disturbance), and surrounding habitat. The structure has the potential to support high conservation status roosts for example maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation sites.
'Moderate'	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions (temperature, humidity, height above ground level, adverse light levels, or high levels of disturbance), and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity & hibernation and this is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence if confirmed via the PRA).
'Low'	The building features one or more potential roosting features that could be used by bats opportunistically at any time of year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions (temperature, humidity, height above ground level, adverse light levels, or high levels of disturbance) and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a larger number of bats.
'Negligible'	There are no obvious habitat features likely to be used by bats, however there is a small element of uncertainty as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion. (*negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute), but it is unlikely that they would (due to another attribute).

'None'

No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).

Survey limitations

Preliminary Roost Appraisal (PRA) – property survey

- 2.7 Potential evidence of crevice-dwelling bats may have been missed due to the nature and remote location of potential roosts. However, binoculars were used to identify any potential bat droppings on the exterior features of the building, where possible.
- 2.8 The site visit provides a 'snapshot' of the site and does not take into account seasonal variation. Species may have been overlooked due to the constraints of the season and time in which the survey was undertaken. A lack of evidence of a species does not confirm its absence from site, rather there was no indication of its presence at the time of survey.
- 2.9 The loft void was difficult to navigate due to the design of the truss. Therefore, the surveyors were unable search directly for evidence in small areas of the corners of the loft.

Reporting and data validity

- 2.10 The data within this report should not be seen as comprehensive. Data obtained from the HBG (HBG, 2024) data search is unlikely to provide a complete record of species within the search area. It is therefore possible that a bat species may occur within the vicinity that has not previously been identified within the data search.
- 2.11 This report is considered valid for 18 months from the survey date in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Advice note (CIEEM, 2019) for planning purposes only; and is only intended for the proposed plans outlined within this report. If any material changes to the building/site occur or if the nature and/or extent of the proposed development changes, an update visit to reassess the building will be required, as any conclusions provided herein may not be valid.

3. Results

Desktop data search

- 3.1 HBG (HBG, 2024) provided records of bats and bat roosts within a 2km radius of the site, and the results of which are provided below.

Species	Number of records	Most recent record	Closest record to site
Bechstein's bat	1	2016	Within 2km
Brown long-eared bat	40	2023	350m southwest
Common pipistrelle	120	2023	285m southeast
Daubenton's bat	4	2018	1.7km northeast
Leisler's bat	3	2022	1.3km northeast
Long-eared bat sp.	28	2022	330m north
Myotis sp.	32	2022	310m southwest
Nathusius's pipistrelle	9	2021	1.15km west
Natterer's bat	10	2017	1.3km southwest
Noctule	50	2022	230m southwest
Pipistrelle sp.	49	2022	230m northeast
Serotine	40	2022	310m southwest
Soprano pipistrelle	107	2023	225m southwest
Western barbastelle	1	2017	2km southeast
Whiskered / Brandt's bat	10	2017	310m southwest
Whiskered bat	8	2020	985m northwest

- 3.2 There are records for myotis bats (including Bechstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*), Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*), whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*) and Brandt's bat (*Myotis brandtii*)), long-eared bats (*Plecotus sp.*) and western barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) bat species as close as 310m from the site. As light-sensitive bats are known to be within the area, a 'bat-friendly' lighting strategy is detailed in Section 4 of this report.

Preliminary Roost Appraisal (PRA)

Building description

- 3.3 A description of the building surveyed for roosting bats is provided in the table below and photographs of the building are provided in Appendix C:

Building	Description
House ('B1')	- The property comprises a rendered brick-built house. - The roof is pitched and constructed from slates. - The soffits, fascia's, window and door frames are constructed from uPVC. - Two internal chimneys are present with lead flashing. - A single storey extension is present on the western elevation with a pitched roof and uPVC bargeboards. - A single-storey extension with a hipped roof is present on the western elevation with slates. - One internal loft void is present within the house and a description of which is provided below:

	- The loft void is 'T' shaped. The section running from east to west measures approximately; 14.5m in length, 4m in width and 2.2m in height to the apex. The section running from north to south measures approximately; 4.5m in length, 2.1m in width and 1.2 in height to the apex. - The roof is lined with polyisocyanurate (PIR) insulation. - The loft void is constructed from a full truss, purlins and support struts with a wooden ridge beam present. - Fibreglass insulation is present. - A water tank is present. - The loft void is used for storage. - Mouse droppings and cobwebbing were present.	
	Potential access points:	Potential roosting areas:
	- No potential ingress points and no suitable gaps or roosting provisions were noted.	- No potential roosting provisions were present, no external crevices were noted.
	Evidence of bats recorded:	
	- No evidence of bats was recorded within or around the building.	
	DNA analysis of dropping sample (as tested by Swift Ecology Ltd):	
	- N/A	
	Roost status / potential of the building for bats:	
'Negligible potential' for roosting bats		

- 3.4 The building was assessed and was deemed to hold 'negligible potential' for roosting bats in line with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Good Practice Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2023); this was due to a lack of potential bat roosting provisions and/or bat access points around the building's exterior. Roosting bats are not considered to be impacted by the proposed works for "second floor extension and remodelling of the existing exterior, following the removal of the existing roof". Further details regarding the validity of this report are provided in Section 4 below.

Other species – hedgehogs and great crested newts

- 3.5 Hedgehogs and great-crested newts (GCN) are known to be present within proximity of the site boundaries and there is the potential for individuals to be impacted during the construction works. A mitigation strategy has been provided in Section 4 to protect these species during the works stage.

4. Conclusions, mitigation and biodiversity enhancements

Conclusions on roosting bats

- 4.1 The PRA of Hacketts, Southampton was undertaken, and the building was considered to hold 'negligible potential' for roosting bats due to a lack of suitable bat roosting provisions and potential access points around the property. Roosting bats are not considered to be impacted as part of the proposed works and therefore no further action is recommended in relation to the *"second floor extension and remodelling of the existing exterior, following the removal of the existing roof"*.
- 4.2 It must be noted that the PRA provides a 'snapshot' of the conditions at the time of survey and does not account for seasonal changes. It is always possible for bat species to ingress at any point in the future, and therefore it is recommended that if 18 months pass and no works have been undertaken, and/or if the condition of the building changes, an update PRA is undertaken to assess whether the potential of the building to support roosting bats has altered.
- 4.3 In the unlikely event bat(s) are encountered at any stage, work will cease and Natural England or a suitably qualified bat ecologist must be sought for advice by the applicant/landowner. The applicant must be aware of the severe penalties associated with bat crimes and their legal obligation to report this information.
- 4.4 In the event a bat is discovered, the nature of the advice will concern allowing the bat(s) to leave on their own accord or waiting for a licensed person to remove the bat(s). A bat licence may then be deemed necessary following the necessary survey work. **All building contractors/roofers are explicitly forbidden from handling bats or interfering with bats in any way.**

Foraging and commuting bats

- 4.5 The site likely supports commuting and foraging bats and the following luminaire specifications must be adhered to for new lighting around the site and is based on the 'Bats and Artificial Lighting At Night' Guidance Note BN08/23 (BCT & ILP, 2023):
 - Preferably, no external light fixtures will be installed. If external lighting is required, this will be limited and only installed where required for safety purposes. No external luminaires will be installed where these will cast light spill onto surrounding vegetation such as mature trees.
 - All luminaires will lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources will not be used.

- LED luminaires only will be used due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability.
- A warm white light source (2700Kelvin or lower) will be adopted to reduce blue light component.
- Light sources will feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats (Stone, 2012).
- Internal luminaires will be recessed only (as opposed to using a pendant fitting) where installed in proximity to windows to reduce glare and light spill.
- Column heights must be carefully considered to minimise light spill and glare visibility. This must be balanced with the potential for increased numbers of columns and upward light reflectance.
- Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio, and with good optical control, will be used.
- Luminaires must always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
- External security lighting will be set on motion sensors and set to a 1 minute timer.
- Bollard or low-level downward-directional luminaires will not be installed. This is due to a considerable range of issues, such as unacceptable glare, poor illumination efficiency, unacceptable upward light output, and increased upward light scatter from surfaces.
- Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed. However, due to the lensing and fine cut-off control of the beam inherent in modern LED luminaires, the effect of cowls and baffles is often far less than anticipated and must not be relied upon solely.

Other species – hedgehogs and great-crested newts

4.6 Hedgehogs and GCN are known to be present within proximity to the site boundary and may be impacted during the construction stage of the proposed works. The following mitigation strategy has been provided and must be adhered to ensure species are not harmed:

- Any stored material on site must be located exclusively on hardstanding and on pallets to ensure there is adequate ground clearance to prevent individuals from utilising the material and potentially becoming harmed. Any stored material must also be kept as far away as reasonably possible from any hedgerows, grassland, or any other habitats on site.

- Any construction waste must be transported off site immediately or stored in a skip and must not be stored where wild animals could access these products, this will reduce the chance of hedgehogs and GCN commuting and utilising the material.
- No fires are to be lit on site to ensure that species are not harmed during the burning of disused material.

Biodiversity enhancement

- 4.7 To comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the local planning policy two 'Woodstone Build-in Invisible Swift Boxes' (<https://www.nhbs.com/woodstone-build-in-invisible-swift-box>) or similar approved will be installed on the eastern elevation as close to the eaves as possible as shown in Appendix D.

5. References

Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) and Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2023). Bats and Artificial Lighting At Night' Guidance Note BN08/23. Accessed from:

CIEEM (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management) (2017). Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (second edition). Accessed from: <https://cieem.net/resource/guidelines-for-ecological-report-writing/>

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Collins, J (ed) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professionals Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2005). Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System.

Eastleigh Borough Council (2022). Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036).

Hampshire Bat Group (HBG) (2024). Hacketts, High Street, Bursledon, SP31 8DL - bats only data search 2km radius.

JNCC (The Joint Nature Conservation Committee) (2016). UK BAP priority terrestrial mammal species.

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

Stone, E.L., Jones, G., Harris, S. (2012). Conserving energy at a cost to biodiversity? Impacts of LED lighting on bats. Glob. Change Biol. 18, 2458–2465

Appendix A: Proposed plans



Appendix B: – Relevant legislation and planning policy

Legislation and UK BAP priority bat species

Legislation

In England, all bats are legally protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended). Additionally, all bats are fully protected under Annex IV of the EC Habitats and Species Directive (1992), which is transposed into UK law under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

The legislation protects bats from many activities and acts, including to:

1. Deliberately take, injure or kill a wild bat.
2. Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturbing a group of bats.
3. Destroy or damage a place used by bats for breeding or roosts (even if bats are not occupying them at the time).
4. Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
5. Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat species found in the wild in the EU (dead or alive) or any part of a bat.

UK BAP priority bat species

Several species are listed under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) (JNCC, 2016) as priority species due to their vulnerability or rarity as listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006), and Section 40 places a duty on all public authorities to conserve biodiversity.

These include bats including barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*), Bechstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*), brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), both species of horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus spp.*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*).

National and local policy

NPPF – The National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. In the context of this report, Section 15 of NPPF is relevant and applicable, Section 15 states:

'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'

New developments and projects are supported where plans promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue measurable net gains for biodiversity.

To ensure this application is compliant with Section 15 of NPPF, ecological enhancements are required as part of the project/development.

The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan

The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (Eastleigh Borough Council, 2022) Policy DM11 'Nature Conservation' states:

'Development will not be permitted if it is likely (either individually or in combination with other developments) to have a direct or indirect adverse effect on priority habitats, protected or priority species, or on the local ecological network unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a. there are no alternative solutions;*
- b. the adverse effects are unavoidable;*
- c. measures are taken to mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects;*
- d. there is an overall biodiversity net gain; and*

if there are any residual adverse effects, the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the adverse effects on priority habitats, priority and protected species, and the local ecological network.'

'It is the applicant's/landowner's responsibility to ensure that the proposed development proceeds in full compliance with this report and/or any update version report thereafter, that works are undertaken lawfully, in compliance with national and local policy, and in accordance with all conditions of the obtained planning consent.

Appendix C: Photographs



Photo 1: Rear elevation.



Photo 2: Rear elevation – single-storey extension.



Photo 3: Rear and side elevation.



Photo 4: Side elevation.



Photo 5: Front elevation.

Appendix D: Biodiversity enhancements

Two 'Woodstone Build-in Invisible Swift Boxes' or similar approved will be installed on the eastern elevation as close to the eaves as possible.



2 Proposed East
1 : 100