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BAT & NESTING BIRD SURVEY

at

Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL9 5AF

for

Gascoyne Holdings Limited

20 October 2021

ECO_750



Ecoscope Ltd.

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SUMMARY:

An evening bat emergence survey was carried out on the 15th September 2021 on a brick built structure comprising of a row of commercial shop units on the ground floor and residential flats on the upper floor at the Northern end of Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL9 5AF.

Four surveyors using handheld and static bat monitoring equipment, including night vision cameras recorded very little bat activity except for the southeast corner where bats commuted through the gap. Feeding activity was recorded over the garden area around the mature trees in the square adjacent to the south of the structure. No bat activity was recorded to the North of the building over the large carpark area.

No bats were seen emerging from the building. Survey work was undertaken slightly out of season (September) a rationale for deviation from BCT guidance is provided. Enhancement and avoidance measures are proposed. No further survey is recommended.

Document Issue Date: *Wednesday, 20 October 2021*

Approved by: Mr. Stuart Kato M.Sc., MCIEEM

Prepared by: Miss Kira Lovatt & Mr Peter Oakenfull ACIEEM

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Description of Brief/Purpose of study

1.1.1 Gascoyne Holdings Limited has commissioned Ecoscope, Ecological Consultants; to carry out a single evening emergence survey on one of their properties at the north end of Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield. AL9 5AF.

1.1.2 A building inspection survey of the structure for its suitability to support bat species gave the building a low suitability score this survey was carried out by a previous consultant. This report details the results of the evening emergence survey and should be read in conjunction with the findings of this previous building inspection report.

1.1.3 Following the guidance provided by the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM)¹ and local and national planning policy the report recommends compensation for potential losses and enhancements to achieve gains in the proposed development.

¹ [CIEEM-Environmental-Net-Gain-Principles-Final-July2021.pdf](#)

2. METHOD

2.1 Field survey

- 2.2.1 An evening bat emergence survey was carried out on the 15th September 2021 on a brick built structure comprising of a row of commercial shop units on the ground floor and residential flats on the upper floor at the Northern end of Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL95AF
- 2.2.2 Four surveyors using handheld and static bat monitoring equipment, including night vision cameras undertook the evening emergence survey which complied with BCT guidelines (exception detailed below).
- 2.2.3 BCT Good Practice Guidelines² note that for a building considered to be low suitability a single visit is acceptable to indicate a negative result. However, this survey should take place before the end of August. This was not possible in this case due to project schedule constraints. We consider that a deviation from the recommendations is justifiable in this occasion as high temperatures continued into the first two weeks into September with a peak of approximately 26°C. The average temperature in the survey week was approximately 16°C with a minimum night temperature of around 12°C.
- 2.2.4 Our surveyors observed bats foraging locally and activity was high. Although September is a sub optimal month to record maternity colonies, it is a good month to record transitional roosts which a low suitability building is more likely to be used for. As such we consider that the survey effort and timing of the survey is acceptable.
- 2.2.5 The survey was undertaken by the staff listed below using the following survey equipment. Surveyors were positioned as shown in Figure 1.

Mr P. Oakenfull (class registration number 2018-34053-CLS-CLS Survey Level 2)
Peersonic RPA2 full spectrum hand unit

² Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

Hikmicro Owl thermal camera

Sony Handycam with additional infrared night vision lighting

Echo Meter Touch 2 PRO

Mr R Chapman (class registration number **No** 2018-002291 CLS-CLS Survey level 2)

Peersonic RPA2 full spectrum hand unit

Sony Handycam with additional infrared night vision lighting

Echo Meter Touch 2 PRO

Ms Katie Dalton (class registration number 2019-42914-CLS-CLS).

Echo Meter Touch 2 PROs

Canon XA25 IR video camera with IR HD monitor

Ms Rosie Softley – bat surveyor with ELMAW Consulting

Echo Meter Touch 2 PROs

Canon XA10 IR video camera with IR HD monitor



Figure 1. Showing the building in the locality and the surveyor position

3. RESULTS

3.1 Building description

- 3.1.1 Full description of the building is provided in the Preliminary Roost Inspection report submitted alongside this application.
- 3.1.2 The structure is a detached building that comprises of a row of commercial properties on the ground floor and residential flats and sits at the northern end of Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield within dense urban features. All the units except for one retail unit were empty at the time of the survey.
- 3.1.3 To the north is a large carpark area with small hedges and ornamental landscape trees. To the south there is an area of amenity grass with raised beds that are planted with low shrubs and herbaceous plants. There are two large mature trees growing within the area grassland.
- 3.1.4 The square is approximately 0.2 hectares and is surrounded by similar two storey properties including offices, residential flats, and shop units.
- 3.1.5 The west end of the survey building surveyed has a narrow footway that separates it from a large building that is currently under refurbishment.
- 3.1.6 The east end of the survey building has a footway and adjacent to the rear gardens

3.2 Emergence survey results

- 3.2.1 No emergence from the building was recorded by any of the four surveyors present. The survey sheets are presented in **Appendix II**.
- 3.2.2 No emergence from the building was recorded by any of the four surveyors that were positioned with good views on each corner of the structure.

- 3.3.3 The two surveyors positioned on the north side failed to record any bat contacts during the survey that started 15 minutes before sunset and ended 70 mins after sunset. The main activity was recorded by the surveyor on the southwest corner positioned where the footway opens into the square.
- 3.3.4 The first bat, a common pipistrelle was recorded at 21 minutes after sunset, and it entered the site from over the gardens to the east and began feeding around the trees in the square. Common pipistrelle was the only species recorded over the site.
- 3.3.5 The record sheet for this position shows the level of activity throughout the survey and up to two common pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) were present. Activity was mainly feeding with bats passing through the gap, too and from the gardens.
- 3.3.6 The surveyor on the southwest corner failed to see any bats but did record activity. This survey position had good views of the structure but was very close to a large tree and its canopy only left a small gap past the adjacent building and restricted any views of the square.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Summary of results

- 4.1.2 No bats were seen emerging from the building. A low level of bat foraging and commuting by Common Pipistrelle was noted.
- 4.1.3 No information was gathered which would indicate that the building is in use as a bat roost.
- 4.1.4 The construction materials and the condition of the building were considered low suitability for roosting bats and the result of this survey has confirmed this. The older and historic properties that are found to the east would provide more roosting opportunity and the large rural estate of Hatfield Park with its mosaic of habitats offers far greater foraging opportunities.

4.2 Risk and impact assessment (without mitigation)

- 4.2.1 Inappropriate development has the potential to alter foraging and flight paths of bat species through light pollution. This risk is of occurrence is **medium**, impact would be **Medium** at a **local** scale.
- 4.2.2 The building is suitable for use as a nesting location for common passerine birds, although none were observed. Inappropriate works could result in the destruction of an active nest which is a criminal offence. The risk of this occurring without mitigation is **medium**, impact would be **high** at a **local** scale.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Mitigation Strategy

4.1.1. Risk is reduced by implementation of a hierarchy of strategies:

- Avoidance
- Protection
- Reduction
- Enhancement
- Mitigation

4.1.2 Only those relevant to the specified project will be considered.

5.2 Avoidance

5.2.1 Any works which may result in disturbance to a bird nest (i.e. site clearance or removal of roofing materials such as soffit or barge boards) must take place outside the bird nesting season which runs from March to September inclusive. If this is not possible the area should be surveyed by an experienced ornithologist. If any birds are recorded nesting any work which may affect fledging must cease until the last chick of the last brood had fledged.

5.2.2 Any external lighting installed must comply with Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial lighting published in 2018 by the Institution of Lighting professionals and the Bat Conservation Trust. This document is freely available on-line.

5.3 Mitigation & Enhancement

5.3.1 No mitigation is required

5.3.2 To comply with local and national planning policy we recommend that a single Beaumaris Woodstone bat box (available from NHBS on-line) is installed on the Eastern gable close to the apex.

6. REVISED RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1.1 Following implementation of the suggested measures we consider that the project will have an overall **LOW** level of impact on the **LOCAL** area.
- 6.1.2 As with any survey the results are a snapshot in time. Bats are wild, itinerant animals and can be difficult to detect in low numbers. We therefore recommend that work proceeds with caution. In the unlikely event of bats being discovered during works all work which may affect a potential roost must cease until advice from Ecoscope / Natural England has been sought.

APPENDIX I LEGISLATION

Bats

In Britain, all bat species and their roosts are legally protected in both domestic (the Wildlife & Countryside Act England & Wales 1981 – as amended) and international (The Habitats Directive 1992 / Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended) legislation, whereby it is an offence to:

- Deliberately take , injure or kill a wild bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats.
- Damage or destroy a place used by bats for breeding or resting (roosts) (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat of a species found in the wild in the EU (dead or alive) or any part of a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

Birds

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is thus an offence (with certain exceptions) to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.
- Have in one's possession or control any wild bird, dead or alive, or any part of a wild bird, which has been taken in contravention of the Act.
- Have in one's possession or control any egg or part of an egg which has been taken in contravention of the Act.
- Use traps or similar items to kill, injure or take wild birds.
- Have in one's possession or control any bird of a species occurring on Schedule 4 of the Act unless registered, and in most cases ringed, in accordance with the Secretary of State's regulations in the Act's schedules.

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

APPENDIX II SURVEY SHEETS.



Bat Emergence/Re-entry Survey Recording Form 80

Name of Site: OLD HAYFIELD		Surveyor's Position: PETER CAULFIELD	
Date: 15TH SEPTEMBER 2021			
Weather conditions: HIGH LIGHT CLOUD N^o WIND			
Temperature (start): 17.2^oC		Temperature (end): 15.9^oC	
Light conditions: GOOD		Insects flying? YES	
Sunset time: 19-15		Audio Recording started at:	
Sunrise time:		HUK MICRO BOWTHERMAL CAM 8-54	
Time		Details of Bat Activity	
		PEELSONIC R 18-55	
		ECHOMETER TOUCH PRO 19-00	
①	19-36	45 PIP AROUND EAST END BUILDING → SOUTH THROUGH SQUARE	
	19-40	45 PIP NOT SEEN. →	
	19-41	45 PIP FEEDING AROUND TREES IN SQUARE	
②	19-42	45 PIP	
③	19-44	45 PIP OVER WALL EAST - FEED AROUND TREES	
④	19-46	45 PIP AROUND EAST END - FEEDING AROUND TREES	
⑤	19-48	V L " " " " " " " "	
⑥	19-55	" " " " " " " "	
	19-55	45 PIP CONTACTS FEEDING AROUND TREES 2 BATS PRESENT	
	↓		
	20-00		
⑦	20-12	45 PIP AROUND EAST END → FEEDING AROUND TREES 2 BATS	
	↓		
	20-25	" " " " " " " " SURVEY END.	
		NO EMERGENCE FROM BUILDING	



x

R CHAPMAN

Name of Site: OLD HATFIELD		Surveyor's Position: as x on plan	
Date: 15-09-2021			
Weather conditions: LIGHT CLOUD GENTLE BREEZE			
Temperature (start): 16°		Temperature (end):	
Light conditions: GOOD		Insects flying? YES	
Sunset time:		Audio Recording started at:	
Sunrise time:			
Time	Details of Bat Activity		
19:50	P 45 NOT SEEN		
	NO EMERGENCE FROM BUILDING		

