

Mitigation and Enhancement Measures Statement in relation to bat species

Halsnead Farm

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Prepared for: Starship Grp/Onward Homes
Version 1

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1.0 Background

1.1 Location and context

The site is located on the southern boundary of the M62 and north of Symmetry Park. The survey area consisted of modified grassland (g4), urban introduced shrub (u-1160), urban buildings and sealed surfaces (u1b), other woodland (mixed) and urban trees.

1.2 Bat emergence surveys and roost type

The Bat Roost Assessment indicates in section 5.0:

“Evidence of bat (segmented droppings, feeding remains and possible urine staining on the battens) was found in the farmhouse. The Farmhouse is therefore a confirmed bat roost.

B1 is a low potential building, a single emergence survey required. B2 is a moderate potential due to the number of PRF that were found during survey”.

The bat surveys report found the following.

No bats emerged from B1 or B2.

Farmhouse. 24.07.2025 (Visit 2 from 3). A single Soprano pipistrelle bat was observed to emerge at wall-top height near the Security Camera on the Eastern face of the House.

One species of bat (Soprano Pipistrelle) was visually seen to emerge from the main farmhouse building using a single-entry point position, a soprano day roost within the farmhouse building. Additionally, eDNA analysis confirms brown long-eared (BLE) and common pipistrelle bats are roosting in the farmhouse in low numbers.

The surveys have confirmed bat species, numbers of animals, roost location, and exit/entry points to the roosts. The roost sites can be reliably classified as external day roost sites, given the number of bats and the various confirmed roost positions being used.

2.0 Development proposals and impact

2.1 The proposed development site consists of demolition of the farmhouse.

2.2 Impact

The short-term impact of construction shall be destruction of the roost site and provision of opportunities to incorporate replacement roosts into the final structure. There are no other impacts such as increased disturbance considered to apply as the site will continue be used in much the same manner.

Without considering the appropriate mitigation development will remove a day bat roost used by a local bat population of common species.

2.2.1 Scale of impact

In accordance with Table 3.2 Assessing the importance of roosts* this site is a non-breeding day roost (conservation status / distribution) and is important at the site / local level because the roost types are widespread in all / many geographies.

**Reference; Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.*

3.0 Avoidance and mitigation measures

3.1 Avoidance Measures

Several avoidance measures are recommended to minimise the disturbance to the bats during the construction phase of the works and ensure that all legislation is adhered to.

Licensing and auditing will be required, and a Natural England (NE) and a European Protected Species Bat License is needed. This is required for demolition to proceed lawfully. For such a license to be applied for the approved planning permission will be needed and even with approved planning permission no demolition works can go ahead. Demolition works can

only go ahead when the license is obtained and even then, they can only be implemented by the license holder and / or accredited agents. In this case given bats are often found on all elevations it will be necessary for the license holder to carry out works on all four elevations and roof.

The licensed ecologist shall carry out a pre-start check using a Mobile Elevated Working Platform (MEWP) and carry out the actual roost demolitions him/herself. All personnel involved in the demolition works shall be briefed by the ecologist as to the implications of bat presence and constraints specific to this scheme.

3.2 Mitigation for roost loss to include artificial roost creation, details of construction, installation, lighting, and monitoring details.

The key to roost mitigation is aiming to mimic the original conditions and function of the roost site with species specific features relative to common pipistrelle. The aim of mitigation shall be no net loss of roosts.

The roosting needs of the species are a small access hole and crevice habitat within the roost with connected landscape for commuting and foraging. Crawl in access is also a feature of successful mitigation design for generalist and crevice dwelling bat species present on the site.

The roost mitigation design shall incorporate four enclosed bat boxes within all four elevations of the garage and main proposed house, installed at 6-8m in height mounted within the masonry as shown in appendix 2. Propriety bat boxes such as the Ibstock enclosed bat box or Schwegler Bat Access Panel 1FE are to be used as described in Designing for Biodiversity second edition page 36.

In addition, 1no. Schwegler 2F bat boxes will be inserted onto an appropriate tree as a permanent bat box for any animal translocations during licensed demolition and will be retained in perpetuity for the purposes of a permanent mitigation feature for Brown Long Ear species.

The Ibstock artificial roost sites need appropriate materials that bats can grip onto, such as masonry, immediately below the artificial roost. The proposed artificial roost sites are appropriate to the roost being used and its installation shall be overseen by bat consultants.

There is an overall increase in the number of roost sites (84no.) from those that have been identified on survey (1no.)

A management plan will be required for the development license stating ownership/sole responsibility for future maintenance, allowing continued access and ensuring that no lighting will be installed that directly impacts on the roost site or around the elevations of the roost sites.

4.0 Enhancement measures

Under National Planning Policy Framework there is a requirement to improve existing environment through enhancement. This will be achieved by habitat improvement through planting and where possible, a suitably lit landscape to ensure the area can sustain the small existing local pipistrelle population. The use of native species is highly recommended throughout the landscape scheme as such species provide a higher insect biomass than non-native plant species.

Research has found that lighting can cause considerable disturbances to bats and may interfere with bat navigation during nocturnal commuting flights to suitable feeding sites. The context of the development and its requirements for lighting and Anti-Terror security limit a site wide lighting plan specific to bats. A more proportionate approach given the scale of impact to bats is to include measures to reduce lighting impact in the vicinity of artificial roosts and where possible within the wider site and landscape areas.

The redevelopment can seek where possible to ensure that lighting used is appropriately designed to ensure minimal light spill particularly in the immediate vicinity of the mitigation positions. This could be achieved by:

- ☐ Ensuring lights are only erected where they are needed, illuminated only during the time period that they will be used, and at levels that enhance visibility.
- ☐ Using narrow spectrum bulbs, to lower the range of species affected by lighting, and avoiding the use of light sources that emit ultraviolet.
- ☐ Ensuring that there are no bare bulbs or lights that point upwards.
- ☐ Ensuring that the spread of light is kept near to or below the horizontal.
- ☐ Ensuring only low level lighting that is as directional as possible is provided and that light emitted from these fixtures is below 3 lux at ground level.
- ☐ Where possible, external lights should comprise sensor activated lamps (Jones 2000; BCT & ILE 2008) so that lights are only operational when they are needed.

5.0 Conclusions and recommendations

If these recommendations and measures are followed the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) and Continued Ecological Functionality (CEF) of the bats on this site will be unaffected by the proposed developments. This is because the provision of suitable mitigation roosting sites shall be installed, and enhancements shall provide an overall improvement in foraging and roosting facilities for bats. There shall be an overall increase in the amount of roost sites available to roosting bats.

Appendix One – Bat Mitigation plan