



Springfield Stables, Garnetts Lane, Tarbock Green

Bat Scoping Survey Report

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Introduction

1.1 Background

Kingdom Ecology have carried out an initial bat scoping survey of a section of outbuilding located at Springfield Stables, Garnetts Lane, Tarbock Green, Knowsley, L35 1QN (National Grid Reference SJ 46974 86485). Proposals are to demolish part of the outbuilding and to construct a new bungalow at the site.

The latest field surveys were undertaken on 27th June 2025. Surveys were carried out by Richard Roe (BSc, MSc, MIEEM, CEnv). Richard has extensive experience of undertaking bat surveys as a professional ecological consultant with over twenty years' experience. Richard is also a licensed bat worker (Level 4 Bat Class Licence).

Previous Bat Scoping Surveys were undertaken by David Bell of Sensible Ecological Survey Solutions (SESS) in 2024 and 2025. David has extensive experience of carrying out ecological surveys as a professional ecologist with over 40 years. However, David does not hold a Natural England Bat Licence, therefore this survey was considered inadmissible for planning. Nevertheless, this latest survey considers the previous SESS survey findings to provide an assessment of the site.

1.2 Purpose of Report

This report provides and outlines the findings of field surveys undertaken at the site in June 2025.

The June 2025 field surveys examined habitats present with a focus on the existing buildings' suitability to support roosting bats. Survey also examined the suitability of the site to support breeding birds. Survey comprised of a daytime assessment examining the interior and exterior of the buildings.

Following a description of the survey findings and an evaluation of habitats at the site, the report goes on to make recommendations for further works, mitigation and ecological enhancement measures where relevant.

1.3 Protected Species Legislation

1.3.1 Bats

All British bat species are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and through their inclusion in Schedule II of the Habitats Regulations 2010 which transpose Annex II of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora ("EC Habitats Directive") which defines European protected species of animals.

British bats species are afforded further protection by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Taken together, this legislation makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats.
- Deliberately disturb bats, whether at roost or not.
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts.
- Possess or transport bats, unless acquired legally.
- Sell, barter or exchange bats.

A bat roost is interpreted as “any structure or place, which any wild bat uses for shelter or protection.” (Bat Conservation Trust 2023¹). A bat roost is protected whether or not bats are present at the time.

All species of British bat are considered a European Protected Species (EPS). The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations (2010) provide derogation against certain offences which could potentially affect an EPS through the EPS Licensing system.

1.3.2 Birds

All wild birds in England and Wales are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird, or take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or its eggs.

¹ Bat Conservation Trust (2023) ‘Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition’

2 Field Survey Methods

2.1 Survey Aims and Objectives

Survey comprised of a site visit and inspection of the affected building. The survey aim was to assess the site as to its suitability to support roosting bats and to identify suitable habitats for any other protected species including breeding birds and barn owl.

Survey also aimed to identify opportunities for ecological enhancement and to inform potential mitigation measures if required to ameliorate any negative impacts attributable to the proposed works.

2.2 Survey Methods

2.2.1 Daytime Bat Inspection

The building was assessed as to their suitability to support bats following standard methodologies prescribed in English Nature's *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (Mitchell-Jones 2004)² and the Bat Conservation Trust's *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines* 4th Edition (BCT 2023)³.

Survey, comprising of an inspection of the interior and exterior of the building, was undertaken during daylight conditions using binoculars, endoscope, aerial drone and a high-powered torch. The survey was undertaken during daylight hours on the 27th June 2025.

In addition to searching for evidence of an actual bat roost the survey also aimed to assess the suitability of the building to support bats and consequently the likelihood of a bat roost being present but with no obvious field signs.

Survey assessed the building's roost suitability by examining structural features and the surrounding habitat. Structural features that will influence the suitability of a building to support roosting bats include the presence of a roof void; access points into a building including gaps beneath barge boards, gaps under lead flashing, gaps within masonry, loose tiles etc, complexity of any roof void, daytime light levels in roof void etc.

² Mitchell-Jones, A.J. 2004. *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

³ Bat Conservation Trust (2023) '*Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines* 4th Edition'

Important habitat features surrounding the structures which could influence roost potential include: whether the structure is in a semi-rural or parkland location, proximity to a significant linear feature (e.g. watercourse, mature hedgerow, wooded lane) or an area of woodland etc.

Taking account of these architectural and habitat features, the building was assigned a level of roost suitability based upon professional judgement.

3 Survey Results

3.1 Site Description

The study site comprises of the southern half of an existing stable building located at Springfield Stables. The building as a whole, extends to approximately 55 m, with the just a 30 m section of the southern half of the building proposed for demolition. The northern half of the building would be retained and continue to be used for stabling.

The building is likely to be of mid 20th century origin and comprises of a long, timber framed structure with timber panelled walls, sections of breezeblock gable wall and a corrugated fibre cement roof. The building is approximately 4.5 m in height and 14 m in width.

The building is located within a rural setting with surrounding habitats comprising principally of horse grazed pasture plus the farmyard and other farm buildings associated with Springfield Stables.

The study site's location is shown in Figure 1 in the Appendix. Photographs of the site are also shown in the Appendix.

3.2 Bat Survey

The proposed development site comprises of the southern half of an existing stable building. This section of the building is currently used for storage.

The building is constructed of breezeblock with a wooden frame, wooden roof trusses, and a corrugated fibre cement panel roof with occasional corrugated Perspex skylights. The internal face of the roof is partially enclosed with chipboard. The building does not support a separate roof void space. The building is open to its full height and the roof does not have a ridge beam.

The building interior is relatively bright, with windows on each face. The southern gable wall has large holes around an external access door, providing potential access to the building interior for bats and birds and allowing further light to enter the building.

No obvious suitable potential that roosting features were identified within the building interior and no evidence of bat activity was identified. The likely that some bat droppings would have been captured on stored materials, if the building interior was in regular use by roosting or foraging bats.

There are two swallow nests present within the northern section of the building (outside of the proposed development area); however, no active swallow nests were identified within the proposed development area. There is evidence of previous swallow activity in the building, including splashes and droppings and old bird nests.

Externally, the building walls are clad in tightly fitted, overlapping wooden boarding and sheets of plyboard. The outer boarding is partially overgrown with cleavers, bramble, and great willowherb. The areas of boarding do not offer any obvious suitable bats roosting habitat.

The south-facing gable supports further overlapping wooden panelling. There are some minor crevices where some of this boarding has warped and decayed. However, the boarding provides a single skin with the rear of the boarding/internal face able to be observed and scrutinised from the interior of the outbuilding. The warped boarding does not provide access to any significant crevice roosting features. No obvious suitable potential bats roosting habitat was identified at the building's exterior.

No bat droppings or other bat field signs were identified either internally or externally.

Taking account of the survey findings, the building was assessed as offering a '**negligible**' bat roosting potential.

No evidence of barn owl activity was identified within the building.

3.3 Previous Survey Findings

Previous Bat Scoping Surveys were undertaken by David Bell of Sensible Ecological Survey Solutions in 2024 and 2025. Full details can be found within the SESS report "Springfield Stables, Garnetts Lane, Tarbock Green, Prescott- Buildings Protected Species Survey and Buildings Appraisal for Bat Roost Potential Report 2024'

In summary, the SESS assessment also considered the building to be of 'negligible' suitability for roosting bats.

In summary, the reason for this assessment included an absence of suitable external roosting features, intact fibre cement roofing panels, and an absence of valuable internal roosting features owing to a lack of enclosed roof chambers.

Therefore, the findings of the SESS report concur with the findings of the Kingdom Ecology Bat Scoping Survey.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Summary

Kingdom Ecology have completed a Bat Scoping Survey of a section of outbuilding located at Springfield Stables.

In summary, the daytime inspection did not identify any field signs indicative of roosting bats.

Furthermore, the building was found to offer a '**negligible**' bat roosting potential, with no obvious potential bat roosting features identified. This finding concurs with previous surveys conducted by SESS in 2024 and 2025.

It is considered to be very unlikely that the site would support roosting bats.

4.2 Recommendations

Whilst the presence of roosting bats is considered to be very unlikely, it is nevertheless recommended that works are carried out in a careful manner, with the corrugated fibre cement roofing panels carefully removed by hand. If any evidence of roosting bats are found, works should immediately stop and an appropriately qualified ecologist should be contacted for further advice.

The building offers suitable nesting habitat for swallows and other common birds.

It is therefore recommended that any works to demolish the building avoid taking place during the breeding bird season (March- September inclusive). Where this is not possible, a check for nesting birds should be completed immediately prior to removal by an appropriately qualified ecologist.

4.3 Site Enhancements

It is recommended that the overall site be enhanced for bats and breeding birds. This can be achieved through the installation of bat boxes (recommended model Habibat 003 or similar) and sparrow and swift nest boxes (recommended models Schwegler Swift Brick or similar) into the proposed new bungalow. Swift bricks are also used by house sparrows and other small bird species so are considered a 'universal bird brick'.

The bat and bird boxes can be built into the brick walls of the proposed building so as to remain visually unobtrusive and to be permanently fixed in place.

The precise location, model and number of bat and bird boxes should be determined by an appropriately qualified ecologist.

5 Appendix

Figure 1- Study Site and Proposed Development Area



Photograph 1- View of west and south face of outbuilding



Photograph 2- North face of Outbuilding



Photograph 3- Interior of Outbuilding

