21 WOODS HILL, LIMPLEY STOKE

BAT AND BIRD BOX PLAN

October 2023

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Report Control Sheet

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Rev	***Date***	***Description***	***Prepared***	***Reviewed***	***Approved***
/	30/10/2023	Draft report sent to Client for comment.	EA	OC	OC
//	03/11/2023	Additional clarifications on installations added.	EA	OC	OC
///	09/11/2023	Final report issued to Client.	EA	OC	OC

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCOPE & PURPOSE

1.1.1. Collington Winter Environmental Ltd was commissioned by Mr Miles Engbarth to prepare a Bat and Bird Box Plan. The plan has been produced in support of the planning application at 21 Woods Hill, Limpley Stoke, Bath BA2 7GA. The proposed development involves extensions, alterations, and external works.

1.1.2. The author of this report is Emma Anderson MSc, Assistant Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd, and overseen by Olivia Collington BSc (Hons), MIEnvSc, CEnv. Director and Principal Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental. Olivia is highly experienced managing schemes and has produced many ecological reports to inform planning permission. Olivia holds a Class 1 Natural England Bat Licence and is experienced assessing sites for bat roosting potential.

1.2. LOCATION

1.2.1. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for the site location. The site location is number 21 Woods Hill, Limpley Stoke. A village located south of the city of Bath. Grid reference: ST 77996 60975.

Figure 1.1 Site Location



1.3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

1.3.1. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site was undertaken in May 2023 by Crossman Associates. This found the site to comprise the following habitats:

- Amenity grassland
- Ruderal and herb
- Scrub
- Trees
- Hedgerow
- Introduced shrub
- Hard-standing

1.3.2. The survey found the site to have potential to support roosting, foraging, and commuting bats, nesting birds, small mammals, and local herpetofauna.

1.3.3. The building on site was assessed as having low suitability for roosting bats. Therefore, in line with survey guidance published by the Bat Conservation Trust (2016), it was recommended that one evening emergence survey be undertaken between May and August inclusive.

1.3.4. In addition to the bat survey above, the PEA report recommended enhancements for the site. These included the incorporation of features for nesting birds, roosting bats, reptiles and amphibians, the sensitive clearance of vegetation in relation to birds and other wildlife, and the enforcement of an external lighting plan.

Nocturnal Bat Survey

1.3.5. A Preliminary Roost Assessment of the building on site was undertaken in May 2023 by Crossman Associates as part of the PEA. This found the main building to provide 'low' bat roosting potential, due to some cracks in the stonework on the southeast elevation. Therefore, one nocturnal emergence survey was recommended, and undertaken by Collington Winter Environmental in July 2023.

1.3.6. Limited bat activity was recorded during the survey, with common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) observed foraging or commuting in proximity of the building.

1.3.7. No bat roosts were located on site during the survey; therefore, no further licences or surveys are required to proceed with the proposed development.

1.4. OBJECTIVES

1.4.1. The objectives of the report are to provide the detail required as set out in Condition 3 to discharge the planning condition of the relevant planning application (reference: PL/2023/06251). Condition 3 states:

1.4.2. *"Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of bat roosts and nesting opportunities for birds shall be submitted to the local authority for approval. These details should be clearly shown on a site plan/technical elevation drawing. The approved details shall be implemented before occupation of the final works.*

REASON: To provide enhancement for biodiversity."

1.4.3. This report has been written with the view it can be used to aid site contractors in understanding works required as part of the planning approval.

2 SPECIES ENHANCEMENTS

2.1. BATS

2.1.1. A total of two bats boxes will be installed within the site to offer roosting opportunities for common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bats - species identified to be present within the local area. The condition specifies that bat roosts included within the development are necessary to discharge the condition.

2.1.2. The recommended bat box specification is Schwegler 2F Multipurpose bat box which is suitable for crevice dwelling bat species. A similar specification and brand of bat box may be used, if preferred.

Table 2.1 Bat Box Specifications and Numbers

Box Specification	No.
Improved Crevice Bat Box – double chamber Height of back panel: 335mm Internal height of roost chamber: 197mm External depth of roost chamber: 69mm External depth including roof overhang: 101mm External width: 166mm Weight: 1.4kg	2

2.1.3. The bat boxes will be installed on a tree in the northeastern corner of the site positioned between a south-east to south-western facing aspect, as this will provide additional heat throughout the day. Bats prefer to change roosts to benefit from varying ambient temperatures, so bat boxes are to be clustered in small groups (i.e. two boxes per tree stem). The boxes will not be installed near to artificial lighting, and locations with the least disturbance have been selected.

2.1.4. Care should be taken to make sure boxes are not angled in such a manner to allow rain to enter them. Boxes are to be affixed to vertical surfaces on retained trees at a minimum height of 4 m.

2.1.5. Bat boxes are considered self-cleaning and require minimal maintenance once installed. The boxes are made of hard-wearing material that is generally long-lasting. Bat boxes should be checked periodically (e.g., every two years) to assess their use and the condition of the boxes. Section 5 includes the maintenance schedule. If any boxes are identified as damaged or missing, they are to be replaced with a box of similar specification.

2.1.6. Only those holding the appropriate Natural England Class 2 bat licence may open and inspect these boxes. It is an offence for anyone without this licence to open a bat box. If a bat box becomes occupied by a bird the nest must be left in situ until after the bird nesting season.

2.2. BIRDS

2.2.1. The Ecological Appraisal (Crossman Associates, 2023) detailed areas of habitat that were assessed as suitable for nesting birds in relation to the trees and areas of shrub on site. House sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) were noted as a local species requiring particular emphasis, and a wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) was noted on site during the survey. As such, the following boxes have been selected to target specific species (see Table 2.2).

2.2.2. A total of two Schwegler Open-front nest boxes (or similar specification/brand)) are to be installed on retained mature trees at the southeast boundary within the site. These should be placed high (ideally between 3 – 5m) on the tree trunks to lessen potential disturbance.

2.2.3. A further two Vivara Pro Woodstone 32mm nest boxes (or similar specification/brand) are to be installed on the northeastern aspect of the building once construction has concluded, prior to occupation of the dwelling. These should be installed at the highest feasible point on the aspect, beneath the eaves/fascia boarding.

2.2.4. It is noted that security lighting is proposed on the northeast aspect at basement level. This lighting scheme has been formulated following guidance outlined in the Institute for Lighting Engineers document “Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lighting” (2005) and BCT’s “Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK” (2018) and will comprise downward-facing fixtures with integrated fittings to contain light spill. This means that use of the lighting feature will not at any time result in illumination of the nest boxes. Therefore, it is considered that the nest boxes will not be negatively impacted by the security lighting proposed.

2.2.5. Please see the Appendix for a diagram of the proposed locations of the bird boxes.

Table 2.2 Bird Box Specifications and Numbers

Box Specification	No.	Associated Species
Schwegler Open-front nest box Width: 17cm Height: 26cm Depth: 18cm Weight: 5.1kg	2	Pied wagtails (*Motacilla alba*), robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), and wren.
Vivara Pro Woodstone 32mm nest box (externally mounted) Entrance hole diameter: 32mm Width: 20cm Height: 31cm Length: 20cm Weight: 6.9kg	2	House sparrow, and nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*).

2.2.6. The bird boxes will be installed on aspects facing between northeast and northwest, where possible, with unrestricted access to the entrance holes. Bird boxes are most effective when positioned on a northeast to northwest facing aspect to prevent overheating during the summer nesting season. Care should be taken to make sure boxes are not angled in such a manner to allow rain to enter them. Nest boxes are to be affixed to vertical surfaces on retained trees at a minimum height of 3m.

2.2.7. The boxes will not be installed near to security lighting, locations with the least disturbance have been selected, and will be installed prior to the occupation of the selected dwellings the boxes are to be situated upon.

2.2.8. The following maintenance measures are to be completed, following the installation of the boxes:

- Bird boxes will require periodic checking and cleaning, (e.g. once every two years).
- Unhatched eggs may be removed legally between September and January and must then be disposed of.
- Disused nests must be removed and cleaned using boiling water to remove parasites. Boxes should be left to dry before replacing the lid. Insecticides and flea powders must not be used.
- If any boxes are identified as damaged or missing, they are to be replaced with a box of similar specification.

3 CONCLUSION

3.1.1. This plan has demonstrated that the requirements to discharge Condition 3 of the relevant application, have been met by demonstrating the following:

- A layout plan detailing where the roosting and nesting features are to be positioned.
- Specifications concerning the type of features to be used. Specifically targeting species associated with residential areas.

4 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bat Conservation Trust (2018). Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK: Bats and the Built Environment series.
- Collins, J. (ed) (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good practice Guidelines, 3rd Edition. The Bat Conservation Trust.
- Ecological Appraisal. Report ref: E1124.001. 2nd June 2023. Crossman Associates
- Nocturnal Bat Survey Report. Report ref: CW20-1048 RPT 001 R3. 21st July 2023. Collington Winter Environmental



Bat and Bird Box Locations
Date: 25.10.23

- 2x Schwegler Open-front nest boxes
- 2x Vivara Pro Woodstone 32mm nest boxes
- 2x Improved Crevice Bat Box – double chamber
- Existing trees to be retained
- Buildings
- Grassland
- Red line Boundary

Scale: 1:700

Drawn By: CW

Checked By: OC

Approved By: OC

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Client: Miles Engbarth

Site: 21 Woods Hill, Limpley Stoke, Bath BA2 7GA

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