



**PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL
AND BAT SURVEY REPORT**

**LAND ADJACENT TO 1 LOWER MARSH
SOUTHWICK
TROWBRIDGE
BA14 9PA**

JULY 25

ON BEHALF OF NIAMH CRONIN



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Authorisation

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It is company policy to share species records collected during our surveys with local biological records centres unless instructed otherwise by the client.

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. LC Ecological Services Limited was commissioned by Niamh Cronin to conduct a phase 1 bat survey on Land adjacent to 1 Lower Marsh, Southwick, Trowbridge, BA14 9PA (central OS grid reference: ST 83576 54846). The report has been prepared to support a planning application for the erection of a single dwelling.
- 1.2. A phase 1 bat survey entails a desk study and daytime bat walkover survey of the site to determine the suitability of the site for bats and identify any likely ecological constraints associated with the project and assess the need for any further surveys, in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust survey guidelines (2023).
- 1.3. The daytime bat walkover survey was undertaken on 16th April 2025. The development site comprises a vacant/derelict land and bramble scrub, there are no features on site suitable to support roosting bats.
- 1.4. The site is located within the yellow zone of Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy. Approval of permission in principle was granted by Wiltshire Council (PL/2024/08878) who included the following informative:

"The development of this site would result in an overall reduction of greenfield land within the yellow zone of the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy (TBMS), in- combination with other development. This stage 1 proposal has been subject to an HRA Appropriate Assessment which has concluded the development proposal would not result in significant effects, however the stated loss needs to be mitigated by a developer payment to be secured as a planning obligation that would require the applicant to enter into as 106 or Unilateral Undertaking to contribute towards habitat mitigation as detailed in Appendix 1 of the adopted Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy."
- 1.5. No further survey effort or mitigation is required, however a financial contribution as detailed in the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy and informed above is required and site enhancements for bats have been suggested.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. LC Ecological Services Limited (LCES) was commissioned by Niamh Cronin to conduct a phase 1 bat survey on Land adjacent to 1 Lower Marsh, Southwick, Trowbridge, BA14 9PA (central OS grid reference: ST 83576 54846). The report has been prepared to support a planning application for the erection of a single dwelling.
- 2.2. Section 4 of the report details the methodologies adopted and section 5 provides an account of the results. Section 6 provides information on the relevance of the results to the proposed development and presents appropriate measures of best practice.

3.0 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

- 3.1. All bat species are legally protected under Annex IV of the EC Habitats and Species Directive which is transposed into UK law via the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. All species of bat are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it an offence to:
 - Deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;
 - Deliberately disturb bats in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect:
 - i) the ability of any significant group of bats to survive, breed or rear or nurture their young; or
 - ii) the local distribution or abundance of bats;
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a roost;
 - Damage or destroy bat roosts; and
 - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
- 3.2. This legal protection means that where activities have the potential to impact on bats, the results of a bat survey and an appropriate mitigation strategy must be submitted to Natural England.
- 3.3. In addition, several species of bat including soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*), are UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species. BAPs set out policy for protecting and restoring priority species and habitats as part of the UK's response as signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity. BAPs operate at both a national and local level with priority species and habitats identified at a national level and a series of Local BAPs that identify ecological features of particular importance to a particular area of the country. The requirement to consider and contribute towards BAP targets was strengthened through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 3.4. The NPPF sets out the Government's vision for biodiversity in England with the broad aim that planning, construction, development and regeneration should maintain and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests. NPPF includes sections on legally protected species and sites.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

Desk study

- 4.1. The Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was used to provide information on any European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licences for bats within two kilometres of the site and Protected sites designated for their bat interest within the vicinity of the site.
- 4.2. Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) was contacted for bat records within two kilometres of the site.

Field study

- 4.3. A Daytime Bat Walkover Survey (DBW) was conducted on the 16th April 2025 by licensed ecologist Hannah Barlow (Natural England class 2 licence holder). The weather conditions at the time of the phase 1 survey were 10°C, wind 4-5/12 and 4-7/8 cloud cover with heavy showers and sunny spells.
- 4.4. The DBW of the development site assesses and records any habitat suitable for bats to roost, commute or forage both on site and in the surrounding area. This may include buildings or structures or trees that could be suitable for bats to roost in and habitats that could be suitable for bats to commute or forage in. An assessment was therefore made of the suitability of the proposed development site for bats based on the following scale:

Table 1: Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, from the Bat Conservation Trust 4th edition survey guidelines (2023)

Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting habitat in structures	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, conditions and surrounding habitat. They have potential to support maternity and/or hibernation roosts.	Continuous, high quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight paths and foraging such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees, woodland, tree lined water courses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.
Moderate	Buildings with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats but unlikely to support a high conservation status roost such as maternity or hibernation.	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for

Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting habitat in structures	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
		foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
Low	Buildings with one or more features suitable for roosting that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year, however they do not provide enough space, shelter, protection of appropriate conditions and/or surrounding suitable habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a larger number of bats.	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree or patch of scrub.
Negligible	No obvious habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats however a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats however a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
None	No features likely to be used by roosting bats at any time of the year.	No habitat features likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of year.

5.0 RESULTS

Desk study

5.1. The following granted EPSM licences were identified within a two kilometre radius of the site by the MAGIC website:

- EPSM2011-3903 impacting non-breeding roosts for Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle, serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) and brown long-eared 0.6 kilometres to the northeast;
- EPSM2010-2578 impacting non-breeding roosts for Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle, serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) and brown long-eared 0.6 kilometres to the northeast;
- 2017-31427-EPS-MIT impacting breeding and non-breeding roosts for Lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) 2 kilometres to the southeast.

5.2. The following sites were identified within the search area designated for their bat interest:

- Bath and Bradford Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lies 7.13 kilometres to the northwest at its closest point and the development site lies with the yellow zone of Wiltshire Council's Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy (TBMS).

5.3. WSBRC provided the following bat records within two kilometres of the site:

- Barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*)
- Serotine
- Myotis species (*Myotis* sp.)
- Bechtein's (*Myotis bechsteinii*)
- Daubenton's (*Myotis daubentonii*)
- Whiskered (*Myotis mystacinus*)
- Whiskered/Brandt's
- Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*)
- Nyctalus species (*Nyctalus* sp.)
- Leisler's (*Nyctalus leisleri*)
- Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*)
- Pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus* sp.)
- Common Pipistrelle
- Nathusius' pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*)
- Soprano pipistrelle
- Long-eared species (*Plecotus* sp.)
- Brown long-eared
- Greater horseshoe (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*)
- Lesser horseshoe

Field survey

- 5.4. There are no structures or trees on site that could support roosting bats.
- 5.5. The habitat on site is considered to offer low potential suitability for foraging bats with a large patch of bramble scrub that is isolated in the landscape.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1. There are no structures or trees on site that could support roosting bats.
- 6.2. The habitat on site is considered to offer low potential suitability for foraging bats with a large patch of bramble scrub that is isolated in the landscape

Recommendations for further actions

- 6.3. No further survey effort is required; there is no proposed increase in external lighting on site.
- 6.4. In accordance with being in the Yellow Zone of the TBMS, a financial contribution is required for the strategic bat mitigation via a Section 106 agreement for £777.62 for a single residential dwelling.

Ecological enhancements

- 6.5. The provision of an integrated bat box in the new dwelling's southwest or southeast external wall, close to the eaves and not above a window or door, will be incorporated into the design in the full planning application proposal, to enhance the site for bats

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 6.6. A separate UKHab survey and BNG report have been provided.

7.0 REFERENCES

Collins, J (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition. 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.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2023) National Planning Policy Framework.

Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Website available at: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

Wiltshire Council TBMS summary accessed at:
https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/8861/Trowbridge-Bat-Mitigation-Strategy-summary-document-of-TBMS-for-planners-and-public/pdf/TBMS_summary_document_rev02.pdf?m=637825266998200000

Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) (2025) Bat records search within 2km (Ref – 20250417_1_LCES).

APPENDIX I Site plan



APPENDIX II Site proposals

