

The White House, Berwick St James

Bat Survey Report
Mr Rufus Diffey



28th March 2025

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Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living creatures are capable of migration and whilst protected species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on site at a later date.

The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to works.

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

- In May 2024 Ahern Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Mr & Mrs Diffey to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of The White House, in Berwick St James.
- The PRA CONFIRMED building 1 – White House to house a bat roost based on bat droppings being recorded in the roof void and the frequency of Potential Roost Features (PRF) recorded.
- **Based on these findings three activity surveys of the buildings were required to confirm the presence/absence of bats using the structure to roost.** These surveys took place during June & July 2024.
- **Building 1: a maximum of two soprano pipistrelle and two brown long eared bat were recorded during any one survey. This confirms the building houses summer, day roosts for these two species.**
- **Bats constitute an ecological constraint to the proposed works to building 1. Subject to receiving planning approval, it will be necessary to apply for and obtain a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) from Natural England under the conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) (Amendments) 2017 Regulations, to legally allow the proposed works to take place.**
- **No building works must take place until an EPSL has been issued.**
- Mitigation and habitat enhancement recommendation are set out in section 4.2.

Update 28th March 2025: In March 2025 we were asked to review some design changes and confirm whether these resulted in a significant change to the proposed mitigation and enhancement.

The revised plans still provide a bat loft in the roof of the northern end of the house. On this basis The proposed bat mitigation remains unchanged.

The bird and invertebrate habitat enhancement remains largely unchanged, with the exception of the location of the swift brick which should now be incorporated into the southern end of the eastern elevation under the eaves at a height of at least 3m above the ground.

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In May 2024 Ahern Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Mr R Diffey to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), also known as a bat inspection survey at White House, Berwick St James.

The PRA CONFIRMED building 1 – White House to house a bat roost based on bat droppings being recorded in the roof void and the frequency of Potential Roost Features (PRF) recorded.

Based on these findings three activity surveys of building 1 – White House were required to confirm the presence/absence of bats using the structure to roost. These surveys took place during June & July 2024.

1.2 Site Location and Description

White House, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', is situated in Berwick St James (SU 07285 39659). An aerial photo view of the site can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Red line boundary for the Site.



1.3 Development Proposals

The current proposals are:

- Extension of the house on the eastern, southern, and western elevations.

1.4 Survey Objectives

The objectives of the bat inspection survey comprise the following:

- Assess the building within the survey area for the potential for bats to use them to roost.

The objectives of the bat activity survey comprise the following:

- Confirm the presence/absence of bats using the building;
- Confirm which species of bat and in what number are present; &
- Confirm how bats are using the building.

1.5 Quality Assurance

All ecological surveys are led by Ecologists who are members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) at the appropriate level. By joining the CIEEM staff sign up to a professional code of conduct.

Methodology

2.1 Dusk emergence survey

Three bat activity surveys were undertaken in Summer 2024, see Table 1, below, for details.

Table 1. Dusk Emergence Survey Dates.

Survey date	Building surveyed	Number of surveyors	Start time	Finish time	Temperature °
05/06/2024	building 1 – White House	4	20:45	22:10	14
26/06/2024	building 1 – White House	3	21:05	22:25	23
17/07/2024	building 1 – White House	3	20:43	22:10	18

The dusk emergence surveys commenced approximately 30 minutes before sunset and continued for 60 minutes after sunset.

Three or four surveyors with bat recording equipment and infra-red video cameras were present in order to survey the required angles of the building. The time, location, number and species were recorded for each bat leaving or returning to a roost. Bat passes by foraging or commuting bats encountered during the survey were also recorded using standardised forms. Equipment used:

- Echo Meter Touch 2 ultra-sonic modules connected to a tablet/ipad
- Anabat Scout – Full-spectrum Bat recorder
- Canon XA30 camcorders
- Canon A35 camcorders

Location of the surveyors:

The surveyors were located in such a way as to achieve coverage of the required areas of the buildings during the survey. See Figure 2, below, for the location.

Figure 2. The location and viewing angles of the surveyors.



2.2 Limitations

The data provided by the online resources were not exhaustive. It is possible that bat species not included in the data search occur within the vicinity of the proposed development site.

The internal and external inspection survey provides a snapshot of conditions at the time of survey. Bats are mobile creatures that will move into and out of areas.

The details within this report will remain valid for a period of 12 months; beyond that date it is advised that a review of ecological conditions is undertaken.

Results

3.1 Activity Survey

There was good weather with no breeze, warm temperatures, and low cloud cover during all three surveys.

The results of the dusk activity survey are set out in Table 2, below.

Table 2. Bat Activity Survey Results – Bat Emergence

Survey date	Site	Survey type	Bats recorded	Number recorded
05/06/2024	building 1 – White House	dusk emergence	brown long-eared soprano pipistrelle	1 1
26/06/2024	building 1 – White House	dusk emergence	soprano pipistrelle	2
17/07/2024	building 1 – White House	dusk emergence	brown long-eared	2

Details of bats recorded across the wider site are set out in Table 3, below.

Table 3. Bat Activity Survey Results – Ambient bat activity

Survey date	Site	Survey type	Bats recorded	Number recorded
05/06/2024	building 1 – White House	dusk emergence	brown long-eared common pipistrelle soprano pipistrelle	2 5 5
26/06/2024	building 1 – White House	dusk emergence	brown long-eared common pipistrelle noctule soprano pipistrelle whiskered	2 13 9 9 2
17/07/2024	building 1 – White House	dusk emergence	barbastelle brown long-eared common pipistrelle noctule soprano pipistrelle	1 3 15 5 8

Discussion and Requirements

4.1 Discussion

4.1.1 Bat Activity Survey results

Building 1: a maximum of two soprano pipistrelle and two brown long eared bat were recorded during any one survey. This confirms the building houses summer, day roosts for these two species.

Bats constitute an ecological constraint to the proposed works to building 1. Subject to receiving planning approval, it will be necessary to apply for and obtain a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) from Natural England under the conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) (Amendments) 2017 Regulations, to legally allow the proposed works to take place.

Emergence points and flight lines can be seen in figure 3, below.

Figure 3. The location of bat emergence point ● and the indicative flightlines which were taken; brown long-eared
→ Soprano pipistrelle →



The findings of this report are valid for 12 months from the issue.

4.2 Requirements

No building works must take place until an EPSL has been issued.

Mitigation measures:

- Prior to any works taking place on site two Harlech woodstone bat boxes will be erected on a tree adjacent to the site at a height at least 3m above the ground.
- The building on site will be inspected by a Natural England C2 licenced ecologist immediately prior to any demolition/roof strip of the existing structure. The ecologist will use a flexible endoscope to assist with this survey.
- The “demolition” phase of the proposed development will take place between late March and late October.

- Should any bats be encountered during the proposed works all activity should stop immediately and a Natural England C2 licenced ecologist should be contacted for advice on how to proceed.

Habitat enhancement measures:

- One bat loft – H: 2.0m, W: 3.5m, L: 4.0m will be constructed in the roof void of building 1, above the proposed extension. See Figures 4 and 5. The bat loft will be lined with OSB board, the roof cladding will be lined with Type 1F around the location of the loft. Access to the loft will be through four bat tiles, see Figure 5, below.

Figure 4. The location of the proposed bat loft.  Bata access tile locations 

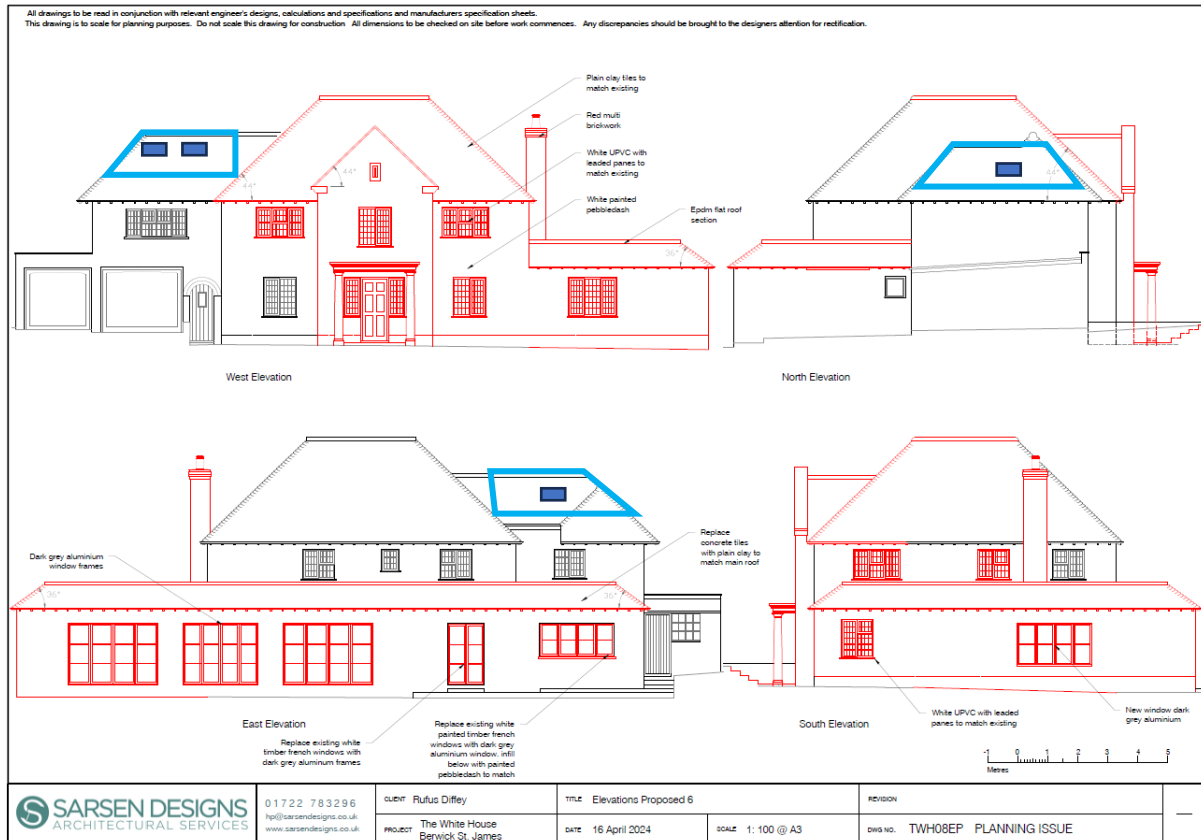


Figure 5. Bat tile – access point to the bat loft



- One Harlech bat box - https://www.birdfood.co.uk/harlech-woodstone-bat-box-black?gclid=EAlalQobChMlwIbT2pqD_gIVyZ7tCh1AoAVbEAAYAiAAEgLxGfD_BwE. Installed at a height of at least 3m on a tree
- One Ibstock swift brick - <https://www.ibstock.co.uk/product/ecohabitats/swift-box?page=1&>. Installed under the eaves at a height of at least 3m above the ground in the extension.
- One hedgehog house - <https://www.arkwildlife.co.uk/product/dome-hedgehog-house/> will be installed in the garden of the property EITHER under a hedge to the rear of the property OR under a brash pile to the rear of the house.
- One insect block - https://www.birdfood.co.uk/woodstone-insect-block-grey?utm_source=google_shopping&gclid=EAlalQobChMlrZm8-ZqD_gIVEmHmCh2g5g_FEAQYAiABEgJu4fD_BwE. Installed at a height of 1.5m above the ground on a south facing tree or building elevation.

References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Gunnell, K., et al (2010) Designing for Biodiversity: A technical guide for new and existing buildings. (2nd edn). RIBA.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (ed.) (2004) Bat Workers' Manual (3rd edn). JNCC

5.1 Legislation

5.1.1 Bats

All species of bat found in the UK are listed under Schedule 5 of *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended 2018) and are afforded protection under Section 9(1), Section 9(4)(b&c) and Section 9(5) of the Act. Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally or recklessly:

- Kills or injures any bat;
- Disturbs any bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- Obstructs access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection.

Bats are afforded additional protection through their inclusion on Schedule 2 of *The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017* (as amended). Under Part 3 of this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he:

- Deliberately captures, injures or kills a bat;
- Deliberately disturbs a bat; or
- Damages or destroys a bat breeding site or resting place.

Disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce, rear or nurture their young, migrate or hibernate. It also includes any disturbance likely to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species. Consequently, attention should be given to dealing with the modification or development of an area if aspects of it are deemed important to bats, such as flight corridors and foraging areas.

5.1.2 Breeding Birds

Wild birds, their nests and eggs, are afforded protection under Section 1(1) of *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally:

- Kills, injures or takes any wild bird;
- Takes, damages or destroys the nest of a wild bird included in Schedule ZA1;
- Takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or
- Takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird.