

**PEST HOUSE
BENTLETTS SCRAP YARD**

Bat Emergence Survey

A Report for 'Wealden Homes'



**Greenspace
Ecological
Solutions**

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This report was compiled by Philip Brown and proofed by Guy Newman MCIEEM

*The content of this report is the responsibility of Greenspace Ecological Solutions Ltd.
It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to meet the client's requirements, no site survey can ensure complete assessment or prediction of the changeable onsite environment.*

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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Client: Wealden Homes

Site Address: Bentletts Scrap Yard, Claygate Road, Laddingford, ME18 6BB

Attending Ecologists: Guy Newman (Natural England Class 2 Bat Licence)
Dan Reed

Survey Date: 19th August 2014

Site Proposals: Change from scrapyard to residential development.

Associated Planning Reference Number: N/A

Source of Relevant Documents:

Document:	Source:
Site Location Plan:	Google Earth Pro

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background and Proposals

2.1.1 It is our understanding that the proposed use for the site will involve a change from its current state into a residential development.

2.1.2 Greenspace Ecological Solutions (GES) were commissioned by Wealden Homes to undertake an Extended Phase 1 Habitat, Bat Scoping Survey and Habitat Suitability Index Assessment (Greenspace Ecological Solutions 2014). The above survey identified that the Pest House (referred to as building B5 within the report) has 'Low' potential to support bats and in response, GES were also commissioned to undertake a single dusk emergence survey of this building.

2.1.3 Should they be present, the result of the emergence survey serve to determine the species and numbers of bats roosting within the building and also the need or not to apply to Natural England for a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence.

2.2 Site Location

2.2.1 The site is located in the parish of Collier Street Kent (National Grid Reference TQ 703 471).

2.2.2 Situated between the villages of Collier Street and Laddingford, the geographical location of the site is depicted in Plate 1.

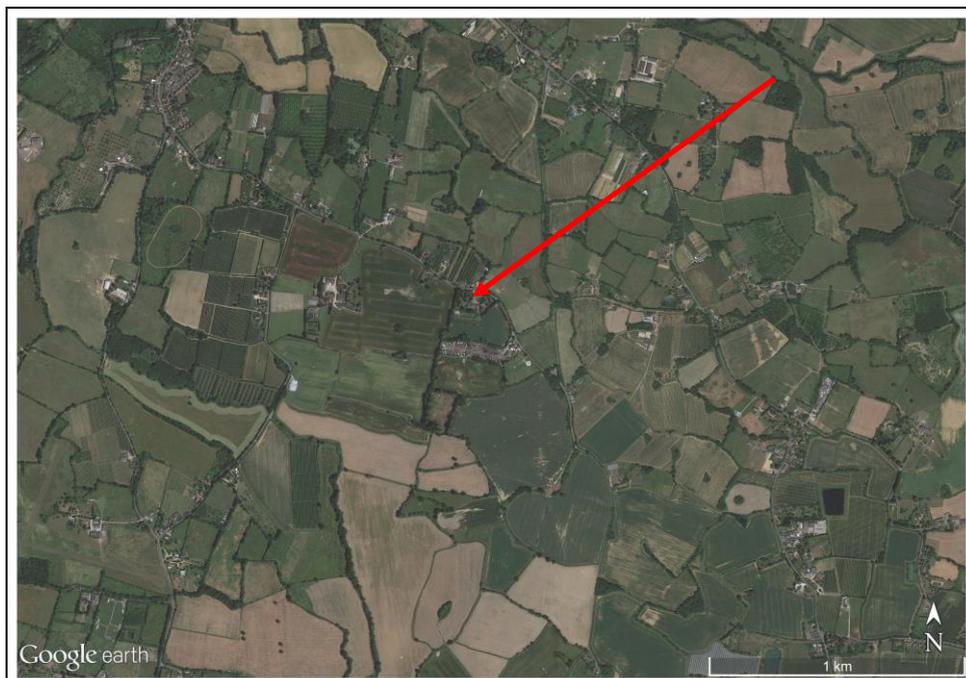


Plate 1 – Site Location

2.3 Site Description

2.3.1 The proposed development site comprises a commercial scrapyards which is dominated by scrap metal hard standing and buildings with vegetated boundaries. A small residential property and associated garden, referred to as the 'Pest House', is located in the north-east corner of the site. The wider landscape is one of arable and agricultural land with occasional waterbodies and scattered residential dwellings.

2.4 Policies and Legislation

2.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) aims to protect species of significant conservation importance in England (in this case bats), as covered by wildlife legislation (see below), NPPF, national and local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP's) and Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Local planning authorities have an obligation to protect such species, and are also required to seek opportunities to promote and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the above legislation, policies and plans.

Bats

2.4.2 All British bat species and their places of rest and shelter receive UK and European protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2010 (as amended) (Habitats Regulations 2010) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended). This protection means that bats and their places of rest and shelter are a material consideration in the planning process.

2.4.3 Taken together, unless under licence, the above legislation make it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture or intentionally take a bat;
- Deliberately or intentionally kill or injure a bat;
- To be in possession or control of any live or dead bat or any part of, or anything derived from a bat;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection;
- Deliberately disturb any bat, in particular any disturbance which is likely to (i) impair their ability to survive, breed, reproduce or to rear or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or (ii) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

2.4.4 A bat roost may be any structure a bat uses for breeding, resting, shelter or protection. It is important to note that since bats tend to use the same roost sites at different times of year, current legal opinion is that a bat roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time.

2.4.5 In addition to the above, certain species of bat are listed on Annex II of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Annex II species include greater and lesser horseshoe bats, barbastelle and Bechstein's. Where present, consideration to the requirement of a Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) should be given.

2.5 Objectives of the Survey

2.5.1 The objectives of the surveys were to:

- Confirm the presence of roosting bats within the building to be affected by the proposed development;
- Identify the number and species of bats, should they be present;
- Identify the entrance/exit points used by bats, should they be present;
- Evaluate the potential for bats to be affected by proposals;
- Identify any legal or policy constraints related to bats that may affect the development;
- Suggest mitigation/compensation measures that may be required; and
- Assess whether a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence is required for the works.

2.6 Survey Constraints

2.6.1 There were no constraints to this survey.

3. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

3.1 Emergence Survey

3.1.1 The Pest House (B5) was subject to a single dusk emergence survey on 19th August 2014. The survey was completed in accordance with current best practice guidance (BCT, 2012) and to adequately observe all aspects of the building, two surveyors were deployed during the survey.

3.1.2 The surveys was conducted by suitably experienced ecologists of which one surveyor holds a Natural England bat survey licence. The surveys was completed in favourable weather conditions with night time temperatures of $\geq 8^{\circ}\text{C}$ and little or no rain. A summary of the weather conditions recorded during the survey is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 – Weather Conditions

Date	Sunset time	Start Weather Conditions	End Weather Conditions
19-08-14	20:12hrs	14°C, 40% cloud cover, no rain, no wind.	13°C, 10% cloud cover, no rain, no wind.

3.1.3 To account for the varying times in which differing bat species emerge, where practical, dusk emergence surveys commenced 15 minutes before sunset and continued for 1 hour and 15 minutes after sunset, or until light levels deemed the survey no longer valid. An overview of the start and end times and the surveyors who conducted the survey is provided in Table 2.

Table 2 – Survey Times and Surveyors

Date	Start Time	End Time	Surveyors
19-08-14	19:57hrs	21:27	Guy Newman. Dan Reed

3.1.4 To aid audible detection, surveyors were equipped with EM3+ bat detectors. These convert the inaudible echo location of bats into a frequency audible to the human ear. All calls were digitally recorded and the sonograms later analysed through the application of the computer programme Wildlife Acoustics Kaleidoscope Viewer 1.1.12.

4. SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 Emergence Survey

19th August 2014, Emergence Survey

- 4.1.1 No bats were seen to emerge during this survey.
- 4.1.2 Common pipistrelle bats *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* were recorded within the site between 20:35hrs and 21:25hrs. Foraging activity was greatest along the hedgerow to the east of the Pest House and within the neighboring garden which lies to the west. Commuting common pipistrelle bats were also noted travelling from the scrap yard in both a northerly and southerly direction.
- 4.1.3 One soprano pipistrelle bat *P. pygmaeus* was recorded at 21:09hrs foraging in and commuting through the neighbouring garden to the west of the Pest House.

4.2 Summary of Results

- 4.2.1 A summary of the survey results are provided in Table 3.

Table 3 – Summary of Survey Results

Date	Emerging/Returning Bats	Bat Species Recorded within the Site
19-08-14	None	Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Emergence Survey

- 5.1.1 No bats were seen to emerge from the Pest House during the survey and as reasonable effort to determine the presence/likely absence of bats has been applied and no roost has been identified, it is suggested that the works proposed for the Pest House will have no detrimental effect to bats or their roosts.
- 5.1.2 Consequently, no timing constraints or working sensitive working methods are required in this instance, yet given that bats are known to frequent the area, in the unlikely event that bats are discovered during the proposed works, all works should **stop** and Natural England and/or the appointed ecologist consulted on the appropriate manner in which to proceed.
- 5.1.3 In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, the following recommendations are provided in an effort to increase the sites potential to support bats.
- The provision of a 2 x bat boxes in suitable locations within the site will provide increased roosting opportunities for bats. An appropriate box design in this instance would be the Schwegler 2F or 2FN.
- 5.1.4 Should the application any of the above measures be included within the development, it is suggested that the site will provide greater roosting opportunities for bats than currently exists within the site. As a result, the proposed will remain in keeping with planning policies which seek biodiversity enhancements within the planning application throughout the UK.

6 SUMMARY

- 6.1 In response to the proposed development of Bentletts Scrap Yard, Claygate Road, Laddingford, the site was subject to one dusk emergence survey to determine the presence of bats.
- 6.2 Although no bats were recorded roosting within the site during this survey, a total of two species of bat (common and soprano pipistrelle) were recorded within and around the site.
- 6.3 As reasonable effort to determine the presence / likely absence of bats has been applied, and none have been recorded, no timing restrictions and/or sensitive methods of works are required in this instance.
- 6.4 The surrounding habitat is suitable for both foraging and commuting bats and in the unlikely event that bats are discovered during the development process, all works should **stop** and Natural England and/or the appointed ecologist consulted on the appropriate manner in which to proceed.
- 6.5 In an effort to improve the sites suitability to support bats post development, it is recommended that a 2 x bat boxes be installed in a suitable location within the site ownership.
- 6.6 It is suggested that, the installation of the purpose built bat box will provide greater opportunities for roosting bats than currently exists within the site and the development will therefore, be in keeping with the requirements of the NPPF, which seeks biodiversity enhancements within developments.

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