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**Bat Method Statement for
Lake Hill,
Bolholt,
Walshaw,
Bury,
BL8 1PU**

OS grid reference:
SD 7821 1184

Commissioned-by:
Lorraine Brophy

for
LPG Estates

Date: 10/8/21

Survey Dates: 24/6/16 (day), 12/7/16 (dusk), 29/9/16 (dawn),
18/10/19 (day - partial), 19/8/20 (dusk), 25/6/21 (dusk)

Report Dates: 22/7/16 (day and dusk), 7/10/16 (dawn),
31/10/19 (day - partial), 28/8/20 (dusk), 8/7/21 (dusk)

Table of Contents

1. Summary	page 3
2. Introduction	page 4
3. Objectives of the Bat Method Statement	page 5
4. References	page 8
Appendix 1 - proposed site layout plan	page 9
Appendix 3 – examples of available integrated and wooden bat boxes	page 10
Appendix 2 - locations of bat roosts discovered in 2020	page 13
Appendix 4 – examples of available boxes for swifts	page 17

1. Summary

This Bat Method Statement refers to a two-storey, detached house in its own, large grounds, and a more modern extension to the rear.

I understand some smaller elements on the north side of the property will be demolished; along with the part of the large single-storey extension on that side of the building, that connects it with the main house. What remains is to be made two-storey. See Appendix 1.

There is an apparent common pipistrelle maternity colony roost in the southern eaves of the main house. I understand this house is to have internal restructuring.

Three roosts of 1 to 3 common pipistrelle bats were discovered at a dusk emergence survey in 2020 in the single-storey element. A dusk emergence survey in 2021 discovered no roosting at the time, but the development still needs to be covered by a licence from Natural England. It is illegal to destroy a bat roost, obstruct access to it or disturb bats when roosting without an appropriate licence from Natural England.

As it is possible to time internal restructuring to the main house to avoid impacting the maternity colony when it is present, meaning only 3 roosts of a small number of common species will be unavoidably affected by the development; the site can be registered with Natural England under the Low Impact Licencing scheme.

With respect to the licence:

- This Method Statement is an integral part of the licencing process and is also required as a condition of the Planning Consent. It must therefore be followed as written.
- Any necessary amendments due to changes in the proposed work or schedule must be approved by the Planning Authority.
- Similarly, any changes to the Planning consent will require the Method Statement to be up-dated as appropriate.
- The licence cannot be applied-for until the start date and schedule of works are known.
- The bat consultant has to have done at least a walk-over assessment of the site within 3 months of the application.
- As a condition of the licence it is necessary for the bat consultant to provide a tool-box talk to contractors prior to them starting work.
- Appropriate care is needed when dismantling the structure.
- Attendance by the bat consultant is necessary at the time of deconstruction of higher risk areas.

- Alternative roosting places are available during the work, as bat boxes were put up in nearby trees in April 2021. However integrated bat boxes are also to be installed in the new build.
- If the development is not underway by May 2022 the bat activity survey work will need updating in order to obtain the licence.
- This in turn is likely to require the Method Statement to be up-dated and may result in a full Mitigation licence being required instead of a Low Impact licence, depending on the findings.

This Method Statement should be read in conjunction with the previous reports, especially those of the last two dusk emergence surveys in 2020 and 2021.

2. Introduction.

This detached property has been surveyed a number of times from **2016** onwards. It stands in extensive grounds containing mature trees and water bodies.

I understand internal refurbishments are planned for the interior of the main house, along with demolition of single-storey elements. See Appendix 1.

At a dusk emergence survey on **19/8/20**, 3 roosts were discovered in the main house, including what appeared to be a maternity colony roost, and 3 roosts were discovered in the single-storey extension to the north of the main building. See Appendix 2. This is to be replaced with a two-storey house. See Appendix 1. This will impact only roosts of small numbers of common pipistrelles and should not impact directly any roosts associated with the older part of the house, including the maternity colony roost. This allows the site to be registered under Natural England's Low Impact Licencing scheme.

It is illegal to destroy a bat roost, obstruct access to it or disturb bats when roosting without an appropriate licence from Natural England.

As bat roosts are also protected from disturbance, the internal re-structuring works to the main house could potentially impact the maternity colony roost.

Disturbance to a maternity colony roost cannot be covered under the Low Impact Licencing scheme. Accordingly any works likely to create noise and/or vibration in the main house, especially in the vicinity of the maternity colony roost must be timed outside the main maternity colony period to ensure no offence is committed in the course of the work. This spans May to August inclusive.

The Method Statement forms an integral part of the Low Impact Licence from Natural England and is a condition of the planning consent.

No birds were found to be roosting/nesting at the most recent survey, but there are gaps at eaves that could potentially be used by species such as the swift (*Apus apus*). This species was feeding overhead at the last survey. As a bird of unknown species was

seen to enter a gap in the east-facing verge of the northern extension in 2016, it would be good practice to provide at least one swift box in the new build too. See Appendix 4. The swift is a bird of conservation concern.

In the past it was thought individual bats might be roosting in association with the roof of the main house. Following its re-roofing, bat boxes x 9 were put up in mature trees near the house:



Fig. 1. Trees where bat boxes located shown in red.

This was done in April 2021.

3. Objectives of the Bat Method Statement.

There were 3 objectives in writing this Method Statement:

1. To ensure contractors take into account that previously unidentified bat roosting sites may be present.
2. To ensure the work is done in accordance with the law relating to bats.
3. To ensure potential roosting places are provided to compensate for those lost to the development, to accord with Natural England expectations and the biodiversity objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

1. Possibility of previously unidentified bat roosts being present.

The contractors must have a copy of this Method Statement on site at the time of the work. It must have been read by all relevant personnel. Any queries must be raised with the bat consultant prior to work starting.

- Bats could roost under roof-tiles, in boxed-eaves, on wall-heads and in cavity walls, not necessarily in places already confirmed as roosting places.
- If present, bats will be put at risk by the work being undertaken. They can sometimes be slow to rouse to escape danger.
- Due care is necessary by contractors to safeguard bats from harm as well as possible, to minimise the risk of an offence being committed in contravention of wildlife legislation.
- A tool-box talk by the bat consultant will be arranged prior to the commencement of works, so contractors can be made aware of higher risk areas, and the degree of care necessary when working on those areas.
- The bat consultant will be in attendance as higher-risk features are removed by hand with care. This includes fascias and roof tiles covering wall-heads, especially where there are gaps at soffits or in verges.
- Contractors must budget for the extra time that will be necessary to work with appropriate care.

2. Ensuring work is done within the law relating to bats.

The contractors must have a copy of this Method Statement on site at the time of the work. It must have been read by all relevant personnel. Any queries must be raised with the bat consultant prior to work starting.

- The measures outlined in 1 above, will minimise the risk of harming any bat that may be present at the time.
- Including in the absence of the bat consultant, contractors will be aware at all times to be vigilant for signs of disturbance to bats.
- In the absence of the bat consultant, if at any time during the work a bat or droppings that may have come from a bat are found, work **must** stop immediately. Further advice **must** then be sought before work continues in that area, even if the bat has flown off.
- Contractors will not handle any bat found unless the bat consultant is absent; and then only if it appears injured and is easily accessible; especially if leaving it risks it retreating deeper into the structure. In that case the bat will be picked-up in a gloved hand or soft cloth and transferred into a secure box - preferably either cardboard with lid that can be taped in place, containing air-holes, or a deep plastic container with smooth sides that the bat can't crawl up, and that can be covered with a cloth. The bat should be given cloth or paper in which it can hide and if possible a small container such as a bottle top containing water. **However it is important the bat consultant is contacted as soon as possible.**
- Work will cease overnight to allow any bat/s present to disperse of their own accord and will only continue when the bat consultant can be present.
- Deconstruction by hand will continue in the presence of the bat consultant
- There will be a wooden bat box available on site, which can be attached to a tree at an accessible level. See Appendix 3. Any bat removed from the structure will be placed in the bat box by the bat consultant.
- No internal refurbishment work will be done inside the main house between the months of May and August inclusive.
- There will be no external work to the southern elevation of the main house.

3. To ensure potential roosting places are provided.

- Bat boxes x 9 (2 small hollow, 2 medium hollow, 3 double crevice and 2 modified-hollow Greenwood boxes) have already been put up in trees in April 2021; mainly to compensate for re-roofing works but also to provide alternative roosting places while development is undertaken.
- Integrated bat boxes will have more stable conditions than tree mounted boxes and are more of a like-for-like measure, as bats can currently access cavity walls. Accordingly, provision for bats will be made in the building via installation of integrated bat boxes as shown in Figs 1 to 3 below. *N.b. Integrated boxes are incorporated into walls and sit flush with them.*
- Habitat bat boxes (see Appendix 3) can be made to match the proposed brickwork, but a wide range of other boxes and suppliers can be found via an internet search. Alternatives must not be ordered however without the approval of the bat consultant.



Fig. 1. West-elevation. Position of boxes shown in red.



Fig. 4. East-elevation. Position of boxes shown in red.

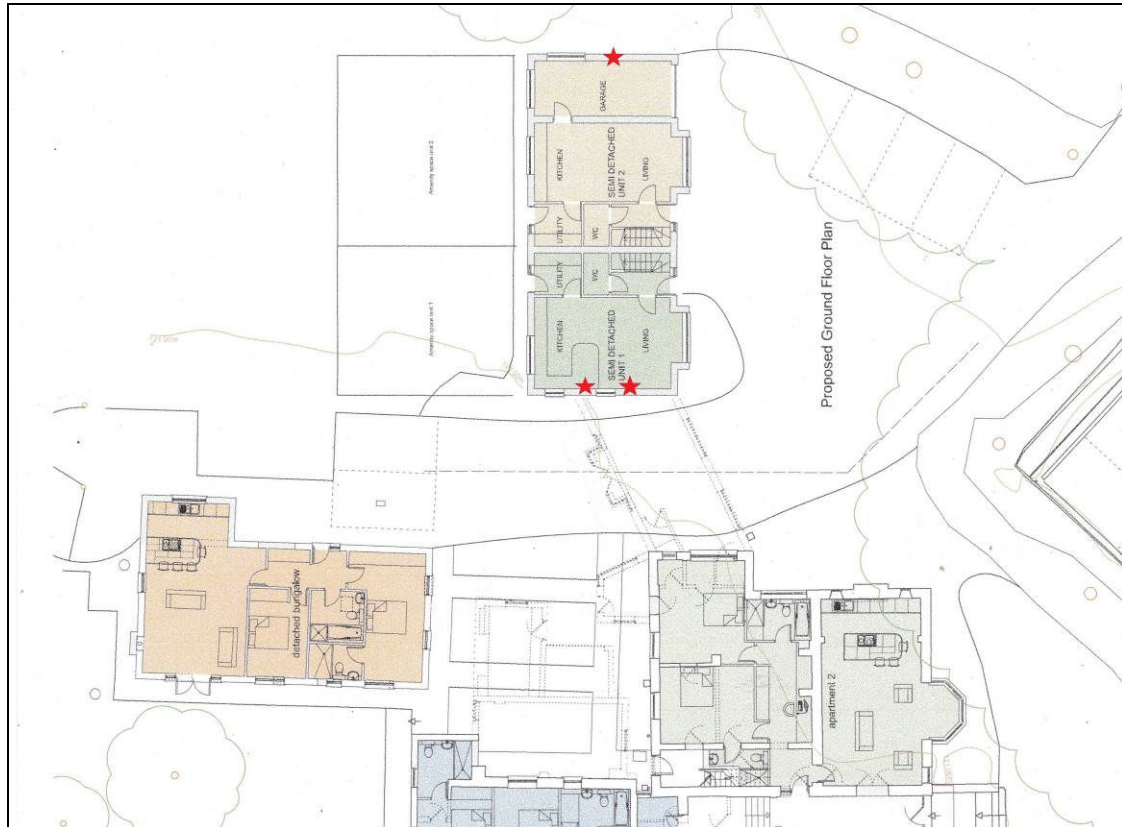


Fig 3. South and north gable elevations. Boxes to be just below eaves level and positioned roughly as illustrated. Position of boxes shown in red.

- Any proposed changes to the positions illustrated above will be agreed with the bat consultant.
- It is important that integrated bat boxes are not subject to constant light pollution, and that potential, bat flight-paths to and from the boxes are shielded from excess light-spill (1). I understand however that no additional lighting is planned for the site. If this proposal changes the Method Statement will be updated.
- It would also be a commendable pro-active measure to provide a nest box for swifts. This can be in any elevation towards the eaves, but west is best avoided.

4. References

1. Bat Conservation Trust (2018). Guidance Note 8/18: Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK.

Appendix 1 - proposed site layout plan



Proposed layout: north to top, main house in south

Appendix 2 - locations of bat roosts discovered in 2020



Key: Approximate locations of roosts indicated by letters A-F. See Table below

Table: Summary of roosts found

Area: See Fig. 1	Number of bats seen to emerge/enter	Comments 19/8/20, sunset 20.28
A	at least 15 out	Above window, from 20.45.
B	3 out	From gap in verge, 4 th tile up, from 20.55.
C	2 out	From soffit at 20.53 and 20.56.
D	1 out	From gap in verge at 20.50
E	2 out, 3 in	From 20.50. Only apparent entry place available is an air-vent, thought previously unlikely to be suitable for roosting. Bat seemed to be considering entering at this location at a previous survey.
F	2 out	From 20.42. Thought unlikely due to recent re-roofing but Plate 10 shows an apparent gap which fits with where bats were thought to emerge. A concern is that the roof is now probably lined with breathable membrane, which can cause bats' to become trapped when they can't extricate their claws from it.



Plates 1 and 2. Roost A, south-facing. Bats emerged from other locations along this soffit in 2021.



Plates 3 and 4. Roost B, south-facing (south-west corner)



Plates 5 and 6. Roosts C and D, east-facing



Plates 7 and 8. Roost E, north-facing



Plates 9 and 10. Roost F

Appendix 3 – examples of available integrated and wooden bat boxes

N.b. An internet search for "integrated bat boxes" will bring up types suppliers of these boxes but the bat consultant should be sought before selecting one of these.

EcoSurv Habibat

<http://www.habibat.co.uk/category/bat-boxes>

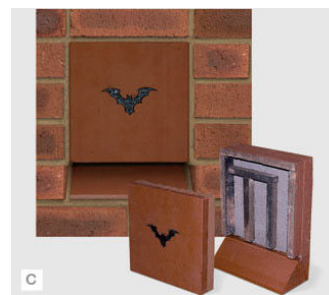
“Designed to be built into an exterior wall and is available in a variety of faces to match the building. Standard facings of red or blue brick - ideal for new builds - are normally available from stock, or boxes can be made to your specific requirements with a face of brick, stone, timber, or plain (for rendering). Supplied un-pointed.”



Brick example of Ecosurv Habibat. Can also be faced with stone.

Ibstock Ecozone

<http://www.ibstock.com/sustainability-ecozone.asp>





Above: typical unit in situ. Photo © Angela Graham

Green and Blue Bat Block/Brick

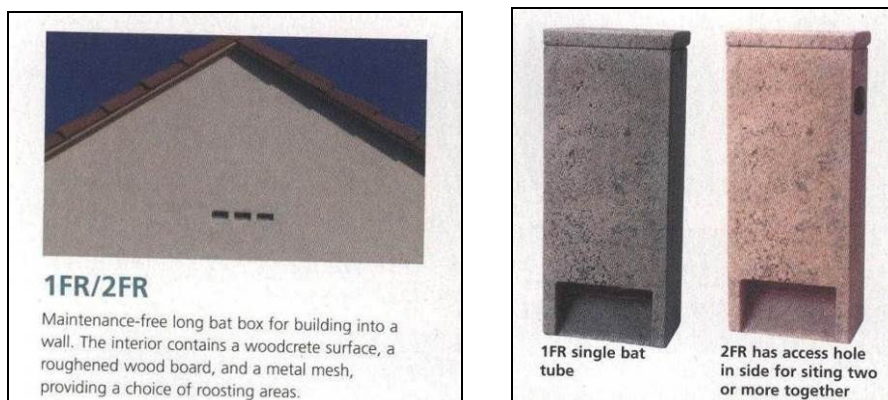
<https://www.greenandblue.co.uk/products/bat-block-bat-brick>



Green and Blue Bat Block/Brick in situ

Schwegler 1FR/2FR

An internet search for Schwegler bat boxes will readily bring up suppliers of these boxes



Schwegler 1FR/2FR

Forticrete

Available from building supplies merchants



Above and below - standard colours available. Others available to order



Example of Forticrete boxes in situ

Wooden boxes. (One to be available on site in case a bat is found during deconstruction)

Cheap wedge-shaped bat boxes - about £12 including delivery, made of untreated rough-hewn timber of reasonable thickness, can be ordered from KT nest-boxes.

<https://www.ktnestboxes.co.uk/>

N.B. The website often states that the boxes aren't available but they can usually be ordered following an enquiry via the 'Contact us' form.

Kent bat boxes are also available. An illustration is shown below with instructions for making them yourself. Traditionally inch-thick wood is used for bat boxes, to provide stable conditions, so not less than the 20mm specified below:

The Kent bat box

Simple to construct, self-cleaning and low maintenance.

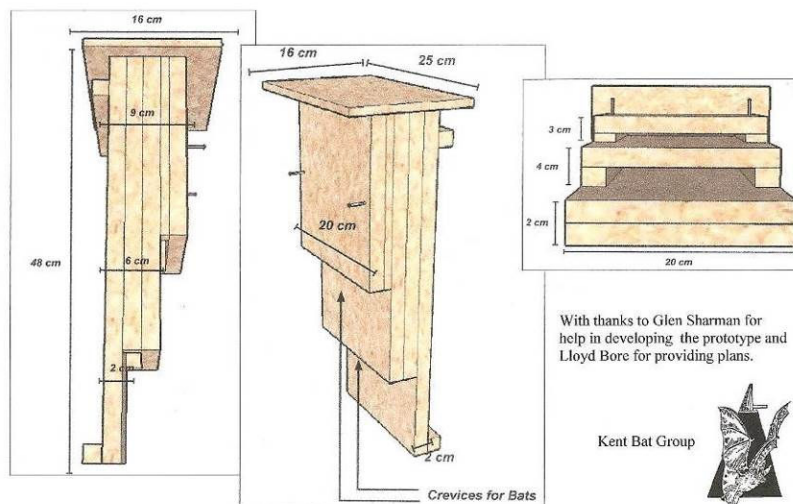
The only critical measurement is the width of the crevices—these should be no larger than suggested. Other measurements are approximate.

Materials and construction

Box to be made from untreated rough-sawn timbers
Timber should be c.20mm thick
The box should be rainproof and draught-free
Crevices can be between 15 and 25 mm wide
Fixing may be by use of brackets, durable bands or wires

Location

Boxes are best fixed as high as possible in a sheltered wind-free position, exposed to the sun for part of the day.
They can be fitted to walls, other flat surfaces or trees
A clear flight line to the entrance is important



With thanks to Glen Sharman for help in developing the prototype and Lloyd Bore for providing plans.

Kent Bat Group



Appendix 4 – examples of available boxes for swifts (integrated and wall-mounted)

Swift boxes:



Integrated swift box from Habibat:

<http://www.habibat.co.uk/category/bird-boxes/habibat-swift-box>



Integrated swift box from Forticrete:

<https://www.roofingsuperstore.co.uk/product/forticrete-swift-box.html>



Surface-mounted swift nest box from Schwegler.

See NHBS website for this and other designs:

<https://www.nhbs.com/search?q=swift+boxes>



Surface-mounted swift nest box from RSPB:

<https://shopping.rspb.org.uk/garden-bird-nest-boxes/rspb-swift-nest-box.html>



Example of swift nest boxes in situ