

**ECOLOGY AND PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEY**

**BUILDING AT CRAYTHORNE LANE, BOSTON,  
LINCOLNSHIRE.**

**November 2019**



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Neil Dowlman Architects Ltd  
12-14 Main Ridge West  
Boston  
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**Report to:** Neil Dowlman Architects Ltd  
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# **ECOLOGY AND PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEY BUILDING AT CRAYTHORNE LANE, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE.**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Helen Scarborough has been commissioned by Neil Dowlman Architecture to undertake an ecology and protected species survey of a building located off Craythorne Lane, Boston in Lincolnshire. The survey is required in connection with plans to convert the building into residential accommodation.

The site was surveyed on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019 by Helen Scarborough (registered to use Natural England Class Licences WML-CL08 to survey great crested newts; registration number 2016-20412-CLS-CLS, WML-CL19 and WML-CL20 to survey bats; registration numbers 2015-12691-CLS-CLS and 2015-12692-CLS-CLS respectively) and Sarah Vinters.

During the initial appraisal of the site the protected species considered likely to occur on site were identified. These were:

- Bats
- Common bird species
- Schedule 1 bird species

Certain protected species were scoped out of the survey; in particular it was considered that white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*, common dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*, water vole *Arvicola amphibius* and otter *Lutra lutra* were highly unlikely to occur on the survey site due to lack of suitable habitat. There was also no habitat on site thought suitable for a long-term significant population of common reptile species. The site is not thought to provide suitable habitat for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*, and according to the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website there are no ponds within 500m of the survey site, thus this species was also scoped out of the survey.

A note was made of any species which are local or national Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species/species of principal importance.

This report details the methods used, describes the species found on the site, discusses the

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results and makes recommendations for further work.

## **2 METHODS**

### **2.1 Data search**

The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website ([www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk)) was consulted for statutorily designated sites within 1km of the site.

The NBN (National Biodiversity Network) Gateway website was consulted in order to check for records of protected species from the area.

### **2.2 Bats**

#### **2.2.1 Preliminary roost assessment**

In accordance with Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (Collins J, 2016), a preliminary roost assessment was carried out on the building to determine whether any features were present that bats could use for entry/exit points and roosting, and to search for signs of bat presence. Ladders and high-powered torches were used to search for internal and external features including but not limited to:

- Gaps around windowsills, door frames and lintels
- Lifted rendering, paintwork, shiplap boarding
- Soffit boxes, weatherboarding and fascia's
- Lead flashing, hanging tiles and lifted or missing tiles/slate
- Gaps >15mm in brickwork and stonework
- Bat specimens (live or dead)
- Bat droppings and urine staining
- Feeding remains (e.g. moth wings)
- Cobweb-free sections of ridge beam

The building was then assigned a measure of potential suitability to determine the extent of future survey work needed. The categories of potential suitability and further survey effort required are as follows:

- Negligible – Negligible features on site likely to be used by roosting bats – no further survey work
- Low – A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual

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bats opportunistically – one survey visit (dusk or dawn)

- Moderate – A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats on a regular basis – two separate survey visits (one dusk and one dawn)
- High – A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a regular basis and for longer periods of time – three separate survey visits (one dusk, one dawn and one dusk or dawn)

## **2.2.2 Assessment of commuting and foraging habitats**

In accordance with Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (Collins J, 2016), the site and adjacent areas were assessed for their potential suitability for commuting and foraging bats and categorised as follows:

- Negligible – Negligible habitat features on site or in surrounding area likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats
- Low – Habitat features that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or small numbers of foraging bats such as a patch of scrub, but that are isolated from other habitat features
- Moderate – Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape such as lines of trees that could be used by commuting bats or trees, grassland or water features that could be used by foraging bats
- High – Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape for use by commuting and foraging bats such as river valleys, woodland, grassland and parkland

## **2.3 Birds**

### **2.3.1 Common bird species**

All bird species noted on the site were recorded. The site was searched for signs of use by nesting birds, typically old and active nests and concentrations of faecal deposits associated with a breeding site.

### **2.3.2 Schedule 1 species**

The building was inspected for the presence of barn owl *Tyto alba* and the signs indicative of their past or present use including regurgitated pellets, concentrated accumulations of flattened pellets indicative of a nest site, faecal encrustation, eggs or eggshell remains, surplus prey items, bodily remains of chicks or infant down feathers. The site was not considered to provide suitable breeding opportunities for other Schedule 1 species.

## **2.4 Survey constraints and limitations**

The information contained in this report was accurate at the time of the survey; however, it should be noted that the status of mobile species such as birds and bats can alter in a short period of time and any survey only represents a 'snapshot' of the site at one point in the season. There are no definitive guidelines relating to the longevity of an ecology report, however we recommend that the results are updated after 12 months if the development or proposed work has not commenced.

## **3 SITE ASSESSMENT**

### **3.1 Location and grid reference**

The survey site comprises a building located on Craythorne Lane, Boston, Lincolnshire - central grid reference TF328440.

The building and habitat on the site are described in detail below and representative photographs are included in the text.

### **3.2 The survey building**

A three-storey building, rectangle shape on plan, constructed of solid brick walls supporting a pitched roof covered with bitumen felt and pan tiles and also some flat roofed areas. There are tightly fitted glass windows and roof lights on the second floor of the building resulting in high ambient light levels. The upper floor (third floor) has some open windows and missing glazing. The windows on the ground and first floor have been bricked up or boarded resulting in no natural light. There are small roof void areas which can be accessed off the third floor.

Inside the building is divided up into numerous seating areas, staircases, cupboards, bars, cloakrooms, dancefloors and restrooms. There are also steps leading down to a cellar.



**Photo 1: Eastern elevation of the building**



**Photograph 2: Southern elevation of the building**



**Photograph 3: Southeast elevations of the building**





**Photograph 4: western view of the building.**



**Photograph 5: Internal view first floor**



**Photograph 6: Further internal view of the building**



**Photograph 7: View looking down on dancefloor**





**Photograph 8: Cellar**



**Photograph 9: A bar area within the building**



**Photograph 10: Access to cellar**



**Photograph 11: Third floor**



### 3.3 Surrounding habitat

The building is on Craythorne Lane, Boston which has commercial and residential properties in the immediate vicinity.

Boston Tattoo Studio forms part of the building on the south west side. Craythorne House (recently renovated into 3 family homes) is to the south of the building, Mr T's carpet shop to the east and Piranha nightclub to the west. The surrounding landscape is dominated by mainly shops and the busy A16 road.

**Photograph 12: Adjacent buildings – attached to the survey building**





**Photograph 13: Adjacent residential dwellings**

## **4 RESULTS**

### **4.1 Data search**

The MAGIC website showed there to be no statutorily or non-statutorily designated sites adjacent or within 0.5km of the site.

There are records of Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus* bat species from within the 10km square TF34.

There are records of barn owl (*Tyto alba*) from the grid square of TF34, however the site is generally unsuitable for this species.

### **4.2 Bats**

#### **4.2.1 Preliminary roost assessment**

No bats or signs of use by bats were noted.

The building was assessed in accordance with Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (Collins J, 2016) Table 4.1 page 35. The results of the assessment appear in tabular form below:

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**Table 1: Assessment of survey site to support roosting bats**

| <b>Building/<br/>Feature</b> | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Site value for<br/>bats</b>   |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Building                     | <p>Solid block/brick walls with few gaps</p> <p>Pitched roof covered with bitumen felt and pan tiles—no roost niches noted.</p> <p>No holes in roof, glazed windows and generally high ambient light levels on upper floors.</p> <p>High levels of disturbance in the building</p> <p>Cellar is very damp and has no niches or gaps suitable for use by hibernating bats</p> | Negligible potential for transient, maternity or hibernation roosting. |

#### 4.2.2 Assessment of commuting and foraging habitats

The site is a busy commercial area with limited potential for bat foraging.

The results of the assessment of the surrounding habitats appear in tabular form below:

**Table 2: Assessment of surrounding habitats to support commuting and foraging bats**

| <b>Feature</b>                | <b>Description</b>                                  | <b>Site value for<br/>bats</b>                |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Immediate area (<500m)        | Busy commercial/residential area.                   | Low potential for foraging and commuting bats |
| Wider surroundings (500m-3km) | Shops and busy A16. No trees or grassland close by. | Low potential for foraging and commuting bats |

### 4.3 Birds

#### 4.3.1 Common bird species

The building has some potential for nesting by common bird species; although there are very

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few potential access points to the internal area of the building. No active or disused nests were noted.

#### **4.3.2 Schedule 1 species**

No signs of use by barn owl were noted: there would be limited access opportunities for this species. No further survey work or mitigation is required.

## **5 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Bats**

#### **5.1.1 Legal protection**

In England, Scotland and Wales, all bats are strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended); in England and Wales this legislation has been amended and strengthened by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. Bats are also protected by European legislation; the EC Habitats Directive is transposed into UK law by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 – often referred to as 'The Habitat Regs'. Taken together, all this legislation makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a group of bats where the disturbance is likely to significantly affect the ability of the animals to survive, breed, or nurture their young or likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species whether in a roost or not.
- Damage or destroy the breeding or resting place of a bat
- Possess a bat (alive or dead) or any part of a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost
- Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (alive or dead) or parts of bats

A roost is defined as being 'any structure or place that is used for shelter or protection', and since bats regularly move roost site throughout the year, a roost retains such designation whether or not bats are present at the time.

#### **5.1.2 Recommendations**

It is considered that the proposals to develop the existing building is unlikely to result in a breach in the legislation relating to bats and there is no requirement for a European Protected Species licence. All contractors working on the building will be briefed on the legal protection afforded to bats and their places of shelter and on how to proceed in the **unlikely** event that a bat is discovered during the course of the work. A procedure to follow in the unlikely event of

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discovering bats on site is given as Appendix 1.

The site provides very little potential for foraging bats and therefore no further survey work or mitigation is required in connection with foraging or commuting bats.

## **5.2 Birds**

### **5.2.1 Legal protection**

All common wild birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built
- Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird

Certain rare breeding birds are listed on Schedule 1 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended). Under this legislation they are afforded the same protection as common wild birds and are also protected against disturbance whilst building a nest or on or near a nest containing eggs/unfledged young.

### **5.2.2 Recommendations for common bird species**

The site has limited potential to be used for nesting by species of common bird. However, as a precaution, any site preparation/clearance work should commence outside the active nesting season which typically runs from March through to late August. If work commences during the bird breeding season, a search for nests should be carried out before they begin, and active nests should be protected until the young fledge.

## **6 SUMMARY**

The building located at Craythorne Lane, Boston, Lincolnshire was surveyed in connection with plans to convert the building for residential use.

There are no major ecological constraints associated with the proposals.

Some further precautionary measures and ecological enhancements are required in order to ensure legal compliance and no net loss to biodiversity. These are as follows:

- Best practice in relation to safeguarding bats (see Appendix 1)

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- Appropriate timing with regards to nesting birds

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**APPENDIX 1**

**Procedure to follow in the event of finding bats on site**

## **ECOLOGY AND PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEY BUILDING AT CRAYTHORNE LANE, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE**

### **Procedure to follow if bats are discovered during works**

- If at any point during the works, bats are discovered then contractors must stop work immediately and telephone Helen Scarborough on 07979 833524
- Should it transpire that the operation being carried out is of more risk to bats than was originally thought, then works will be stopped until they can be supervised by an appropriately licensed bat worker.
- If a bat is found under a tile or any other aperture, works will stop immediately (as above). If the bat does not voluntarily fly out, then the aperture will be carefully covered over to protect the bat(s) from the elements, leaving a small gap for the bat to escape voluntarily. Any covering should be free from grease or other contaminants and should not be a fibreglass-based material.
- Any injured bats should be gently placed in a secure ventilated box in a cool, quiet dark place (e.g. cardboard box with a sealed lid) by the contractor for the bat's protection whilst awaiting the arrival of the licensed person.