

Biodiversity Construction Method Statement

PROJECT TITLE: Refurbishment & Alterations to Orchard House

SITE ADDRESS : Orchard House, 11A, Norman Street, Caerleon, Newport,
NP18 1BB

PLANNING REF: 18/1236

DATE: 18th November 2024

1. Introduction

1.1) Planning Consent has been granted for refurbishment and alterations to Orchard House Care Home to create 7 self-contained supported living apartments. The main building will have no reroofing works undertaken and the tiled roof will remain intact. There will be the demolition of selected outbuildings and construction of a single storey communal garden pavilion including associated landscaping work.

1.2) The site is centred at ST 33955 90837. Planning consent has been granted (ref: 18/1236) and a number of pre-commencement conditions have been added to the decision notice. Condition 3 of the planning consent relates to a biodiversity construction method statement to ensure species such as bats are protected during the work. The condition states:

Condition 3: *‘Prior to the commencement of roof works to the roof of the building details of a Biodiversity Construction Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The content of the method statement shall include details of measures to safeguard protected species including during the construction works, based on the information provided in ‘BE Ecological Bat Survey Issue 1 Version A’. The works shall be undertaken fully in accordance with the approved construction method statement.*

Reason: In the interests of protecting European Protected Species. Policy GP5.

1.3) Bat survey work was undertaken by BE Ecological in 2019 to inform the development proposals. The original scope of works included the re-roofing of Orchard House and the BE Ecological Ltd survey report made recommendations in accordance with the proposals/ Since the previous bat survey work and reports, the planned works to the building have changed. The building no longer requires alteration to the roof or any re-roofing works. No roofing works will take place and therefore no bat roost locations will be lost or affected during the proposed works.

1.4) An internal and external bat scoping assessment of the building was completed by BE Ecological Ltd in February 2019. Potential entry points and roost features were identified during the external inspection. Potential roost features noted include gaps beneath slipped tiles, ridge tiles and fascias. A single bat dropping, thought to be Pipistrelle species, was identified during the internal inspection, subsequently rendering the building to be a confirmed bat roost with HIGH bat roost suitability.

1.5) Three bat emergence, re-entry activity surveys were undertaken on 13th May 2019 dusk, 26th May 2019 dusk and 12th June 2019 dawn by BE Ecological Ltd. A common pipistrelle was identified emerging from the hip of the roof, a second common pipistrelle emerged from beneath a tile on the roof on two separate occasions. A common pipistrelle was also observed re-entered the roof beneath a tile during the dawn visit. Subsequently, the building was identified as an occasional day roost for no more than three common Pipistrelle bats. The building had three points within the roof where bats were seen emerging or reentering the structure.

1.6) Two further bat emergence surveys were undertaken by Ecological Services Ltd on 17th July 2024 dusk and 24th August 2024, both undertaken during suitable weather conditions. No bats were seen emerging from the building but a number of common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bats were observed foraging around the building and flying up to the building itself on both surveys.

1.7) A blue tit nest was identified on the southwest elevation of the building during the bat activity surveys.

1.8) The development proposals seek to retain Orchard House but undertake internal renovation works. The summer house and existing outbuildings will be demolished. A garden pavilion will be built on the location of the existing outbuildings to the north west of Orchard House.

2. Construction Mitigation Measures

European Protected Species Licence

2.1) Since the previous bat survey work and reports, the planned works on the building have changed. The building no longer requires alteration to the roof. No re-roofing works will take place and therefore no bat roost locations will be lost during the proposed works, therefore a development licence for bats is not required from NRW.

2.2) Contractors must not seek to disturb any bat roost locations within the building. No new, additional lighting should spill onto the roost location or entrance/exit points identified during the 2019 bat roost surveys undertaken by BE Ecology Ltd. This will be avoided by following the steps outlined in the accompanying biodiversity strategy report.

Bat Roosting Provision

2.3) 4 x Large Bat Bark Box and 1 x 1FF Schwegler Bat Box will be erected in suitable locations (chosen by a suitably qualified ecologist) within the site boundary prior to works commencing on site. These will be left in situ as enhancements following the completion of works at site. The bat boxes will be installed at least 3m from ground level, The base of the boxes must be at least 30cm away from any tree limb or features which may cause an obstruction to the bat access holes.

2.4) Photographs of the correctly mounted boxes will be sent to Newport Planning Department.

2.5) As no roofing works are being undertaken there will be no need to seek a development licence from Natural Resources Wales (NRW). BE Ecological originally recommended that all bat roost locations could be retained. No roofing works are proposed to take place and therefore the roost locations can remain intact.

2.9) All current roost locations within the building will be retained. There will be no work to the building walls or roofing and therefore no opportunity to provide integrated boxes within Orchard House. The construction of the Garden Pavilion is not suitable for integrated boxes.

2.10) Given the small number of individual day roosting bats found within the building enhancements will be provided via tree mounted bat boxes. 1 x 1FF tree mounted bat box and 4 x Large Bat Bark Box (or similar design) will be provided as detailed within the accompanying biodiversity strategy report.

2.11) There are lights on every elevation of the building, it is not thought that any additional lighting will have any effect on bat roosts in the site providing that lighting is mounted below eaves level and set on timers. All lighting must meet recommendations in the BCT Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night.

Nesting Birds

2.12) Nesting birds were recorded within Orchard House during the bat activity surveys at site. The building and surrounding trees are suitable for bird nesting use.

2.13) Any tree removal or roof works must be completed outside of the bird nesting season of March to August inclusive. If this is not achievable an ecologist must inspect any vegetation with the potential for birds to be present for active birds' nests prior to removal works beginning. If an active nest is identified a buffer zone of at least 5m around the nest must be observed until the chicks have fledged. Only then can the vegetation be removed. Greater buffer zones around nests may be required depending on the species and habitat the nest is within.

Habitat Protection

2.14) Many mature trees and hedgerow within the grounds of Orchard House will be retained during construction works. Barrier fencing will be required as indicated on drawing SAAC.19.007 '*Tree Protection Plan Orchard House, Caerleon*' by Steve Ambler & Sons Tree Specialists Ltd. Full details of barrier fencing and tree protection measures during construction can be found in the Arboricultural Method Statement for Orchard House, Caerleon by Steve Ambler & Sons Tree Specialists Ltd dated 28th January 2019.

2.15) An agreed site compound location for the secure storage of materials and machinery used as part of the development will be required. All materials and machinery will be stored within the compound to prevent any pollution incidents or soil compaction. The site compound will need to be at least 5m away from any tree or hedgerow. **The location of the storage compound will be within the car parking area of the site.**

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1) The Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) during construction works:

Project Ecologist - Ecological Services Ltd; info@ecologicalservices.wales ; 07305143857

3.2) The ECoW will remain on call, should any queries arrive they will be contacted directly for advice how to proceed. The EcOW will supervise installation of bat boxes to ensure they are correctly installed as per this document and NRW bat licence. The EcOW will provide written confirmation to the Project Manager and Site Contractor it has been completed correctly. Photographic evidence of site visits will be collected.

3.3) Willis Construction are the lead contractors for the development works. They will have the responsibility to ensure all enhancement features within the document are installed. Willis Construction will be responsible for ensuring confirmation of the correctly installed enhancement features are sent to Newport Planning Department. **Site Contractor** - Willis Construction; matthew@willisconstruction.co.uk; 02920 797073

3.4) Pobl Group (The Client) will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the development site. They will be responsible for all monitoring work and ensuring compensation features are maintained in good condition in perpetuity.

Best Wishes

Ash Harris
Director
Ecological Services Ltd

Signed: *Ash Harris* **Date: 18th November 2024**