

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: 26th March 2025

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 including re-roofing areas of the main building, demolition of selected outbuildings and construction of 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 BE Ecological Ltd survey report made recommendations in accordance with the proposals to retain the roost locations within the building roof. As the roofing works require the use of a breathable roofing membrane it is not possible to retain the current roost locations within the building roof. Using a bitumen based roofing felt is not an option due to the presence of internal wooden boarding along the pitch of the roof and concerns over condensation.

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. Full details of the 2024 survey effort can be found in Appendix 1 of this report. 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. The proposed works will result in the disturbance, destruction and loss of bat roost locations within the building.

2. Construction Mitigation Measures

European Protected Species Licence

2.1) Once all pre-commencement ecology related conditions have been discharged, a development licence for bats will be sought from NRW. **No roof work to the building will commence until a development licence from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has been sought.** The development licence must be granted prior to any roof works being undertaken. A development licence from NRW can take 40 working days to be issued and will require detailed timing of the works and suitable compensation for the level of bat activity found within the site boundary.

2.2) A suitably licenced ecologist will supervise the roof removal work across all areas of the building. The ecologist will give a tool box talk to all contractors prior to works starting on the building. All contractors must remain vigilant for the potential presence of bats within all areas of the building.

2.3) Contractors under direct supervision of the ecologist will remove the barge boards / fascia boards by hand lifting each item from the building. The Contractor and ecologist will then search the underside of the board and also inspect the aperture where the board was lifted from. Once no bats have been seen the contractor will hand down the board and the process will be repeated.

2.4) The removal of any boarding, roof tiles and other roof materials will be by hand and taking care not to twist or bang. Check the underside of all materials removed. Keep a careful watch for bats during this operation.

2.5) Once all the barge boards have been removed a visual inspection of the area will be undertaken. The roofing felt will be prised off and rolled back.

Bat Roosting Provision

2.6) Temporary mitigation will need to be available prior to any works commencing on the building. A Schwegler 1FF bat box will be erected in a suitable location (chosen by the supervising ecologist) prior to any works commencing above eaves level of the building. This will be left in situ as an enhancement following the completion of works. The bat box

will be installed at least 3m from ground level, The base of the box must be at least 30cm away from any tree limb or features which may cause an obstruction to the bat access hole.

2.7) Permanent bat roosting provision will be provided within Orchard House as part of the roofing works. Two 1bstock bat boxes (or similar design depending on stock availability) will be integrated into the brick work of the building. The bat boxes will be provided at eaves level on the north west corner of the building under the direct supervision of the licenced ecologist.

2.8) Four wall mounted bat boxes will be added to the chimneys retained within the roof line. Two x 1FQ bat boxes (or similar design depending on stock availability) will be added to each chimney as part of the proposed roofing works.

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

2.10) 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

2.11) 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.

2.12) 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

2.13) 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.

2.14) 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: March 2025**

Appendix 1 - Bat Survey Information

Orchard House, Caerleon

First Survey: 17/07/24

Sunset - 21:21

Weather - Dry and calm with approximately 95% cloud cover

Temperature - 17 degrees celsius

Surveyors - Hannah Evans; Tyrone Evans; Debbie Parry and Keith Watkins

Emergence:

- No bats emerged from the building.

Activity:

- A number of Common and Soprano Pipistrelles were observed foraging in the grounds around the building and the bats kept flying right up to the building.



Second Survey: 24/08/24

Sunset - 20:15

Weather - Dry and calm with approximately 20% cloud cover

Temperature - 15 degrees celsius

Surveyors - Jonathan Daniels; Adam Hughes; Debbie Parry; Caitlin Smith; Mason Smith and Kieran Turner (We sent extra on the 2nd survey as the property was too big for 4 to properly cover)

Emergence:

- No bats emerged from the building.

Activity:

- The same level of activity as the July survey was observed during the August survey