



Bat Tree Assessment

Land west of Church Lane,
Climping

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22/02/2021

Vivid and Climping Homes LTD

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Non-technical Summary

Phlorum Ltd was commissioned by Vivid and Climping Homes LTD to undertake Bat Tree Assessment on the trees on the land west of Church Lane, Climping on 10th February 2021 prior to development, in order to determine whether there were any potential bat roosting features at the site.

Current proposals are for the construction of an approximately 300-unit residential development with green space provision. A new junction will be required between A259 and Church Lane. It is understood the woodland within the southern and western site extent will be retained with the exception of an area of hedge and trees within the south-eastern site extent to make way for the new junction. Ponds will also be created as part of the plans. The survey area extended over approximately 25 hectares (ha).

The main findings of the survey are as follows:

- The hedge and trees along the eastern border, and the broad-leaved woodland along the southern and western border contained trees with potential roosting features.
- The tree assessment identified a total of 62 trees that were considered to have features of high or moderate value to roosting bats, most of which were located within woodland in the southern and western site extents
- Tree climbing surveys are recommended for the 3 trees which are due to be removed: T7, T8 and T9 (in G13). If plans change and other trees are to be removed further surveys might be needed. Further emergence and re-entry surveys might be required depending on the findings of the tree climbing surveys.
- Transect surveys are recommended for the areas of woodland in south west and south of site to assess how bats are using the site.
- Further information regarding mitigation and site enhancement is provided in the recommendations section of the report.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 Phlorum Limited was commissioned by Vivid and Climping Homes LTD to carry out a bat tree inspection (often referred to as a Preliminary Roost Assessment ((PRA) in relation to land west of Church Lane, Climping (hereafter referred to as "the site"), prior to development.
- 1.2 Current proposals are for the construction of an approximately 300 unit residential development with the inclusion of green space. A new junction will be required between A259 and Church Lane. It is understood the woodland within the southern and western site extent will be retained with the exception of an area of hedge and trees within the south eastern site extent to make way for the new junction. Ponds will also be created as part of the plans. This report provides an assessment of the status of bats within the site, providing information on their presence/likely absence and distribution. Potential impacts of the proposed development are identified and measures to mitigate the effects of the proposed development on bats are discussed.

Site Description

- 1.3 The site adjacent to Church Lane is within a relatively rural location within the centre of Climping in West Sussex. The site is bounded to the north by residential housing, and Horsemere Green Lane and to the east by Church Lane. Yapton Road bounds the site to the west and Crookthorn Lane is directly south.
- 1.4 In wider surrounds, agricultural land dominates the landscape south, east and west with residential properties and commercial buildings to the north. Littlehampton is located approximately 1.5km to the east and the coastline is approximately 1.3km to the south.
- 1.5 The National Grid Reference for the centre of the site is grid reference TQ 00082 02044. The survey area extended over approximately 25 hectares (ha).

2. Methodology

Desk Study

Data Search

- 2.1 Records for bats within a 2km radius of the site were obtained from the Local Records Centre (SxBRC, 2020) as part of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Review of Previous Bat Surveys

- 2.2 Previous bat tree inspections and bat activity surveys were undertaken at the site in 2015 and 2018 by Phlorum.
- 2.3 A recent preliminary ecological appraisal was undertaken at the site in October 2020 by Phlorum.

Personnel

- 2.4 The Bat Tree Assessment was carried out by Kim Roll-Baldwin, an ecological consultant with over two years' survey experience.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 2.5 The inspection of the trees on-site was carried out on 10th February 2021 in accordance with good practice guidelines (Collins, 2016).
- 2.6 A preliminary roost inspection of the trees on site bat roost features, which includes, but are not limited to: a review of potential: woodpecker holes; knot holes; rot holes; cracks/splits; ivy; partially detached platey bark; and other hollows or cavities.
- 2.7 Refer to the Bat Tree Assessment Map in Appendix A to see the location of the trees considered to have either a moderate or high potential for roosting bats. All trees were assessed using currently accepted criteria (Hundt 2012 & Cowan, 2006), following the Cowan scale (Cowan, 2006) which is used to assign a value of 0-4 according to the presence or otherwise of features suitable for roosting bats. The Cowan Scale is summarised in the table below.

Table 2.1: Tree Assessment Criteria

Cowan Scale	Features
0: No Value	No visible features of use to bats.
1: Low Value	One or two minor features, possibly associated with feeding or night roosts, easily replaced; sparse ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>), minor branch splits, small areas of loose bark, features less than 10 years old.
2: Moderate Value	Features which may provide a more secure site for small groups and individuals, fairly common features; dense ivy, significant branch splits, small cavities, present for between 10-30 years.
3: High Value	Features of particular significance, suitable for high priority roosts and large numbers of bats, conditions rare or uncommon in local area; large cavities, extensive branch splits, multiple opportunities in same tree, features may have been available for >30 years.
4: Confirmed roost	Evidence of use by bats e.g. bats, bat droppings.

- 2.8 Any features that could potentially support roosting bats were viewed remotely from the ground using binoculars to assess suitability and identify signs of use.
- 2.9 Due to the large number of trees within the survey area, only trees identified as having moderate potential or higher for roosting bats are detailed in this report. These were individually numbered for the assessment and their locations marked on the survey map in Appendix A.

Constraints

Data Search Constraints

- 2.10 It is important to note that, even where data is held, a lack of records for a defined geographical area does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of ecological interest; the area may be simply under-recorded.

Bat Survey Constraints

- 2.11 Bats are mobile animals which can move roost sites both within and between years.
- 2.12 However, it is considered that the survey was sufficiently rigorous to assess the ecological value of the site for the purposes of this assessment.

3. Results

Data Search

- 3.1 The data search returned recent (post-2005) records of bats from the genera pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus*), long-eared (*Plecotus*), *Myotis*, serotine (*Serotinus*), and noctule (*Nyctalus*) occurring within the 2km search area.
- 3.2 In 2015 one transect survey was carried out. In 2018 three transect surveys were carried out. No bat roosts were identified in either survey but a **moderate** level of foraging activity with at least three species was recorded. Species included soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), and noctule (*Nyctalus noctule*).

Tree Assessment for Bats

- 3.3 In total 62 trees were considered to support features of **moderate** to **high** value to roosting bats with 36 having moderate potential and 26 having high potential. No confirmed roosts were identified during the assessment.
- 3.4 All trees with roosting potential were within the area of hedge and trees on the eastern border of the site and the area of broad-leaved woodland border on the south and west of the site. With the majority located in the area of broadleaved woodland located to the south of the site.
- 3.5 For the purposes of this assessment, trees assigned as having a **moderate** or **high** value have been numbered and are illustrated on the survey map in Appendix A.
- 3.6 Under current design proposals an area of woodland along the south eastern border of the site is to be removed to make way for a new roundabout.
- 3.7 The results of the tree assessment are provided in the summary table below (Table 3.1). **High** value trees are highlighted in red and **moderate** value trees are in blue and the locations of these trees are marked on the map in Appendix A. The corresponding tree numbers/areas assigned during the arboricultural assessment have also been provided in the table and on the map for cross referencing purposes.
- 3.8 Due to the large number of on-site trees, those considered to be of **low** or **negligible** potential have been omitted from the summary table below however areas of trees with **low** potential are described later in the results section.

Table 3.1: Tree Assessment Summary

Tree Number	Tree Species	Cowan Score	Potential	Proposed Works	Arboricultural Reference Number
T1	Goat willow	2	Moderate	Retain	T44
T2	Ash	3	High	Retain	G13
T3	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G13
T4	Ash	3	High	Retain	G13
T5	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G13
T6	Pedunculate oak	2	Moderate	Retain	G13
T7	Pedunculate oak	2	Moderate	Removal	G13
T8	Ash	2	Moderate	Removal	G13
T9	Ash	3	High	Removal	G13
T10	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G22
T11	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G22
T12	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G22
T13	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G22
T14	Sycamore	2	Moderate	Retain	G22
T15	Beech	3	High	Retain	G22
T16	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G22
T17	Beech	3	High	Retain	G22
T18	Beech	3	High	Retain	G22
T19	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G22
T20	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G22
T21	Beech	3	High	Retain	G22
T22	Ash	3	High	Retain	G22
T23	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G22
T24	Ash	3	High	Retain	G22
T25	Poplar sp.	3	High	Retain	G22
T26	Beech	3	High	Retain	G22
T27	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G23
T28	Ash	3	High	Retain	G23
T29	Ash	3	High	Retain	G23
T30	Ash	3	High	Retain	G23
T31	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G23
T32	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G23
T33	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	T24
T34	Sycamore	2	Moderate	Retain	G23
T35	Sycamore	3	High	Retain	G23
T36	Pedunculate Oak	3	High	Retain	G23
T37	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G23

Tree Number	Tree Species	Cowan Score	Potential	Proposed Works	Arboricultural Reference Number
T38	Pedunculate oak	3	High	Retain	G25
T39	Ash	3	High	Retain	G25
T40	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G25
T41	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G25
T42	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G25
T43	Beech	3	High	Retain	G25
T44	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G27
T45	Ash	3	Moderate	Retain	G27
T46	Beech	3	High	Retain	G27
T47	Ash	3	High	Retain	G27
T48	Ash	3	High	Retain	G27
T49	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G27
T50	Beech	3	High	Retain	G27
T51	Beech	3	High	Retain	G27
T52	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G27
T53	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G27
T54	Beech	2	Moderate	Retain	G28
T55	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G28
T56	Ash	3	High	Retain	G28
T57	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G28
T58	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G28
T59	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G28
T60	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G28
T61	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G28
T62	Ash	2	Moderate	Retain	G28

High Value: Category 3

3.9 A total of 26 trees assigned a high value for roosting bats were identified within the site. Large trunk cavities and multiple woodpecker holes, knot/rot holes and branch splits were present together with varying amounts of ivy cladding. Several trees had at least three or more features. Concentrations of woodpecker holes were on marginal trees on the northern extent of the woodland strip located within the south of the site. Dominant species included ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*). Specific tree numbers and associated areas (provided in the arboricultural survey report) of Category 3 trees are listed below:

- ☛ T2, T4 and T9 (in G13);
- ☛ T15, T17, T18, T21, T22 and T24-T26 (in G22);
- ☛ T28, T29, T30, T35 and T36 (in G23);

- ❖ T38, T39, and T43 (in G25);
- ❖ T46, T47, T48, T50, and T51 (in G27); and
- ❖ T56 (in G28).

Moderate Value: Category 2

3.10 In total 36 trees were recorded throughout the site. Dominant features included knot/rot holes, woodpecker holes and branch splits and some were clad with ivy. Dominant species included ash, beech, pedunculate oak and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*). Most of these trees were within the woodland areas in the southern and western site extents, with the exception of one: T1, located on the northern boundary. Specific tree numbers and associated areas (provided in the arboricultural survey report) of Category 2 trees are listed below:

- ❖ T1 (in T44);
- ❖ T3, T5, T6, T7 and T8 (in G13);
- ❖ T10-T14, T16, T19, T20, and T23 (in G22);
- ❖ T27, T31, T32, T34 and T37 (in G23);
- ❖ T33 (in T24);
- ❖ T40-T42 (in G25);
- ❖ T44, T45, T49, T52, and T53 (in G27);
- ❖ T54, T55, T57, T58., T59, T60, T61 and T62 (in G28)

Low Value: Category 1

3.11 Approximately 30% of trees at the site were noted to have some degree of ivy cladding and/or flaking bark. Dominant species included ash and beech. Category 1 trees were located within of the woodland within the southern and western site extents. Due to the large number of low value trees, these were not individually numbered; instead these were grouped into areas for the purposes of this assessment. These areas (based on the area reference provided in the arboricultural survey report, Phlorum 2020) are listed below and marked on the bat survey map in Appendix A:

- ❖ G13;
- ❖ G22;
- ❖ G23; and
- ❖ G53;
- ❖ G16;
- ❖ G22;
- ❖ G25;
- ❖ G27.

No Value: Category 0

- 3.12 All remaining trees on the eastern, western and southern border of the site were considered to have **negligible** potential for roosting bats.
- 3.13 Areas of the broad-leaved woodland in the south of the site were relatively young and small with no potential roosting features.

4. Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion

- 4.1 The site is located at land west of Church Lane, Climping BN17 5RY.
- 4.2 During the survey trees with **moderate** and **high** roosting potential were noted in the hedge and trees, and broad-leaved woodland surrounding the site on the eastern, southern and western border.
- 4.3 Trees with potential roosting features and assessed as **moderate** that are due to be removed are T7, and T8. T9 is assessed as **high** and due to be removed.
- 4.4 Other trees with potential roosting features are to be retained however due to the size of the development any potential roosts in these trees will likely be affected.

Recommendations

Bat Emergence Surveys

- 4.5 Bats receive protection under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 4.6 The trees which are due to be removed (T7, T8 and T9) will require a tree climbing survey to assess whether bats are using any of the potential roosting features. These trees might then require bat emergence / re-entry surveys.
- 4.7 Due to its **high** potential suitability to support roosting bats, 3 emergence and re-entry surveys are recommended on T9 to provide information on if and how bats are using the tree for roosting.
- 4.8 Due to its **moderate** potential suitability to support roosting bats, 2 emergence and re-entry surveys are recommended on T7 and T8 in order to provide information on if and how bats are using the site.
- 4.9 Transect surveys are recommended for the trees which are not due to be removed to gain an understanding of how bats are using the site and what the impacts of the development will be on any populations present.
- 4.10 Emergence and re-entry surveys can only be undertaken during the active period for bats taken to run between May and September with at least 1 between mid-May and August.
- 4.11 The results of the bat surveys can then be used to inform specific mitigation and enhancement measures for this species group to include a lighting scheme that is sympathetic to bats.
- 4.12 Where a roost is likely to be impacted by the works, and where avoidance is not possible, it may be necessary to obtain a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence before the works can proceed and to complete any necessary mitigation.

- 4.13 Such a licence would need to be obtained from Natural England once full planning permission is in place. The application will require the drafting of a detailed mitigation strategy including timing and construction methods in addition to the mitigation measures proposed. Natural England currently require 30 working days to determine a licence application.

Habitat Enhancement/Retention

- 4.14 Additional roosting opportunities could be incorporated into the final design to enhance the site for roosting bats post works. This could include the installation of at least two bat boxes such as the Schwegler 1FF bat box located on surrounding mature trees within the site. These should be orientated with a south east or south west aspect and located at least 3m from ground level.

Bats and Lighting

- 4.15 Different species of bat have been found to react differently to night-time lighting however research has found that generally, all species of bats are sensitive to artificial lighting and that excessive lighting can delay bats from emerging, thus shortening the time available for foraging, as well as causing individuals to move away from suitable foraging grounds or roost sites, to alternative dark areas (Jones, 2000). Bats can also become isolated from their foraging grounds if the linear features they use for commuting are suddenly illuminated, creating a light barrier (Fure, 2006).
- 4.16 The development should serve to maintain the site's value for foraging bats and to minimise indirect impacts from lighting associated with the new building. This can be achieved by following accepted best practice (Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management 2006, Institute of Lighting Professionals 2018, Bat Conservation Trust, 2014):
- ❖ The level of artificial lighting including flood lighting should be kept to a minimum, particularly around the site boundaries;
 - ❖ LED lights are a preferred option to low pressure sodium lights or high pressure sodium or mercury lamps, and lights should be directed low with minimal light spillage;
 - ❖ ideally the site boundaries should be kept dark, preferably at bat emergence (0-1 hour after sunset) and during peak bat activity periods (e.g. 1.5 hours after sunset and 1.5 hours before sunrise); and
 - ❖ Artificial lighting should not directly illuminate any potential bat commuting areas such as boundary features particularly along the south and west of the site. Similarly, any newly planted linear features or buffer areas around the site boundary should not be directly lit.

5. Conclusions

Conclusions

- 5.1 The site is located at land west of Church Lane, Climping. Broad-leaved woodland, and hedge and trees border the site providing potential roosting, foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the wider landscape.
- 5.2 Current proposals are for the construction of an approximately 300 unit residential development to include the provision of green space. A new junction will be required between A259 and Church Lane. It is understood that the woodland within the southern and western site extent will be retained except for an area of hedge and trees within the south eastern site extent to make way for the new junction. Ponds will also be created as part of the plans. The survey area extended over approximately 25 hectares (ha).
- 5.3 The tree assessment identified a total of 62 trees that were considered to have features of high or moderate value to roosting bats, most of which were located within woodland in the southern and western site extents. Under current plans 3 of these trees; T7, T8 and T9 are due to be removed.
- 5.4 Tree climbing surveys are recommended on the 3 trees that are due for removal. The results of the tree climbing survey might mean further emergence and re-entry surveys are required.
- 5.5 Transect surveys are recommended for the area of woodland on the south west of the site to assess how bats are using the site and how they will be impacted by the development.
- 5.6 If any roosts are identified on-site during the surveys a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence will be required.

6. References

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Appendix A

Bat Tree Assessment Map

Appendix B

Legislation

Legislation

This section contains information pertaining to the legislation and planning policy applicable in Britain. This information is not applicable to Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands. Information contained in the following appendix is provided for guidance only.

Species

The objective of the EC Habitats Directive¹ is to conserve plants and animals which are considered to be rare across Europe. The Directive is transposed into UK law by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) (formerly The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) and The Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) implements the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and also implements the obligations set out for species protection from the Council Directive 2009/147/EC (formerly 79/409/EEC) on the Conservation of Wild Birds (EC Birds Directive) in Great Britain.

Various amendments have been made since the Wildlife & Countryside Act came into force in 1981. Further details pertaining to alterations of the Act can be found on the following website: www.opsi.gov.uk. Key amendments have been made through the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000) and Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

There are a number of other legislative Acts affording protection to species and habitats. These include:

- ❖ Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- ❖ Deer Act 1991;
- ❖ Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- ❖ Protection of Badgers Act 1992; and
- ❖ Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

Bats

Bats are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This act protects individuals from:

- ❖ intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level);
- ❖ intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection; and
- ❖ selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale

¹ Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.

In addition, all species of bat are fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- ❖ deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species (all bats);
- ❖ deliberate disturbance of bat species as to impair their ability:
 - (i) to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young; and
 - (ii) to hibernate or migrate.
- ❖ deliberate disturbance of bat species as to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species;
- ❖ damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place; and
- ❖ keeping, transporting, selling, exchanging or offering for sale whether live or dead or of any part thereof.

A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence issued by Natural England will be required for works liable to affect a bat roost or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake activities listed above. A licence is required to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and monitored.

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