



Condition 7- Ecological Design Strategy

Land at Red House
Cuckfield Road, Staplefield
Haywards Heath

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LIABILITIES:

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living creatures are capable of migration and whilst protected species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on a site at a later date.

The views and opinions contained within this document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to or during works.

1.0 Introduction

Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report was instructed by David Jenkins Design in order to support the discharge of condition for the enhancement of biodiversity and protected species on land at Red House, Cuckfield Road, Staplefield, Haywards Heath, RH17 6ET.
- 1.2 Planning permission, DM/25/1422 has been granted for the loft conversion and two storey and single storey rear extensions to the existing detached house with a garden room extension to the existing garage, associated landscape and drainage alterations to incorporate a new outdoor pool. Conditions have been attached to this permission.

Site Context and Proposals

- 1.3 The site is located in Staplefield to the east of the Cuckfield Road at central grid reference TQ 27920 27907, Figure 1. The site supports a single residential building and garden located within a rural area. Adjacent to the northern and eastern boundaries is an arable field, and residential development borders the western boundary. The wider area is dominated by arable fields, and parcels of woodland.



Figure 1: The approximate red line boundary

1.4 The condition is provided below;

Prior to commencement a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected, Priority and threatened species, prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist in line with the recommendations of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Ecology Partnership, August 2024) and the Bat Emergence Report (August 2024), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;*
- b) detailed designs or product descriptions to achieve stated objectives;*
- c) locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans (where relevant);*
- d) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures; and*
- e) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).*

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To enhance protected, Priority and threatened species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of NPPF 2024 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and to comply with Policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

2.0 Ecological Baseline

PEA / Internal Bat Survey

- 2.1 The house and out building was internally and externally assessed for their suitability for roosting bats. The survey was undertaken on 16th May 2024.
- 2.2 The garden supported well managed modified grassland dominated by perennial ryegrass. Two small apple trees were present in the southwestern section of the site and a small ornamental pond was also present. A cherry laurel hedgerow was present on the boundary.
- 2.3 The building supported a clay tiled roof in moderate condition, as well as hanging tiles on all four aspects. Internally, no roof lining was present, with tiles open to the internal environment. During the internal assessment a single brown long eared bat was identified.

Externally the roof tiles supported crevices which were considered to have potential to support bats such as pipistrelles. Further surveys were recommended as the building was classified as a 'confirmed roost'.

- 2.4 The site was not considered likely to support other protected species.

Bat Surveys 2024

- 2.5 The house was surveyed on the 16th May 2024, 5th June 2024 and 26th June 2024. Surveys identified common and soprano pipistrelles, noctules and brown long eared bats. During the final survey a single brown long eared bat was recorded emerging during the survey at 21.53 from the top northwestern hip of the roof, Figure 2.
- 2.6 No other emergence was recorded from the roof or the hanging tiles around the building. Due to the low numbers of bats recorded, it is considered that the loft void of the house is used as an opportunistic/day roost by a brown long eared bat. As such, the works to the building and loft void must be undertaken under a low-impact licence from Natural England.



Figure 2: Emergence at 21.53



Figure 3: Emergence and surveyor locations 26th June 2024

Update Bat Survey 2026

- 2.7 An update internal and external and emergence surveys was conducted on the 15th September 2026. Internally a total of 4 brown long eared bats were recorded, Figure 5 below. The roof void was not lined and supported numerous small gaps, making the void airy and cool.
- 2.8 Sunset was at 17:16 with no cloud cover, no precipitation and no wind. The survey temperature started at 18°C. Five bats were recorded emerging from the building. The first bat that emerged was a whiskered myotis *Myotis mystacinus* and emerged at 19:48 from the hanging tiles on the southern aspect of the building (Figure 4c). The following four emergences were all brown long-eared bats, likely the four identified within the loft void during the internal inspection of the building. These emerged at 19:52 from the south-western eaves (Figure 4d), at 20:17 and 20:18 from the eastern ridge (Figure 4a), and at 20:37 from the base of the north-facing chimney (Figure 4b). The remainder of the survey consisted of continuous common pipistrelle, noctule and brown long-eared recordings over the house and garden. The last bat recorded was a brown long-eared at 20:44, which was heard but not seen.

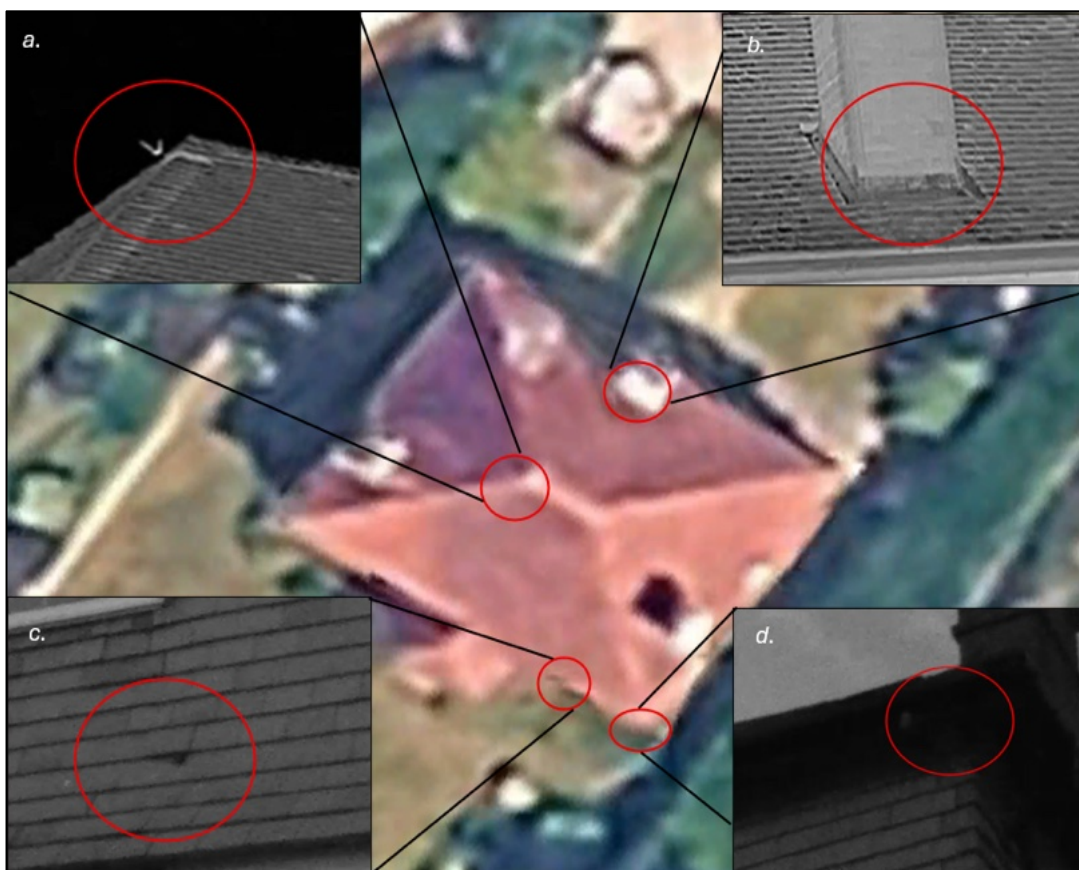


Figure 4: Five emergence points of bats on the follow up emergence survey (15/09/26). Two brown long-eared bats at 20:17 & 20:18 (4a); a brown long-eared bat at 20:37 (4b); a whiskered myotis at 19:48 (4c); and brown long-eared bat at 19:52 (4d)



Figure 5: Brown long eared bats recorded in roof void

3.0 Purpose and Conservation Objectives

3.1 The proposals are shown in Figure 6 below. The design includes the retention of key ecological features (the pond) and the creation of new habitats of value post development.

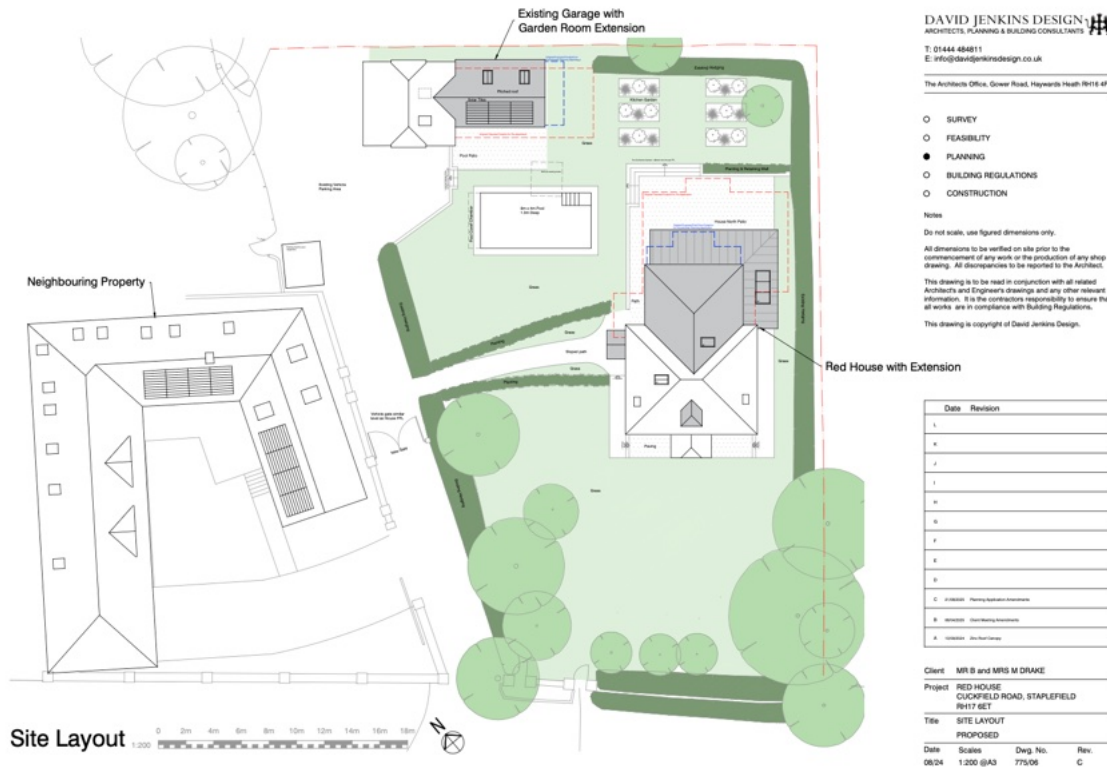


Figure 6: Site wide consented scheme

3.2 The purpose of the enhancement strategy is to increase opportunities for wildlife on site, in particular protected and priority species, notably brown long eared bats and whiskered bats. This will be implemented on site by undertaking the following:

- Installation of new specific features for roosting bats;
- Installation of new specific features for invertebrates and other species such as hedgehogs;
- Provision of new habitat features of value.

3.4 New habitats created onsite as part of the development are: vegetated garden/ kitchen garden, species rich flowering lawn and new hedgerow planting.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Ecologists

4.1 The Ecology Partnership will be on site when appropriate to monitor work so that no wildlife comes to harm and also to provide advice to site workers about best practices. The Ecology Partnership's duties include, but are not limited to:

- Monitoring site works;
- Sensitive tile removal works;
- Provision of status reports and updates as necessary;
- Provision of advice and liaison with workers on site as necessary;
- Identifying environmental risks and developing appropriate environmental controls;
- Delivery of environmental training for site personnel and sub-contractors;
- Liaison with client.

4.2 If an occasion arises which requires advice about a wildlife issue, then the Ecology Partnership's office can be contacted on: **01372 364 133**.

Site Workers

4.3 It is expected that all site workers will act responsibly whilst on the development site and adhere to the wildlife protection measures. All site workers will be briefed on ecological issues with regards to working practices and timings by the site manager. All site workers will receive a tool box talk (TBT) in relation to bat species present on site. It will be the site managers responsibility to ensure that this is undertaken.

4.4 Under **NO** circumstances must site workers:

- Clear or remove any tiles, including hanging tiles or roof tiles, without the agreement of the project ecologist;
- Handle or catch animals (unless the animal is in immediate danger);
- Remove or disturb wildlife boxes.

4.5 If any site worker is unsure of any of the above points, they must refer to the site manager or the site ecologist.

5.0 Enhancement Details Specific for Target Species

Bats

- 5.1
- The roof void supports a day roost for brown long eared bats identified in 2024. In 2026 the update survey in September suggesting a transitional roost.
- 5.2
- The proposals include the conversion of the roof structure and a two storey extension. As such, the bat roost within the roof void will be lost. Works to the house will be conducted under a Natural England licence. Compensation measures and enhancement roosts are to be recreated within the red line boundary. This includes the use of three tree mounted bat boxes, the use of integrated soffit boxes on the garage extension. Finally, a cavity rocket box will be established in the north eastern corner of the site, Figure 7 below.

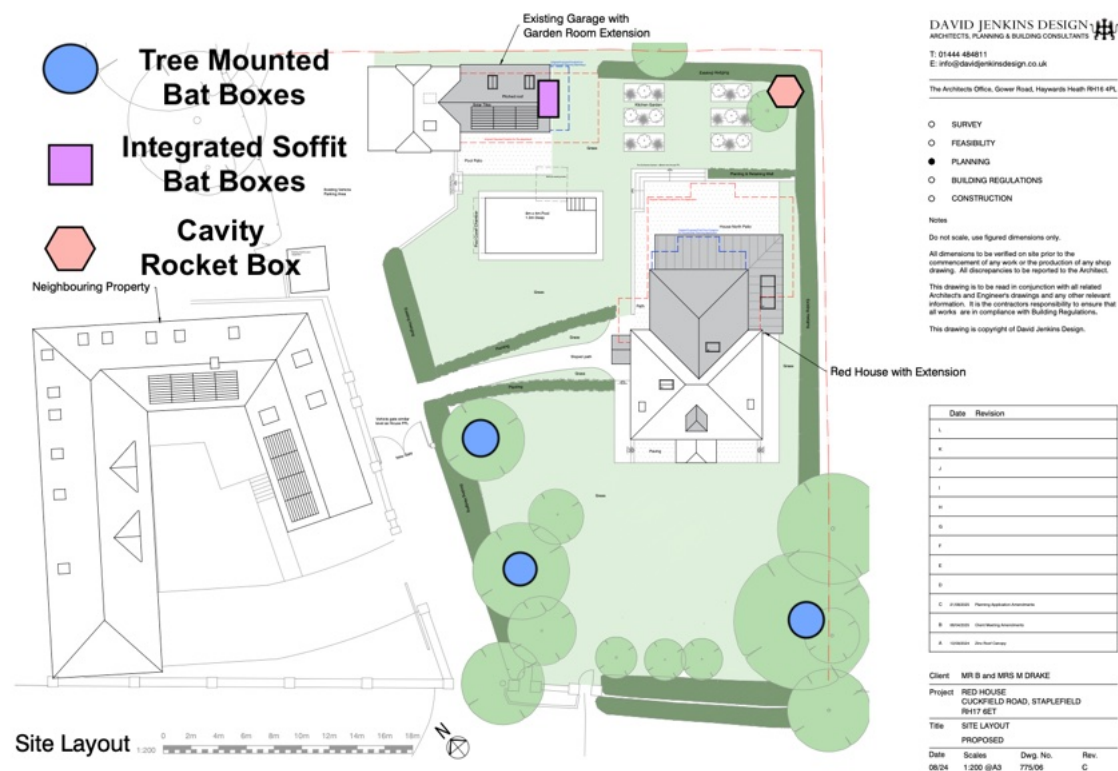


Figure 7: Location of the bat compensation measures and the enhancement measures for bats

- 5.3
- The three tree mounted bat boxes will consist of Vivara Pro WoodStone Bat Box Large and the Multi Chamber WoodStone Bat Box are both recommended, Figure 8. Please note that the final agreed location for the bat boxes will be determined by the ecologist if these positions require alteration.



Figure 8: Proposed Tree Mounted Bat Boxes

- 5.4 The soffit bat box roost (Figure 9) will be incorporated into the new garage. This caters for crevice-dwelling species such as pipistrelles and certain *Myotis* species such as Natterer's and Whiskered bat. This type of box makes use of an underutilised area of a building and would require no maintenance as droppings would drop through the entrance hole.

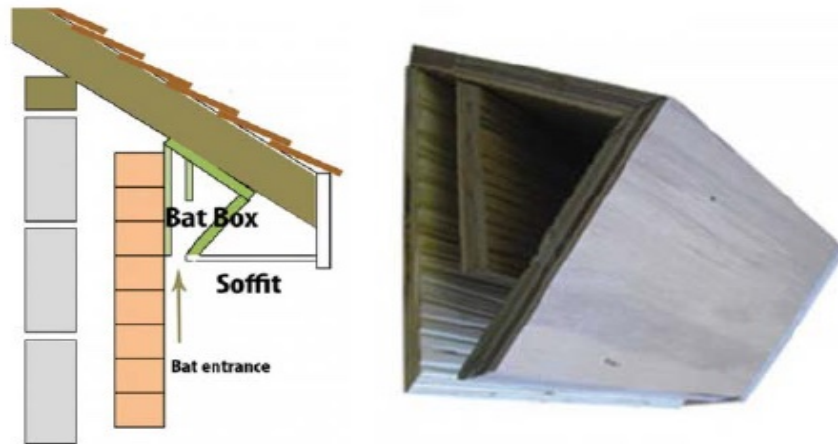


Figure 9: Soffit bat box (Wildcare)

- 5.5 The cavity bat box is specifically designed for cavity-roosting bats such as brown long-eared bats and noctules. It has a single internal cavity which is 45mm wide, running around the box. The bat box has rough walls and ceiling so that the bats have good grip, enabling them to move around the box and hang from the roof with ease. The construction of these boxes is shown in Figure 10 below.

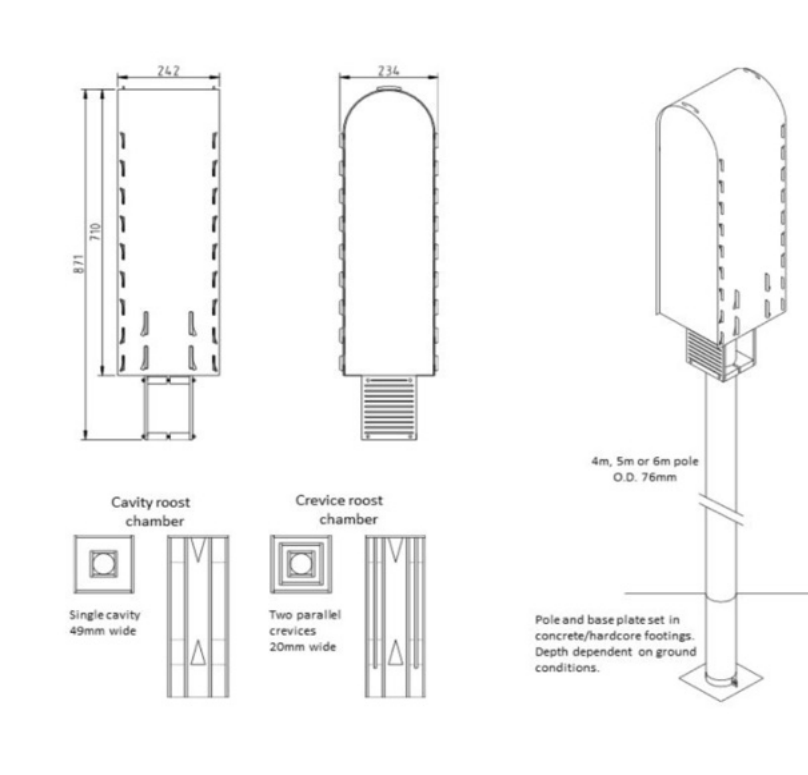


Figure 10: Cavity Bat Box

Invertebrates and Hedgehogs

- 5.6 The addition of log piles around the north of the site are to be included within the scheme. These would provide new opportunities for hedgehogs and invertebrates post-development. Log piles can be created using local, native wood where possible (Figure 11).



Figure 11: Examples of log piles that can be made on site

Bird Boxes

- 5.7 Additional nesting opportunities will be installed on several mature trees in the southern garden area. Hardwearing woodcrete boxes as shown in Figure 12 below. These would cater for species such as house sparrows and wagtails and the smaller garden birds. A total of two boxes will be utilised on the site and will be established on the north eastern aspect of the garage block, Figure 13 below.



Figure 12: Vivara Pro Seville 32mm WoodStone Nest Box

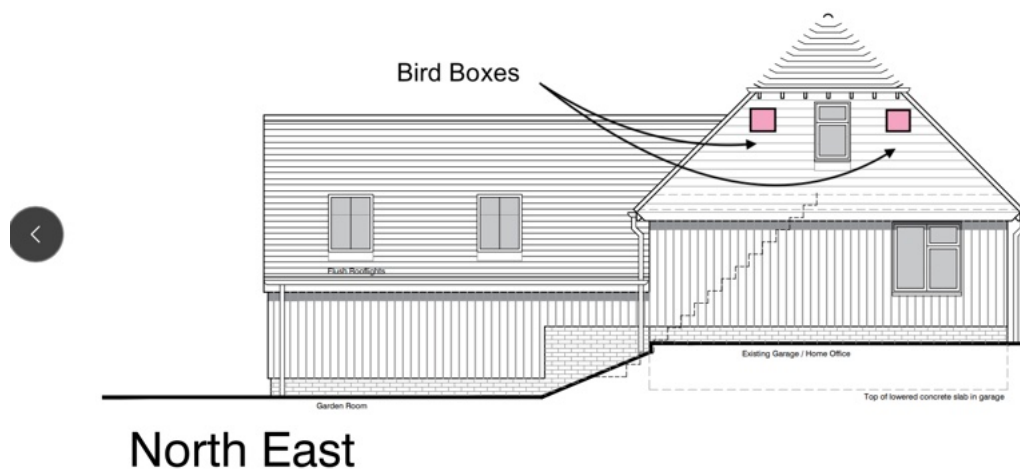


Figure 13: Location of the bird boxes

6.0 Habitat Management

Protection of Existing Vegetation During Construction

- 6.1 All trees and hedgerows around the edges of the site retained as part of the development proposals will be protected in accordance with the separate Arboricultural Method Statement to comply with the provisions of BS 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations'.
- 6.2 Protective fencing will be erected prior to any construction activity commencing and will be maintained until practical completion of all building and engineering works. The protective fencing should be checked by a qualified arboricultural consultant. If for any reason the fencing needs to be moved or altered, this will only be done under the supervision of the appointed arboriculturist.

Development Proposals

- 6.3 Supervision of vegetation removal, the ecological watching brief and all other ecological supervision and monitoring will be undertaken by an ecological consultant. The consultant ecologist will also advise on the location of habitat/wood piles; construction will be undertaken by a landscape contractor.

Bat Box Management

- 6.4 The bat boxes which are to be included within the scheme, do not require maintenance, with the design of the bat boxes allowing for droppings to fall out without cleaning. However, if there are any problems associated with maintenance then a suitably qualified ecologist will need to review potential impacts and further surveys may be required. Avoidance of maternity season (May – August) and hibernation (November – February) season should be made, where possible.

Log Pile Management

- 6.5 Log piles will be retained and managed as habitat for invertebrates, providing shelter, breeding and overwintering opportunities. Logs should be maintained in contact with the ground and comprise a range of sizes and decay stages. Log piles will be left undisturbed wherever practicable, with additional untreated timber added where appropriate.

Bird Box Management

- 6.6 The boxes should be checked once a year. Damaged bird boxes should be replaced promptly to maintain safe and suitable nesting conditions, as structural defects can expose birds to weather and predation. Routine maintenance should also ensure that entrance holes remain unobstructed to support ventilation and prevent water ingress. In line with best practice, all old nesting material should be removed during the recommended non-breeding period (typically early autumn) to minimise parasite load and prepare boxes for future occupancy, while ensuring compliance with wildlife protection legislation by avoiding disturbance during active nesting periods.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 Surveys by The Ecology Partnership identified the presence of brown long eared bats within the roof void of the building. A total of 4 brown long eared bats were recorded in the update survey in 2026. A single myotis, considered likely to be a whiskered bat, was also recorded emerging from the hanging tiles during the update survey.
- 7.2 It is considered that if these measures are implemented within this condition then the favourable conservation status of bats in the local area will not be harmed. This report should be read in conjunction with the updated bat report.
- 7.3 A licence for the works to the house will be required. Supervision of the removal of the roof tiles and hanging tiles will be required as a condition of the licence.
- 7.4 Other enhancements, including log piles and bird boxes, have been included within this condition.

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