

SOUTHWARK PLANNING



Barry Kitcherside  
Chart Plan (2004) Ltd  
Mansard Cottage  
65 Stoneleigh Road  
Limpsfield Chart  
Oxted  
Surrey RH8 0TP

31 March 2011

Dear Barry,

10 AP 3 751 SOUTHWARK COUNCIL PLANNING 12 MAY 2011 CASE FILE COPY	
DATE RECEIVED CASE FILE COPY	DECISION AND DATE
REGISTERED NUMBER	
23 MAY 2011	

#### ECOLOGY SURVEY REPORT - 123 GROVE PARK, SOUTHWARK

I am writing to set out the findings of my ecology survey of the above site completed on 25 March 2011. The survey was completed to update two previous surveys of the site undertaken by my company in 2006 and 2007<sup>1</sup>. I am an ecologist with over 20 years professional experience, a Chartered Environmentalist and licenced bat worker, I am also a voluntary Bat Warden for Natural England (Three Counties Team).

I completed an external and internal inspection of the house to search for signs of roosting bats, and identify features that bats could use for roosting. I also completed a walkover survey of the grounds and garden to search for evidence of legally protected animal species, species with elevated levels of biodiversity interest in the context of the Southwark Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and invasive plants that might be of planning concern with respect to developing the site.

In general the site was in a very similar condition to that reported previously, with the house (see **Photos 1-2**) possessing a number of built features about its exterior that could support crevice roosting bat species including gaps behind soffits (**Photo 3**) and lifting roof tiles (**Photo 4**). No physical evidence of bats was seen on any external surface, and the presence of bats using these features remains, as reported previously, a theoretical possibility only. It is of note that the current survey was completed outside the start of the main bat active season, and therefore evidence of bats (e.g. their droppings) would not necessarily be expected to be visible on exposed areas about the buildings exterior.

<sup>1</sup> Applied Ecology Ltd (July 2006) *Ecological Appraisal of 123 Grove Park, Southwark*. Report for Colliers CRE issued 12 July 2006  
Applied Ecology Ltd (August 2007) *123 Grove Park, Southwark - Bat Report*. Report for the Citrus Group







Photo 1

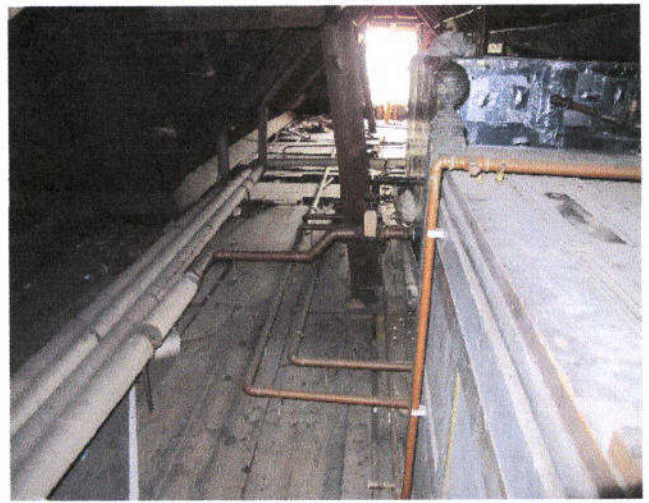


Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

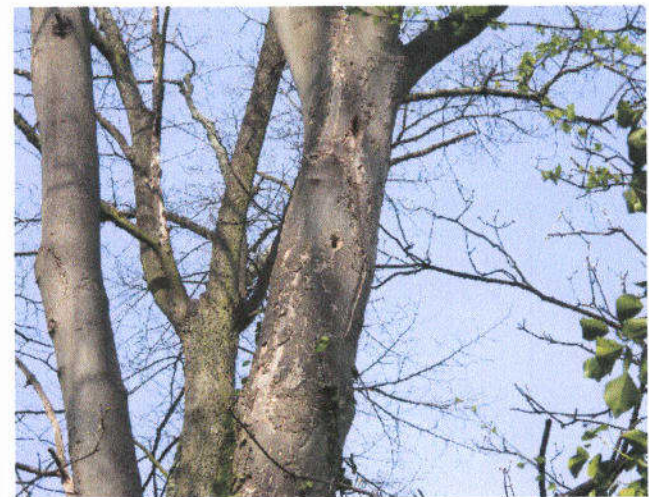


Photo 6

SOUTHWARK PLANNING

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123 Grove Park, Southwark  
Photo-sheet 1 of 1

Photos taken March 2011



CASE FILE COPY



Two old bat droppings of a size and shape consistent with those produced by a Pipistrelle bat were present on the lid of a water tank in the loft (see **Photo 2**), but no other evidence of bats was present. This along with the very light conditions within the roof space as a result of gable end windows (some with missing panes of glass), indicates that a large or important bat roost of species that require large roof voids to fly within (e.g. Brown Long-eared bat) is not present, and that any roosting activity is likely to be confined only to the use of crevice type features by Pipistrelle bats about the exterior of the property. The two droppings within the loft are considered most likely to have been produced by a single bat making a one off exploratory visit of roof space entering via the window frame with the missing window pane.

The two sycamore trees in the wooded area of the garden (**Photos 5-6**), reported previously to possess woodpecker holes that could be used by tree roosting bats, were still standing, and it appeared likely that one or both were in use by greater spotted woodpecker at the time of the survey. No obvious evidence of roosting bats was seen in association with either tree.

The previously reported invasive alien plant Japanese Knotweed was still present in the garden albeit the stand had increased in size since 2006. Similarly, as reported before, a number of fallen trees and log piles were also present in the wooded area of the garden, and are likely to provide dead wood habitat for Stag Beetle (a local BAP and legally protected species). Stag Beetle pupae and larvae require below ground dead wood habitat to persist and it is very difficult to prove their presence/absence from a site as it would involve destroying the habitat on which they depend to search for them. The presence of adult Stag Beetles in the garden does not necessarily prove breeding presence in the garden unless the beetle is seen to emerge from dead wood within the site. In light of this, and reflecting unverified reports of Stag Beetle presence in the local area, I would recommend a precautionary approach is adopted with respect to Stag Beetle, and the species is regarded as being present within the wooded part of the site.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Bats***

A bat activity survey in line with current best practice survey guidance should be completed to verify the presence/absence of roosting bats within the house prior to its demolition. If bats are found to be present, it is likely they will be crevice roosting species (almost certainly Pipistrelle bats) roosting in external crevice features. It is of note that such features could be easily replicated in any new building, and it is recommended that bat roost features are incorporated into the exterior of the new building as compensation for the loss of crevice roosting opportunity.

1. Ten enclosed bat bricks (Ibstock Type B or similar) to be incorporated in suitable locations within the exterior of the new building (locations to be agreed by a suitably experienced bat worker).



2. If the presence of roosting bats (i.e. more than one bat) is verified, then the building to be demolished under the auspices of a Natural England European Protected Species (EPS) development licence as considered necessary.
3. Standing dead trees with bat roost features to be felled at a time when they are least likely to be in use by nesting birds and breeding tree roosting bats in the autumn months (September to early November) immediately after a detailed check has been carried out that birds and bats are absent from them. Trees to be soft-felled if bat absence cannot be verified e.g. if trees prove unsafe to climb. Trees to be felled under the auspices of an EPS licence, as necessary, if the presence of tree roosting bats is confirmed.
4. As compensation for the loss of bat roost potential trees, six woodcrete bat boxes to be mounted in suitable locations on retained trees or other suitable structures within the grounds of the site in locations to be agreed by a suitably experienced bat worker.

#### *Stag Beetle*

A boundary of the garden (minimum width 3m) should be set aside as a Stag Beetle protection zone in perpetuity. In advance of site clearance and construction the following measures should be completed:

5. All dead wood and brashings to be removed by hand and used to construct two Stag Beetle loggeries (2.5m circumference) within the protection zone. Loggeries to be supplemented with large hard wood logs (not pine) as necessary. Left over dead wood to be left as habitat piles on the ground surface within the protection zone.
6. All ground immediately below and within 1m of the edge of existing dead wood log/brush pile locations to be hand dug under ecological supervision to search for Stag Beetle larvae or pupal cells. All larvae found to be transferred to one of three Stag Beetle breeding boxes to be constructed in advance of site clearance within the Stag Beetle protection zone.
7. A Stag Beetle information board to be erected to describe Stag Beetle ecology, conservation and the function of the mitigation measures provided within the protection zone.

#### *Japanese Knotweed*

8. A Japanese Knotweed elimination strategy be developed and implemented in advance of site clearance to avoid the spread of knotweed as a result of site clearance and construction operations.

In summary, I believe that provided the recommendations numbered 1-8 listed above are made a condition of any planning permission that is issued, there should be no significant adverse impact on the ecological interests of the site and the biodiversity value of the site will be maintained in the long term.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or points of clarification.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Duncan', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

**Dr Duncan Painter MIEEM CEnv**  
On behalf of Applied Ecology Ltd.