AEWC Ltd

Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants

26-003
23rd June 2026

Project Ref: 26-003 – St George's Church

Bat Assessment for Proposed Extension

AEWC Ltd were commissioned by St George's Church P.C.C to carry out a daytime bat assessment in relation to the proposed extension of St George's Church, West Grinstead, Horsham, RH13 8NF at central grid reference TQ 17090 20684.

Proposals are for a single-storey extension on the southern elevation of the church. The extension will comprise a combination of flat roofs and mono-pitch roofs. The new roofs of the extension will adjoin the southern elevation well below the existing eaves levels of the church and will not impact on any of the existing roofs. See Figure 1 below.

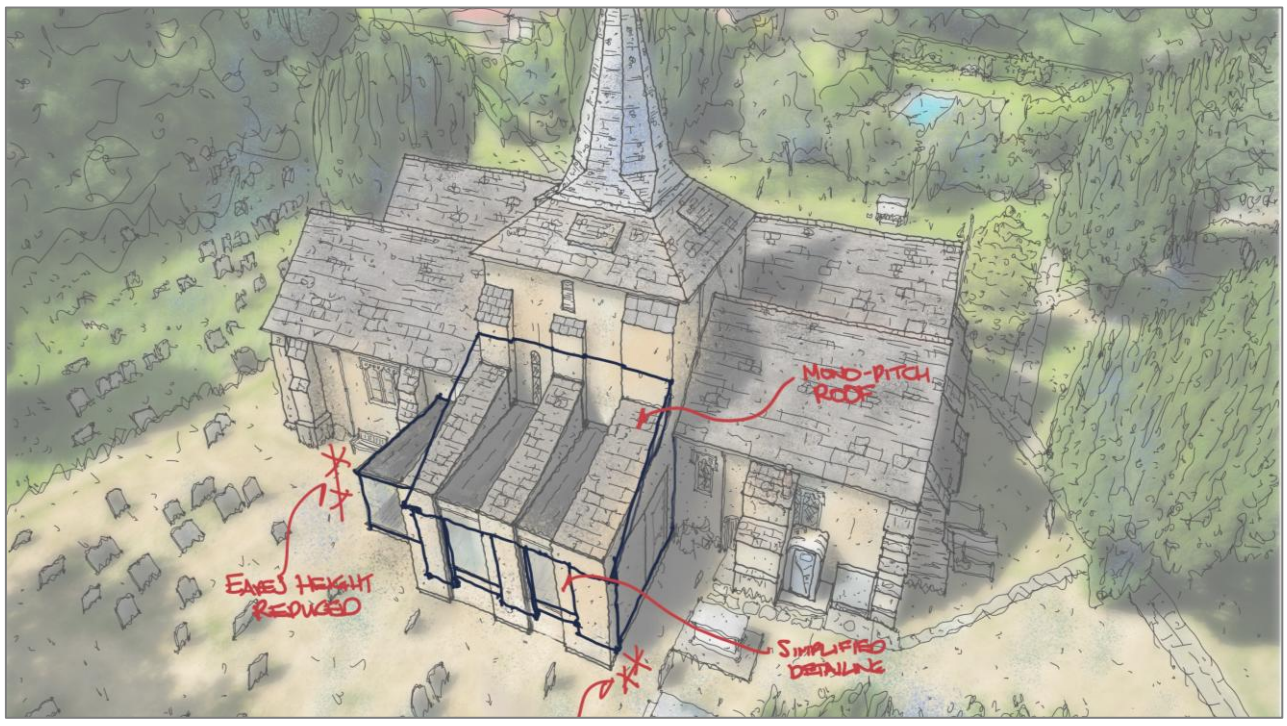

Figure 1: Illustrative Plans

Historic Bat Survey Findings, Building Alterations & Mitigation

The church is known to be a confirmed bat roost and has been subject to multiple bat surveys over the past seven years.

Bat emergence and re-entry surveys undertaken in 2019, 2020 and 2021 by Bernwood Ecology identified that the church supported a small maternity roost of Natterer's bats (*Myotis nattereri*), with a peak count of 30 emergences in 2019, and day roosts of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), and brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*). At this time, the roosting bats were found to be using the main internal church space as well as the porch on the northern side of the church. Numerous bat access points to the church were identified.

Due to bat urine and faeces causing damage to monuments in the church, in September 2021 works commenced under a Bats in Churches Class Licence to install barrel vaulted ceilings in the church, creating two enclosed loft spaces for the roosting bats, with suitable access points on the northern and southern elevations. In addition, the mitigation included the installation of two eaves boxes and the integration of louvres to the tower vents, which were previously sealed, to enable bat access to the tower for roosting.

Post-development monitoring surveys were undertaken by Bernwood Ecology in 2022 and 2023. No evidence of bat activity within the main internal church space was identified. The tower was found to be supporting day roosts for common pipistrelles and brown long-eared bats. Low numbers of Natterer's bats were recorded emerging from / re-entering the church via the southern aisle access point, indicating use of the southern void above the new ceiling. Common pipistrelles were also recorded emerging from this access point in small numbers, as well as from beneath the eaves on the southern elevation and from under roof tiles. One Natterer's bat and one barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) were identified perching within the porch on the northern side of the church.

2026 Bat Assessment

A daytime bat assessment of the church was undertaken by bat licensed ecologists Daniel Whitby and Natalie Arscott of AEWC Ltd on the 10th June 2026. The aims of the survey were to:

- Assess whether conditions at the church have changed since the previous bat surveys were undertaken;
- Identify whether any potential bat roosting features or access points are present within the area to be impacted by the proposed development;
- Determine any potential impacts of the proposed works on the bat roosts present; and
- Identify any further bat surveys and/or mitigation required.

The church's structure and overall condition, in terms of suitability for roosting bats, was found to be unchanged from how it was described in previous bat survey reports.

An internal inspection revealed no evidence of bat activity within the main internal church space. It is understood that no droppings or bats have been sighted within this space since the installation of the new ceilings.

The bell tower, which sits in the centre of the southern elevation and will be adjoined by the proposed extension, was subject to an internal inspection. This revealed low numbers of scattered bat droppings with small accumulations beneath suitable roosting features. The number of droppings recorded were indicative of day roosting activity. Larger accumulations of droppings would be expected if the tower supported a maternity roost. One brown long-eared bat was present roosting within the accessible part of the bell tower at the time of the inspection. It is noted that there may be further suitable features for roosting up the tower's spire, but this is inaccessible.

The portion of the southern elevation where the proposed extension will be located comprises smooth rendered walls, with an area of stonework surrounding the church door. There are no crevices or other potential roosting features associated with the walls or stonework themselves. The eaves of the tower and the southwestern lower roof of the church provide bat access points, however the proposed extension will sit a considerable distance below these.

The void spaces above the barrel-vaulted ceilings were not inspected due to poor accessibility. It is assumed, based on findings of the post-development surveys, that these are actively used by roosting bats which use access points along the eaves of the southern elevation.

See Photographs 1 – 4 below from the daytime bat assessment.



Photograph 1 – The church viewed from the north.



Photograph 2 – The church viewed from the south.

	
Photograph 3 – Location of the proposed extension on the southern elevation.	**Photograph 4 –** Brown long-eared bat within the bell tower.

Conclusions and Recommendations

St George's Church supports confirmed roosts for Natterer's bats, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, and brown long-eared bats, with a barbastelle having also been identified perching within the porch. Roosting areas are associated with the roofs, bell tower, loft voids, and potentially the eaves boxes installed as part of the mitigation for the ceiling works.

The proposed extension will adjoin an area of the southern elevation with no bat roosting suitability, impacting only on the existing walls which do not contain any potential roosting features. The western section of the extension will be flat roofed and therefore will sit comfortably beneath the eaves of the church's southwestern roof, where roosting bats have been identified as present. The eastern section of the extension will support mono-pitch roofs, however given the greater height of the tower that this section adjoins, the roof apexes will adjoin the southern elevation of the tower well below eaves level.

Based on the design of the proposed extension, it is not considered that it will directly impact on any confirmed or potential roosting areas, nor will it impede on bat access to any confirmed or potential roosting areas.

Potential disturbance to roosting bats during the works can be mitigated through appropriate precautionary methods and timing of works.

As such, it is not considered that a licence will be required for the proposed extension works, as no licensable impacts on roosting bats are likely. Undertaking further bat emergence surveys is also not considered necessary, since the findings would not alter the proposed mitigation.

To ensure bats are not negatively impacted by the proposed works, the works must be carried out under a Non-Licensed Precautionary Working Method Statement. This will include appropriate timing of works, a toolbox talk regarding bats, supervision

by a bat licensed ecologist where deemed necessary, and the appropriate positioning of scaffolding to ensure there is no conflict with roosting areas and access points.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best wishes,



Natalie Arscott
AEWC Ltd
Ecologist