

Yorkshire Forest District

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Ecologist
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Tree Top Junior – Dalby Forest.

Ecology Report.

A survey of the proposed Tree Top Junior site at Dalby Forest was carried out on the 12th June 2013 by Forestry Commission Ecologist Brian Hicks MSc MCIEEM (Bat licence no. 20122309).

The main tree species is Larch *Larix sp.* planted in 1941.

The understorey consists of Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, Hazel *Corylus avellana* Birch *Betula pendula*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*.

Species present within the field layer include Greater Stitchwort *Stellaria holostea*, Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, Bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, Broad buckler fern *Dryopteris dilatata*, Wavy hair grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*.

There were a small number of Badger *Meles Meles* latrine pits on the boundary of the woodland and fields in the north west corner of the proposed site.

A detailed inspection of the Larch trees was carried out from the ground using Swarovski 7 x 42 binoculars. All of the trees were found to be healthy with no splits, holes or cracks, and no flaky bark. Therefore these trees were found to have no potential for harbouring roosting bats.

None of the understorey trees were found to have any features suitable for roosting bats. Removal of these trees would result in a slight reduction of the area used by foraging bats, but in the context of this part of Dalby forest this area is extremely small and the effect would be negligible at most.

Badgers will not be affected by this development, the latrine area is outside the development area. Following tracks from the latrine, it is thought that the sett is likely to be several hundred metres away to the north.

Brian Hicks 2013.