

earthworks environmental design

9 Poorsland Barn, Slaidburn, Clitheroe. Lancashire. BB7 3AE
01200 446859 M: 07709 225783 earthworksuk@yahoo.co.uk

FAO: Ciara Naessens

Campbell Driver Partnership
Capricorn Park
Blakewater Road
Blackburn
BB1 5QR

4 December 2012

Job ref: B 1240

Dear Ciara

Re: Daylight scoping survey (bats): 138 Ribchester Road, Clayton-le-Moors, Blackburn, BB1 9EE

Introduction

You have requested a protected species survey on behalf of your clients Mr and Mrs Mellor, as a condition of a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) for a proposed building extension requiring modifications to an existing roof and roof voids at the property shown in figures 1 to 6 of this report.

The Local Planning Authority must take account of the impact of a development on protected species in accordance with PPS9. RVBC requires an appraisal of the likely impact of the proposed development on all bat species that are present or likely to be present at the property, in addition to any mitigation, compensation or enhancement proposals that may be required.

A daylight scoping survey was undertaken on Thursday 29 November 2012 between 10.45 and 11.30.

Survey methodology

The survey includes both internal and external inspections of the building, in addition to accessible roof voids.

The survey methodology follows the recommended guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust - *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd Edition, Hundt, L (2012)*, Natural England (*Survey Objectives, Methods and Standards as outlined in the Bat Mitigation Guidelines, 2004*) and Chapter 3 - Survey and Monitoring Methods, (*Bat Worker's Manual, JNCC, Mitchell-Jones AJ and McLeish, AP, 3rd Edition 2004*).

The aim of the scoping exercise is to consider the potential value of the site for European Protected Species (EPS) and to establish whether bats and other protected species have been active within any part of the property that will be affected by the proposed development.

Non-invasive survey methods were used to assess the use of the property by protected species (bats).

The search was made using a high-powered lamp (Clu-lite CB2 - 1,000,000 candle power), close-focussing binoculars (Leica Trinovid), a digital camera (Kodak MD41) and 900mm endoscope (ProVision 300) to view all likely areas of the building for the presence of bats, ie. droppings and urine spots, bat corpses, roost staining or evidence of feeding remains such as discarded moth and butterfly wings and other insects fragments typically found in a perching and feeding area.

Survey constraints

The survey methodology is designed to determine the likely presence of bats within the property and does not necessarily prove absence.

Crevice-roosting species may be overlooked, particularly when solitary bats are concealed inside wall cavities or beneath wall claddings and roofing materials.

Bats tend to be highly mobile mammals; pipistrellus, plecotus and myotis species frequently change roost sites particularly during spring, summer and autumn.

Evening emergence and dawn swarming surveys have not been carried out at this property.

Evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings or staining on external walls and surfaces is frequently removed by the action of wind and rain; absence of evidence is therefore evaluated with caution.

Personnel

The survey was carried out by David Fisher (EED) - an experienced ecological consultant with more than 25 years experience of bat ecology and field survey work and a Natural England licence holder since 1989.

Natural England licence No: 20122876 (August 2012), Conservation, Science and Education.

Desktop study (10km square: SD 63)

A local data search was carried to identify any relevant records of bat activity within 1km of the site. The following bat species are known to be present within the wider district:

Myotis sp.

Natterer's bat	(<i>Myotis nattereri</i>)
Whiskered bat / Brandt's bat	(<i>M. mystacinus</i> / <i>M. brandtii</i>)*
Daubenton's bat	(<i>M. daubentonii</i>)* ¹

Plecotus sp.

Brown long-eared bat	(<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)* ¹
----------------------	---

Pipistrellus sp.

Common pipistrelle	(<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)* ¹
Soprano pipistrelle	(<i>P. pygmaeus</i>)* ¹

Nyctalus sp.

Noctule bat	(<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)* ¹
-------------	---

*NBN data ¹EED data

National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and NLBG database records, whilst indicative of the bat species likely to occur within a 10km square, do not confirm presence or absence of a species or habitat.

Absence of records does not imply that a particular bat species is not present within the recording area.

Pre-existing information

No records are available at this property (SD 675 330).

Description of the property

The property is modern style detached bungalow (built ca.1930) with brick cavity wall construction and duo-pitched welsh slate with batten roof. The original property has been extended and modernised to include a first floor roof conversion comprising two bedrooms with landing.

The most recent extension (built in 2002) on the SE gable includes first floor bedroom with large double garage below. The garage has a rendered block work cavity wall construction and contains a small loft at the rear; the area is boarded for storage and access (figure 6). All roofs are lined with bitumen felt.

There is an eaves loft on either side of the first floor accommodation; stud walls and ceiling rafters are insulated with glass fibre material and the pitched roofs insulated with Kingspan board between the rafters (figures 4 and 5).

Externally, the building is well-maintained; slates and clay ridge tiles appear secure. PVC fascia -soffits are fully-sealed and there are no gaps between the box-soffit and rendered walls.



Figure 1: Rear elevation

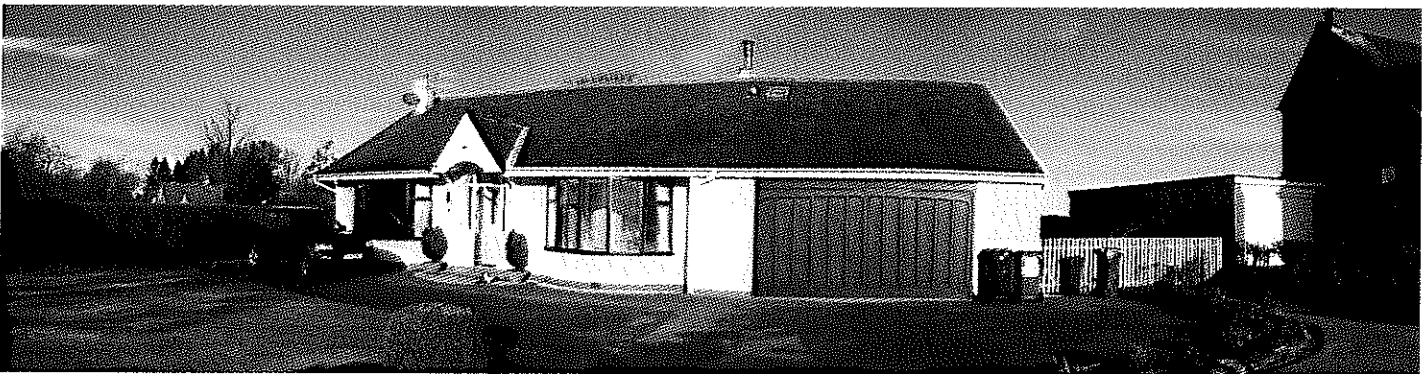


Figure 2: Front elevation



Figure 3:



Figure 4:



Figure 5:

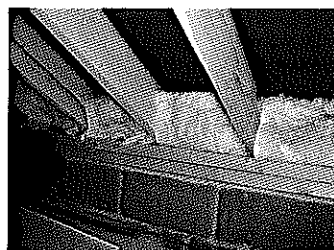


Figure 6:

Location of the property (national grid reference: SD 675 330): elevation: approximately 130 metres).

The property is located on the north side of Ribchester Road, close to open countryside; the house has a large garden to front and rear and there are extensive views over permanent pasture to the north.

The site has an open aspect and is not adjacent to woodland, plantation or sheltered hedgerow. There are no significant areas of open water or river channel nearby; the location is likely to be sub-optimal in terms of providing suitable habitat for feeding, foraging and commuting bats.

Proposed works

It is understood the proposed works includes a two floor rear extension (area located in figure 1) requiring removal of the existing dormer window and modifications to roof materials, roof verges and fascia soffits

Survey results

The weather at the time of the inspection was cold, dry and bright with light ground frost (max. temperature: 1.5°C; cloud cover: 10%; wind: calm; precipitation: nil) providing satisfactory conditions for a scoping survey.

There is no evidence of bat activity at this property.

All external features were carefully inspected for evidence of bat droppings and other indicative signs of access by bats, none was found; most areas of the building have minimal roost potential.

Slate cladding on the rear dormer window has 'low to moderate' roosting potential for bats; small gaps beneath some of the slates are accessible to crevice-seeking species such as pipistrelles.

There is no evidence of bats within the roof voids and it is very unlikely that bats have ever been present.

Evaluation of results

There is currently no evidence of bat activity at the property.

It is unlikely that breeding or hibernating bats have been present within any part of the building.

There is 'low to moderate' risk of disturbing roosting bats beneath slate cladding on the rear dormer window since bats favour warm south-facing structures where slate cladding is present. It is recommended that any hanging slates with gaps are removed carefully by hand to ensure roosting bats are not injured or killed during their removal. (see mitigation notes below).

The overall scale of impact of the development on local bat populations is likely to be negligible.¹

There are no existing records of bat activity at this property.

Further survey work (emergence and activity surveys) is not recommended.³

¹ The scale of main impacts at site level on bat populations – Table 6.1. p37 - (BMG, 2004)

² Guidelines for proportionate Mitigation, (Bat Mitigation Guidelines, 2004).

³ Flow chart depicting the process for deciding what level of survey is necessary, (BCT, Bat Surveys, 2007, p24)

Conclusion:

There is currently no evidence of bat activity within any part of the building.

There are no records of roosting bats at this property or in neighbouring buildings.

There is minimal risk of disturbing roosting bats during the proposed building alterations.

Recommendations

It is recommended the proposed works proceed with reasonable caution and vigilance for the 'unexpected' presence of solitary roosting bats beneath some of the hanging slates. (refer to mitigation notes below).

Further surveys (ie. evening emergence or dawn re-entry and swarming surveys) are not required.

An EPS development licence is not required.

SUMMARY

There is **no evidence** of roosting bats at this property.

An EPS development licence is **not required**.

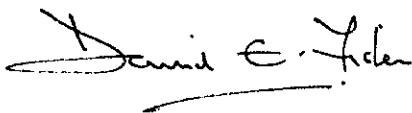
The proposed building alterations are **unlikely to cause disturbance to bats** or result in the loss of a bat roost or cause injury or death of a European Protected Species – (Bats) or result in any significant impact on a local bat population.

The scale of impact of the development at site level on local bat populations is likely to be negligible.

Mitigation guidance notes are attached (Appendix A); in the unlikely situation that any bats are disturbed, contact the surveyor immediately (David Fisher - EED) or call the Bat Conservation Trust for further advice.

Please note: I do not provide a copy of this report to the local planning authority, therefore it is your responsibility to forward the report to Ribble Valley Borough Council with the planning application.

Yours sincerely



David Fisher

Mitigation considerations (general guidance notes)

Mitigation refers to the practices adopted to reduce or remove the risk of disturbance, injury or death of a protected species or damage to a roost. The Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Natural England, 2004) define mitigation as "...measures to protect the bat population from damaging activities and reduce or remove the impact of development".

ACTION	METHOD / NOTES
1. Further survey effort	No required
2. Timing constraints	Not required
3. EPS Licence requirement	Not required
4. Method statement	Not required
5. Removal of roof slates	Although it is unlikely that roosting bats will be exposed during the proposed works, all site contractors and project managers should be aware that solitary roosting bats are occasionally found beneath roof slates, roof verges, ridge tiles, fascia boards and soffits.
6. Removal of slate cladding	There is increased risk of exposing solitary roosting bats beneath hanging slates on the existing rear dormer. Some of the hanging slates on the south side of the window have small gaps beneath them; these are optimum width for attracting small pipistrelle bats. IT IS RECOMMENDED these slates are very carefully removed by hand to ensure that any roosting bats are not harmed. Roosting bats can be present throughout the year, although the greatest risk of disturbance is during the spring, summer and autumn when bats are most active.
7. Accidental exposure of bats	In the event of bats being exposed or vulnerable to harm, all work in that area must stop immediately. Cover the exposed bats to reduce further risk of harm and seek further advice.
8. Legal protection	Site contractors and project managers should be fully aware of the legal protection afforded all species of bat in the UK and procedures should be in place to mitigate for the potential impact on bats - see notes on 'Bats and the Law' in this report.
9. General advice on bats	If you require further advice on bats during the proposed building operations or if you find an injured or resting bat, call BCT immediately; they will normally contact a qualified bat worker in the local area who will visit the site and provide further advice free of charge. Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) helpline number: 0845 1300 228
10. Emergency advice:	Call David Fisher (EED) on 01200 446859 (office) or 07709 225783 (mobile)
11. Post-development monitoring	Not required

Wildlife legislation – Bats and the law

All bat species in the UK receive full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended by the Environment Protection Act 1990). The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the Wildlife and Countryside Act to also make it an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct a place that bats use for shelter or protection. All species of bats are listed on Schedule 5 of the 1981 Act, which makes it an offence to:

- *intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bat.*
- *intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection. This is taken to mean all bat roosts whether bats are present or not.*
- *intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.*

The protected status afforded to bats means planning authorities may require extra information (in the form of surveys, impact assessments and mitigation proposals) before determining planning applications for sites used by bats. Planning authorities may refuse planning permission solely on grounds of the predicted impact on protected species such as bats. Recent case law has underlined the importance of obtaining survey information prior to the determination of planning consent¹.

*"It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by a development proposal, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision."*²

All British bat species are included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, (also known as Habitats Regulations) which defines 'European Protected Species' (EPS).

¹ Bat Mitigation Guidelines, AJ Mitchell Jones, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, (2004) ISBN 1 86107 558 8

² Planning Policy Statement (PPS9) (2005) , Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. ODPM.

Protected species (Bats) and the planning process¹

For development proposals requiring planning permission, the presence of bats, and therefore the need for a bat survey, is an important 'material planning consideration'. Adequate surveys are therefore required to establish the presence or absence of bats, to enable a prediction of the likely impact of the proposed development on them and their breeding sites or resting places and, if necessary, to design mitigation and compensation. Similarly, adequate survey information must accompany an application for a Habitats Regulations licence (also known as a Mitigation Licence) required to ensure that a proposed development is able to proceed lawfully.

The term 'development' [used in these guidelines] includes all activities requiring consent under relevant planning legislation and / or demolition operations requiring building control approval under the Building Act 1984.

Natural England (Formerly English Nature) states that development in relation to bats "covers a wide range of operations that have the potential to impact negatively on bats and bat populations. Typical examples would be the construction, modification, restoration or conversion of buildings and structures, as well as infrastructure, landfill or mineral extraction projects and demolition operations".*

*(Tony Mitchell-Jones, 2004)

¹ 2.2.3 - Planning for development, p10, Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines, BCT (2007).

