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9 April 2013

Job ref: B 1290

Dear Mr Wilson

Re: Daylight scoping survey (bats): Edisford Hall Farm, Edisford Bridge, Clitheroe. BB7 3LJ

Introduction

You have requested a protected species survey on behalf of your clients Mr and Mrs McKean as a condition of a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council for proposed building alterations at Edisford Hall Farmhouse.

The Local Planning Authority must take account of the impact of a development on protected species in accordance with PPS9. The planning authority 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 Wednesday 3 April 2013 between 10.30 and 11.30. The weather at the time of the survey was cold, dry and bright (maximum temperature: +5°C, cloud cover: 10%, wind: light north-easterly, rain: nil) providing satisfactory conditions for a scoping survey.

Survey methodology

The survey includes both internal and external inspections of the property. The existing building is shown in figures 1 to 9 of this report; areas affected by the proposed development are outlined in figure 1; two roofs will be disturbed, these are shown as roof A (fig.1) over an existing kitchen and roof B above a first floor bedroom.

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 bat species are occasionally overlooked; solitary bats are able to conceal themselves within cavity walls or beneath wall cladding materials and roofing materials.

Bats are highly mobile mammals and frequently move between sites, particularly during the warmest months of the year in spring, summer and autumn.

The timing of the scoping survey is outwith the optimal survey period for monitoring bat activity, therefore evening emergence / dawn swarming / acoustic bat surveys have not been undertaken 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.

Proposed works

It is understood the proposed works include construction of a single storey rear and side extension requiring removal of the mono-pitch roof over the existing kitchen extension and disturbance to the existing south-east elevation (*Drawing no. 1826.P.002 Rev K – Proposed elevations - IWA Architects*).

Additionally, the proposed works require re-aligning the existing shallow roof pitch (roof B figure 1) to match the opposite side and enlargement / replacement of a double window with stone lintel on the west elevation.

The property is a two storey stone farmhouse with extensions shown as structures A and B in figure 1.

The single storey rear extension (A fig. 1) has stone and block work cavity wall construction and mono-pitch lean-to roof with an enclosed roof void (figure 6). The slate roof is lined with bitumastic felt and insulated above the ceiling joists with a foil and glass-fibre thermal material. The void is cool, dry and dark and the area well-ventilated. There is a small gap within the block wall at the SE corner of the roof (figures 7 to 9) containing an electric cable (alarm); externally there is access into the cavity wall beneath a piece of lead work flashing as shown in figures 2 and 3.

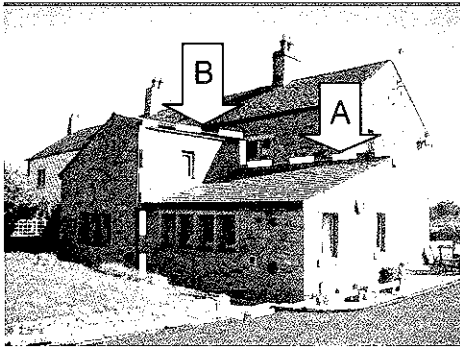


Figure 1:

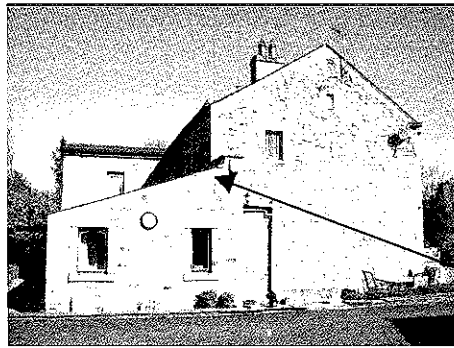


Figure 2:



Figure 3:



Figure 4:



Figure 5:



Figure 6:

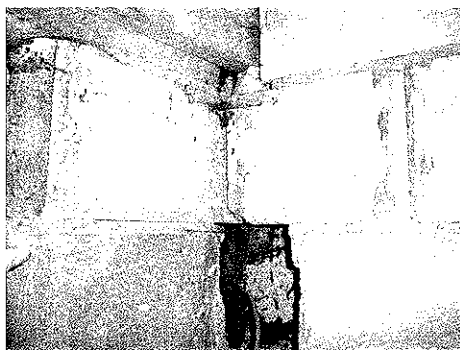


Figure 7:

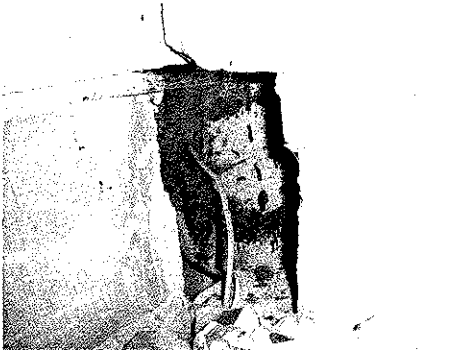


Figure 8:



Figure 9:

There is an accumulation of fresh bat droppings within this part of the roof indicating regular and significant roosting activity by crevice-roosting bats. The access to the roost is a narrow gap (20mm) beneath the lead work flashing on the south-east corner of the roof (figure 3).

The first floor extension (B fig. 1) is a two storey structure with shallow pitch slate roof. There is no void above the first floor room and the ceiling extends into the eaves.

Externally the building is well-maintained, windows and doors are double-glazed and secure and all stonework, lead work and external mortar pointing is very secure. Roof verges and coping stones are also well-sealed and secure.

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The property is one of several residential properties at Edisford Hall. The location is semi-rural and close to the River Ribble at Edisford Bridge. The house is situated on the north side of the river on a natural terrace approximately 100 metres from the river. Although the site is immediately adjacent to woodland, there is mixed conifer / broadleaved plantation and riparian woodland within 75 metres.

The Ribble channel provides extensive feeding, foraging and commuting habitat for bats and there are several pipistrelle maternity roosts in the locality.

A local data search has shown there are no designated nature conservation or wildlife sites adjacent to the property – ie. Special areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Biological Heritage Sites (BHS), National Nature Reserves (NNR's), Local Nature Reserves (LNR's) or Regionally Important Geological and Geo-morphological Sites (RIGS).

Desktop study (10km-grid squares: SD 74)

Pre-survey data searches include:

- (1) data on protected species (ie. any locally significant bat roosts)
- (2) local, regional and national wildlife / conservation designations
- (3) previous EPS surveys previously carried at the property or at neighbouring properties.

The following bat species are known to be present within the wider district:

Myotis sp.

Natterer's bat	(<i>Myotis nattereri</i>) ¹
Whiskered bat	(<i>M. mystacinus</i>)* ¹
Brandt's bat	(<i>M. brandtii</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
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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
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*NBN data ¹EED / ELBG data

Limitations of the data search

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

Pre-existing information

There are no existing records of roosting bats at this property (SD 735 414) or within neighbouring buildings within 250m of the site.

The nearest records of significant bat activity are at properties within 0.4km of the site at Ribblesdale Pool, NGR: SD 727 414 (*Pipistrelle* sp. maternity roost, Low Moor: SD 729 419 (*Pipistrellus* sp. maternity roost) and SD 730 420 (*P. pygmaeus* maternity roost).

There is evidence of a maternity bat roost within the roof cavity wall of the single storey rear extension (shown as structure A in figure 1).

The roost access point is above the cavity wall beneath a small piece of lead work flashing as located in figures 2 and 3. An accumulation of fresh bat droppings on the inside block work wall indicates recent roosting activity (ie. during the previous breeding season).

Although the species cannot be identified at this stage, the location of the roost suggests either common or soprano pipistrelle bats; both species are widespread and relatively common within residential properties along this section of the River Ribble.

No bats are currently present (endoscope survey); returning bats are likely to be present towards the middle of April / end of April / early May depending on the weather conditions.

It is likely the roost will contain at least 50 individuals, although the average size of a maternity roost is usually in excess of 75 females, sometimes considerably more. The actual number of bats can only be determined by carrying out a roost emergence count at dusk during the period 1 May to 31 August.

There is no evidence of roosting bats in any other part of the roof void; an additional inspection of both eaves voids in the main roof has found no evidence of roosting bats.

Evaluation of results

The conservation value of this property is moderate to high (ref: Fig 4, BMG, p 39).

The scale of impact of the proposed works at the site level on local bat populations is likely to be moderate to high (ref: Table 6.1, BMG p 37).

There is clear evidence of bat activity at the property; a maternity roost (probably pipistrelle bats) is located on the NE corner of the roof; bats are likely to use the roost each breeding season; returning bats are normally present from mid-late April or early May until mid to late August or September. Parturition takes place in mid to late June or early July. Pups are unable to fly for several weeks and are normally present at the nursery site until at least mid-August. During late August and September adults and pups disperse and numbers decrease steadily; during milder autumn weather, a few bats remain until October or early November.

Risk of disturbance

The level of risk of causing disturbance to roosting bats at this property is likely to be **moderate to high risk***

* Risk categories are shown in Table 1 below:

Negligible risk: it is highly unlikely any bat species have been present at this site.

Low risk: there is only low risk of disturbance to solitary bats or small numbers of common and widespread bat species.

Low / moderate risk: caution required; activity of common / rarer species is possible, including the presence of occasional / regular night perching and feeding activity or the presence of small numbers of rarer species (but not a maternity or hibernation site).

Moderate risk: caution required; there is moderate risk of disturbance to common bat species; activity may include the presence of regular / significant feeding perches and signs of feeding, a regularly used day / night roost or a maternity site of a common and widespread species or the likely presence of low numbers of rarer species ('rarer' as defined within the local context).

Moderate / high risk: considerable caution is required; this category may include a maternity site of rarer species.

High risk: considerable / extreme caution is required; there is a significant risk of causing disturbance to roosting bats at this site including large numbers of common species, a maternity site of locally rare or rarest UK species or a significant hibernation site for rare or rarest species; this is likely to be a site meeting the SSSI guidelines.

Further survey effort is required to determine: (a) species; (b) numbers of bats; (c) roost status – (ie. whether this is a main roost or satellite roost); (d) flight and foraging routes over the property; (e) location of other nearby roosts.

At least one evening emergence survey and one dawn re-entry / swarming survey should be carried out during the optimal survey period (May to August inclusive). The surveys must be undertaken by a licensed and qualified person.

Current guidance (BMG – 2004) requires (a) timing constraints on when the works are carried out; (b) more or less like-for-like replacement of the roost site; (c) bats must not be left without a roost and must be given time to find a replacement roost; (d) monitoring of the roost for 2 years is preferred.

A Method Statement containing mitigation measures and compensatory (enhancement) works is also required before any works are carried out on the proposed development.

SUMMARY

There is evidence of bat maternity roost within the building that will be affected by the proposed development; **further survey work is required during the optimal survey period.**

At least one evening emergence or one dawn swarming survey is required between 1 May and 31 August.

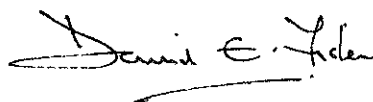
The surveys should be carried out by a qualified and licensed ecological consultant.

A detailed Method Statement is required outlining appropriate mitigation and compensation measures.

The Method Statement should be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority before any works are carried out.

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 District Council with the planning application.

Yours sincerely



David Fisher

ACTION	NOTES
1. Further survey effort	REQUIRED At least one dusk emergence or dawn swarming / re-entry survey during the optimal summer survey period between 1 May and 31 August to determine (1) species, (2) numbers of bats, (3) frequency of use, (4) roost status, (5) bat activity over the site including commuting and foraging routes and presence of other bat roosts nearby.
2. Timing constraints	REQUIRED Disturbance to roof areas must avoid the critical period MAY, JUNE, JULY and AUGUST when female bats and their young are at greatest risk of disturbance. Natural England recommends the optimal times for roofing works are during spring and autumn period when bats are least vulnerable to disturbance. The replacement roost must be completed well before the bats are due to return in April / early May the following year.
3. Replacement roost / access	REQUIRED Like-for-like replacement of roost and access point required on new building; bats must not be left without a roost and must be given time to find the replacement roost.
4. Licence requirement	MAY BE REQUIRED A mitigation licence is required where there is likely to be risk of disturbance, injury or death of a protected species or damage or loss of a bat roost.
5. Method statement	REQUIRED A DETAILED METHOD STATEMENT IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO WORKS BEING CARRIED OUT. The method statement must include mitigation and compensatory works: Mitigation refers to all works required to comply with the legislation when developing areas occupied by protected species. Mitigation refers to practices which remove or reduce damage. Compensation refers to works which offset the damage caused by the development and may include additional enhancement works that ensure the conservation value of the property is maintained or improved.
6. Pre-development monitoring	REQUIRED Visual check at roost immediately before roof works begin; ecologist to be on site to discuss the method statement and working practices with contractors and must be present during the removal of any roof materials in the vicinity of the bat roost.
7. Post-development monitoring	PREFERRED – (two breeding seasons) to ensure that adequate mitigation and compensation measures have been carried out to ensure there are adequate access points for bats into the new roof; monitoring should include at least one roost emergence check in the year following completion of the work.

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).

Other references:

Bats, development and planning in England, (Specialist support series) - Bat Conservation Trust, 5th Floor, Quadrant house, 250 Kennington Lane, London, SE11 5RD, 0845 1300 228

Clarification of the legal duty of Local planning Authorities' to European Protected species: High Court Judgment June 2009: (Wooley v Cheshire east Borough Council) - Bat Conservation Trust.

Defra Circular 01/2005 (to accompany PPS 9) - Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. www.defra.gov.uk

Natural England, Cheshire to Lancashire Team, Electra Way, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 6GJ Tel: 01270 754227

Altringham, JD., (2011) Bats, From Evolution to Conservation.

Dietz, C., Helversen, O., Nill, D., (2009) Bats of Britain, Europe and Northwest Africa.

Hundt, L., (2012) BCT Bat Surveys, Good practice Guidelines – 2nd edition.

JNCC, (2010), Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a technique for environmental survey.

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Mitchell, AJ., (2004), English Nature Bat Mitigation Guidelines, version January 2004

Russ, J., (2012), British Bat Calls, A Guide to Species Identification. Pelagic Publishing.

Websites:

1. National Biodiversity Network (NBN) database, (terrestrial mammals - chiroptera)
2. Bat Conservation Trust (BCT)
3. Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
4. East Lancashire Bat Group
5. Lancashire Wildlife Trust
6. Lancashire Biodiversity Partnership
7. Biological Heritage Sites Partnership (LCC, NE and LWT)
8. EED dataset (Lancashire bat records 2000 - 2012)
9. Multi-Agency Geographical Information Centre (www.magic.gov.uk)
10. Natural England - Nature on the map (www.natureonthemap.org.uk)