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Clara Naessens
Campbell Driver Partnership
Capricorn Park
Blakewater Road
Blackburn
BB1 5QR

26 August 2015 Job ref: B 1603

Dear Ciara

Re: EPS – Daylight scoping survey: Oaksmead, Copster Green, Blackburn, BB1 9EP

You have requested a scoping survey (European Protected Species) as a condition of a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council for proposed building alterations at the above property.

As a consequence of the historical declines in bat populations during the second half of the twentieth century, all bats and their roosts are protected by UK law. The depletion of natural habitats throughout the UK means that some bat species are now more than ever dependent on houses and other structures as roosting sites. It is this dependence that makes bats vulnerable to developments that can result in damage or destruction of significant maternity sites or hibernation roosts.

The Local Planning Authority must take account the impact of a development on protected species in accordance with current planning policy (National Planning Policy Framework). 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 site, in addition to any mitigation and enhancement works that may be necessary.

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.*

*Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines, BCT, (2007).

All internal and external areas have now been carefully inspected for the presence of bats and other protected species. **The survey has found no evidence of bats within any part of the building**; consequently there is unlikely to be any risk of disturbance to protected species at this site.

The proposed demolition works will not require a development licence since the alterations are unlikely to result in a breach of the Habitats Regulations.

Please find the survey report now attached.

Yours sincerely

David Fisher
Director (EED Surveys)

BAT SCOPING SURVEY REPORT:

Property at: Oaksmead, Copster Green, Blackburn, BB1 9EP

Timing of survey / weather conditions

The survey was undertaken on Monday 25 August 2015 between 11.45 and 12.30 hrs.

The weather at the time of the inspection was dry, warm and bright (minimum temperature: 17ºC, cloud cover: 20%, wind: light WNW breeze, rain: nil) providing optimal conditions for this level of survey.

Personnel

The survey was carried out by David Fisher (EED Surveys) - an ecological consultant with more than 25 years of experience in field survey work and development issues relating to protected species. The surveyor has held a Natural England licence since 1989.

Natural England Class Licence Registration Number: CLS03502 (1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016)

Class Survey Licence WML CL15 (Volunteer Roost Visitor Level 1)

Class Survey Licence WML CL18 (Bat Survey level 2)

Aim of the scoping survey

The aim of the scoping survey is to assess the potential value of the site for European Protected Species (EPS) and to establish whether bats, barn owls or other protected species have been active within any part of the building that is likely to be affected by the proposed development.

From the developer's perspective, the primary objective of a survey for protected species is to ensure that a development can proceed lawfully without breaching the Habitats Regulations.

*The overall aim of surveying at a proposed development site is to collect robust data to allow an assessment of the potential impacts the proposed development will have on the bat populations present on and around the site. . . The data allow the developer to decide whether to proceed with the proposal as it stands, or whether to modify it. Proposals for appropriate mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be based on the survey data and impacts.**

* Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd Edition, BCT, (2012)

Survey methodology

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

The survey includes a visual assessment of both internal and external features of the property in addition to all accessible roof voids and structures that are likely to be affected by the proposed works.

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 search was made using a high-powered lamp *(Clu-lite CB2 - 1,000,000 candle power),* close-focussing binoculars *(Leica Trinovid 10 x 32 BN)* and digital camera *(Sony Cyber-shot HX300)* were used to view all likely areas of the building for the presence of bats - ie. droppings and urine spots, bat corpses, bat fly larvae, roost staining or evidence of feeding remains such as discarded moth and butterfly wings or 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 able to roost within very narrow gaps, frequently less than 25mm wide; solitary roosting bats are sometimes overlooked during daylight inspections, particularly in situations where bats have gained access within cavity walls and roof materials or beneath lead work, wall claddings, fascias and soffits.

The scoping survey does not include evening / dusk emergence or dawn re-entry and swarming surveys.

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; apparent absence of evidence is therefore evaluated with caution.

Limitations of the data

National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and other data sources, whilst indicative of the bat species likely to occur within the nearest 10km-grid squares, do not confirm presence or absence of a species or habitat.

Local bat records are obtained from a variety of sources gathered over several years; the accumulated records may include unverified public data in addition to data obtained from ecological consultants and local bat groups.

The surveyor is not aware of any comprehensive bat survey undertaken in the wider district, local records are likely to provide a generalised and somewhat incomplete picture of the bat fauna within the area of search.

Pre-survey data search

The pre-survey data search includes the following sources:

(1) European Protected Species (EPS) – ie. locally significant bat roosts or species records within the district.

(2) Locally, regionally or nationally important wildlife and conservation designations.

(3) EPS surveys undertaken at this site and other properties within 2km of the site.

(4) National Biodiversity Network (NBN) terrestrial mammal records (chiroptera).

(5) Local bat records - East Lancashire Bat Group (ELBG) / North Lancashire Bat Group (NLBG)

(6) Interactive maps: *Natureonthemap* (Natural England) and *Magic.gov.uk*.

The following bat species are likely to be present within the wider district (10km grid square – SD 63):

- Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*)
- Whiskered bat (*M. mystacinus*)
- Brandt's bat undertaken on (*M. brandtii*)
- Daubenton's bat (*M. daubentonii*)
- Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*)
- Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
- Soprano pipistrelle (*P. pygmaeus*)
- Noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctula*)

Pre-existing information

There are no published records at this location.

The surveyor has not carried out an EPS survey on this building previously.

Location of the property

National Grid Reference: (SD 675 338) - Elevation: approx. 85 - 90 metres.

The property is part of a small residential development at Copster Green and is close to other dwellings of similar age, design and construction. The location is semi-rural and is relatively close to open countryside to the east / north-east. 100 metres west of the property is the A59 with further open countryside beyond the road.

The site is not close to any extensive broadleaved woodland or mixed / conifer plantation and there are no areas of standing open water or river channel near the site. The location of the building is sub-optimal in terms of feeding, foraging and commuting habitat for bats, although several bat species are present within the locality.

An online data search has found no reference to designated nature conservation sites immediately 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).

Description of the building

The property is a modern detached dormer bungalow (built circa 1995) with standard brick and block cavity wall construction and duo-pitched rafter-with-purlin roofs. There is a front lounge extension and entrance porch on the south-facing front elevation (figure 1) both structures have pitched blue slate roofs (figure 3), additionally there is a dormer window on the front roof pitch above the integral garage (figure 4). At the rear of the property are three dormer windows on the north roof pitch (figure 2).

An enclosed roof void extends along the entire length of the building (figure 5); the roof void is without natural light and all areas are clean, dry and well-ventilated. The void is boarded for access and storage and glass fibre insulation is present between the ceiling joists.

The slate roof is lined with a bitumen roofing felt and all areas of the roof appear to be very secure, although gaps around the gable apex and wall plate are present and a number of bat droppings are visible (figure 6).

Figure 1: front elevation (south)

Figure 2: rear elevation (north)

Figure 3: entrance porch front elevation

Figure 4: garage with dormer above

Figure 5: main roof void

Figure 6: gable apex wall (west elevation)

Proposed works

It is understood the proposed development includes replacement of the existing lounge roof requiring extensive roofing works over the new extension. Additionally, some local roof alterations are likely to disturb the roof pitch above the existing garage and dormer on the front elevation (figure 4).

Survey results

All internal and external features of the property have been inspected for evidence of roosting bats.

A number of droppings are present on the internal blockwork of the gable apex wall of the west elevation. Several fresh droppings (≤ 10) and a number of old droppings (≥ 10) are present on the block wall (figure 6) and on the floor immediately below the apex.

There are no other signs of bats within any part of the roof void and there are no signs of bat faeces on any of the external surfaces of the building.

Evaluation of results

The presence of small bat droppings around the west gable apex indicates access by solitary bats or low numbers of bats within the roof apex. The location and identity of these droppings suggests common pipistrelle bats have been active in this small area of the roof.

There is no evidence of flight within the roof void and there are no indications that bats are currently active.

The proposed development is unlikely to disturb to roosting bats; the proposed working areas are sufficiently remote from the roost area as to cause minimal disturbance to any protected species.

Nesting wild birds are not present at the property.

Further survey effort at this property is not required.

Summary and Recommendations

ROOSTING BATS

The proposed development is **unlikely to cause significant 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 these works at site level on local bat populations is likely to be **minimal / low.**

The conservation significance of this property is currently **low.**

Additional survey effort (ie. dusk emergence and dawn re-entry and swarming surveys) during the optimal survey period 1 May to 31 August **is not required** at the property.

It is recommended the works proceed **without a requirement to obtain a development licence (EPSL)** since the proposed works are unlikely to result in a breach of the Habitats Regulations.

NESTING WILD BIRDS

There is no evidence of roosting or nesting swifts, swallows, house martins or barn owls at the property.

Nesting wild birds are unlikely to be disturbed during the proposed works.

ANNEX 1

MITIGATION GUIDANCE – minimising the risks to roosting bats and wild birds

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	Not required
2. Timing constraints	Not required
3. Detailed method statement	Not required
4. EPS Licence requirement	Not required
5. Removal of roofing materials	There is a low risk of disturbing isolated bats beneath roofing materials. In the unlikely event of any bats being exposed during disturbance of roofing materials, work in that area should stop immediately until the site has been inspected by a qualified person.
6. Avoid works on west gable apex	There is potential for roosting bats to be present within 1 metre of the apex of the west gable wall during the spring and summer months. Solitary bats or low numbers of bats are most likely to be present during the period April to August / September. Bats are least likely to be present during the winter months (October to March) **If any works are likely to take place within the area of the roof close to the west apex, the owner of the property must seek further advice before these works are carried out.**
7. Accidental exposure of bats	Cover the exposed bats to reduce any further risk of harm. Place the bats in a small dark and very secure box and leave in a cool and quiet place. Wherever possible, try to prevent any bats from flying away in daylight. Seek further advice immediately.
8. Legal protection	The onus lies with the developer to ensure that protected species are not disturbed, injured or killed at this site. 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. Emergency advice on bats	If you require specific advice on injured or exposed bats during the building works please contact: EED Surveys (David Fisher): 01200 425113 (office) or 07709 225783 (mobile) email: earthworksuk@yahoo.so.uk The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) provides a bat helpline: 0345 1300 228; in an emergency, BCT will call the nearest volunteer bat worker in your area to arrange a site visit at the earliest opportunity.

	BCT also provides an out-of-hours service run by volunteers at the end of the working day for emergency calls and operates between 19.30 and 23.30 or 07.30 and 09.00 next day.

ANNEX 2

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 consent[1].

"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 process

Our built environment has the potential to have major negative impacts on biodiversity. However, if done sensitively, the development and refurbishment of buildings can, in fact, increase the ecological value of the site.*

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[1].

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".*[2]

* Designing for Biodiversity, RIBA (second Edition - 2013) [1] Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines, BCT (2007. [2]Tony Mitchell-Jones, (BMG, 2004)

Other references:

Bats, development and planning in England, (Specialist support series) - Bat Conservation Trust, 5th Floor, Quadrant house, 250 Kennington Lane, London, SE11 5RD, 0345 1300 228

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

Natural England - Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside offices are located at:
Crewe: Natural England, Electra Way, Crewe business park, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 6GJ 0300 060 2922
Kendal: Natural England, Juniper House, Murley Moss, Oxenholme Rd, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 7RL 0300 060 2122
Manchester: Natural England, 3rd Floor, Bridgewater House, Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 6LT 0300 060 1062