



Mr and Mrs Clash
7 Ribchester Road
Ribchester
Lancashire
PR3 3YA

11th July 2015

Dear Mr and Mrs Clash

Re: Proposed development at 7 Ribchester Road, Ribchester, Lancashire PR3 3YA

Thank you for your request for a bat survey in relation to a proposed development at the above site; I understand the local planning authority have requested the survey in relation to a planning application (Reference 3/2015/0549) which includes an extension to a dwelling house.

Background and Qualifications

The survey was carried out by Pat Waring and Janette Gazzard.

Pat is a licensed bat worker (Class 2 licence), registered consultant of the Bat Low Impact Class Licence, a Chartered Environmentalist and a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology.

Pat has been working as an ecological consultant for over seventeen years, most recently as Director of Ecology Services UK Limited. This work includes provision of expert advice and guidance to bodies such as Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations, Local Planning Authorities and Lancashire and Yorkshire Police Authorities, as well as the delivery of professional training courses about bats at a national level.

Pat has recognised and extensive experience and knowledge of ecological survey, monitoring, condition assessment and impact assessment techniques. He has extensive knowledge of bat ecology relating to buildings and trees including the requirements and condition necessary for bats roosting. He also has recognised skills relating to bat surveys and assessment.

Janette is a full member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Management.

Janette has over eleven years experience working in ecology and nature conservation, including roles as a Senior Ecologist for a large multidisciplinary company and as a lead adviser for Natural England throughout the North West of England. She has a range of demonstrable skills including habitat surveys ecological appraisals, protected species, conservation management advice and condition assessments; and is currently working towards becoming a licensed bat worker.

Pat Waring and Janette Gazzard meet the requirements for knowledge, skills and practical experience as outlined in the CIEEM technical guidance as follows:

Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (2013) *Competencies for Species Survey: Bats*. CIEEM, Winchester, Hants.

Advisory Note

The information in this note represents the professional opinion of an ecological consultancy and does not constitute professional legal advice. You may wish to seek professional legal interpretation of the wildlife legislation associated with this area of work.

The information, opinion and advice that Ecology Services UK Ltd has prepared are true, and have been prepared in accordance with the CIEEM Code of Professional Conduct. Ecology Services UK Ltd confirms that the opinions expressed are our true professional bone fide opinions.

Methodology

In order to assess the likelihood of bats being present at the dwelling house a daytime inspection of the building and surroundings was carried out on 9th July 2015. The full and relevant parts of the site were accessible on the day for a detailed inspection.

Results of the Survey

The building comprises a semi detached, two storey dwelling house, constructed of brick with rendered external walls and a concrete tiled, hipped roof with brick chimney and lead flashing. The tiles are covered with moss and lichens on all aspects and are close fitting with no suitable gaps for bats visible. There are a few gaps associated with lead flashing but these are too open and exposed to be used by roosting bats.

There is a small, shallow roof void with a roof light present on the south elevation, making conditions light and therefore unsuitable for daytime bat roosting. The roof is supported on timber frame structures, it is unlined and part insulated on the ceiling with rock wool insulation.

There is a detached garage to the south of the house but this will not be affected by the proposals.

No potential roosting features for bats were found anywhere during the survey.

Habitats and surroundings

The proposed development site lies within a mature garden with privet hedges and planted shrubs. It is situated in a rural setting with adjacent farm fields, connecting hedgerows, a stream to the south and neighbouring residential properties with established gardens. As such, the proposed development site is connected to a range of habitats in the immediate and wider surroundings that are considered high potential areas for bats, common garden birds and farmland birds that are likely to be present regularly throughout the year.

Bats

No bats or signs of bats were found during the site inspection.

Nesting birds

No birds or signs of birds were found associated with the buildings during the site inspection.

Other Protected Species

There is no evidence of any other protected species. The proposed development site is considered unsuitable to support other protected species as a result of current use of the site and the availability and condition of habitats present.

Advice and Recommendations

Bats

It is advised that there is no evidence to suggest that bats pose a constraint to the proposed development at any time of the year.

It is advised that the proposed development site is within a high value landscape for bats. As a precaution, dismantling of the roof structures should be carried out carefully by hand.

It is advised that if bats are found at any time during the development, work must stop until advice has been sought from Natural England directly or through an appropriately experienced Ecologist. If the development will affect bats, a licence may be required and suitable mitigation put in place.

Rationale for advice and recommendations

The survey has provided no evidence of bat roosts; however bats are small, opportunistic animals that may exploit a wide range of niches at any time of the year. The proposed development site lies within an area that offers high potential roosting and foraging resources to bats.

Bats and their roosts are protected under UK and European legislation. Roost sites are protected even if bats are not present at the time of the survey.

Precautionary measures are generally regarded by Statutory Bodies, Local Planning Authorities and Professional Ecologists as being appropriate where there is a low risk of bats being present but, where emergence/re-entry surveys are not warranted.

Nesting birds

It is advised that there is no evidence that nesting birds would pose a constraint to the proposed development.

It is advised that the proposed development site is in a high value landscape for birds.

It is advised that if birds are found to be nesting within or in close proximity to the work area during development works, it will be necessary to seek advice as to whether or not any development can proceed lawfully at that time. Under these circumstances, work must stop until advice has been sought from Natural England directly, or through an appropriately experienced Ecologist.

Rationale for advice and recommendations

Under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), wild birds are protected from being killed injured or captured, while their nests and eggs are protected from being damaged destroyed or taken. In addition certain species such as the barn owls are included under Schedule 1 of the Act and are protected against disturbance while nesting and when they have dependant young. Activities affecting birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are subject to special penalties.

If nesting birds are present, plans will need to show how offences will be avoided during the proposed development. Work will have to be programmed around the nesting season to minimise disturbance.

There is no provision under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) for licensing the disturbance of nesting birds or the destruction of nests which are in use for the purpose of development. If enforcement action were taken the developer would need to rely on the 'incidental result of an otherwise lawful operation' defence if it were not possible to avoid an offence being committed. This defence can only be tested in court and it is therefore important to ensure all possible mechanisms for avoiding an offence are considered.

Other Protected Species

There are no constraints in relation to other protected species.

If you require any further ecological advice or guidance in relation to the proposed works please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Janette Gazzard MCIEEM
Senior Ecologist
Ecology Services UK Ltd
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View of north west elevation with gravel driveway (lhs)



View of south east elevation; location of proposed extension(rhs)



View of the garden with adjacent fields and trees in background(lhs)



View of small, shallow, unlined roof void(rhs)