EED

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Mr and Mrs Gatty
The Fields
Grindleton
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 4QS

18 February 2016

Job ref: B 1653

Dear Mr and Mrs Gatty

Re: EPS – Daylight scoping survey: The Fields, Grindleton, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 4QS

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

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

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 buildings as roosting sites. It is this dependence that makes them vulnerable to redevelopments that can result in damage or destruction of a bat roost, particularly at maternity and hibernation sites resulting in negative impacts on a local bat population.

Since 2008 bats have been included as one of the UK Biodiversity Indicators which aim to show the response of species to the pressures, changes and threats to our natural and built environment.

The scoping survey has found no evidence of access by roosting bats or nesting wild birds at the property.

Given the sub-optimal location of the property and complete absence of evidence of roosting bats, the conservation significance of the buildings in terms of their potential for roosting bats is currently low and therefore the impact of the development on protected species is likely to be minimal / low.

It is recommended the development proceeds without the requirement to obtain a development licence since the proposed works 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)

(European Protected Species)

BAT SCOPING SURVEY REPORT

The Fields, Grindleton, Clitheroe, Lancashire. BB7 4QS

Aims of the scoping survey

This type of survey is sometimes referred to as a 'presence or absence survey' and is based on an internal / external assessment of the building with regard to bats and other protected species such as nesting wild birds.

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.

A scoping survey involves an internal / external search of the property looking for evidence of access by protected species. The survey can be undertaken during daylight hours at any time of year and is not dependent on whether bats or wild birds are active at the time of the inspection.

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.**

*page 17 - 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 protocol requires that a full visual inspection of the property is carried out; the survey should cover all internal and external features of the building including inspection of all accessible roof voids and out-buildings 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.

Timing of survey / weather conditions

The scoping survey was undertaken on Friday 12 February 2016 between 09.00 and 10.30.

The weather at the time of the inspection was cold, dry and bright (minimum temperature: 3ºC, cloud: 70%, wind: light north north-west breeze) providing satisfactory conditions for this level of survey.

Personnel

The inspection 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 licence since 1989 and is a volunteer bat worker with Natural England (via the BCT), a participating member of several UK bat groups and founder member of the Bowland Kilns and Caves Research Group.

Natural England Class Licence WML-A34 - Level 1 (Registration Number: 2015 – 17599-CLS-CLS)

Natural England Class Licence WML-A34 – Level 2 (Registration Number: 2015 – 12106-CLS-CLS)

Survey limitations

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 behind wall claddings, fascias and soffits.

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.

National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and other data sources, whilst indicative of the bat species likely to occur within a 10km-grid square, 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.

Pre-survey data search

The pre-survey data search includes the following sources:

(1) European Protected Species (EPS) - ie. species records of local, regional or national significance.

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

(3) Local bat records: (i) East Lancashire Bat Group (ELBG) (ii) EED Surveys (iii) other ecological consultants.

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

The following bat species are likely to be present within the 10km national grid square: SD74:

Common name	Scientific name	Status of local population
Natterer's bat	(*Myotis nattereri*)* [1] [2]	widespread / common
Whiskered bat	*(M. mystacinus)* [1]	widespread / uncommon
Brandt's bat	*(M. brandtii)*	infrequent / uncommon
Daubenton's bat	(*M. daubentonii*) * [1] [2]	widespread / locally common
Brown long-eared bat	(*Plecotus auritus*)* [1] [2]	widespread / locally common
Common pipistrelle	(*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)* [1] [2]	widespread / common
Soprano pipistrelle	(*P. pygmaeus*) [1] [2]	widespread / locally common
Nathusius's pipistrelle	(P. nathusii)[2]	current distribution unknown
Noctule bat	*(Nyctalus noctula)* [1] [2]	widespread / locally common

*NBN data [1]East Lancashire Bat Group [2]EED surveys

Pre-existing information

There is no history of roosting bats at this property or within neighbouring buildings.

The nearest recorded bat roost (*pipistrellus sp.)* is at Grindleton Primary School (SD 763 456).

There are no published records of roosting bats shown at this location.

Location of the property

NGR: SD 767 455 Elevation: 65 metres

The property is located within the boundary of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); the site is approximately 0.75 east of Grindleton and is outwith the Grindleton Conservation Area.

The site is not adjacent to extensive broadleaved woodland or conifer plantation and there are no significant river channels or areas of standing open water adjacent to the property. Although the location is sub-optimal in terms of availability of suitable feeding, foraging and commuting habitat for bats; there are several bat species breeding within the wider district and there is a known common pipistrelle maternity roost within 0.5km.

Connectivity to high-value riparian woodland habitat is moderate / low; the nearest significant water channel is the River Ribble located some 300 metres east of the site; there are no areas of standing open water nearby.

A local data search has shown there are no designated nature conservation sites adjacent to this 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 property

The property is an extended detached property with associated outbuildings and an adjoining barn. The building is a two storey detached house (shown as building 'A' Figure 5) with a single storey extension on the eastern elevation (shown as building 'B' figure 5) linking a detached two storey stone building ('C' figure 3).

Adjoining building 'C' is a single storey out-building (shown as 'D' figure 4) with an adjoining out-building and loft area (shown as 'D' in figure 4). Brief descriptions of each of the buildings A to E are as follows:

Building 'A' – two storey stone-built house with date stone 1759 on the front elevation. The house has a duo-pitched roof and three enclosed roof voids. The main roof has a post and truss construction and is clad in blue slate; the slates are back-pointed and remain unlined. Three connecting roof voids are accessible for inspection; within the voids there is glass fibre thermal material between the ceiling rafters (figures 6 and 7). The voids are dark, dry and well-ventilated with accumulations of spider webbing, dead cluster fly and signs of mammal faeces (mice only). There is no evidence of access by roosting bats or nesting wild birds.

Building 'B' – a single storey renovation (circa 1980's) with block and stone cavity wall construction, duo-pitched slate roof and enclosed roof void. An old post-and-truss roof frame has been strengthened with new rafters and purlins and the roof lined with bitumen felt and the void is insulated with Rockwool thermal material. The area appears to be well-insulated and secure and there is no evidence of access by bats or birds although there are signs of activity by small mammals (mice only).

Building 'C' – a two storey stone-built cottage with first floor office area and ground floor workshop housing a central heating boiler. The building has a duo-pitched slate roof; two RSJ's are also present and the first floor ceiling is under-drawn with hardboard panels; there is no access into the roof void above.

Buildings 'D' – natural stone building with an unlined duo-pitched slate roof; leads directly into loft of adjoining building; the structure is cold, dry and a doorway remains open at all times. There is no evidence of bats/birds.

Building 'E' - external steps lead to a timber hayloft and forking hole; an undercroft houses an oil tank. Although there is no evidence of roosting bats, nesting barn swallows have been present in previous years in both the hayloft and the under croft areas.

Proposed works

It is understood the planning application is for restoration of some of the pre-1980 features in the house including re-establishing the original ceiling height and first floor levels. The proposed works may also include a loft conversion and further renovations to some of the the existing out-buildings.

Images: The Fields, Grindleton - taken 12/02/16

Figure 1:

Figure 2:

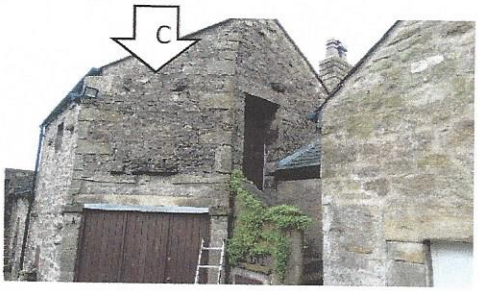

Figure 3:

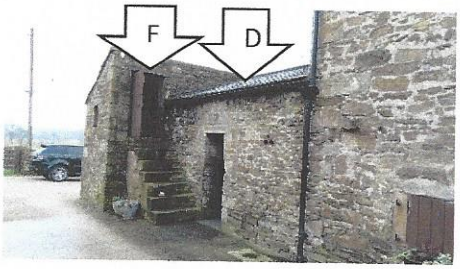

Figure 4:

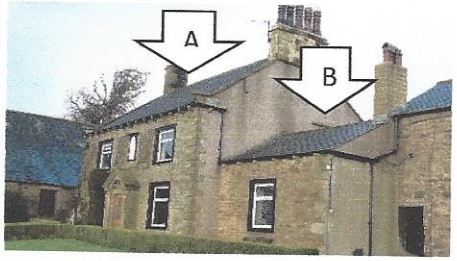

Figure 5:

Figure 6:

Figure 7:

Figure 8:

Figure 9:

Survey results (BATS)

There is no evidence of access by roosting bats within any part of the property.

It is highly unlikely that roosting bats have ever been present within the roof void of the house and there is no evidence of roosting, perching or feeding bats within any of the adjoining out-buildings that are likely to be affected by the proposed building works.

The building currently has **low potential** for supporting roosting bats (see table 1 below).

Survey results (WILD BIRDS)

Nesting swallows are likely to be active during the spring and summer period (April to September). A number of old nests are present within the under-croft and loft areas of Building 'E'.

Evaluation of results

The conservation significance of the building in terms of providing access and shelter to roosting bats is low.

The impact of the proposed works on roosting bats is likely to be minimal / low*.

The proposed development is unlikely to cause significant disturbance to a protected species.

The presence of swallows must be taken into account before any building works are undertaken.

***Minimal:** it is highly unlikely any bat species have been active within any part of the property.

***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.

Table 1: *Based on Guidelines for proportionate mitigation - Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2004) fig. 4, page 39

Summary and recommendations

The proposed building alterations at this property 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 building works at site level on local bat populations is likely to be **minimal.**

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

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.

Further survey effort at this property is not required.

Building works must avoid disturbance to nesting barn swallows, their nests and eggs during the summer.

MITIGATION GUIDANCE – minimising the risks to roosting bats and nesting barn swallows

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	In the unlikely event of any bats being exposed during the removal of roof slates, bitumen felt, lead flashings etc, work in those area should stop until the building features have been fully inspected by a qualified person / ecologist. (Contact details #8 below)
6. 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. Call the surveyor for further advice before proceeding, otherwise contact the emergency help line at the BCT.
7. Legal responsibility	The onus lies with the applicant to ensure that no offence will be committed if the development goes ahead, regardless of whether planning permission has been granted.
8. Emergency advice on bats	EED Surveys (David Fisher): 01200 425113 (office) or 07709 225783 (mobile) email:earthworksuk@yahoo.co.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 free site visit. www.bats.org.uk email: enquiries@bats.org.uk
9. Nesting barn swallows	Nesting swallows are likely to be present during the spring and summer (April to September). Barn swallow populations have shown significant declines in some parts of the country over recent years; this is partly the result of localised habitat changes and / or loss of suitable nesting sites, although the losses are compounded by other complex factors affecting the birds wintering grounds and migration routes. Safeguarding existing nest sites is particularly important given the bird's high fidelity to traditional nest sites. Current planning policy supports the local conservation of barn swallows and therefore efforts should be made to encourage nesting birds in new developments, especially in rural locations such as this. All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence (with certain exceptions) to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built. Provision for nesting swallows should include design modifications such as inclusion of covered roosting locations to encourage nest building and / or use of artificial nest platforms. **If exclusion of nesting / roosting swallows is required before building works are carried out, the closure of the buildings must take place during before the end of winter.**

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, 0845 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

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