EED

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Mr Ivan Wilson
IWA Architects
Waterloo Mill
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7 July 2016
1710

Job ref: B

Dear Mr Wilson

Re: Scoping survey (European Protected Species): Brooklands, 61 Whalley Road, Langho, BB6 8EF

You have requested a scoping survey 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.

Results and recommendations

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

Given the well-maintained condition of building and complete absence of signs of bat activity, the scale of impact of the proposed works on protected species (bats) is likely to be minimal.

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

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 Registration Number: 2015 – 17599-CLS-CLS) CL15 (Bat Roost Visitor)

Natural England Class Licence Registration Number: 2015 – 12106-CLS-CLS) CL18 (Bat Survey)

Survey limitations

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

The survey includes access to the roof void within the side extension but does not include the main house roof.

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.

Pre-survey data search

The aim of the pre-survey data search (also called a desk study or scoping study) is to collate background information around the proposed development site on bat activity, roosts and significant landscape features that may be used by bats. The key sources of information used in this report are:

(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 were recorded during the previous 5 years in the 10km grid squares: SD63 / SD73:

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

Figure 3:

Figure 4: attic conversion

Images taken: 06/07/16

Proposed works

A two storey side extension on the west gable apex wall as located in figures 1 and 2. *Reference: Proposed plans and elevations provided by IWA Architects Ltd. (Drawing: 2308.P.02 June 2016)*

Survey results

There is no evidence of bat droppings or other indicative signs of access by bats within any part of the property.

Externally there are no signs of access by roosting bats or nesting wild birds into any of the roof areas.

The building is well-maintained and all external brickwork, roofing materials, fascia-soffits and lead flashings appear to be very secure.

Evaluation of results

The survey has found no evidence of roosting bats at this property, therefore the conservation significance of the building in terms of providing access and shelter to roosting bats is **low.**

Given that the building is well-maintained and secure, the property currently has **minimal / low potential** for supporting roosting bats and nesting wild birds.

The scale of impact of the proposed building works on roosting bats is likely to be **minimal*** (see table 1 below).

***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

Impact assessment and recommendations

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

The building currently has **low** potential for supporting protected species.

ANNEX 1

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]