EED

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Darren Faraday

Arbour Farm
Thornley
Preston
Lancashire
PR3 2TE

320171207P

22 November 2017

Job ref: B 1892

Dear Mr Faraday

Re: EPS – Daylight scoping survey: Arbour Farm, Longridge Road, Thornley. PR3 2TE

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 to the above property.

The Local Planning Authority is required to take account of the impact of a development on protected species in compliance 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 property, 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 structures as roosting sites. It is this dependence that makes them vulnerable to redevelopments that can result in damage or destruction of a roost, particularly maternity roosts, resulting in negative impacts on a local bat population.

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

A preliminary roost assessment (scoping survey) has found no evidence of bat roosting activity at this property.

There are no signs of any maternity roost, mating roost or place of hibernation and it is unlikely that bats have ever been present at this site. The proposed building alterations are unlikely to result in disturbance to roosting bats; therefore the overall impact of the development on protected species is likely to be negligible.

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

Please find a copy of the survey report now attached.

Yours sincerely

David Fisher
Director (EED Surveys)

(European Protected Species)

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT – EPS REPORT

ARBOUR FARM, LONGRIDGE ROAD, THORNLEY, PR3 2TE

Date of survey: 22 November 2017

Introduction

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

Timing of survey / weather conditions

The scoping survey was undertaken on Wednesday 22 November 2017 between 11.00 and 12.00.

The weather at the time of the inspection was mild, wet and overcast (min. temperature: 13ºC, cloud: 100%, wind: light F1 south-westerly, light rain becoming dry) providing satisfactory conditions for this level of survey.

Personnel

The inspection was carried out by David Fisher (EED Surveys) - an ecological consultant and Natural England bat licence holder since 1989.

Current licences held:

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)

Aims of the survey*

Collect robust data to determine the likely impacts of the proposed development on bat populations and other protected species at the property.

Facilitate the design of mitigation, enhancement and monitoring strategies for bats and all protected species.

Provide a clear assessment of risk to bats and other protected species enabling the Local Planning Authority to reach an informed planning decision.

Assist clients in meeting their statutory obligations.

Facilitate the conservation of bat populations and other protected species.

*Adapted from 'Defining aims and objectives', p15 BCT Bat Surveys - Good Practice Guidelines,

Survey methodology

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 survey protocol requires that a full visual inspection of the property is carried out. The survey aims to cover all internal and external features of the building including any accessible roof voids and out-buildings that are likely to be affected by the proposed works. The main purpose of the search is to look for evidence of flight, feeding, perching or other indicative signs of bat activity or evidence of other protected species at the property.

The search was made using a high-powered lamp *(Clu-lite CB2 - 1,000,000 candle power),* close-focussing binoculars *(Swarovski Optik EL8 x 32 WB)* 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.

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

Survey limitations

The survey is designed to determine the likely presence of bats and does not necessarily prove their 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 rubble infill walls or beneath roof materials and other structural features.

Evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings, feeding signs and other indicative evidence such as staining on external walls and surfaces is frequently removed by the action of wind and rain – please note that absence of evidence of bats is not necessarily evidence that bats are not present.

Records whilst indicative of the bat species likely to occur within an area, do not confirm presence or absence of a species or habitat. Some local records may contain unverified public data.

Proposed works

(1) Two storey side extension adjacent to the existing kitchen.

(2) Single storey rear extension to provide a utility area at rear of the existing kitchen.

Pre-existing information

An EPS scoping survey was undertaken at the adjacent property at Lower Arbour Cottage by this surveyor (EED Job No. B1754) on 25/10/16; no evidence of roosting bats or nesting wild birds was recorded at the site.

A data search has found no records of roosting bats at this property or within neighbouring dwellings.

The present owner is unaware of any historical records of bat activity at the property.

Pre-survey data search

The aim of the pre-survey data search is to collate background information about the proposed development site on bat activity, roosts and significant landscape features that may be used by bats and other protected species. Information sources include:

(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.

The following bat species are recorded within the 10km national grid squares: SD63 and SD 64 (Longridge):

Common name	Scientific name	Status of local population
Natterer's bat	(*Myotis nattereri*)* [1 2]	widespread/common
Whiskered bat	(*M. mystacinus*) [1]	widespread
Brandt's bat	(*M. brandtii*)	widespread
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
Noctule bat	(*Nyctalus noctula*) [1 2]	widespread
Bat previously recorded within the district (status unknown):		
Lesser horseshoe bat	(*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) [3]	locally rare

*NBN data [1]East Lancashire Bat Group [2]EED surveys [3]Bowland Kilns and Caves Research Group

Location of the property

NGR: SD 621 448 Elevation: 97 metres

The property is located within the boundary of the Forest of Bowland AONB approximately 3km NE of Longridge and 2km south of Chipping.

The house is adjacent to the highway (Longridge Road) and close to a number of other dwellings.

Although the site is surrounded by open countryside with extensive pasture and permanent grassland nearby, the location of the property is sub-optimal in terms of habitat connectivity and access to high-value feeding and foraging habitat for bats within the wider district.

The site is not adjacent to any areas of standing open water or river channel. The nearest watercourse of significance is the River Loud some 400 metres west of the property.

The site has a relatively open aspect with minimal shelter woodland or broadleaved hedgerow nearby.

There are no significant woodlands within 1km of the property; the nearest significant woodland blocks are mixed conifer / broadleaf plantations more than 1km south-east on the west side of Longridge Fell at Wheatley Farm and Bradley's Farm.

Description of the property

The property is a semi-detached two storey building, formerly a stone-built farmhouse with an attached barn (also a dwelling). The building has a duo-pitch blue slate roof with an enclosed roof void. The front elevation is rendered (figure 1);the side and rear elevations are well-pointed and very secure (figures 2 and 3). To the rear of the house is a small stone out-building with mono-pitch slate roof (figures 6 and 7).

Externally all parts of the building are well-sealed; all roof verges, lead-work flashings and timber fascias appear to be very secure; it is understood the building was re-roofed about ten years ago. Internally the roof void is well-sealed and there are no visible gaps where bats / nesting birds could gain access. The roof is lined with a breathable woven membrane and the area insulated with a glass fibre material between the ceiling joists (figures 4 and 5). There are heavy accumulations of dust within the void. Although there are a number of mouse droppings within the roof void; there are no signs of roosting bats or nesting wild birds.

It is unlikely that protected species have ever been present within the roof area, consequently the house has a relatively low conservation significance in terms of protected species.

To the rear of the house is a small stone out-building with mono-pitch blue slate roof; the building is unheated and used only for storage. All external areas are very well-sealed and secure. The building has low conservation significance and is unlikely that roosting bats have ever been present within the structure.

Images: 22/11/17

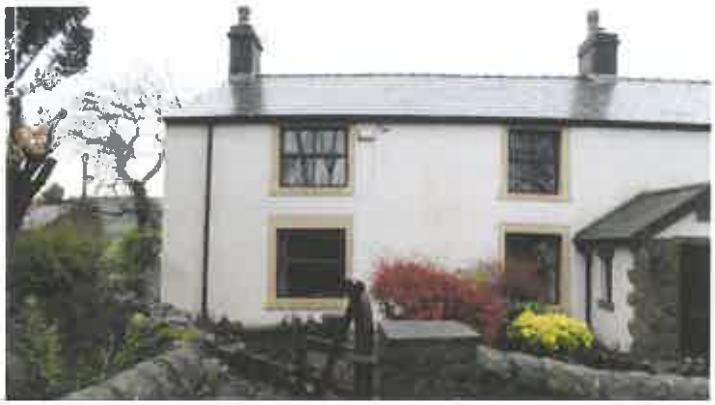

Figure 1: front elevation

Figure 2: rear elevation

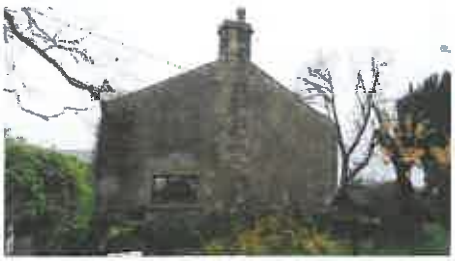

Figure 3: side elevation

Figure 4: roof void

Figure 5: roof void

Figure 6: out-building

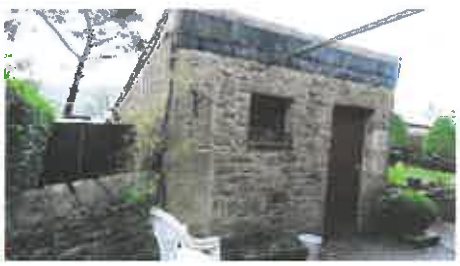

Figure 7: out-building

Survey results

A preliminary roost assessment has found no evidence of roosting, perching or feeding bats at the property.

There are no signs of roosting bats within the enclosed roof void.

The surveyor has found no historical evidence that bats have ever been present at this site.

There are no records of roosting bats at this location.

The property has low conservation significance in terms of access to roosting bats or nesting wild birds.

Evaluation of results

The building has low roosting potential for bats; it is unlikely that bats have ever been present.

The proposed building alterations are unlikely to result in disturbance to roosting bats.

The impact of the proposed works on protected species is likely to be **negligible.***

Impact assessment

***Negligible:** the development will have no (or negligible) effect on the local bat population or on individuals and will therefore not require mitigation.

***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.

Summary and recommendations

BATS

Negligible impact.

The proposed building alterations 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.

No specific mitigation requirements.

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

Further survey effort at the property is not required.

Nesting wild birds

There is no risk of disturbance to nesting birds.

ANNEX 1

Summary / Notes

Action	Summary of advice / recommendations
1. Timing constraints	Not required
2. Further survey effort at this site	Not required
3. Detailed method statement	Not required
4. Licence requirement (EPSL)	Not required
5. Roofing works: Removal of roofing materials	**Minimal / low risk of disturbing roosting bats.** In the unlikely event of any bats being exposed during the removal of the roof spars, tiles, timber battens, timber fascia boards or lead flashings, building operations should cease in the area of disturbance until the property has been inspected by a licenced person.
6. Accidental disturbance to bats	**IF YOU SUSPECT BATS MAY BE PRESENT, SEEK ADVICE IMMEDIATELY.** In case of accidental exposure of bats, cover any exposed individuals to reduce any further risk of harm. Avoid handling bats wherever possible. Sometimes it may be necessary to move bats to a place of safety; always use gloves to handle bats. Place the bats in a small dark and very secure box and leave in a cool and quiet place. Wherever possible, building / roofing contractors should try to prevent any bats from flying away in daylight, but this is not always possible. 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 is 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 site visit. www.bats.org.uk email: enquiries@bats.org.uk

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].

Natural England – North of England 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

Sheffield: Natural England, 1 East Parade, City Centre, S1 2ET, Sheffield.
