EED

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Michael Farrar
Holmlea
Vicarage Lane
Wilpshire
BB1 9HX

19 April 2017 Job ref: B
1803

Dear Mr Farrar

Re: EPS – Daylight scoping survey: Holmlea, Vicarage Lane, Wilpshire, Blackburn, BB1 9HX

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

The Local Planning Authority is required 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 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 roosting bats or nesting wild birds.

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 minimal / low. Similarly, there are no signs of roosting or nesting wild birds or other protected species at the property.

The planning authority has also requested a Protection Management Plan to safeguard a number of trees at the property. A site-based habitat assessment of the likely impact of the development confirms minimal risk of damage or disturbance to nearby trees within the garden and the surrounding site boundary.

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 – BAT / BARN OWL SURVEY REPORT

Holmlea, Vicarage Lane, Wilpshire, Blackburn, BB1 9HX

19 April 2017

Introduction

A preliminary roost assessment (sometimes referred to as a presence or absence survey) requires a detailed inspection of the external and internal features of a building to look for evidence of flight, feeding, perching or other indicative signs of bat activity normally associated with roosting bats.

The aim of the survey is to determine the actual or potential presence of bats and whether further survey effort is likely to be required. The wider aim of the survey is to assess the potential value of the site for European Protected Species (EPS) to establish whether bats, barn owls and other nesting wild birds 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.

Timing of survey / weather conditions

The scoping survey was undertaken on Monday 18 April 2017 between 10.30 and 12.00.

The weather at the time of the inspection was cool, dry and bright (min. temperature: 8ºC, cloud: 10%, wind: calm, rain: nil) providing satisfactory conditions for this level of survey.

Personnel

The inspection was carried out by David Fisher (EED Surveys) an ecological consultant currently specialising in protected species surveys and development issues in the north-west of England having worked for 30 years in nature conservation throughout the UK.

The surveyor has held a Natural England licence since 1989 and continues to work as a voluntary bat worker via the Bat Conservation Trust / Natural England and is a founder member of the East Lancashire Bat Group.

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 provide an assessment of the potential 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 is designed to determine the likely presence of bats within the property and does not necessarily prove absence.

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.

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

The tree survey methodology is largely based on a 'Protocol for visual inspection of trees due to be affected by arboricultural work, to assess the value of the trees to bats' (BCT Good Practice Guidelines 2nd Edition and 'Preliminary ground level roost assessment of trees' BCT Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition). Please note: the tree survey carried out at the property is not an Arboricultural Implications Assessment (BS 5837).

Survey limitations

The scoping survey can be undertaken at any time of the year and is not dependent on whether roosting bats are present at the time of the assessment. Roost activity surveys (ie. emergence /re-entry and swarming) are only carried out during recommended optimal survey period (May to September / early October).

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, cavity walls, beneath roofing materials, wall claddings or other features.

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.

The scope of the survey includes only those areas of the property that are likely to be affected by the works.

The tree survey does not include a Tree Constraints Plan (TCP) or Tree Protection Plan (TPP).

Pre-existing information

A data search has found no records of roosting bats at this property.

Previous EPS surveys have not been carried out at this address.

Proposed works

Dormer roof extension to rear slope of property to provide additional first floor accommodation; proposed works include removal of a flat bitumen roof over an existing rear kitchen / lounge extension prior to replacement with a duo-pitched roof to match the existing slate roofs.

Reference: Proposed drawings as seen:: PCE Designs, 40 Queensway, Euxton, Lancashire, PR7 6PW

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 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.

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

*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.

The following bat species have been recorded within the 10km national grid squares: SD63 – Ribble Valley:

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

Other bat species rarely recorded within the district:

Nathusius's pipistrelle	*(P. nathusii)* [2]	rare, distribution unknown

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

Location of the property

NGR: SD 685 331 Elevation: 135 metres

The property is located in Wilpshire within the district boundary of the Ribble Valley Borough Council.

The site is sub-urban in character and although situated relatively close to dwellings in Vicarage Lane, the site is close to an area of open countryside with permanent grassland and some agricultural land to the north.

A local data search has shown there are no 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).

The house and garden is adjacent to a piece of open ground with several mature broadleaved trees and hedgerows and the locality has many well-established gardens with mature standard trees, common species include ash, oak, holly and sycamore in addition to several ornamental broadleaved and conifer species.

The location of the property is sub-optimal in terms of connectivity to feeding, foraging and commuting habitat for bats within the wider district.

Description of the property

The property is an extended bungalow with standard brick cavity wall construction and duo-pitched rafter-with-purlin slate roofs (figures 1 and 2). The bungalow has been extended at the rear to provide a kitchen and lounge with flat bitumen roof (figure 3). A garage with enclosed roof void (figure 8) to the side of the property is an earlier extension on the south-east elevation.

There are 3 accessible roof voids:

(1) The small eaves void is located beside the existing roof conversion (figure 5); the studwork wall is insulated with glass fibre material and the area is clean, dry and well ventilated; there is no evidence of access by bats.

(2) The main roof void is partly boarded for access; the void is cool, dry and well-ventilated; the slate roof is back-pointed and remains unlined. A layer of glass fibre insulation is present between the rafters. The area has a considerable accumulation of dust and spider webbing and cluster flies are present.

(3) The garage has a rafter-with-purlin roof construction and the slate roof lined with bitumen felt. The void is not insulated above the rafters and the area is cool, dry and well-ventilated; there is no evidence of access by roosting bats or nesting wild birds.

Figure 1: front elevation

Figure 2: rear elevation

Figure 3: flat roof extension at rear

Figure 4: NW elevation

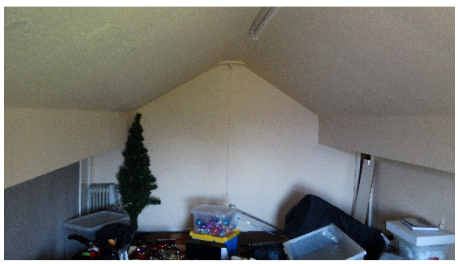

Figure 5: existing roof conversion

Figure 6: eaves void

Figure 7: main void

Figure 8: garage void

Externally the building is well-sealed and all roof areas appear to be very secure. The building has an exposed brick plinth with rendered and pebble-dashed upper walls. The timber fascias and soffits are all well-sealed with the exception of a narrow gap beneath the timber fascia on the NW gable end wall (figure 4).

Survey results

A preliminary roost assessment has found no evidence of roosting bats or nesting bird activity at the property.

The building is generally well-maintained and all external features appear secure.

There are no signs of a bat maternity roost, mating roost or place of hibernation at the property and there is no external / internal evidence of access by any protected species.

Evaluation of results

The proposed building alterations are unlikely to result in disturbance to roosting bats or nesting wild birds, therefore the overall impact of the development on protected species is likely to be **minimal / low.**

The conservation significance of the existing building is relatively low; the impact of the proposed alterations is likely to be **minimal / low**.

Recommendations

Low impact / minimal - low risk.

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 – (Bats) or result in any significant impact on a local bat population.

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.

No further survey effort is required at the property.

Summary (Protected species – bats)

Action	Summary
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 disturbance to roosting bats.** In the unlikely event of any bats being exposed during the removal of roofing materials, further work in the area should cease until the building has been inspected by a qualified person / ecologist.
6. Accidental disturbance to bats	Seek advice immediately. Cover any 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, the roofing contractors should try to prevent any bats from flying away in daylight. Call the surveyor for further advice before proceeding with further building operations in the area, otherwise contact the emergency BCT help line (details below).

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

Pre-development survey - trees

A number of small ornamental trees and shrubs are present within the garden, including a 12 metre x 2m high hawthorn hedge in the rear garden.

Trees within the rear garden:

(1) one small ornamental *acer* - fig 9, (2) one small *malus* (apple) - fig 10, (3) *crataegus monogyna* - fig. 10 (hawthorn) hedge 2m in height x 12 in length, the hedge also includes lonicera sp. and *ilex* (holly)

Trees in front garden: (4) *ilex aquifolium* – fig 11 (holly) 4.5 metres in height this tree is outside the boundary fence, (5) *alnus glutinosa* – fig 12 (alder) 350mm DBH x 7.5m in height – also outside the boundary fenceline, (6) *acer pseudoplatanus* (sycamore) 400mm DBH x 8m in height, (7) *prunus* sp. – fig 13 (Kanzan cherry) 200mm DBH x 3.5m in height, (8) *laburnum* sp. – fig 14 – 200mm x 3m,

Trees along SE side of property – NB. None are within the property boundary: (9) *quercus* fig 15 (oak) 550mm x 9m, (10) *fraxinus excelsior* (ash) 550mm x 12m, (11) *acer pseudoplatanus* 350mm x 9m, (12) *quercus* 350 x 8.5m, (13 / 14) *cupressus sp.* – fig 16 – 300mm x 8m.




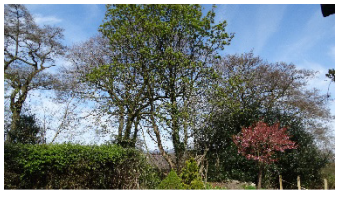

Fig 9:

Fig 10:

Fig 11:

Fig 12:

Fig 13:

Fig 14:

Fig 15:

Fig 16:

Summary

All the trees listed above have **minimal / low potential** to support roosting bats / few potential roost features (PRF) – Category 2 trees.

None of the trees are likely to be damaged by the proposed building operations; there are no plans to remove any of the trees or carry out arboricultural works; **all trees at the property will be safeguarded**.