EED

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Claire Dobson

1 Hawthorne Close
Langho
Lancashire
BB6 8DZ

26 September 2017 Job ref: B 1864

Dear Claire

Re: EPS – Daylight scoping survey: 1 Hawthorne Close, Langho, Lancashire, BB6 8DZ

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 / dormer extension 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 minimal / low.

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

1 Hawthorne Close, Langho, BB7 8DZ

22 September 2017

Introduction

A preliminary roost assessment / scoping survey requires a detailed inspection of both internal and external 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 in 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 Friday 22 September 2017 between 10.30 and 11.30.

The weather at the time of the inspection was cool, bright and dry (min. temperature: 13ºC, cloud: 50%, wind: light WSW, rain: nil) providing satisfactory conditions for this level of survey.

Personnel

The inspection was carried out by David Fisher (EED Surveys) an ecological consultant 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 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 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 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 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 *(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

Crevice-roosting bat species are able to roost within very narrow gaps, frequently less than 20mm 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. Local records may contain unverified public data.

Pre-existing information

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

The surveyor is unaware of any previous surveys carried out at this address.

Proposed works

Extension to first floor dormer bedrooms and dormer windows requiring modifications to the existing roof.

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: SD73 and SD74 (Ribble Valley):

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)* [2]	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
Other bat species recorded within SD74:		
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 709 336 Elevation: 185 metres

The property is located at York on the south-east side of Langho in the Ribble Valley. The house is situated within a small residential development close to other dwellings of similar age, design and construction.

There are no areas of woodland adjacent to the property, the nearest extensive broadleaved habitat is more than 1km north-east of the site on Moor Lane. Similarly, the property is not adjacent to open standing water, or water channel; Dean Clough Reservoir is the nearest significant riparian habitat 750 m to the south-west.

Although several bat species are regularly recorded within the wider district, the location is considered sub-optimal in terms of connectivity and availability of high-value feeding, foraging and commuting habitat for bats.

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).

There are no local records of bat roosts at nearby properties.

Description of the property

The property is a modern two storey detached house with standard brick and block cavity wall construction and duo-pitched rafter-with-purlin roof (figures 1 and 2).

A three bedroom dormer extension on the south roof slope has a flat bitumen roof and is clad with PVC weather boarding on the side and front elevations (figures 3 and 4). Although there are no roof voids within the dormer extension itself, there is an access into the main roof void (figure 5).

The tiled roof is lined with a bitumen and hessian felt and the roof space is well-insulated with glass fibre material above the first floor ceiling joists. The void is clean, dry and well-ventilated and there are no signs of access by roosting bats or nesting wild birds.

Externally the property is very well-maintained; all roof areas, dormers, roof verges, lead flashings and fascia-soffits are secure and there are no signs of access by roosting bats or small birds.

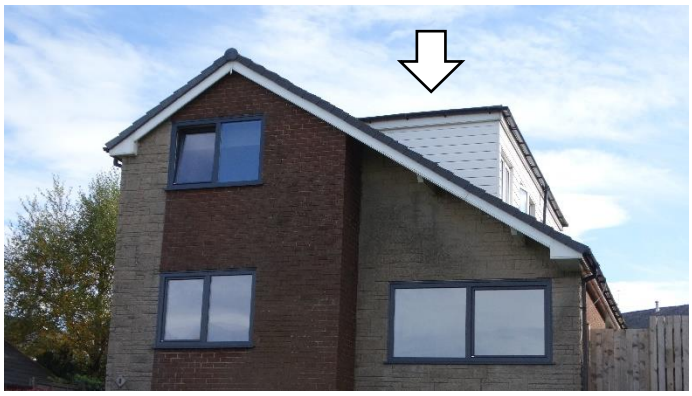

Figure 1: Front elevation

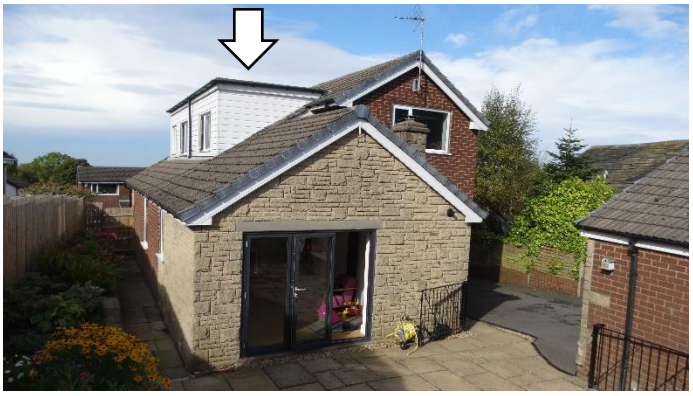

Figure 2: Rear elevation

Figure 3:

Figure 4:

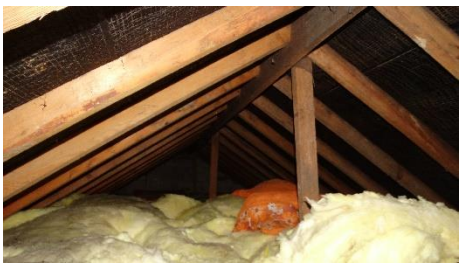

Figure 5: roof void

Survey results

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

There are no signs of a bat maternity roost, mating roost or place of hibernation and there is no external / internal evidence of access by a protected species. The building is well-maintained and all external features are secure. There are no signs of roosting bats within the roof void and there is no historical evidence that bats have ever been present in this building.

Evaluation of results

The conservation significance of the building is minimal / low. It is unlikely that roosting bats have ever been present.

The building is low risk with minimal roosting potential*.

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*.**

***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.

Summary – mitigation guidance

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	**Low risk of disturbing roosting bats.** In the unlikely event of any bats being exposed during the removal of the roof spars, roof tiles, roof membranes or claddings, building operations in the working area should cease until the property has been inspected by a licenced person.
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, building / roofing contractors should 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 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 free site visit. www.bats.org.uk email: enquiries@bats.org.uk

Minimal – low 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 – (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.

Further survey effort at the property will not be required.

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.
