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Joe Monks
Monks Architectural Design
25 Birchfield Drive
Longridge
Preston
PR3 3HP

18 January 2018
1900

Job ref: B

Dear Joe

Re: EPS Preliminary Roost Assessment: Beechcroft, Ribchester Road, Ribchester PR3 3YA

You have requested a European Protected Species 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 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 bat roost activity at the 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 property, consequently the proposed building alterations are unlikely to result in disturbance to roosting bats. The overall impact of the operations 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

(European Protected Species)

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT – BAT SURVEY REPORT

BEECHCROFT, RIBCHESTER ROAD, PR3 3YA

18 January 2018

Introduction

A preliminary roost assessment* is a detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of a structure to look for features that bats could use for entry / exit and roosting and to search for signs of bats. The aim of this survey is to determine the actual or potential presence of bats and the need for further survey and / or mitigation. In many situations it is not possible to inspect all locations where bats may be present and therefore an absence of bat evidence does not equate to evidence of bat absence.

*Description and aims, p38, Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists (Bat Conservation Trust) 3rd Edition 2016.

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 preliminary roost assessment was undertaken on Thursday 18 January 2018 between 11.30 and 11.30.

The weather at the time of the assessment was cold, dry and bright (min. temperature: 4°C, cloud: 60%, wind: light south-easterly, rain: nil) providing satisfactory survey conditions.

Personnel

The inspection was carried out by David Fisher (EED Surveys) an ecological consultant and licenced bat worker based in the Ribble Valley.

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)

Survey objectives

Collect robust data to provide an assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed development on bat populations and other protected species.

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 local wildlife habitats, bat populations and other protected species.

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 method involves a detailed external and internal inspection of the structure to compile information on potential and actual use of the building by roosting bats. Where safe, a systematic search of the interior is undertaken out to identify access points, roosting places, feeding signs and perches. A systematic search of exterior features normally involves a visual inspection from ground level to identify any signs of roosting bats.

The search is 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)*. A systematic daylight inspection of the structure is undertaken to identify any evidence of protected species such as droppings and urine spots, bat corpses, bat fly larvae, fur oil staining, feeding remains such as discarded moth and butterfly wings and other insects fragments, odour or noise of movement or squeaking calls from hidden bats in a roost.

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).*

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

Survey limitations

Preliminary roost assessments are carried out during daylight at any time of the year and are not dependent on whether roosting bats are present at the time of the assessment. Roost emergence and roost re-entry and swarming surveys are undertaken after dark (usually between dusk and dawn) in the summer / autumn period between late April / early May and August / September.

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 and beneath roof materials and other significant structural 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.

Bats in the Ribble Valley

As many as ten bat species occur in the Ribble Valley and the Forest of Bowland AONB. Bats are present within a very wide range of habitats, both urban and rural, particularly where there are areas of standing open water, significant river channels, broadleaved woodlands and conifer plantations and other high quality semi-natural habitats where flying insects and invertebrates are more abundant and roost opportunities are available.

Although some species are largely dependent on trees and woodland, all locally occurring species are known to rely on built structures for at least part of their life cycle; these include residential properties, barns, agricultural buildings, garages, commercial premises, offices and factories, cellars, bridges and culverts.

All bats are warm-blooded animals and are attracted to warm structures in summer. Contrary to popular belief, buildings constructed since 1970 are frequently used as maternity roosts between May and August when pregnant females gather, sometimes in considerable numbers at suitable sites to give birth to their young.

During late summer and autumn adults and young bats leave their breeding roosts and disperse within the wider district; there is also increasing evidence of seasonal movement and migration by certain species. All

UK bat species feed exclusively on insect prey. Hibernation at cooler locations between October / November and March / April is a period of relative inactivity, enabling bats to survive the winter when prey is unavailable.

Proposed works

Bedroom and en-suite extension over existing first floor (rear) balcony (figure 3).

(Reference - drawings: Monks Architectural Design, 25 Birchfield drive, Longridge, Preston, PR3 3HP)

Pre-survey data search

The aim of the pre-survey data search is to collate background information about the proposed development site on bats and other protected species including data on local bat populations, known roost sites, significant feeding and foraging habitats, designated wildlife sites and other protected landscapes.

Online data sources include:

(1) Maps and Related Information Online – MARIO maps - Lancashire

(2) MAGIC interactive mapping system.

(3) National Biodiversity Network (NBN)* terrestrial mammal records (chiroptera).

(4) Online surveys and local bat records:

(i) East Lancashire Bat Group (ii) North Lancashire Bat Group (iii) EED Surveys (iv) other ecological surveyors

The following bat species are recorded within the 10km national grid squares: SD73 / 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 recorded within the boundary of the Forest of Bowland AONB:

Nathusius's pipistrelle	(*P. nathusii*) [2]	rare, distribution unknown
Lesser horseshoe bat	(*Rhinolophus hipposideros*)[3]	rare, distribution unknown

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

Pre-existing information

There are no records of roosting bats at this property or within neighbouring dwellings.

A preliminary roost assessment was undertaken at the adjacent property (Brooklyn, Ribchester Road) on 11/10/17 (EED Job No. B1874); no evidence of roosting bats or nesting wild birds was found.

Location of the property

NGR: SD 626 367 Elevation: 85 metres

The property is situated on the Ribchester Road (B6245) approximately 2 km ESE of Longridge and 2.25km north-west of Ribchester. The location is semi-rural and adjacent to open countryside to the north with agricultural grazing land and permanent grassland nearby. Neighbouring dwellings have well-established gardens to either side of the property and there is a small woodland copse and minor watercourse to the rear.

The district is not well-wooded and there are no significant broadleaved woodland or plantations within 2.5km.

Similarly, there are no significant watercourses adjacent to the property. Spade Mill and Alston Reservoirs are situated more than 1km from the site. A number of small brooks and ponds are present within the locality.

Although several relatively common bat species are present in the area, the location is considered sub-optimal in terms of connectivity and proximity to 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).

Description of the property

The property is a two storey semi-detached house with brick cavity wall construction and hipped slate roofs (figures 1 to 5). To the rear is a kitchen / lounge flat roof extension with first floor balcony (figure 3) and a single storey conservatory with D/G uPVC windows and doors and brick plinth.

An existing loft conversion has a Velux window and eaves storage beneath the rear pitch (figures 5 and 6). There is no evidence that roosting bats have ever been present. The roof is clad with blue slate and ceramic roof tiles; lead flashing and mortar pointing is well-sealed and the roof fabric appears secure.

Timber fascia-soffits are well-maintained and are generally secure although a 25-30mm gap exists between the sofftit and brickwork on the side elevation. Externally; there are no signs of access by bats or nesting birds.

Survey results

A preliminary roost assessment has found no evidence of bat activity associated with any part of the property.

There are no signs of any maternity bat roost, mating roost or place of hibernation.

There are no local records of roosting bats at the property or in neighbouring dwellings.

The location is sub-optimal in terms of access and connectivity to feeding, foraging and commuting habitat.

There is no evidence of nesting wild birds within any part of the property.

Evaluation of results

The proposed building alterations are unlikely to result in disturbance to roosting bats or nesting wild birds.

The overall impact of the development on protected species is likely to be negligible.

The conservation significance / potential of the property to support roosting bats is relatively low.

Risk assessment

Negligible Risk	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk

Table 1: showing the likely risk of causing disturbance to roosting bats during the proposed building works.

Impact assessment

Negligible potential	Low potential	Moderate potential	High potential

Table 2: Showing the potential of the property to support protected species.

Summary

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 this property is **not required.**

ANNEX 1:

Images: Beechcroft, Ribchester Road, Ribchester. (18/01/18)

Figure 1: Front (south) and side elevations

Figure 2: rear elevation (north)

Figure 3: Area of proposed first floor extension

Figure 4: existing roof conversion

Figure 5:

ANNEX 2:

Recommendations / mitigation advice

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. Roof works: Removal of roofing materials / bats	Negligible risk of exposing / disturbing roosting bats. Solitary roosting / resting bats are occasionally exposed during removal of roofing materials; highest risk areas are beneath roofing felts and under roof slates, ridge tiles and fascia boarding. In the unlikely event of any bats being exposed during the removal of the roof spars, roof slates, verge tiles, bitumen felts or masonry; further operations in the area should cease until the building has been inspected by a qualified person / ecologist. (For further advice - see note 8 below).
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 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 wild birds	No risk of disturbance to nesting wild birds or damage to their nests.

ANNEX 3

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)

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, M1 6LT 0300 060 1062