DOCUMENT 1 - Background

BAT METHOD STATEMENT – 2 RIDGE COURT, LONGRIDGE, PR3 3RZ

A Introduction

A bat scoping survey was undertaken on 25/10/17 by Angela Graham Consultancy Services Ltd, the results of which showed minor evidence of roosting bat activity within the house roof void. The survey report made a recommendation that further survey effort was required between May and August and a method statement prepared outlining appropriate mitigation measures prior to works commencing.

The scoping survey (10/05/18) confirmed a small number of bat droppings consistent with occasional or sporadic use by solitary bats or low numbers of individuals (less than 5 bats) beneath timber cladding on the front elevation of the house. No evidence of roosting bats was found on the garage.

A dusk survey was undertaken on 10 May 2018 by David Fisher (EED Surveys). The survey did not confirm bat emergence from any part of the property although two species of pipistrelle bats were active around the property, a neighbouring dwelling and the nearby woodland during the survey.

Ribble Valley Borough Council has granted planning permission (RVBC decision date 26 January 2018 application No. 3/2017/1130) subject to planning conditions 4 and 5 of the planning decision which requires further surveys are carried out and a Bat Method Statement prepared as outlined in the Preliminary Bat Survey Report submitted on 26 October 2017 by Angela Graham.

Although the impact of the proposed building demolition and extension is unlikely to result in significant disturbance to roosting bats or result in the destruction of a known bat roost, precautionary timing restraints will be required to ensure that no works are carried out during the period 1 May to 31 August when bats are most vulnerable to disturbance. It is recommended that the works are carried out after 1 September as recommended by Natural England in Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2004) to minimise the impact of the scheme on roosting bats that may be present.

A1 **Site:** 2 Ridge Court, Longridge, PR3 3 RZ (NGR: SD 611 375)

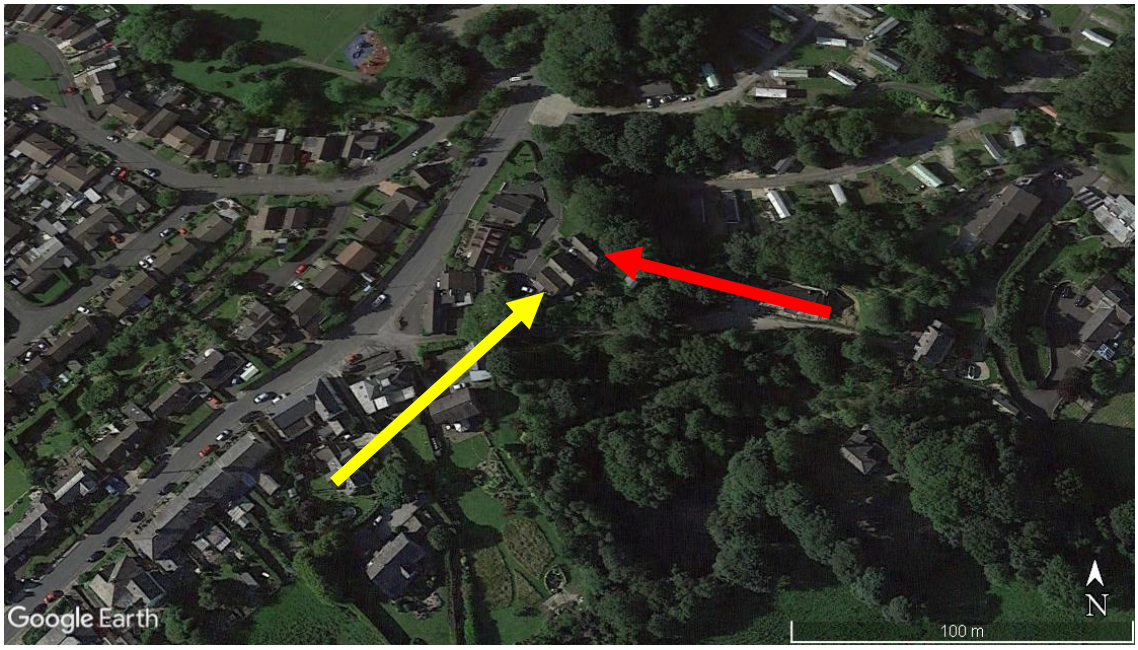

Figure 1: Location of property (yellow arrow); and neighbouring property (red arrow).

A2 Buildings:

Images of the property (taken 10/05/18)

Figure 2: Front (north-west) elevation

Figure 3: Front (north-west) elevation

Figure 4: Front elevation gable apex (house)

Figure 5: Rear elevation gable apex (house)

Figure 6: Rear (south-east) elevation

Figure 7: Rear elevation (garage)

Figure 8: Roof void - house

Figure 9: Roof void – house

Figure 10: garage internal

Figure 11: Roof void – garage workshop

Description of property

This is a modern detached dormer bungalow with brick and block cavity wall construction and duo-pitched concrete-tiled roof. The rafter-with-purlin roof is partly underdrawn with insulated board and polystyrene blocks between the roof spars (figure 8); the roof tiles are likely to be lined with a bitumen felt. The void is boarded for access and storage and all areas are clean, dry and well-ventilated, a Velux-type window and dormer window provide good natural light within the roof void.

Externally the property has timber cladding above the front elevation bay windows (figure 4) and timber fascia boards and soffits (figures 3 and 4). There is a small dormer window on each of the roof slopes and the roof is partly converted to provide access and additional accommodation. The rear gable apex has no cladding attached (figure 5).

The adjacent double garage has a duo-pitched tiled roof with weatherboard cladding to the front and rear gables. The garage roof has been utilised as a first floor workshop (figure 11) with a rear window providing good natural light (figure 7). The rafter-with-purlin roof is lined with a bitumen felt.

A3 Roosting bats:

A winter scoping survey on 25/10/18 (Angela Graham Consultancy Services Ltd) found some evidence of bat droppings in the house roof void (about 6 droppings were recorded) below the apex on the north-west gable wall. An inspection of the garage found no evidence of roosting bats.

Both buildings were considered ‘high risk’ in terms of roosting potential for pipistrelle bats and therefore a precautionary dusk emergence survey was recommended between May and August to determine whether roosting bats were present.

A scoping survey on 10 May 2018 undertaken by David Fisher (EED Surveys) found similar results to the previous winter survey. A small number of bat droppings were present at both ends of the house roof although no significant accumulations of faeces were present and there was no evidence of roosting bat activity within any part of the garage / workshop area.

Externally, a small number (less than 5) of relatively fresh bat droppings (figure 4) were also noted on the timber cladding of the north-west gable end just below the roof apex, although there was no evidence of faeces on the external south-east gable apex wall (figure 5).

A4 Problem:

The proposed building alterations as submitted to the local planning authority require demolition of the existing garage prior to building the new extension on the south-west elevation of the house.

The initial scoping survey by Angela Graham Consultancy Services Ltd considered the likelihood that a pipistrelle maternity roost could be present given the evidence of bat droppings in the roof void, proximity of the site to high-value feeding and foraging woodland habitat and the presence of the Spade Mill reservoirs some 400 metres from the site.

Based on the initial survey, the findings automatically triggered a requirement for a dusk emergence survey (1 May and 31 August) and report.

Demolition of the garage will require removal of the timber cladding to the front and rear; whilst there is no evidence of roosting bats beneath the cladding at present, there remains a potential risk of exposing roosting bats under these boards. It is likely however that low numbers of bats have previously roosted beneath the topmost cladding on the front elevation of the house (figure 4).

A5 Solution:

Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) requires a detailed appraisal of the impact of the proposed development on all protected species that are present or likely to be present at the property.

Natural England (NE) recommends the optimal period for carrying out roofing works is 1st September to the end of April in situations where bats are likely to be present (the site is not a proven maternity roost). During spring and autumn bats will be able to feed successfully on most nights and there will be no risk to vulnerable / flightless pups or pregnant females.

The existence of a detailed method statement helps to establish a defence against possible prosecution in the unlikely event of bats being disturbed during the development. The method statement contains specific mitigation measures that are designed to ensure that protected are not significantly disturbed, injured or killed as a result of the proposed demolition and building works.

Natural England clearly states that *"failure to follow the method statement may result in a breach of the law and leave the developer open to prosecution".*

A5.1 Recommendations

The project manager and contractors should be aware that low numbers of bats have roosted previously within the gable apex roof of the house (both front and rear elevations). In the unlikely situation of any bats being exposed during building alterations, work in the affected areas should cease immediately until the site has been assessed by a licenced bat worker / ecologist.

Timber weather-boarding is a high-risk feature on properties where small gaps exist beneath the cladding, particularly when underfelts are present and where the boards receive direct warmth from sunlight; dark cladding absorbs more heat therefore becoming even more attractive to roosting bats.

Timing of the works is required: although this property is unlikely to attract breeding bats (ie. this is not a proven maternity roost) caution is required to avoid exposure of roosting bats between 1 May and 31 August when bats are vulnerable to disturbance. Building or demolition works likely to cause disturbance (noise, vibration, dust etc.) should avoid this critical period.

Demolition works must not be undertaken before 1 September and aim to be completed before the end of April in the following year.

Given the presence of weather-boarding on the garage, removal of the cladding prior to demolition should be undertaken with extreme care for the (potential) presence of resting bats beneath. In the event of exposure of any bats, work should stop immediately in that location and advice sought from a licensed bat worker / ecologist on how best to proceed.

B Details of proposed works covered by the Method Statement

Demolition of existing garages and sheds prior to erection of a new two storey side extension, including rear balcony and alteration of existing side dormer.

(Agent: Joe Monks, 25 Birchfield Drive, Longridge. Preston PR3 3HP)

C Survey and site assessment

C1 Pre-existing information on the bat species present at this site

Scoping survey and report by Angela Graham 26/10/17 – the survey found a few bat droppings on inner block wall of NW gable apex wall of the house.

There was no evidence of bat roost activity in the garage / workshop.

A previous EPS scoping / dusk emergence survey was carried out at the neighbouring property on 28/05/18 (No. 1 Ridge Court) by David Fisher (EED Surveys); one common pipistrelle emerged from beneath a ridge tile on the apex of the SE gable end at the rear of the property (EED Survey B1934).

C2 Objectives

(1) Determine which bat species are likely to be disturbed by the building / demolition operations.

(2) Identify appropriate mitigation and compensation measures to enable bats to continue roosting at the site after the building extension has been completed.

C3 Personnel

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

Current licence: Natural England Class Licence CL18 – 2015 – 12106- CLS- CLS (Level 2)

C4 Surveys undertaken at the property

Initial (winter) scoping survey was undertaken on 25 October 2017 by Angela Graham.

A (summer) scoping survey was carried out by David Fisher on 10 May 2018.

A dusk emergence survey was carried out at the property on 10 May 2018 between 20.30 and 22.25.

C5 Survey results - scoping survey

Inspection of the house roof void found a small number of bat droppings on the internal gable apex walls figures 12a/12b. Several bat droppings were also present on the external cladding (figure 4).

Figure 12a: NW gable apex internal wall

Figure 12b: SE gable apex internal wall

C6 Survey results - dusk emergence survey

The dusk survey began 25 minutes before sunset (20.55) and continued for 90 minutes after sunset. The weather was bright, dry and mild (temperature: 12°C – 7.5°C, wind: calm, rain: nil, cloud: 10%) Twilight was prolonged with a clear and cloudless sky providing optimal survey conditions.

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.

Bat activity was assessed using a Petterrson D230 ultrasonic bat detector with stereo headphones. Additional recordings were made using an Anabat SD2 device (Frequency Division) with an attached Hewlett Packard iPAQ PDA to view spectrograms of bat calls.

Additionally, a video recorder (SONY Cybershot HX300) with tripod and 4 No. infra-red lamps was used to record and confirm bat activity within the rear garden of the property.

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

Two bat species was recorded (common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle); the first echolocation by common pipistrelle was heard at the woodland edge almost 30 minutes after sunset.

No bats were observed emerging, entering or swarming around any part of the building.

No commuting routes were identified; only solitary bat activity was recorded throughout the survey.

Both common and soprano pipistrelles were recorded feeding and foraging across the front gardens of properties 1 and 2 Ridge Court and between the two houses; solitary commuting and foraging bats were also observed flying over the nearby woodland edge and canopy at the rear of the site.

C7 Interpretation / evaluation of survey results

A small number of bat droppings were noted on both the internal and external NW gable apex wall in addition to a few droppings on the internal SE gable apex wall of the house.

The volume of droppings is not indicative of regular or significant roosting activity and there is no evidence of a maternity roost at the site. The small accumulation of droppings indicates only occasional roosting by solitary pipistrelles or possibly low numbers of individuals (less than 5 bats).

The dusk survey failed to establish whether any roosting bats were present at the time of the survey although there was flight around the site by both common and soprano pipistrelles.

The presence of extensive broadleaved woodland at the rear of the property provides favourable feeding, foraging and commuting habitat for several bat species. The arrival of bats some 30 minutes after sunset indicates bats have commuted from other locations to feed and forage over the site.

D Impact assessment

The surveys indicate occasional and sporadic roosting activity by low numbers of bats or solitary individuals. Pipistrelle bats are highly mobile animals and frequently change roost locations. Bats are most likely to be present during the spring, summer and early autumn period rather than during the winter hibernation period.

The impact of the proposed works is likely to be relatively low; the proposed building extension is unlikely to result in direct disturbance to the front / rear elevations of the house.

The demolition of the garage / workshop area is likely to be relatively low impact also although there remains a low risk that solitary roosting bats are accidentally exposed as timber claddings are removed and roof materials lifted prior to demolition of the building.

Demolition works should not take place before 1 September since there is a risk that solitary roosting bats being present during the summer breeding period (May to August inclusive).

The optimal time for carrying out the proposed demolition operations and removal of roofs is during spring and autumn (1 September to 30 April) as recommended by Natural England (Bat mitigation Guidelines pp 41 /42).

All operations which are likely to cause significant disturbance, injury or death to roosting bats **must** avoid the critical months May, June, July and August to minimise the impact of the works on protected species.

D1 Short-term impacts: disturbance

Potential for exposing solitary roosting bats prior to demolition of the garage.

Contractors should remove all timber cladding carefully by hand to avoid crushing bats that are sheltering beneath boards or under bitumen felts. Bats will stay out of the way of most building operations and can safely relocate to other roost locations while the works are in progress.

D2 Long-term impacts:

No significant long-term impacts are anticipated.

D4 Predicted scale of impact on bats

Potential for temporary disturbance to solitary pipistrelle bats during building / demolition operations.

The scale of impact of the works on roosting bats at this site is likely to be **low ***.

**Reference: The scale of main impacts at site level on bat population.*
Table 6.1., page 37, Bat Mitigation Guidelines – Jan 2014

DOCUMENT 2

METHOD STATEMENT - DELIVERY INFORMATION

Summary and main recommendations	
Action	**Methodology**
1.Further survey effort	No further surveys are required.
2. Timing of the works	Natural England advises the optimal time to carry out building and roofing operations is between 1 September and mid-November or during March and April when roosting bats are least vulnerable to disturbance. In the unlikely event of bats being exposed / disturbed, work in that location should cease immediately, the area then covered to avoid further exposure of bats and advice sought on how best to proceed (see note 7 below).
3. Demolition of garage	High risk areas where small crevice-dwelling bats are likely to roost are: (1) Beneath timber weather-boarding / cladding, or between boards and bitumen felt lining. (2) Beneath roof tiles and ridge tiles (3) In gaps / woodwork around old window frames and door frames. Remove all timber cladding carefully taking care to lift the boards by hand and inspect beneath the materials for signs of roosting bats, dead bats or accumulations of droppings. Similarly, be aware that small pipistrelles can find refuge in very small crevices (15 – 20mm wide) or under roof slates and other roofing materials. In the event of any bats being exposed seek advice immediately.
5.Timber treatment work	**Avoid the use of timber treatments that are toxic to mammals.** Where timber treatment and use of pesticides id considered necessary, all products must be approved under the Control of Pesticides Regulations (COPR).
5. Method statement	A copy of the method statement must be available on site as a reference document throughout the development; all project managers and

	contractors should be aware of its existence. Natural England advises that “failure to follow the method statement may result in a breach of the law and leave the developer open to prosecution”.

Main recommendations / specifications

The proposed building works are unlikely to cause significant disturbance to roosting bats given the new extension will largely avoid impacting the areas of roof where bats have previously roosted.

Figure 13 shows the areas of highest risk of disturbance.

Timing of works in these areas must avoid the critical period 1 May to 31 August inclusive.

Building works outwith the area shown in figure 13 do not require specific timing restraints.

For more information refer to the mitigation measures outlined in ANNEX 1.

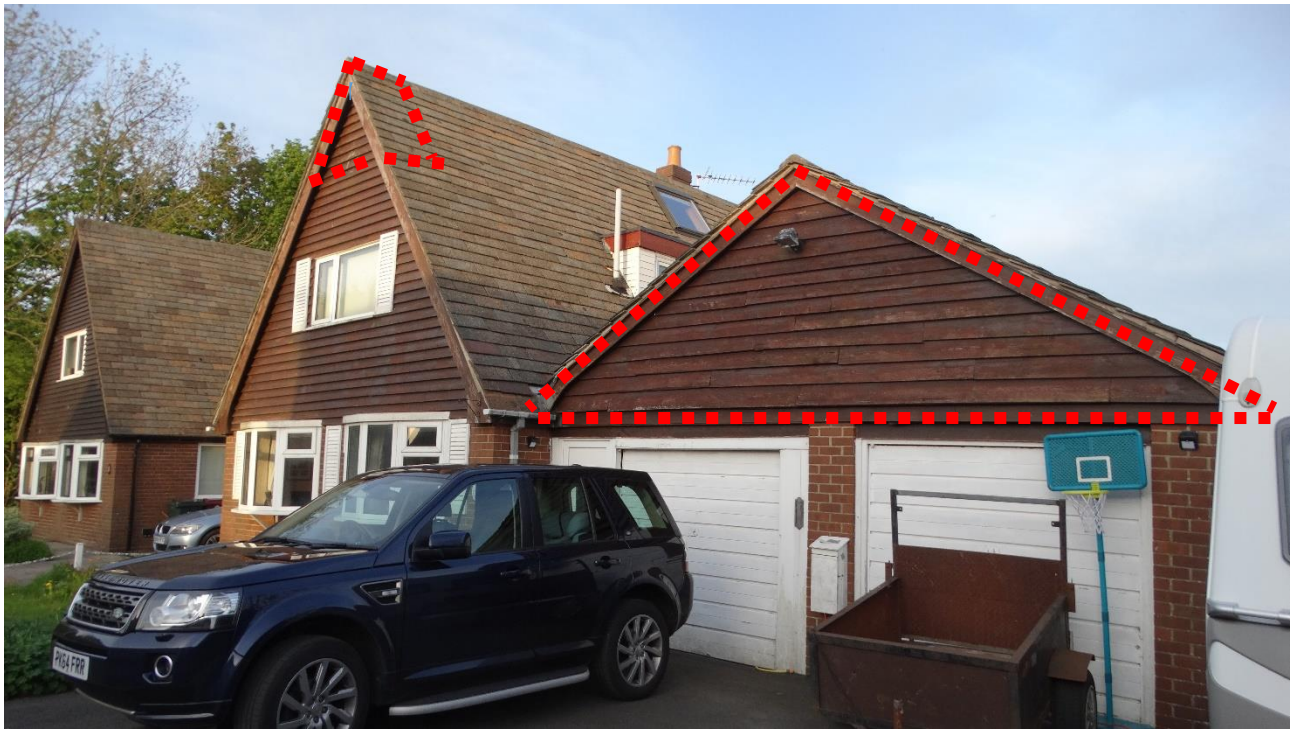

Figure 13: Showing the areas of the property with highest risk of exposing roosting bats.

ANNEX 1

MITIGATION GUIDANCE – minimising the risks to roosting bats

Mitigation refers to the practices adopted to reduce or remove the risk of disturbance, injury or death of a protected species or damage to a roost. The Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Natural England, 2004) define mitigation as "*...measures to protect the bat population from damaging activities and reduce or remove the impact of development".*

Action	Advice / comments
1. Timing constraints	AVOID disturbance to high-risk areas of the property as highlighted in figure 13 during the period 1 May to 31 August inclusive.
2. Further survey effort at this site	Not required
3. Licence requirement (EPSL)	Not required
4. Removal of roofing materials	General recommendation: In the unlikely event of solitary resting / roosting bats being exposed during the removal of the timber claddings, roof spars, roof tiles, ridge tiles and timber battens, work should cease in the affected area and any exposed bats safely covered until the site has been fully inspected by a qualified person / ecologist.
5. Accidental exposure of 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 by the carefully covering the area that is exposed. Call the surveyor for further advice before continuing work in this area, otherwise contact the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) emergency help line.
6. 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.
7. Emergency advice on bats	EED Surveys (David Fisher): 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

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[1]

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.

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".*

[1] Planning for development, Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines, BCT (2007). (Mitchell-Jones, 2004)

Compliance

The existence of a Method Statement helps to establish a defence against prosecution for intentional (WCA), deliberate (Habitat Regulations.) or reckless (WCA) disturbance of bats or damage to roosts.

A Method Statements is normally required by the local planning authority to ensure that procedures are in place before the development works are carried out. It is the responsibility of the LPA to ensure that the proposed works do not result in a breach of the Habitat Regulations.

Reference: Wildlife and Countryside Act. / (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations (1994) (as amended 2010).

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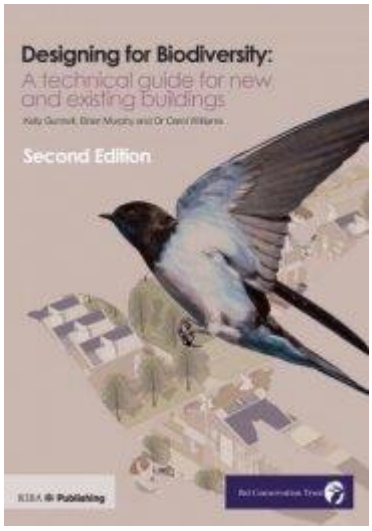
OTHER READING / REFERENCE MATERIAL



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