

Nicola Ford
Wilkinsons Farmhouse
Simonstone Lane
Simonstone
Burnley
BB12 7NX

15th March 2019

Dear Nicola

Proposed re-roofing works at Wilkinson Farmhouse, Simonstone, Burnley BB12 7NX

Thank you for your request for a bat survey. I understand that the above property is a listed building and requires a bat survey prior to any proposed re-roofing works.

Background and Qualifications

The survey was carried out Pat Waring and Janette Gazzard.

Pat is a licensed bat worker (Class 2 licence), a Registered Consultant of the Bat Low Impact Class Licence, a Chartered Environmentalist and a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology.

Pat has been working as an ecological consultant for over twenty one years, most recently as Director of Ecology Services UK Limited. This work includes provision of expert advice, guidance and training to bodies such as Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations, Local Planning Authorities and Lancashire, Yorkshire and North Wales Police Authorities, as well as the delivery of professional training courses about bats at a national level.

Pat has recognised and extensive experience and knowledge of ecological survey, monitoring, condition assessment and impact assessment techniques. He has extensive knowledge of bat ecology relating to built structures and trees, including the requirements and condition necessary for bats roosting. He also has recognised skills relating to bat surveys and assessment.

Janette is a full member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Management.

Janette has over fifteen years' experience working in ecology and nature conservation, including roles as a Senior Ecologist for a large multidisciplinary company and as a lead adviser for Natural England throughout the North West of England. She has a range of demonstrable skills including habitat surveys, ecological appraisals, protected species, conservation management advice and condition assessments, as well as extensive experience of bat surveys of built structures and trees.

Pat Waring and Janette Gazzard meet the requirements for knowledge, skills and practical experience as outlined in the CIEEM technical guidance, Chartered Institute for Ecology and

Environmental Management (2013) *Competencies for Species Survey: Bats*. CIEEM, Winchester, Hants.

Advisory Note

The information in this letter represents the professional opinion of an ecological consultancy and does not constitute professional legal advice. You may wish to seek professional legal interpretation of the wildlife legislation associated with this area of work.

The information, opinion and advice that Ecology Services UK Ltd has prepared are true, and have been prepared in accordance with the CIEEM Code of Professional Conduct. Ecology Services UK Ltd confirms that the opinions expressed are our true professional bone fide opinions.

Ecology surveys are time-limited; as a rule survey findings can generally be relied on for the season in which surveys took place. However, mobile species such as bats and birds may increase or decrease in numbers and change behaviours over time. Statutory agencies will often accept survey results for 12-18 months, but this varies around the country.

Ecology Services UK Ltd personnel make a professional judgement as to how long the results of our surveys will remain current. Advice and recommendations as regards currency and its impacts on decision making are included in relevant sections below.

Methodology

In order to assess the likelihood of bats being present a daytime inspection of the building and surroundings was carried out on 13th March 2019.

Observations were made from ground level, as well as from telescopic ladders to examine potential roost features. An endoscope was used to access out of reach areas, including one of the roof voids which had restricted access. A 1000 lumens Led Lenser x21 torch and close-focussing Zeiss Victory FL 8x42 binoculars were also used as aids to visibility.

It is recognised that limiting the survey to a single visit in one month does not take account of bat activity on the site through the whole of the active season (March/April to October) or at other times of the year.

The survey was compliant with the current best practice guidance, as detailed in Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Results

Wilkinson Farmhouse is a detached, occupied, two storey dwelling with single storey extensions to the north and west elevations. The main roof and single storey to the north are covered with concrete tiles and a stone ridge. The single storey extension to the north is covered with slate and lead flashing. There are gaps associated with the main roof, at the ridge and due to occasional lifted tiles. There are also gaps along the roof edges, in particular at the gable ends. Some of these gaps have potential be used by bats for gaining access and possibly for roosting.

Five separate roof voids were accessed and inspected during the survey. Two roof voids are above the single storey extension to the north, the first roof void is a very small, shallow space and the second roof void is a much larger void containing the boiler and ventilation pipes; both are lined with bitumastic roof liner have block internal walls with a king span and encapsulated rock wool insulation present. The remaining three roof voids are associated with the original house, above the bedrooms on the first floor. A mix of original timbers and more modern roof supports are present with stone and brick internal walls and deep rock wool overlaid with encapsulated rock wool. Gaps were visible along the roof edges within the older roof voids. Clustered and scattered mouse droppings were found throughout all roof voids but no bats or signs of bats were found.

Wilkinson Farmhouse lies within a private mature garden with driveway, planted shrubs, mown lawn and occasional mature trees. Simonstone Lane is to the immediate east with a row of residential properties to the north and open fields to the south and west. The wider surroundings are dominated by open farm fields with trees, hedgerows and small pockets of woodland. Levels of artificial lighting are expected to be low based on the rural location. The immediate and wider surroundings provide at least moderate potential shelter and foraging resources to local bat and bird populations.

Bats

No bats or signs of bats were found during the survey.

Potential roosting features for bats are:

Night roosting

- Negligible

Day roosting

- Low potential –roof coverings and roof edges

Hibernation roosting

- Low potential –roof coverings and roof edges

Low potential in the above examples reflects the condition of the features and their environment.

Nesting birds

No bird nests were found during the survey.

There is high potential for nesting birds to use the roof and roof edges during the nesting season (February to September).

Other species

There is no evidence of any other protected species. The proposed development site is considered unsuitable to support other protected species as a result of current use of the site and the availability and condition of habitats present.

Advice and Recommendations

Bats

It is advised that although there is no evidence to suggest that bats are present within the building there are some features present (gaps associated with roof coverings and roof edges) that bats could utilise and in this location and landscape setting. These features have low potential for bats to use throughout the year.

As a precaution, it is advised that proposed roof works should not take place during the winter months (November to March) so as to avoid the most sensitive times for bats during their hibernation period.

It is advised that all personnel involved in proposed roof works should be carefully advised about bats by an appropriate person, so that all works are undertaken with a clear understanding about legal aspects, precautions to be adopted and what to do if a bat is found.

It is advised that if bats are found at any time during the development, work must stop until advice has been sought from Natural England directly or through an appropriately experienced Ecologist. If the development will affect bats, a licence may be required and suitable mitigation put in place.

Rationale for advice

The survey has provided no evidence of bat roosts; however gaps associated with roof have low potential to be used by bats throughout the year. Bats are small, opportunistic animals that may exploit a wide range of niches at any time.

Precautionary measures are generally regarded by Statutory Bodies, Local Planning Authorities and Professional Ecologists as being appropriate where there is a low risk of bats being present and where further investigative surveys are not required prior to a planning and/or listed building application.

Bats and their roosts are protected under UK and European legislation. Roost sites are protected even if bats are not present at the time of the survey.

Nesting birds

It is advised that nesting birds could utilise the building throughout the nesting season (February to September).

It is advised that all personnel involved in roof works to the building should be carefully advised about nesting birds by an appropriate person, so that all works are undertaken with a clear understanding about legal aspects, precautions to be adopted and what to do if an active nest is found. All persons working at this site should be vigilant in checking for birds and also ensuring that the roof is made inaccessible to birds at the end of each working day.

It is advised if nesting birds are found in close proximity during development works, it will be necessary to stop works and to seek advice as to whether or not any development can proceed lawfully at that time. Under these circumstances, work must stop until advice has been sought from Natural England directly, or through an appropriately experienced Ecologist.

Rationale for advice

Bird species which nest in gardens and buildings are likely to occur within the proposed work area during the nesting season. The proposed roof work has potential to disturb nesting birds if they are making use of the building.

Under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), wild birds are protected from being killed, injured or captured, while their nests and eggs are protected from being damaged, destroyed or taken. In addition certain species such as the barn owls are included under Schedule 1 of the Act and are protected against disturbance while nesting and when they have dependant young. Offences against birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are subject to special penalties.

If nesting birds are present, plans will need to show how offences will be avoided during the proposed development. Work will have to be programmed around the nesting season to minimise disturbance.

There is no provision under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) for licensing the disturbance of nesting birds (other than feral pigeons) or the destruction of nests, which are in use, for the purpose of development. If enforcement action were taken the developer would need to rely on the 'incidental result of an otherwise lawful operation' defence if it were not possible to avoid an offence being committed. This defence can only be tested in court and it is therefore important to ensure all possible mechanisms for avoiding an offence are considered.

Other Protected Species

There are no constraints in relation to other protected species.

For this site, it is recommended that if proposed works are not undertaken within 12 months of the ecology survey, advice should be sought as to the need for further surveys at that time.

If you would like any further advice or guidance in relation to this site, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



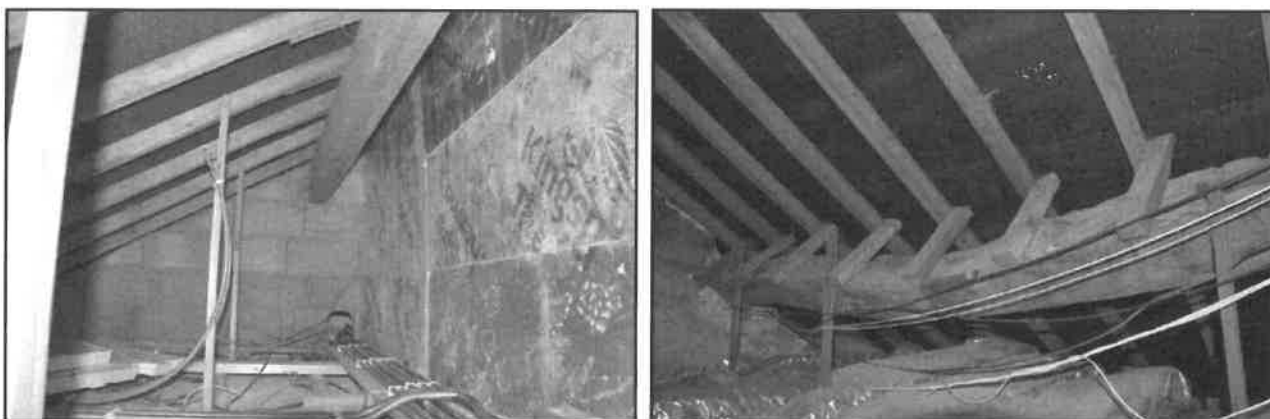
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View of Wilkinson Farmhouse, east elevation (lhs) and west elevation (rhs).



View of south gable, gaps are present along the roof edges (lhs) and view of main roof. There are gaps present along the ridge and between occasional lifted tiles (rhs).



Example of roof voids, modern roof void above single storey extension (lhs) and original roof void above the main house showing original timbers (rhs).

Summary of issues and advice

Issues (bats)	Action required
Further surveys	No further surveys required at current time
European Protected Species licence (bat licence)	Not required
Bat Low Impact Class licence	Not required
Timing constraints	As a precaution, roofing work should avoid the bat hibernation period (November to March).
Method statement for contractors	Not required
Advice for contractors	All personnel involved in proposed works should be carefully advised about bats by an appropriate person, so that all works are undertaken with a clear understanding about legal aspects, precautions to be adopted and what to do if a bat is found.
Bats found during proposed works	Work must stop until advice has been sought from Natural England directly or through an appropriately experienced Ecologist.

Issues (birds)	Action required
Further surveys	No further surveys required at current time.
Timing constraints	Not required
Method statement for contractors	Not required
Advice for contractors	<p>All personnel involved in proposed works should be carefully advised about nesting birds by an appropriate person, so that all works are undertaken with a clear understanding about legal aspects, precautions to be adopted and what to do if nesting birds are found.</p> <p>All persons working at this site should be vigilant in checking for birds and also ensuring that the building is made inaccessible to birds at the end of each working day.</p>
Nesting birds found during development	Work must stop until advice has been sought from Natural England directly or through an appropriately experienced Ecologist.