



Mr D Green
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Church Walk
Clitheroe
BB7 2RA

15th July 2019

Dear Mr Green

RE: Proposed refurbishment of the Bowling Green Cafe, Clitheroe Castle Gardens

Thank you for your request for a bat survey in relation to proposed refurbishment works at the Bowling Green Cafe.

Background and Qualifications

Surveys were carried out by 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 buildings 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 buildings and trees.

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

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 roosting at the Bowling Green Cafe, the following surveys were undertaken.

Daytime building inspection

A daytime building inspection of the former cafe building was carried out 8th July 2019.

- Internal and external parts of the building, including the roof void, were subjected to examination for signs of bats, including droppings, urine staining, grease marks, feeding remains and areas clear of cobwebs. A search was also made for live and dead bats.
- Observations were made from ground level, as well as from telescopic ladders to examine potential roost features. An endoscope, although available, was not required on this occasion. A 1000 lumens Led Lenser x21 torch and close-focussing Zeiss Victory FL 8x42 binoculars were also used as aids to visibility.
- Potential access/egress points and potential roosting features for bats were examined in detail where accessible.
- Notes were made of potential disturbance factors for bats

Emergence survey

Following the daytime survey, the cafe building was judged as having low potential for use by roosting bats. A single emergence survey was therefore undertaken on 9th July 2019 .

- At the start and end of the survey, a range of environmental readings, including temperature, humidity and wind speed, were taken using a Kestrel Weather Meter.
- The survey started 30 minutes prior to sunset and continued until 60 minutes after sunset.
- Bat detectors used during surveys were 2 x BatBox Griffin - Time expansion detectors.
- Bat echolocation was recorded onto the internal device from both BatBox Griffin detectors.
- During the emergence survey, surveyors stood close to potential access points for bats and in view of the roof coverings. The number of surveyors, the equipment used and their survey locations ensured that the building had sufficient coverage for this type of survey.

The surveys were 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

Daytime building inspection

The Bowling Green Café is a disused, two storey detached building set within the grounds of the Clitheroe Castle Garden Park. The building is currently weatherproof but in a deteriorating condition. The walls are constructed of stone with a hipped, stone tiled roof. The ridge coverings are missing and have been replaced with a plastic membrane. There are timber soffits below the roof edges and gables. All windows and doors are boarded with timber boards or metal shutters. There is small, flat concrete roof extension to the west elevation that was locked and sealed at the time of the survey.

Inside the former café, the ground and first floor floors are all well sealed with no suitable features for bats. The roof void, supported on a timber framed structure, is part lined with torching. The void was draughty and light due to gaps present between tiles and along the roof edges.

Overall, there are a number of gaps associated with stone tiled roof coverings, roof edges and soffits that have some potential to be used by bats, and some of these gaps also provide potential access for bats and birds to enter the building.

No bats or signs of bats and no birds or signs of nesting were found associated with the building during the daytime survey.

The close surroundings are dominated by a mown grass (former bowling green) and hardstanding (courts and skate park) with mature trees and shrub planting within the park gardens. The wider surroundings are dominated by Clitheroe Town centre, residential housing with gardens and mown grass (green space). The surrounding area provides at least moderate potential shelter and foraging resources to local bat and bird populations.

Emergence survey

The weather during the survey was as follows.

Date (2017)	Temperature °C (start/end)	Humidity % (start/end)	Cloud cover % (start/end)	Rain	Wind mph (start/end)
9 th July emergence	17.4/16.9	69.8/65.4	100/100	None	0/0

Table 1 – weather during survey

No bats emerged, although common pipistrelle and soprano bat activity was detected in the immediate vicinity; these bats flew through the survey area but did not emerge from the building.

Limitations of survey

Surveys took place on two occasions in July 2019. It is recognised that limiting the survey period to visits in this 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.

Building surveys

Some bat species, such as myotis and pipistrelles, are typically crevice dwellers. Droppings and other field signs of the presence of such species are often not visible, as they accumulate in hidden areas which may not be found during routine, non-invasive surveys. This is a frequent limitation when surveying buildings.

As with most buildings, the roof coverings could not be examined in detail due to limits on access and concerns about the safety of surveyors. However, the roof coverings were visible from ground level and from ladders; this enabled an assessment to be made in relation to potential for roosting areas for bats.

Emergence surveys

The echolocation used by some bats is very quiet and difficult to detect; species such as brown long eared bat may have been present without registering on the bat detectors used during the emergence surveys.

Conclusions

The Bowling Green Cafe supports suitable roost features for bats including roof coverings and roof edges; however these have low potential.

The Bowling Green Cafe lies in a landscape with at least moderate potential for use by bats.

Surveys were undertaken under appropriate environmental conditions.

There is no evidence to show that the Bowling Green Cafe supports a current roost, or that a roost has been present in recent years.

There is no evidence to suggest that any bats are currently dependent on the Bowling Green Cafe as a resting or sheltering site.

There is no evidence to suggest that any nesting birds are currently present within the Bowling Green Cafe.

Two species of pipistrelle bats were detected in close proximity to the building during the emergence bat survey.

As there is potential for use by bats and nesting birds, careful management of the proposed refurbishment, using precautionary measures, is advisable.

Advice and Recommendations

Bats

It is advised that there is no evidence to suggest that bats pose a constraint to the proposed refurbishment works.

It is advised that it is possible that bats could utilise features associated with the roof coverings and roof edges. These features, in this location and landscape setting, have potential for bats to use throughout the year.

It is advised that all personnel involved in refurbishment 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, as a precaution the proposed refurbishment 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 when removal or disturbance of potential roost features, roof edges and roof coverings are to take place, this should be done carefully by hand.

It is advised that if bats are found at any time during the roof works, work must stop until advice has been sought 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 and recommendations - bats

The surveys have provided no evidence of bat roosts. Features are present that have some potential to be used by bats. Bats are small, opportunistic animals that may exploit a wide range of niches.

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.

The 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 at the time.

Nesting birds

It is advised that nesting birds could utilise the gaps associated with roof coverings and roof edges throughout the nesting season (February to September). It is therefore advised that works are either undertaken outside the nesting bird season, or if works cannot be avoided during this period, a pre-commencement check is carried out by an ecologist.

It is advised all personnel involved in refurbishment 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 an active nest is found.

It is advised if nesting birds are found within the work area or in close proximity during works, it will be necessary to delay works or 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.

Bird species which nest in gardens and buildings are likely to occur within the proposed work area during the nesting season. The proposed works have 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.

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.

It is also recommended that potential roosting features associated with the roof coverings and roof edges are retained and/or recreated following works in order to maintain opportunities for roosting bats and nesting birds.

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

Yours sincerely



Janette Gazzard MCIEEM
Senior Ecologist
Ecology Services UK Ltd
Tel: 07842 694 618



Image showing Bowling Green Cafe northeast (lhs) and southwest (rhs) elevations



Image showing gaps along wall tops below roof overhang (lhs) and between stone tiles (rhs)



Image showing internal roof void with part intact torching (lhs) and gaps between the stone tiles (rhs)