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Mr Andrew Jones
19 Knowsley Road West,
Clayton Le Dale,
Blackburn,
BB1 9PW

10 March 2021

Dear Mr Jones

Report of Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment at 19 Knowsley Road West, Clayton Le Dale, Blackburn, BB1 9PW

You instructed us to undertake a preliminary bat roost assessment (also referred to as the; "PRA, survey, report") at the above-named property (also referred to as the; "site, building, structure"). The survey was undertaken on 4th March 2021. My qualifications and experience along with those of the reviewer of this report are summarised at the end of this report.

As I have already discussed with you on site, the probability that bats are roosting at your site and you might engage the legislation that protects them by progressing your development without the benefit of further investigation or mitigation is extremely low. Consequently, I have no further recommendations.

My full report follows.

Aims

In a manner that is proportionate to scale, nature and intensity of the proposed development and its probable interactions with ecological receptors, specifically bats:

Survey

To describe the physical evidence and to evaluate the significance of features that contribute to or detract from the 'roost suitability' of the site, in the context of the desk study, and the proximate and wider landscape.

Evaluation

To describe the constraints to the proposed development as a result of the risk of harm or disturbance to bats (if any).

To set out any recommendations for further survey effort, where this risk is unacceptable or a complete understanding of how bats are using the site cannot be defensibly argued.

To inform any subsequent mitigation proposals in order to achieve a planning or other statutory consent, and to comply with wildlife legislation.

Methods

Survey

For the desk study:

To objectively demonstrate the presence of roosting bats or evaluate the likelihood of presence of roosting bats and offer an assessment of how they could be using the site, I undertook a desk study. This included review of all statutory and non-statutory designated sites, Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats and granted EPSML records for bats held on governmental databases (including MAGIC) within a 1km radius of the site. I also made an assessment of the surrounding landscape structure, using aerial images from Google Earth and Ordnance Survey maps.

Lancashire Environmental Records Network (LERN) was not commissioned to provide bat records for within 2km of the site. This was primarily due to the relatively small scale of the proposed development and lack of expected impact upon bats.

General:

I systematically assessed all features that will be impacted by the development proposals for bats, evidence of bat activity, and roosting or commuting habitat.

For all structures:

Externally, I made a non-intrusive, visual appraisal from the ground using binoculars, inspecting the external features of the structure(s) for potential access and egress points, and for signs of bat use.

For buildings:

Internally, I made an inspection of the building, including the living areas of derelict or abandoned buildings and the accessible roof spaces of all buildings, using an

endoscope, torch and ladders. I paid particular attention to the floor and flat surfaces, window shutters and frames, lintels above doors and windows, and carried out a detailed search of all accessible features within the roof space.

Birds:

I also made a note of any other ecological constraints observed during the survey. Commonly, this relates to the risk of harm to breeding birds, and the suitability of the site to support barn owls *Tyto alba*.

Evaluation

The evaluation that drives an assessment of likelihood is, by nature, probabilistic. The evaluation methodology I employed for the PRA is described by Colins (2016) and summarised in the table below:

Evidence, likelihood of presence and significance of habitat features	
Possible survey findings	**What this means for you**
⇒ Bats ⇒ Evidence of bat roosting or activity ⇒ Quantitatively significant or qualitatively important features for roosting ⇒ Connectivity to high quality habitat for roosting, foraging and commuting in the proximate and wider landscape	There are probable and foreseeable impacts to bats and their roosts in consequence of your development. These impacts present a real risk of harm or disturbance to bats. In order to prevent this outcome and any criminal liability, further survey effort is necessary to appropriately inform mitigation and enhancement. Thereafter, a planning decision can be defensibly made in favour of the proposed development.
⇒ No bats ⇒ No evidence of bat roosting or activity ⇒ A small number of qualitatively poor features for roosting (if any) ⇒ Limited connectivity to poor-quality habitat in the proximate and wider landscape (if any)	Any impact to bats and their roosts is extremely improbable or negligible. Bats and their roosts do not present any constraints to your development. A planning decision can be defensibly made in favour of the proposed development without delay.

Limitations

There were no limitations to the survey.

Findings

The findings collate the data of the desk study, the evidence of the physical survey and any other substantiation (such as the result of DNA tests of physical evidence collected on site).

Photographs with descriptions are only included where appropriate i.e., where they enhance the reader's comprehension of the relevance of salient features on site, or provide valuable context to the evaluation, foreseen impacts and recommendations.

Description of the site and proposed development

The survey building is a detached brick-built residential dwelling with a pitched and gabled roof clad in clay roof tiles. The brickwork around the building appears in a good condition with no gaps or cracks that could provide suitable roosting space for crevice-dwelling bats. Similarly, the roof structure appears in a good condition with no missing or raised roof tiles that would provide suitable roosting space for crevice-dwelling bats or provide access into the loft spaces for void-dwelling bats. There are UPVC copings along the gable-ends meaning there are no suitable gaps for roosting bats. There is one chimney located on the roof which has lead flashing around the base. This lead flashing appears tight-fitting with no roosting sites. The windows and door are UPVC framed and are tight-fitting with no suitable roosting sites. The building has UPVC soffits which are in good condition and tight-fitting to the walls providing no suitable roosting sites for bats. There is a single-storey flat-roof garage on the north-western elevation of the building. The brickwork on this section of the building has no suitable bat roosting features. The roof is clad in a bitumen felt with no suitable bat roosting sites. There is a large metal shutter door on the north-east elevation of the garage, which appears tight-fitting providing no access for bats or birds into the garage.

The building is A-framed and as such there is no loft space within the roof ridge, however there are roof spaces along the building eaves which were internally inspected. Internally, the roof structure is constructed from timber beams with an internal bitumen felt lining. The internal roof appears in excellent condition with no gaps or tears in the lining that would provide access for bats into the loft space. No daylight was seen entering the roof spaces through the roof structure or along the eaves indicating a lack of access for bats. The garage was also inspected internally. The internal garage roof structure is constructed from timber beams with a plastered

ceiling. The interior of the garage area is unsuitable for void-dwelling due to the high levels of light from the windows and also the lack of access into the garage.

The proposed plans are for the demolition of the existing garage building and for the construction of a double-storey extension on the north-western elevation which will be built into the existing roof structure with the addition of two dormer windows. The south-eastern elevation of the building will not be impacted by the proposed plans.

Site Photos

North-eastern elevation (pictured above).

South-western elevation (pictured above).

Garage extension (pictured above).

Site Plan

Figure 2: Proposed site plan provided by the client.

Summary of Desk Study

There are no designated sites within a 2km radius of the site. The closest designated site is approximately 3.5km to the east of the site, which is the Harper Clough and Smalley Delph Quarries Site of Special Scientific Interest. Priority habitats within a 2km radius include deciduous woodland (closest approximately 44m from site), good quality semi-improved grassland (closest approximately 360m from site), purple moor grass and rush pasture (closest approximately 720m from site), lowland calcareous grassland (closest approximately 780m from site), lowland heathland (closest approximately 1040m from site) and lowland fen (closest approximately 1500m from site). There has been one European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) granted within a 2km radius of the site, which involved the destruction of a resting place of common pipistrelle bats.

Summary of Physical Survey

The survey building is a brick-built detached dwelling with a pitched and gabled roof clad in clay roof tiles. There is a single-storey garage extension on the north-western elevation of the building which will be demolished as part of the proposed plans. There are no suitable external features suitable for crevice-dwelling bats and no access to the internal roof spaces for void-dwelling bats. As such the building is considered to have negligible habitat for supporting roosting bats.

Discussion

I have taken into account the findings of the desk study, the physical survey and made a qualitative evaluation of the habitat value at site and its utility to support roosting bats.

Although there is suitable surrounding habitat and disturbed roost within the area, the lack of suitable roosting sites on the survey building means bats are very unlikely to be found roosting within the building and as such are unlikely to be impacted by the proposed works.

Conclusion

My assessment is that bats should not present a constraint to development as the risk of harm or disturbance is highly improbable.

Foreseen Impacts and Recommendations (if any)

None.

References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Garland & Markham (2008) Is important bat foraging and commuting habitat legally protected?

Google Earth (2021) accessed on 10/03/2021.

Magic database (2021) http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx accessed on 10/03/2021.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.

Report ends.

I trust this is sufficient for your assessment. However, if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me via 07519109350 or melreid@arbtech.co.uk.

Author

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Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2019-43774-CLS-CLS

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