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Christina Aro  
2 Eightacre Avenue  
Sabden  
BB7 9HQ

5<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Ms Aro

**Re: Proposed development at 2 Eightacre Avenue, Sabden, BB7 9HQ (central grid reference: SD 77967 37732)**

Thank you for your request for a bat survey at the above site. I understand that the proposed development is for a single storey extension, and that the lower part of the roof on the front (north east) elevation will be affected.

### **1.0 Background and Qualifications**

The survey was carried out by Pat Waring and Janette Gazzard.

Pat is a licensed bat worker (Class 2 licence), 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-three years, including over 16 years as Director of Ecology Services UK Limited. This work includes provision of expert advice and guidance to bodies such as Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations, Local Planning Authorities and Lancashire and Yorkshire Police Authorities, as well as the delivery of professional training courses about bats at a national level.

Pat has recognised and 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 seventeen 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 relating to professional bat work, including building and tree surveys, assessments and judgements of value in relation to bats, as well as selection and monitoring of mitigation features.

Pat and Janette 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).

### **1.1 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.

### **2.0 Methodology**

In order to assess the likelihood of bats being present at 2 Eightacre Avenue, a daytime inspection of the building and its surroundings was carried out on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

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 Coast HP 10R 1000 lumens 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 (April to October) or at other times of the year.

### **3.0 Results of the Survey**

2 Eightacre Avenue is an occupied, semi-detached, dormer bungalow. The property is constructed of brick walls with a dual pitched roof, covered with interlocking roof tiles and a dormer on either side. There is lead flashing around the dormers and at the junction of the neighbouring property. All roof coverings, the ridge and lead flashing are sealed tight with no visible gaps. The gable (south east elevation) is capped with plastic verge covers and there are occasional gaps behind the verges and at the apex. These features have some potential for use by bats and the gap at the apex has high potential for use by nesting birds. The same feature (gable apex) is present on the adjoining property. A house sparrow was observed entering and leaving the apex from a nearby property during the survey. In addition, there are gaps associated with the roof edges to the rear of the property, including a nest box attached to the exterior wall, that are suitable for use by birds during the nesting season.

Most of the internal roof space has been converted into bedrooms. The front bedroom (location of the proposed development) has a side door access into a small roof void. The roof is underlined with bitumastic hessian and floor is boarded floor; this area is used for storage and has negligible potential for use by bats.

There is a detached single garage building, immediately adjacent to the proposed work area. At the front (north east) gable there are gaps, due to missing mortar. These gaps have high potential for use by nesting birds and provide potential access for use to bats that could roost within the roof coverings of the garage.

The property lies within a landscaped garden with managed boundary hedges and occasional, standard broadleaved and coniferous trees. None of the trees are suitable for use by roosting bats. There are numerous plants, trees and shrubs, as well as a garden pond. Non-native plants species, Cotoneaster, Montbretia and Japanese rose are present within the garden including immediately adjacent to the proposed development site.

There are other properties with gardens both immediately adjacent and in close proximity to the 2 Eightacre Avenue. To the north, there are open fields with connecting hedgerows and trees. Artificial light spill is expected to be extensive, based on the density of the housing and presence of street lighting.

The immediate surroundings provide at least moderate potential shelter and foraging resources to local bats and high potential shelter and foraging resources to bird populations.



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### *Bats*

No bats were found during the site inspection.

Potential roosting features for bats are:

#### Night roosting

- Negligible potential – there are no suitable night roosting features

#### Day roosting

- Low potential – gaps associated with gable and apex features on dwelling house and garage gable

#### Hibernation roosting

- Low potential – gaps associated with gable and apex features on dwelling house and garage gable

Low potential in the above examples reflects the condition of the features and their environment. It is our professional judgement that further surveys for bats at this time are not warranted.

### *Nesting birds*

House sparrow, blackbird and siskin were all observed calling from the garden during the survey.

A house sparrow was seen entering and leaving a gable feature at a neighbouring property.

There is high potential for nesting birds to be present within gaps associated with the gables of the house and garage, and within the garden vegetation during the nesting season (February to September).

## 4.0 Advice and Recommendations

### 4.1 Bats

Protected Species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Bats	<p>It is advised that there is no evidence to suggest that bats pose a constraint to the proposed development.</p> <p>It is advised that there are potential roost features (gaps) suitable for bats associated with gable edges. In this location and landscape setting, these features have low potential for bats to use throughout the year.</p> <p>All bat species are afforded full protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019</p>	<p><b>Advice (mitigation):</b> All personnel involved in proposed development works should be carefully advised about bats by a professional Ecologist, 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. <b>Prior to development.</b></p> <p><b>Advice (mitigation):</b> As a precaution, it is advised that when removal or disturbance of potential roost features such roof coverings are to take place, this should be done carefully by hand. <b>At all times.</b></p> <p><b>Advice (mitigation):</b> If bats are found at any time during the development, work must stop until advice has been sought from an appropriately experienced Ecologist. If the development will affect bats, a licence may be required and suitable mitigation put in place. <b>At all times.</b></p>

**Table 1 Bats**

## 4.2 Nesting birds

Protected species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
<p>Nesting birds</p>	<p>It is advised that there is high potential for birds to be nesting within roof edges of the house and garage buildings, as well as garden vegetation, during the bird nesting season (February to September).</p> <p>Under 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.</p> <p>There is no provision under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) for licensing the disturbance of nesting birds or the destruction of nests which are in use, for the purpose of development.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Advice (mitigation):</b> It is advised that the most appropriate way to address the risk to nesting birds is: Avoid disturbance to the building and vegetation during the nesting season. Or If works cannot be delayed the proposed work area should be carefully checked, immediately prior to works commencing. Checks should be carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist. If the risk of nesting birds remains, then monitoring for nesting bird activity should continue for the duration of works. <b>Prior to any work commencing (checks) and throughout works in nesting season (monitoring).</b></p> <p><b>Advice (mitigation):</b> If works are to be undertaken during the nesting season, all people working at the proposed development site should attend a toolbox talk delivered by an appropriately experienced person, to be made aware of the likelihood of encountering nesting birds and how to identify them, the legal protection of nesting birds and their own responsibilities as regards implementation of precautionary measures. <b>Prior to any work commencing.</b></p>

Protected species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Nesting birds Continued		<b>Advice (mitigation):</b> If birds are found to be nesting within or in close proximity to the work area during proposed works, it will be necessary to stop and establish an exclusion area. The extent of the exclusion area, which should be determined by a suitably experienced ecologist, will depend on the bird species and the nature of the proposed works. <b>At all times.</b>

**Table 2 Nesting Birds**

#### 4.3 Non-native invasive plant species

Non-native invasive plant species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Cotoneaster, Montbretia and Japanese rose species are confirmed within garden planting	It is advised that the proposed development will have to take account of non-native invasive plant species.  Proposed works to the building will involve an amount of disturbance which could result in the spread of non-native invasive plant species which are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).	<b>Advice (mitigation):</b> All personnel involved in the proposed development works should be made aware of the presence of non-native plant species and how to identify them, so that all works are undertaken with a clear understanding about legal aspects and working methods and precautions to be adopted. <b>Prior to any work.</b>  <b>Advice (mitigation):</b> Where possible, leave all boundary and border plants in situ and avoid all activities that have the potential to disturb the ground/plants resulting in the further spread. If plants must be removed, they should be removed carefully by hand and all excavated material (soil and plants) should be removed from the site to a licensed landfill as controlled waste, or burnt on a bonfire where it will not cause nuisance to neighbours through excessive smoke or odour. <b>Prior to and during any work.</b>

**Table 3– Non-native invasive plant species**



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Compliance with the actions outlined in the Tables above will help to avoid committing offences in relation to bats, nesting birds and non-native plant species.

Precautionary measures such as those listed above are generally regarded by Statutory Bodies, Local Planning Authorities and Professional Ecologists as being appropriate where there is a risk of protected species (i.e. bats and nesting birds) being present but further investigative surveys are not required prior to a planning application.

There are no known or likely constraints in relation to any other protected species.

If you require any further ecological advice or guidance in relation to the proposed works, please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely

Janette Gazzard MCIEEM  
Senior Ecologist  
Ecology Services UK Ltd



***View of 2 Eightacre Avenue north east elevation (location of proposed extension) (lhs) and south west elevation (rhs)***



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***Japanese rose confirmed in close proximity to proposed extension works***



***View of gables showing gaps with high potential for use by nesting birds on garage (lhs) and main house (rhs) and low potential for use by bats***



***View of roof coverings below dormer (lhs) and internal view of small roof void (rhs) all areas well sealed with no gaps present***



***Presence of non native species cotoneaster (lhs) and Montbretia (rhs) confirmed and in close proximity to proposed extension works***