Providing *ecology* support for *everyone*

Mrs L Whitey
5 Milbeck Close
Longridge
Lancashire
PR3 3LQ

26th March 2021

Dear Mrs Whitey

Re: Proposed development at 5 Milbeck Close, Longridge, PR3 3LQ (central grid reference: SD 59927 36119)

Thank you for your request for a bat survey at the above site. I understand that the proposed development is for an extension above the garage and to the rear of the existing dwelling house.

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 5 Milbeck Close, a daytime inspection of the building and its surroundings was carried out on 22nd March 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

5 Milbeck Close comprises an occupied, detached, dwelling house with an adjoining single storey garage and rear conservatory. The walls are constructed of brick and the windows and doors are upvc; sealed tight with no gaps. The roofs above the dwelling house and the garage are dual pitched and covered with tight fitting, concrete profiled tiles. There are timber soffits along the roof edges and gables; the soffits have started to deteriorate and there are holes and gaps present at the roof corners and gable ends. There are also gaps along the verges where the roof tiles are uncapped and remain open. Some of the gaps associated with gable soffits and the roof verges have some limited potential for use by bats.

There are roof voids above the dwelling house and the garage. Both roof voids are underlined with intact, bitumastic liner. There are block interior walls, timber trussed roof supports and rock wool insulation. Both roof voids are used for storage and are cluttered.

No signs of bats were found in either roof void. Bird feathers are present in the roof void above the main house. A single house sparrow was calling from the property roof throughout the survey. The bird was observed carrying nesting material into the roof edge.

Habitats and surroundings

5 Milbeck Close is situated within a residential location on the south west edge of Longridge. There is a paved driveway to the front and small rear garden, predominantly mown lawn with boundary trees and shrubs.

There are dwelling properties with gardens to the east and west and an un-grazed field to the immediate south. There are connecting hedges, scattered trees and field ponds in the close and wider surroundings.

The levels of artificial lighting are expected to be at least moderate based on the density of the housing and presence of street lighting.

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

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 timber gable soffits to garage and dwelling house

Hibernation roosting

- Low potential – gaps associated with timber gable soffits to garage and dwelling house

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

Bird feathers were found in the house roof void and a single prospecting house sparrow was seen investigating roof edges during the surveys.

There is high potential for nesting birds to be present within the roof edges during the nesting season (February to September).

4.0 Advice and Recommendations

4.1 Bats

Protected Species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Bats	It is advised that there is no evidence to suggest that bats pose a constraint to the proposed development. It is advised that there are potential roost features suitable for bats associated with timber soffits at the gable ends of the house and garage. In this location and landscape setting, these features have low potential for bats to use throughout the year. All bat species are afforded full protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	**Advice (mitigation):** As a precaution, a pre-commencement bat survey by a suitably qualified Ecologist should be carried out immediately prior to any proposed works (this could include supervising contractors during a roof strip). A pre-commencement survey will help avoid unlawful disturbance to bats and bat roosts before any development takes place- it is therefore specified to be used as a final precautionary approach once planning permission has been granted. **Immediately prior to the development** **Recommendation (mitigation):** 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. **Prior to development.** **Advice (mitigation):** 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. **At all times.**

Table 1 Bats

4.2 Nesting birds

Protected species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Nesting birds	It is advised that there is high potential for birds to be nesting within roof edges during the bird nesting season (February to September). 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. 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. 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.	**Advice (mitigation):** It is advised that the most appropriate way to address the risk to nesting birds is: Avoid disturbance to the building 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. **Prior to any work commencing (checks) and throughout works in nesting season (monitoring).** **Advice (mitigation):** 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. **Prior to any work commencing.**

Protected species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Nesting birds Continued		**Advice (mitigation):** 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. **At all times.**

Table 2 Nesting Birds

Compliance with the actions outlined in the Tables above will help to avoid committing offences in relation to protected species bats and nesting birds.

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 some risk of protected species (i.e. bats and nesting birds) being present but further investigative surveys are not required prior to a planning application.

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
Tel: 07842 694 618


View of 5 Milbeck Close front (north) elevation (lhs) and location of proposed extension rear (south) elevation (rhs)


Example of gaps associated with roof corners (lhs) and gable soffits (lhs)


View of roof garage roof void (lhs) and main house roof void (rhs) showing bitumastic roof liner, block and brick walls and timber truss supports

House sparrow observed prospecting during the survey and view of field adjacent to the rear garden