Providing *ecology* support for *everyone*

Rachel Mirza
10 Southern Close
Longridge
Preston
Lancashire
PR3 3FS

27th September 2021

Dear Rachel

Re: Proposed development at 10 Southern Close, Longridge, PR3 3FS (central grid reference: SD 60170 36601)

Thank you for your request for a bat survey at the above site. I understand that the proposed development is for a two-storey side extension to 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 Police Authority, 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 10 Southern Close, a daytime inspection of the building and its surroundings was carried out on 16th September 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

10 Southern Close comprises an occupied, semi-detached, dwelling house with a small adjoining mono-pitch single storey extension, detached garage and lean-to shed. The dwelling house walls are constructed of brick with concrete panelling on the front elevation. All the windows and doors are upvc; sealed tight with no gaps. The roof is dual pitched and covered with tight fitting, cement tiles. There is a brick chimney with lead flashing and upvc soffits along the roof edges and gables. There are a few small gaps present between the soffits and brick walls at the gable end and one gap visible associated with the lead flashing. These gaps (associated with the gable soffits and lead flashing) have some potential for use by bats.

Half of the roof void is used for storage and is part boarded and sealed with plasterboard. The other half of the roof void is underlined with bitumastic liner and rock wool insulation on the floor. No visible gaps were observed within the roof void apart from small gaps at the wall top with the adjoining roof void property

The detached garage and lean-too shed are single storey with brick walls and part corrugated plastic sheet, part corrugated asbestos sheet roofs. There is a timber fascia and fracture cracks within external brick walls none of which provide suitable conditions for use by bats.

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

Habitats and surroundings

10 Southern Close is situated within a residential area to the south of Longridge Town centre. There is a hardstanding driveway to the front. The front, side and rear garden areas are predominantly mown lawn with boundary trees and shrubs.

There are other dwelling properties with gardens in the immediate vicinity, a large sports field, reservoir and open farm fields with connecting hedgerows within the close and wider surroundings.

The levels of artificial lighting are expected to be at high due to the presence of street and flood lighting present in close proximity (associated with a school sports field).

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 gable soffits to lead flashing

Hibernation roosting

- Low potential – gaps associated with gable soffits to lead flashing

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

No bird nests or signs of nesting birds were found during the survey.

There is high potential for nesting birds to be present during the nesting season (February to September). Nesting birds can utilise the buildings and garden vegetation during this time.

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 gaps soffit gable ends and chimney lead flashing. 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):** 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):** As a precaution, it is advised that when removal or disturbance of potential roost features such as soffits are to take place, this should be done carefully by hand. **At all times.** **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 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 and/or 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. **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.** **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

4.3 Non-native invasive plant species

Non-native invasive plant species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Cotoneaster species and Montbretia confirmed within the 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).	**Advice (mitigation):** 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. **Prior to any work.** **Advice (mitigation):** 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. **Prior to and during any work.**

Table 3– Non-native invasive plant species

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

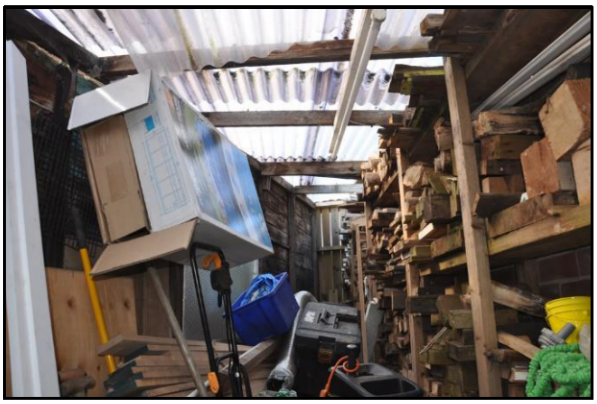
[redacted]

Janette Gazzard MCIEEM
Senior Ecologist
Ecology Services UK Ltd
[redacted]

View of 10 Southern close front (west) elevation (lhs) and rear garden (south) (rhs)

View of tight-fitting roof coverings (lhs) and view of gaps associated with soffit at the gable, indicated by red arrows (rhs)


Internal view of roof void, plaster board section (lhs) and underlined section (rhs) showing connecting gaps at wall top between adjoining properties

View of garage roof (lhs) and internal view of lean-to (rhs)