



Providing *ecology* support for *everyone*

Chris Brown
The Follies Bungalow
Vicarage Lane
Wilpshire
Blackburn
BB1 9HY

20th December 2022

Dear Chris

Re: Proposed development at The Follies Bungalow, Vicarage Lane, Wilpshire, Blackburn, BB1 9HY

Thank you for your request for a bat survey.

We understand that the proposal is for the refurbishment and conversion of an existing bungalow and garage into a two-storey dwelling house.

1.0 Background and Qualifications

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

Pat is a licensed bat worker, a registered consultant of the Bat Mitigation Class licence in England, 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-four years, including over 17 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, including Lancashire Planning Authorities and 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 conditions necessary for bat roosting. He also has recognised skills relating to bat surveys and assessments.

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 eighteen 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 throughout England

www.ecologyservice.co.uk

Ecology Services UK Limited

Chipping | Lancashire | PR3 2GH

E info@ecologyservice.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales no. 5329675

and Wales, 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 The Follies bungalow, a daytime inspection of the building and its surroundings was carried out on 16th December 2022.

Observations were made from ground level, as well as from telescopic ladders to examine potential roost features. A Ridgid CA300 endoscope was available but not required during the survey. A Coast HP 10R 1000 lumens torch and close-focussing Zeiss Victory FL 8x42 binoculars were also used as aids to visibility.

The survey was 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.

2.1 Limitations

It is recognised that limiting the survey to a single visit in December 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.

The presence and behaviour of species, especially mobile species such as bats and birds, can change over time. Ecology surveys are therefore always time-limited in their currency.

3.0 Results of the Survey

The Follies bungalow comprises an occupied dwelling house and adjoining double garage. The ground floor and roof space are used as living areas and the garages are used for storage.

The walls are constructed of stone and the roof is covered with fitted cement tiles with a mortared ridge and Velux windows. The windows and doors are upvc and sealed tight with no gaps. There are timber fascias and soffits along the roof edges and timber fascias at the gables. Most of the roof edges are sealed tight but in some sections the timber has become worn and rotten. As a result, there are a small number of gaps associated with broken soffits that are suitable for use by birds, as well as smaller gaps on the south gable (garage) and north gable (bungalow) that have some limited potential for use by bats.

Although most of the roof space is used as bedrooms, there are three small voids along the eaves accessed by wall cupboard doors. The roof is a traditional cut and pitch design and underlined with bitumastic hessian roof liner. There are block and timber internal walls, with cavity wall insulation spilling out into the voids and deep rock wool insulation on the floor. All of voids were well sealed with intact roof liners and no potential access for bat or birds found.

There is a fourth roof void above a ground floor bedroom and a sealed area above the garages. These roof voids are underlined with intact, plastic roof membrane, contain deep rock wool and block walls.

Habitats and surroundings

The Follies Bungalow is located to the north of the Village of Wilpshire, in a rural setting alongside the two other dwelling houses. There is a large grass lawn to the north and hardstanding driveway to the south. Along the eastern boundary is a row of mature trees and scrub which provides shelter and visual screen from the adjacent railway line to the immediate east. To the north, west and south are open fields with connecting trees and hedgerows.

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

The levels of artificial lighting are expected to be low based on lack of street lighting and low density of housing in the close surroundings.

Bats

No bats or evidence of bats was found during the daytime inspection.

Potential roosting features for bats are:

Night roosting

Negligible potential – there are no potential night roosting features

Day roosting

Low potential – gaps associated with south gable (garage) and north gable (bungalow)

Hibernation roosting

Low potential – gaps associated with south gable (garage) and north gable (bungalow)

The assessment above reflects the condition of the features and their environment. It is the professional judgement of Ecology Services UK Ltd that no further surveys are warranted at this time.

Nesting birds

No bird nests were found, although bird droppings were present on the external walls along the east elevation, suggesting that birds have been perching and roosting on the building.

There is high potential for nesting birds to utilise gaps associated with gables and soffits 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 suitable for bats associated with north and south facing barge boards. 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>Advice (mitigation): All personnel involved in the proposed development should be carefully advised about bats, 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.</p> <p>Advice (mitigation): As a precaution, it is advised that when removal or disturbance of potential roost features such as barge boards are to take place, this should be done carefully by hand. At all times.</p> <p>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.</p>

Table 1 Bats

4.2 Nesting birds

Protected species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Nesting birds	<p>It is advised that there is high potential for birds to be nesting associated with roof edges during the bird nesting season (February and 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>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.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p>

Protected species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Nesting birds Continued		<p>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.</p>

Table 2 Nesting Birds

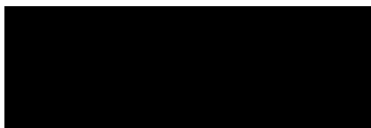
Compliance with the actions outlined in the Tables above will help to avoid committing offences in relation to protected species (bats and nesting birds).

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

For this site, it is recommended that if the proposed works are not undertaken before May 2023, advice should be sought as to the need for further surveys at that time.

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





Providing *ecology* support for *everyone*



View of south gable of garage, small gaps with some potential for use by bats and birds behind gable soffits



View of roof coverings with Velux windows



ecology Providing *ecology* support for *everyone*
SERVICES UK LTD



Example of damaged soffit. Gap is suitable for access by nesting birds



Example of sealed fascia, no gaps present for use by bats or birds



View of roof void above eaves showing intact bitumastic liner and deep rock wool



View of void above garage showing plastic roof membrane, rock wool and block walls