

Method Statement - European Protected Species (Bats)

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

**2 Walled Garden,
Woodfold Park,
Mellor,
BB2 7QA**

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Executive summary

In December 2022 Batworker Ecological Consultancy was commissioned to undertake a preliminary bat roost assessment of 2 Walled Garden, Woodfold Park, Mellor, BB2 7QA to support residential development works including alterations to the southern facade and installation of rooflights.

A pipistrelle maternity roost has been identified using the eastern and western gable ends of the existing building and development proposals do not affect the roost or roost entrances.

Mitigation in the form of timing of works, and reasonable avoidance measures, have been proposed to manage the proposed development.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of building and that the presence of a significant or low conservation value bat roost is unlikely in areas of the building highlighted for alterations.

“The presence of a significant bat roost (invariably a maternity roost) can normally be determined on a single visit at any time of year, provided that the entire structure is accessible and that any signs of bats have not been removed by others”. - Mitchell-Jones, A (2004) Bat mitigation guidelines. English Nature.

The overall purpose of the Method Statement is to ensure that bats and their roosts are fully protected to ensure the ‘favourable conservation status of the species’. This method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to bats. By following the Reasonable Avoidance Measures and mitigation included in this document the work can take place, ensuring the Continued Ecological Functionality of the site.

Site Location

2 Walled Garden, Woodfold Park, Mellor, BB2 7QA
NGR: SD6342529414



Survey Personnel.

Personnel on surveys included: David Anderson, an experienced ecologist and bat researcher with 25 years experience of fieldwork and bat ecology, a founder member of the East Lancashire Bat Group and 'Batworker.com', formerly a Natural History Curator and manager of the East Lancashire Biological Records Centre. (Natural England licence No:2015-15784-CLS-CLS, Conservation, Science and Education).

Survey Summary

Survey Type	Date	Timings
Daytime Walkover	21 st February 2023	1 hour.

Survey constraints

Access to all areas of the interior and exterior of the building was possible and good visual inspection at ground level was possible.

Evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings or staining on external walls and surfaces is frequently removed by the action of wind and rain; apparent absence of evidence is therefore evaluated with caution.

In many situations it is not possible to inspect every locations where bats are present therefore it should be assumed that an absence of bat evidence does not necessarily equate to evidence that bats are absent.

Some species such as pipistrelle sp bats are opportunistic and it is possible for individuals to be found during works, even where surveys have had negative results during preliminary and activity surveys.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

The property consists of a brick built split level house with a double pitched slate roof, the building has single storey porch to the frontage and an adjoining garage at the western gable.

Walls are well pointed with no obvious cracks, gaps or crevices present. Roof slates are generally close fitting with no obvious lifted, missing or slipped slates present. Lead flashing is close fitting. Roof slates are lined with a modern breathable membrane within the loft space.

Timber soffits are generally close fitting and well sealed, however gaps were present at both gable ends allowing access to the cavity wall.

The property was assessed as offering moderate bat roost potential.



Northern frontage



South facing facade



Western gable end



Eastern gable end

Visual Inspection.

Gaps were present at the apex of both the eastern and western gable ends allowing access to the wall tops.

Inspection of the eastern gable within the loft revealed pipistrelle droppings overspilling from the wall top to the interior.

Droppings were consistent with a maternity roost of pipistrelle bats being present within the gable cavity walls.

Interpretation of results

	
<i>Location of roost entrance on western gable</i>	<i>Location of roost entrance on eastern gable</i>

A small pipistrelle maternity roost was observed using the eastern and western gable of the existing building with roost entrances located high on the apex of the gable ends.

Given the nature of proposed alteration and location of development proposals it is not expected that proposed works will affect the roost with suitable reasonable avoidance measures and timing of works.

Mitigation in the form of timing of works, and reasonable avoidance measures, have been proposed to manage proposed development works.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of building and that the presence of a significant or low conservation value bat roost is unlikely on areas of the site highlighted for alteration.

“The presence of a significant bat roost (invariably a maternity roost) can normally be determined on a single visit at any time of year, provided that the entire structure is accessible and that any signs of bats have not been removed by others”. - Mitchell-Jones, A (2004) Bat mitigation guidelines. English Nature.

It is considered that the recommended reasonable avoidance measures and timing of works will be sufficient to ensure the continued ecological functionality of the building for roosting bats.

Impact Assessment

Short-term impacts – Disturbance Low risk:

Roof stripping where necessary will be undertaken by hand and under supervision.

Long-term impacts - Roost loss: No impact on a local bat population.

Long-term impacts - Fragmentation and isolation:

Minimal risk, the impact of the proposed development on local bat species will be insignificant.

Predicted scale of impact: No loss of roosting sites of a common and relatively widespread species.

Method Statement and Reasonable Avoidance Measures

The overall purpose of the Method Statement is to ensure that bats and their roosts are fully protected to ensure the 'favourable conservation status of the species'. The Method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to roosting bats.

Common pipistrelle bats are considered an opportunistic species and it is possible for individuals to be found during works, even where surveys have had negative results during preliminary and activity surveys.

A Method Statement is normally required by the local planning authority to ensure that procedures are in place before the development works are carried out and will form part of the EPS Licence application where necessary.

No work should commence without contractors receiving a toolbox talk.

All contractors will be made aware of the legal protection afforded all species of bats in the UK and procedures will be in place to mitigate for the potential impact on bats before any building work is undertaken.

Timing of works - Work will take place between September and March inclusive to avoid disturbance to roosting bats.

Prior to work commencing a single emergence survey should be carried out (between May and August inclusive) to confirm pipistrelle species and roost entrance locations.

Roof work should take place following an evening temperature of +5c

Work to affected roof areas will take place under supervision, with the batworker 'on call'.

Roof slates should be removed by hand and under supervision where necessary.

Scaffolding should avoid areas of the western and eastern gable ends identified as roost entrances to ensure flighlines remain undisturbed.

In the unlikely event bats are found during works. The area should be carefully covered and work stop until the batworker can attend to assess the appropriate way forward.

Compensatory bat boxes (two Two Greenwood Eco Habitats two crevice boxes or Kent Bat Boxes) will be placed on trees on site prior to work commencing.

Bat boxes will remain on site as part of biodiversity enhancements,

A copy of the Method Statement should be available to site / project managers in advance of any works being carried out.

The existence of a Method Statement helps to establish a defence against prosecution for intentional (WCA), deliberate (Habitat Regulations.) or reckless (WCA) disturbance of bats or damage to roosts. All work should take place under the supervision of the ecologist.