

Mr Andrew Weir
Glebe Barn
Main Street
Gisburn
BB7 4HR

26th June 2023

Dear Mr Weir

Re: Proposed development at Glebe Barn, Main Street, Gisburn BB7 4HR

Thank you for your request for a bat survey.

We understand that the proposal is for the conversion of an existing garage into a kitchen and roof replacement to the dwelling house, and the installation of roof lights to an existing, detached garage building.

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-five years, including over 18 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 nineteen 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

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 buildings, a daytime inspection of the buildings and their surroundings was carried out on 19th June 2023.

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 June does not take account of bat activity on the site through 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

Glebe Barn is an occupied, semi-detached dwelling with an integral single garage and a detached, double garage and store room.

The walls of the dwelling house are constructed of stone, in good condition with no gaps. The roof of the house is covered with original stone tiles and the single garage is a mono-pitch roof with cement tiles. Velux windows are present on both the north and south pitch of the roofs. The ridge, roof edges and west gable verge are all well-sealed with no visible gaps; there are however, gaps throughout the dwelling house roof coverings, associated with the natural fit of the stone and these gaps have some potential for bats throughout the year. There are no enclosed roof spaces associated with the dwelling house and integral garage. The roof in the dwelling house is vaulted and used as living rooms and all internal ceilings are sealed and well maintained.

The detached double garage is a new building constructed of stone outer walls with block inner walls and steel frame supports. The roof is covered with slate and underlined with a modern roof membrane. There is a large roof void (divided in two). The roof void is boarded on the floor with rock wool insulation beneath the floor boards. There are a small number of gaps along the wall top and behind the UPVC fascia boards on the east and west elevation and these gaps have some potential for use by bats throughout the year, as well as use by small birds during the bird nesting season (February to September).

Habitats and surroundings

The proposed development site is located on a main road (A59) in the centre of Gisburn. There is a gravel and stone driveway as well as paved garden areas and stone walls. Planted pots with low growing shrubs and vegetables are also present around the property.

There are other residential dwellings with gardens and business premises along the main street as well as the vicarage to the immediate north and St Mary's Church to the west. Open fields with scattered trees, managed hedgerows and small woodland blocks lie beyond the built areas of Gisburn. These landscape features (buildings, trees, hedgerows and fields) provide potential shelter and foraging resources for use by bat and bird populations in the close and wider surroundings.

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

Bats

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

Potential roosting features for bats are:

Night roosting

Negligible potential – the buildings are not suitable for use by night roosting bats

Day roosting

Low potential – gaps associated with the roof covering (dwelling house), fascia boards and wall tops (detached garage)

Hibernation roosting

Low potential – gaps associated with the roof covering (dwelling house), fascia boards and wall tops (detached garage)

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 or sign of birds nesting were found during the survey.

The garden areas are paved with very limited vegetation suitable for nesting birds. Small birds could utilise gaps associated with roof coverings on the dwelling house and the wall tops and fascia gaps associated with the detached garage.

There is also potential for birds to utilise the mature trees immediately adjacent the detached garage during the nesting season (February to September).

4.0 Advice and Recommendations

4.1 Bats

Protected Species	Impacts, Issues & Rationale	Action Required
Bats	<p>There are no known impacts to bat roosts as a result of the proposed development.</p> <p>It is advised that there are potential roost features suitable for bats associated with roof coverings (dwelling house) and roof edges (detached garage). In this location and landscape setting, these features have low potential for bats to use throughout the year. However, the potential is not sufficient to warrant further surveys.</p> <p>All bat species and bat roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and 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 roof coverings 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, Issues & Rationale	Action Required
Nesting birds	<p>There are potential impacts (disturbance, damage and destruction) to nesting birds, nests and eggs as a result of the proposed development.</p> <p>It is advised that there is potential for birds to utilise gaps associated with roof coverings (dwelling house). Roof edges (detached garage) and trees immediately adjacent 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>Advice (mitigation): It is advised that the most appropriate way to address the risk to nesting birds is:</p> <p>Avoid disturbance to the buildings 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):</p> <p>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> <p>Advice (mitigation):</p> <p>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 some risk of protected species (bats and nesting birds) being present in the future, but where the potential risks are judged insufficient to trigger the need for further investigative surveys prior to a planning application.

For this site, it is recommended that if proposed works are not undertaken before April 2024, 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



Image showing front (south) elevation of Glebe Barn



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Image showing rear (north) elevation showing roof coverings on dwelling house, single mono-pitch garage and view of double garage in background.



Image showing vaulted ceilings (no roof void) in dwelling house



Image showing south elevation view of detached, double garage with mature trees to the immediate west and north. Small gaps present (red arrow) along wall top and fascia boards on the west and east elevation



Image showing roof void with intact modern roof liner above detached double garage