Preliminary Roost Assessment

2 Lane Ends

Sabden

Clitheroe

Bb7 9EZ

For

Carole Davies

Gritstone Ecology

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Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the report

The report is written by Stewart Bradshaw for Carole Davies. Stewart carried out a Preliminary Roost Assessment of 2 Lane Ends, Sabden, Clitheroe, on 18th October 2024.

1.2. Survey aims

The aim of the survey was to determine the actual or potential presence of bats and the need for further survey or mitigation.

1.3. Surveyor details

Stewart is licensed to disturb, take and handle all species of bats in all counties of England under licence number 2015-15615-CLS-CLS. He has more than 15 years of experience in ecological consultancy, including the planning & preparation of bat surveys, and mitigation licences.

1.4. Reason for survey

The development proposals are for the demolition of an existing extension and conservatory, and the extension of the property including a full height side extension, ground floor rear extension, and changes to the internal layout. Additionally a single willow tree will need to be removed to accommodate the works.

1.5. Site context

The site is located on the north side of Padiham Road, Sabden, Clitheroe, BB7 9EZ, GR SD 78202 37068, approximately 5km southeast of Clitheroe Town Centre. The site is in a predominantly rural area on the southern edge of Sabden, and is surrounded by open farmland.

The site includes an occupied end of terrace house, built in 1822, with gardens to the front and rear, and areas of hard landscaping.

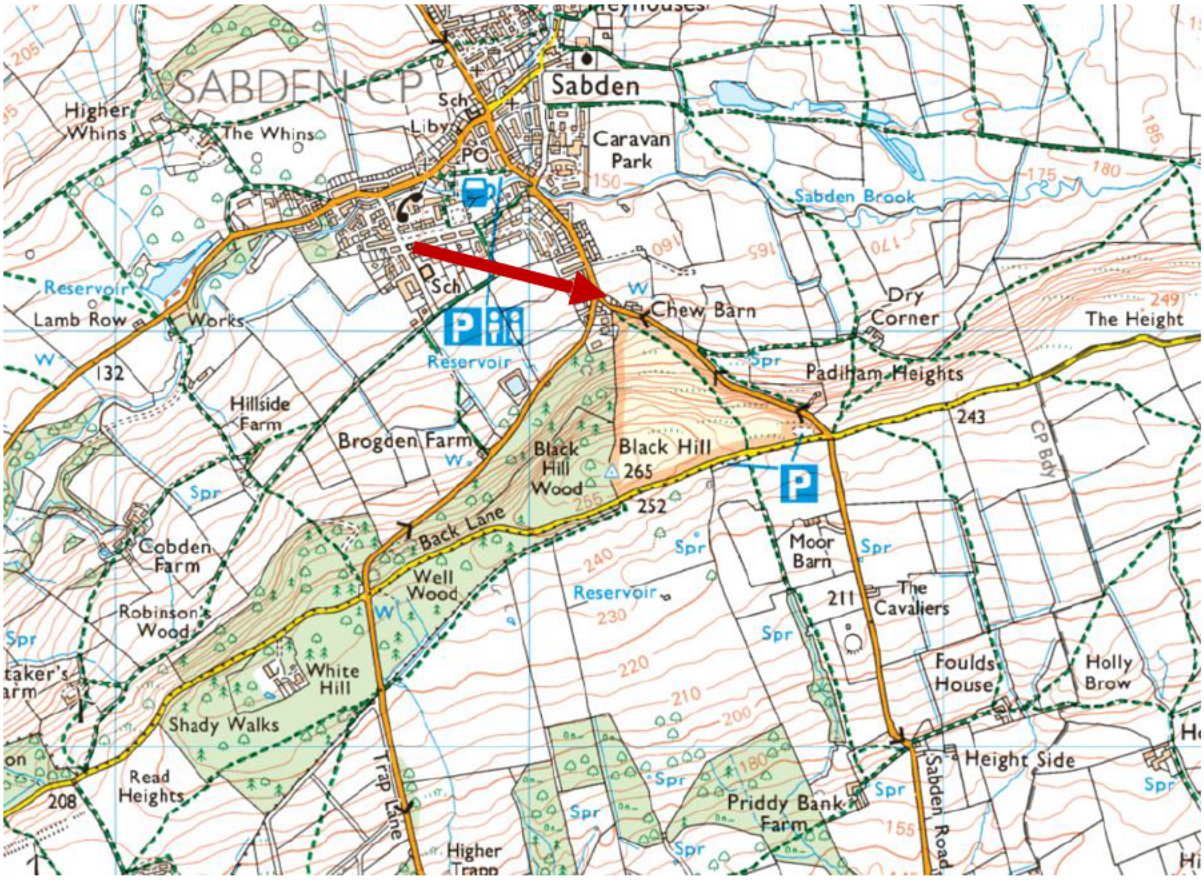
Habitat within 50m of the house includes; houses, gardens, trees, areas of open farmland, and busy un-lit roads.

Habitat within 500m includes, housing and linked back gardens, areas of open farmland, hedgerows, watercourses, ponds, mature trees, and blocks of woodland.

Areas of open farmland, linked back gardens, watercourses, and blocks of woodland, potentially provide good quality foraging opportunities for bats; in an area which is subject to little disturbance from light, noise, and other human activity.

The site and surrounding area provide high quality foraging, commuting, and roosting opportunities for bats. Although the site is at an altitude of 170m on the northern slope of a hillside, and is exposed to the elements.

1.6. Site location



1.6a – 2 Lane Ends – site location.

1.6b – 2 Lane Ends – aerial photograph.

2. Methods

2.1. Survey timings

The building inspection was completed on 18th October 2024. Weather conditions during the survey were bright, warm, and dry, with a temperature of 16°C.

2.2. Desk study

No desk study of the site was undertaken, prior to the preliminary roost assessment, and no other ecological surveys have been carried out in relation to the proposals.

The development has a small footprint, and impacts beyond the site boundary are unlikely. A site-specific investigation was considered more suitable.

2.3. Habitat assessment

The habitat on site and in the surrounding area was assessed using Ordnance Survey mapping, and aerial photography. Habitat features on site, and those in the surrounding area were assessed for their suitability for use by bats during the site visit.

2.4. Building inspection

A systematic search of the exterior of the building was made to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate any evidence of bats such as live or dead specimens, bat droppings, urine splashes, fur-oil staining and or squeaking noises. Bat specimens and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence; the other types are not always the result of bat activity. Sometimes bats leave no visible sign of their presence on the outside of a building (even when they do wet weather can wash evidence away.)

The search included (where present) the ground beneath potential access points, windowsills, window panes, walls, behind peeling paintwork and lifted rendering, hanging tiles, weatherboarding, eaves, soffit boxes, fascia's, lead flashing, gaps under felt, under tiles / slates and in existing bats boxes. Gaps in brickwork and stonework were searched (where present). All evidence of use by bats, or features with the potential to be used by bats was recorded and photographed.

A systematic search of the inside of the building was undertaken to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate evidence of bats. Bat specimens (live or dead) and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence. Other evidence can include urine splashes, fur-oil staining, feeding remains, squeaking noises, bat fly (Nycteribiid) pupal cases (Hutson 1984) or odour.

Areas inspected include;

Within rooms

- floors and surfaces
- behind wooden panelling
- in lintels above doors and windows
- behind window shutters and curtains
- behind pictures, posters, furniture, peeling paintwork, peeling wallpaper, lifted plaster and boarded up windows
- inside cupboards and in chimneys accessible from fireplaces.

Within roof spaces

- the tops of gable end and dividing walls
- the top of chimney breasts
- ridge and hip beams and other structural timbers
- mortise and tenon joints
- all beams
- the junction of roof timbers, especially where ridge and hip beams meet
- behind purlins
- between tiles and the roof lining (where accessible)
- under flat felt roofs.

The areas listed above were inspected (where present), any additional areas with potential for use were also inspected.

2.5. Equipment

The equipment listed below was available for use during the surveys and was used where required.

Clulite CB2 1,000,000 candlepower torch. Rigid Seesnake CA-300 digital endoscope with 0.9m cable reach with 17mm and 6mm imaging heads. Digital camera with 50x zoom. 8x25 close focussing binoculars, 4m ladders, bat handling gloves, DNA sampling tubes.

Additionally a camera drone was used to inspect the roof in detail.

2.6. Survey limitations

None. All accessible areas of the house were inspected in detail. The survey was completed in October, when bats are less active, and external signs of use, such as droppings, are less likely to be present.

3. Results

3.1. External inspection

3.1a – The front of the house.

No2 Lane Ends, Sabden, is a stone end of terrace house, built in 1822, which is currently occupied. It has a pitched roof, covered with slate roof tiles and stone ridge tiles. The gable end is palisaded and covered with stone capping. A ground floor extension to the west gable end has a single pitched roof covered with slate tiles. There is a UPVC and glass conservatory to the rear.

Roof pitches face north, south, and west; the gable end faces west. Lead flashing is fitted at the base of chimneys, in gutters, and where roof tiles abut stonework. Timber fascia boards and boxed soffits are fitted at the eaves of the extension.

Walls are solid stone, lintels and window settings are stone; window and door frames are a mixture of UPVC and timber, all glass is intact.

The building is well maintained, and in good condition. Ridge tiles are fixed tightly, there are no damaged or missing ridge tiles. There are no damaged, slipped, or missing roof tiles. Roof tiles are tightly fitted, with no gaps between tiles.

Fascia boards and boxed soffits are fitted tightly against the walls gaps are filled with expanding foam sealant. Walls are in good condition, with no missing mortar or cracks.

There are no features externally which are likely be used by roosting bats, and no evidence of use by bats was present during the inspection.

3.2. Internal inspection

3.2a – The roof void.

The house has a two roof voids which are used for storage, and accessed infrequently for essential maintenance.

The roof has a timber rafter and purlin structure, lined with a modern non-breathable membrane, and insulated with mineral wool between the ceiling joists. The roof lining is in good condition with no tears, or gaps.

The eaves and wall plate were inspected using an endoscope. There are no gaps at the eaves; and there are no gaps which give direct access to the roof void from the outside. Boxed soffits on the extension open into the roof void and were inspected from above.

The roof voids in general, and in particular the roof timbers and gables are filled with dusty cobwebs, and were undisturbed prior to the inspection.

The house has no cellar, and there are no other enclosed spaces which are suitable to be used by roosting bats.

3.3. Trees

A willow tree to the front of the house will be removed to accommodate the new extension. The tree is approximately 6m in height, and multi-stemmed, with an average stem diameter of 20cm. There are a number of pruning wounds on the main stem, however these are healing, and there are no features suitable for use by roosting bats.

3.4. Indications of use

No indications of use by bats were present during the building inspection, either internally, or externally.

3.5. Level of suitability

The house has **negligible suitability** for use by roosting bats. This is as the building is well maintained, in good condition, and as no suitable roosting opportunities were noted during the building inspection.

The willow tree has no features suitable for use by roosting bats.

4. Evaluation

The building is set in an area which, in general, provides high quality habitat, for foraging, commuting and roosting bats, and bats are likely to be present locally.

Areas of open farmland, woodland, and watercourses locally provide foraging opportunities for bats, in an area which is subject to little disturbance from light and noise.

Houses immediately adjacent to good quality habitat are more likely to be used by roosting bats than those further away. However, the house is well-sealed, and has no features which could be used by roosting bats.

The house is well maintained, and in good condition. There are no features externally, which are suitable, or likely to be used by roosting bats; the roof void has no gaps which could give direct access to roosting bats, and no evidence of use was found during the inspection.

The lack of any indications of use inside the roof voids, such as bat droppings or feeding remains, reduces the likelihood of a significant roost being present. If bats were present inside the roof voids, even in lower numbers, some evidence of use would be likely to persist.

Roof and ridge tiles are in good condition; ridge tiles are sealed with cement. There are no gaps between roofing materials which are likely to be used by roosting bats.

Walls are solid stone with no insulating cavity. Walls are in good condition, with no cracks, or missing mortar which could be used by crevice dwelling bats.

Window and door frames are fixed into the brickwork, gaps are filled with sealant, and offer no suitable roosting opportunities.

Fascia boards and boxed soffits at the eaves of the extension are fixed tightly against stonework, with no suitable gaps.

The small gaps between stonework, roof timbers, and roofing materials, in the roof voids were inspected in detail using an endoscope. No droppings were found, and no suitable gaps were present which could give access, or shelter to roosting bats.

The main roof of the house will not be affected by the proposed works. The conservatory, and ground floor extension, are the only parts of the building which will be impacted. The willow tree which is to be removed has no features suitable for use by roosting bats.

Taking into account the habitat surrounding the site, and the features present, the building is unlikely to be used by roosting bats and has **negligible suitability** for use. The willow tree has no suitable features.

4.1. Legal and planning context

All species of bats in the UK and their roosts are legally protected by UK and European legislation. The UK the legal protection is summarised as follows:

You will be committing a criminal offence if you:

1. Deliberately* capture, injure or kill a bat
2. Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
3. Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
4. Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
5. Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost even if bats are not present at the time

*In a court, 'deliberately' will probably be interpreted as someone who, although not intending to capture/injure or kill a bat, performed the relevant action, being sufficiently informed and aware of the consequence his/her action would most likely have.

If bats were roosting in the building, the proposed works would likely impact bats or bat roosts.

5. Impact assessment

The development proposals are for the demolition of an existing extension and conservatory, and the extension of the property including a full height side extension, ground floor rear extension, and changes to the internal layout. Additionally a single willow tree will need to be removed to accommodate the works.

The building has no features which are suitable, or likely to be used by roosting bats and has negligible suitability for use.

The proposed work is unlikely to impact on bats or bat roosts; and, once completed is unlikely to provide any increase in levels of disturbance for bats locally.

6. Required actions

The building has **negligible suitability** for use by roosting bats, no field signs of use by bats were found internally or externally during the inspection, and no further survey work is required.

7. References

Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Policy Framework.

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. (4th ed.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). The Bat Workers Manual. (3rd ed.) JNCC

8. Appendix 1 – Photographs

1 – The front of the house.

2 – The rear of the house.

3 – Roof and ridge tiles are in good condition with no suitable gaps.

4 – Soffits at the eaves of the extension are fixed tightly against brickwork.

5 – Lead flashing is fitted tightly with no suitable gaps.

6 – Stonework and mortar are in good condition with no suitable gaps.

7 – Window and door frames are tightly sealed into brickwork with no suitable gaps.

8 – Capping stones at the gable end are fitted tightly with no suitable gaps.

9 – Cement at the verges is intact with no viable gaps.

10 – The main loft void.

11 – Timbers are covered with dusty cobwebs.

12 – The loft void in the extension is small and cluttered.

13 – A willow tree will be removed to facilitate the works.

14 – The tree has pruning wounds but no suitable cavities for roosting bats.