



ECOLOGY TECHNICAL NOTE: PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT

PROJECT ADDRESS	5 Church St, Ribchester, PR3 3XP
PROPOSED PLANS	Proposed loft conversion & proposed single storey, rear extension
DATE	19 December 2024
AUTHOR	Ryan Knight BSc (Hons) MCIEEM - Principal Ecologist
ISSUED TO:	Sunderland Peacock and Associates Ltd

INTRODUCTION

Knight Sky Ecology Ltd was commissioned to undertake a preliminary bat roost assessment at 5 Church Street in relation to the proposed development plans for the property. The assessment was undertaken by Ryan Knight MCIEEM who holds a Level 2 Natural England Class Licence (ref. 2015-12611-CLS-CLS) for bats and has held this licence type for over 12 years. Ryan has also acted as the named ecologist on numerous European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licences issued by Natural England which covered several bat species and roost types.

This document presents the results of the bat survey and provides all the necessary data, assessment and guidance to satisfy the relevant planning and conservation policy obligations and legislative framework.

METHODS

The preliminary bat roost assessment was undertaken in accordance with good practice guidelines (*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. 4th edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London. (Collins, J., (ed.) (2023))*) and the scope of the assessment was also designed in relation to the small-scale nature of the proposed works and the predicted degree of risk of impacts to bats. With this proportionate approach in mind, a desk top study was not considered to be required for the assessment.

A daytime visit to the property was undertaken on 10th December 2024. The assessment involved a visual search for evidence of bats and an assessment of the bat roost suitability of the property based on the extent and suitability of any potential roost features present. The property was fully accessed. It should be noted that the property did not have any loft spaces (see below).

The site visit was undertaken outside of the main active period for bats (April-October) when evidence of a bat roost is not as readily identifiable. However, the seasonal constraint did not present a significant limitation to the conclusions and recommendations made within this document. The main aim of the assessment was to evaluate the suitability of the property for use by bats - not to determine presence or absence.



RESULTS

Property Description & Potential Roost Features

Photos of the property are provided at the foot of this document. The property comprises an end terrace located on the lower west side of Church St, towards the River Ribble. The property has a stone frontage and brick built rear and side. The stone and brickwork was solid with no potential roost features recorded. The main gable roof has an intersecting roof at the rear. The dry verge pointing on both the rear and side appeared in good repair and the roof tiles at the verges appeared to be well bedded in. The property featured bargeboards on a section of the side and at the rear. Both bargeboards were tightly sealed to the wall and no crevices were observed. The frontage had a stone cornice which was overlapped with lead flashing. No potential roost features were observed in this location.

There were several slightly lifted roof slates on both aspects of the roof; however, the roof did not have an underlining and there were no recessed crevices in the roof. Internally, the upper floor ceiling had been removed and the property had been completed gutted. As a result, there was no enclosed loft area and no potential roost features were identified.

Overall, the external elevations of the property appeared to be in good repair and were well sealed throughout and no bats, evidence of bats or potential roost features for bats were recorded.

Suitability of Surrounding Habitats

The property is located on Church Street which contains rows of terraced houses with limited greenery. However, there is a mature tree line to the direct west of the property and further mature trees associated with St Wilfrid's Church further south-westwards. The River Ribble is also 75m south and this river and associated riparian habitats provide a foraging resource of very high value for bats. There is likely to be a relatively higher ratio of bat roosts along this river corridor. Whilst bat activity levels in the immediate area of the property are expected to be lower, bat activity and species diversity are expected to be high within the local area.

Overall Bat Roost Suitability

No evidence of bats was recorded and largely due to the external condition of the property and the renovation works that had been undertaken internally, the property was assessed as '**negligible**' in its bat roost suitability.

Nesting Birds

No evidence of nesting birds was observed and there was negligible potential for use of the property by nesting birds.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



No evidence of bats was identified and the property is considered to offer a negligible level of suitability to support bats. Therefore, it is concluded that **bats do not present a constraint to the development proposals** as the works will remain legally compliant with reference to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)). No further surveys or mitigation measures are recommended.

Enhancements

The proposed development presents a very good opportunity to deliver enhancements for bats at the site and such enhancements would comply with national and local biodiversity related policies (e.g., National Planning Policy Framework, 2023). Details of the bat box recommended to be installed are provided in Table 1.1.



Table 1.1. Bat box recommendations

Locations and positioning	The box can be fitted on the rear elevation. The box should be positioned at a height of at least 3m. Below the roof line is optimal.		
Bat box models and purchasing	Bat box models along with the locations for purchasing are provided below. There can be a considerable waiting time for delivery for certain models, therefore, two options have been provided.		
	Low Profile WoodStone Bat Box		Available from: https://www.nhbs.com
	Beaumaris Bat Box		Available from: https://www.wildcare.co.uk
Maintenance	The models chosen do not require cleaning as bat droppings do not typically accumulate within these types of boxes to a level likely to cause problems for future habitation.		



PHOTOS

Photo 1.
Front (east)
elevation.



Photo 2.
Side (south)
elevation.



Photo 3.
Rear (west)
elevation.





Photo 4.
Tight-fitting
bargeboards.



Photo 5.
Roof verge and
pointing on rear
elevation.



Photo 6.
View of loft.





Photo 7.
View of removed
ceiling and loft area.

