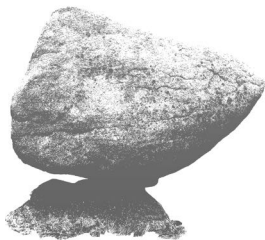


Preliminary Roost Assessment

Dilworth Cottage
Ward Green Lane
Longridge
PR3 2ZL

For
Ogden Design Consultants



Gritstone Ecology

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the report

The report is written by Stewart Bradshaw for Ogden Design Consultants. Stewart carried out a Preliminary Roost Assessment of Dilworth Cottage, Ward Green Lane, Longridge, on 4th December 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 the existing cottage, the construction of a replacement dwelling, and associated landscaping works. An existing workshop will not be affected by the works.

1.5. Site context

The site is located on the junction of Ward Green Lane, and The B6243 Lower Road, Longridge, Preston, PR3 2ZL, GR SD 62796 37734, approximately 2.5km east of Longridge centre. The house is in a rural area, and is surrounded by open farmland.

The site includes a traditional pre-1950's stone cottage, with a detached garage, gardens to the side and rear, and areas of hard landscaping.

Habitat within 50m of the house includes; mature trees, hedgerows, open pasture, and busy unlit roads.

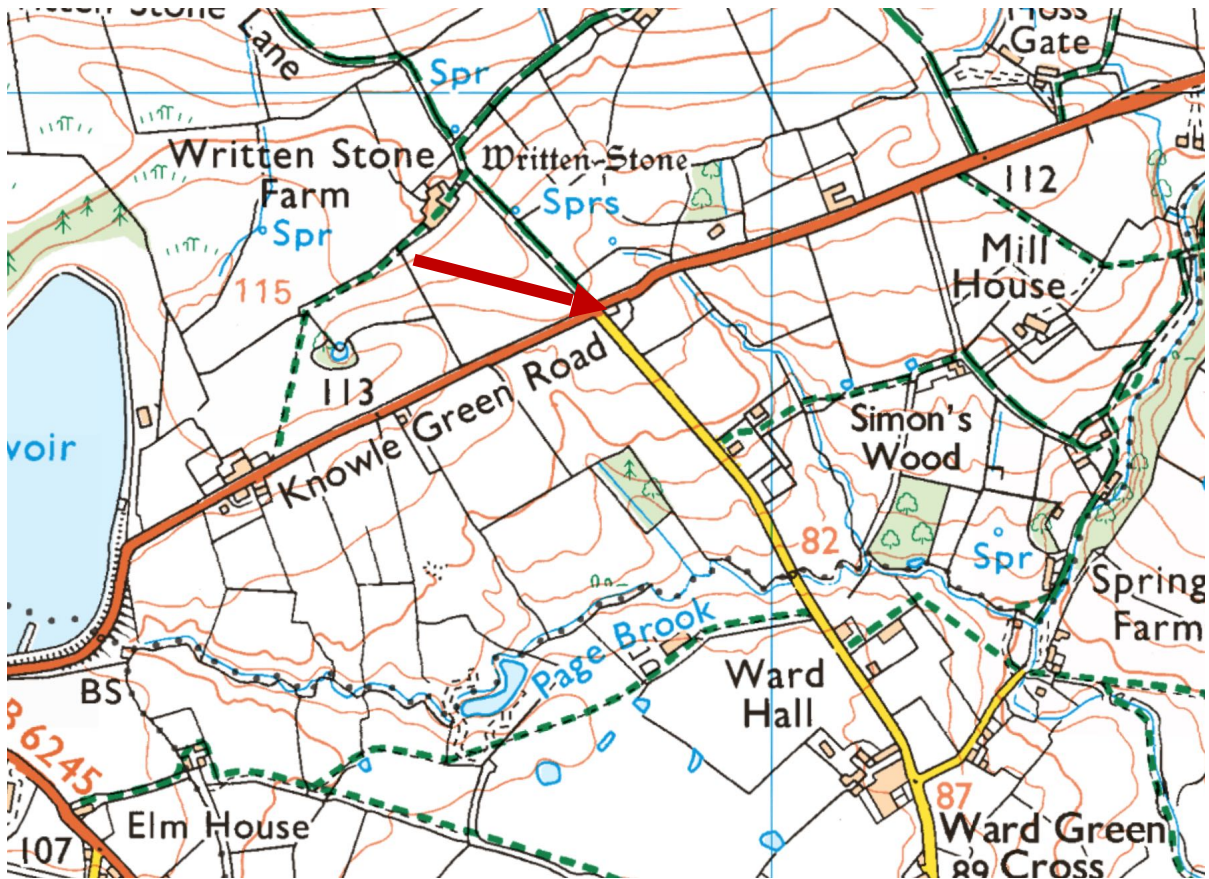
Habitat within 500m includes, open farmland, hedgerows, mature trees, small blocks of woodland, watercourses, ponds, busy unlit roads, houses, and agricultural buildings.

Trees, hedgerows, watercourses, and open farmland locally, potentially provide good quality foraging opportunities for bats in an area which is subject to little disturbance from light, noise, and human activity.

The site and surrounding area provide high quality foraging, commuting, and roosting opportunities for bats.



1.6. Site location



1.6a – Dilworth Cottage – site location.



1.6b – Dilworth Cottage – aerial photograph looking southeast across the site.



2. Methods

2.1. Survey timings

The building inspection was completed on 4th December 2024. Weather conditions during the survey were overcast, cold, and dry, with a temperature of 8°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

All accessible areas of the house were inspected in detail. The building inspection was completed in December, when bats are less active, and external signs of use, such as droppings, are less likely to be present.

The southern half of a loft void above a ground floor extension at the east gable end could not be inspected, as there is no access hatch. The northern half of the same loft void was accessed and inspected in detail.



3. Results

3.1. External inspection



3.1a – The front (southern aspect) of the house.

Dilworth Cottage, Longridge, is a pre-1950's traditional stone cottage, which is currently unoccupied, and has been empty for more than 12 months. It has a pitched roof, covered with slate roof tiles, and stone ridge tiles. A ground floor extension to the east gable has a single pitched roof covered with slate tiles. A store at the west gable, and pitch on the south wall have pitched roofs covered with slate tiles.

Roof pitches face north, south, east, and west. Lead flashing is fitted at the base of chimneys, and where roof tiles abut stonework. Timber fascia boards are fitted at the eaves, end tiles at the verges are filled with cement.

Walls are solid stone with no insulating cavity, window settings and sills are stone; window frames are UPVC, 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. In general the walls are in good condition, with no missing mortar or cracks. Although the store at the west gable has been damaged which has exposed the cavities in concrete blockwork.

However, there are a number of features which could be used by roosting bats including: gaps in cement beneath ridge tiles, gaps between fascia boards and stonework at the eaves, and exposed cavities at the damaged store at the west gable.

The features could give access to the small crevices between materials, or to the roof voids.



3.2. Internal inspection



3.2a – A section of the roof void.

The building has four separate roof voids. The roof void of the house is split into two equal sections by a stone dividing wall; both sections were inspected. The roof void of the ground floor extension at the east gable end is divided into two sections by a stone dividing wall. Only the northern section was inspected as there is no access into the southern section. The roof voids are only accessed for essential maintenance work, and were undisturbed prior to the inspection.

The roof has a timber rafter and purlin roof structure, lined with bitumen felt, and insulated with mineral wool between the ceiling joists. The roof lining is in good condition with no tears, or gaps. Timbers at the ridge, and the roof voids in general are filled with dusty cobwebs. Large numbers of mouse droppings were present in all roof voids.

The gaps between roofing materials, timbers, and stonework were inspected at the gables using an endoscope; the eaves could not be inspected as they are blocked by purlins. There are no gaps at the gables; and there are no obvious gaps which could give direct access to the roof void from the outside. The house has no cellar, and there are no other enclosed spaces which are suitable to be used by roosting bats.

3.3. Indications of use

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

3.4. Level of suitability

The building has a number of gaps which could be used by roosting bats, including gaps under ridge tiles, and behind fascia boards, and is in an area which presents high quality



habitat for bats. Taking into consideration the habitat surrounding the site, and the features present, the building has **moderate suitability** for use by roosting bats. Additionally, a section of the roof void could not be accessed or inspected.

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, mature trees, blocks of woodland, hedgerows, watercourses, and ponds locally provide good foraging opportunities for bats, in an area which is subject to little disturbance from light and noise.

Buildings immediately adjacent to good quality habitat are more likely to be used by roosting bats than those further away. The house has a number of features which could be used by roosting bats including; gaps beneath ridge tiles, and gaps behind fascia boards at the eaves. These are features which could be used by individual bats, or could give access to larger spaces such as roof voids.

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 void, even in lower numbers, some evidence of use would be likely to persist.

Walls are solid stone with no insulating cavity. In general the walls are in good condition, with no cracks, or missing mortar which could be used by crevice dwelling bats. However a damaged store at the west gable has exposed cavities, which could be used by roosting bats.

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

The small gaps between brickwork, roof timbers, and roofing materials, in the roof void 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.

Taking into account the habitat surrounding the site, and the features present, the building has the potential to be used by roosting bats and has **moderate suitability** for use.

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 demolition works would likely impact bats or bat roosts.

5. Impact assessment

The development proposals are for the demolition of the existing cottage, the construction of a replacement dwelling, and associated landscaping works. An existing workshop will not be affected by the works.

The building has a number of features which are potentially suitable to be used by roosting bats and has moderate suitability for use.

If bats are roosting in the building, the proposed works could kill or injure bats, and destroy a roosting place.

Once completed, the residential use of the site is unlikely to provide an increase in the level of disturbance for bats, and there should be no effect on flight lines, foraging, or commuting routes.

6. Required actions

The preliminary roost assessment has identified features which could be used by roosting bats, and the building has moderate suitability for use.

Bat emergence surveys are required during the active season for bats (May to September). The surveys are necessary to determine the presence or (likely) absence of bats in the building.

As the building has moderate suitability, two separate surveys are required. The surveys must be a minimum of three weeks apart. If bats are found roosting then a further survey will be necessary to determine the type of roost present.

If a bat roost is identified in the building, then a European Protected Species Licence issued by Natural England will be required prior to the start of the works.



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 (south side) the house.



2 – The north side of the house (the garage to the left will not be affected).





3 – Roof and ridge tiles are in good generally condition.



4 – There are gaps under ridge tiles at various points on the ridge.





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



6 – There are gaps between fascia boards and stonework at the eaves.





7 – Stonework and mortar is in generally good condition.



8 – A damaged store wall at the west gable has exposed the cavity in blockwork.





9 – The house has four separate roof voids.



10 – Roof lining is in good condition with no gaps or tears.





11 – Mouse droppings and runs were present in each of the roof voids inspected.



12 – Roof timbers are dusty and cobwebbed.

