Providing *ecology* support for *everyone*

Mr Peter Baker
Crow Trees Barn
Chatburn
Lancashire
BB7 4AA

8th September 2025

Dear Peter

Re: Application No. 3/2022/0834 proposed conversion of existing buildings to ancillary accommodation

Thank you for your request for an updated bat survey. I understand the survey is required to fulfil part of Planning Condition 6 as set out below:

The development hereby approved shall be caried out in strict accordance with the mitigation recommendations set out in the submitted Section 5 and Appendix 6 dated 28th May, 2022 in order to avoid, cancel or reduce negative effects of the development on protected species/roost/habitat. This mitigation includes, but is not exclusive of:

- *The requirement for a repeat survey if building works have not commenced by 1st June 2023, the findings of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority along with any additional mitigation measures identified as being required.*

1.0 Background and Qualifications

The Preliminary Survey and Assessment Report, dated 28th May 2002, produced by Echo Calls Bat Surveys (referred to in the condition above) was reviewed.

The 2025 surveys were carried out by Pat Waring and Janette Gazzard.

Pat is a licensed bat worker, registered consultant of the Bat Mitigation Class licence, 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 27 years, including over 20 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 Local Authorities and Lancashire Police Authority, 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 licensed bat worker (Class 2 licence) and a full member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Management.

Janette has over 21 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 Crow Trees Barn, a daytime inspection of the buildings and their surroundings and a single bat emergence survey were carried out on 31st August 2025.

Daytime inspection

External and internal observations were made from ground level, as well as from telescopic ladders, to examine potential roost features. A Ridgid CA300 endoscope was used to inspect deep wall cavities. Coast HP 10R 1000 lumens torches and close-focussing Zeiss Victory FL 8x42 binoculars were also used as aids to visibility.

Emergence survey

- At the start and end of the survey a range of environmental readings, including temperature, humidity and wind speed, were taken using a Kestrel Weather Meter.

- The survey started 30 minutes prior to sunset and continued until 90 minutes after sunset.

- Bat detectors used during surveys were as follows:
  - 1x Anabat Scout – Real time full spectrum
  - 1 x Elekon Batlogger – Real time full spectrum

- Bat echolocation was recorded onto the internal devices on both detectors during the surveys.

- 2 x Canon XF-100 and Sony HDR-XR 520VE camcorders (set on 0 lux Nightshot), with two IRlight6 infra-red illuminators, were focussed on potential roost features throughout the emergence survey to assist with observations.

- During the emergence survey, observers were positioned so that they could clearly see potential roost features. The number of surveyors, the equipment used and their survey locations ensured that there was sufficient coverage of the buildings during the survey.

The survey was compliant with the current best practice guidance, as detailed in:

- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-978-1-7395126-0-6.

- Interim Guidance Note: *Use of night vision aids for bat emergence surveys and further comment on dawn surveys*. Bat Conservation Trust, May 2024.

2.1 Limitations

It is recognised that limiting the surveys to a single visit in August does not take account of bat activity on the site through the whole of 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.

Not all of the roof coverings could be examined in detail due to the height of the buildings and the associated measures required for a safe inspection. However, roof coverings were visible through binoculars (daytime and early evening) at ground level, and this enabled an assessment to be made in relation to potential external roosting areas for bats.

It is recognised that the echolocation used by some bats is very quiet and difficult to detect; species such as brown long eared bat may have been present without registering on the bat detectors used during the emergence surveys.

3.0 Results of the Survey

Based on the descriptions and images within the 2022 report, the survey structures remain in similar use (storage) and overall comprise the same structure and appearance.

There are three discrete units (B1, B2, B3) forming a collection of adjoining outbuildings set within an L shaped footprint. All the buildings are constructed of stone walls with unlined, slate roof coverings. There are a small number internal and external deep wall cavities present in all of the buildings. These cavities were inspected with an endoscope during the survey and no bats or signs of use by bats was found.

Roof coverings associated with Buildings 2 and 3 are in a poor state of repair, with large gaps present due to missing, slipped and broken slates. The roof coverings on Building 1 are however more intact and a small number of suitable gaps are present associated with roof and along the roof verges. There are no roof voids in any of the buildings and all the buildings are unheated, light and draughty, with Building 3 (the smallest unit, south corner) being the most exposed due to missing doors.

Since 2022 the most apparent change is as a result of an adjacent development of land and buildings to the immediate south and east. Part of the scaffolding associated with the adjacent development currently lies above the roof coverings on the eastern end of Building 2 and construction activities are taking place immediately adjacent to the survey buildings including land clearance, dismantling and rebuilding works.

Habitats and surroundings

The buildings lie within a private garden with hardstanding driveway, mature garden planting including mature trees and shrubs and a large area of mown grass. All of the buildings are in daily use, and in combination with the activities associated with the adjacent development are subject to frequent levels of disturbance including natural and artificial light incursion, draughts, noise and vibrations.

The levels of artificial lighting are high on the along the north elevations based on external lighting observed during the emergence survey. There was no artificial light spillage to the rear (south elevation).

The property is located within a rural landscape, to the south west of the village of Chatburn. The close and wider surroundings comprise other dwelling house, established gardens, small agricultural fields with hedgerows and small woodlands.

The immediate and close surroundings provide at high potential sheltering and foraging resources to local bat and bird populations.

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 unsuitable for use by night roosting bats

Day roosting
Low potential – Roof coverings and wall cavities

Hibernation roosting
Low potential – wall cavities

Emergence survey

The weather during the survey was as follows:

Date (2025)	Temperature ^{0}C (start/end)	Humidity % (start/end)	Cloud cover % (start/end)	Rain	Wind mph (start/end)
31/8/2025	17.5/15.3	54.0/59.3	0/20	None	2.8/3.1

Table 1 – weather during survey

No bats emerged from the buildings during the survey.

Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bat activity was detected from 30 minutes after sunset. Pipistrelle bat species were recorded foraging in the vicinity of the buildings to the south throughout the remainder of the survey.

Nesting birds

No bird nests or signs of birds nesting were found during the survey.

There is high potential for nesting birds to utilise the building and garden vegetation in close proximity during the nesting season (February to September).

4.0 Advice and Recommendations

4.1 Bats

Protected Species	Impacts, Issues & Rationale	Action Required
Bats	There are no predicted impacts to roosting bats as a result of the proposed development. Bats will forage over the survey area and the adjacent landscape during their active season. All bat species are afforded full protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)	**Recommendation(mitigation):** Any new external lighting associated within the proposed development should be designed to reduce light spill upwards and where possible there should be no light spill onto vegetation in close proximity. This will help to avoid any impacts on bat activity, including foraging and bat flyways. **During and Post development.** **Recommendation(enhancement):** Suitable bat roosting features e.g. integral bat boxes or external bat boxes such a Kent Box, Vincent Pro or Schwegler 2F should be installed on or within external walls of the completed building. Further information on bat boxes is available on the BCT website External ready-made & integrated bat boxes - Bat Boxes - Bat Conservation Trust (bats.org.uk) **Post development**

Table 1 Bats

4.2 Nesting birds

Protected species	Impacts, Issues & Rationale	Action Required
Nesting birds	<u>There are potential impacts</u> (disturbance, damage and destruction) to nesting birds, nests and eggs as a result of the development. It is advised that there is high potential for birds to be nesting in the building and garden vegetation during the bird nesting season (February to September). 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. 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. 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.	**Advice (mitigation):** It is advised that the most appropriate way to address the risk to nesting birds is: Avoid disturbance to the building and vegetation in close proximity during the nesting season. Or If works cannot be delayed the proposed work area and its close surroundings 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).** **Advice (mitigation):** 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.**

Protected species	Impacts /Predicted Impacts	Action Required
Nesting birds Continued		**Advice (mitigation):** 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.** **Recommendation (mitigation and enhancement):** Suitable bird nesting features e.g. house sparrow terrace boxes should be installed in or on external walls of the converted building. In addition, the adjacent canopy area adjoining the east gable could incorporate swallow nest cups Swallows nest cup - terracotta - Garden bird nest boxes (rspb.org.uk). This will help to maintain and enhance opportunities for local bird populations. **Post development.**

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 a risk of protected species (i.e. bats and nesting birds) being present, but further investigative surveys are not required prior to development works.

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
Tel: 07842 694 618

Image showing View of front (north and east) elevations of survey building. B3 is lean-to, lower section to the rear. Note presence of scaffold and Heras fencing from the adjacent development.

Image showing rear (south) elevation of survey buildings.

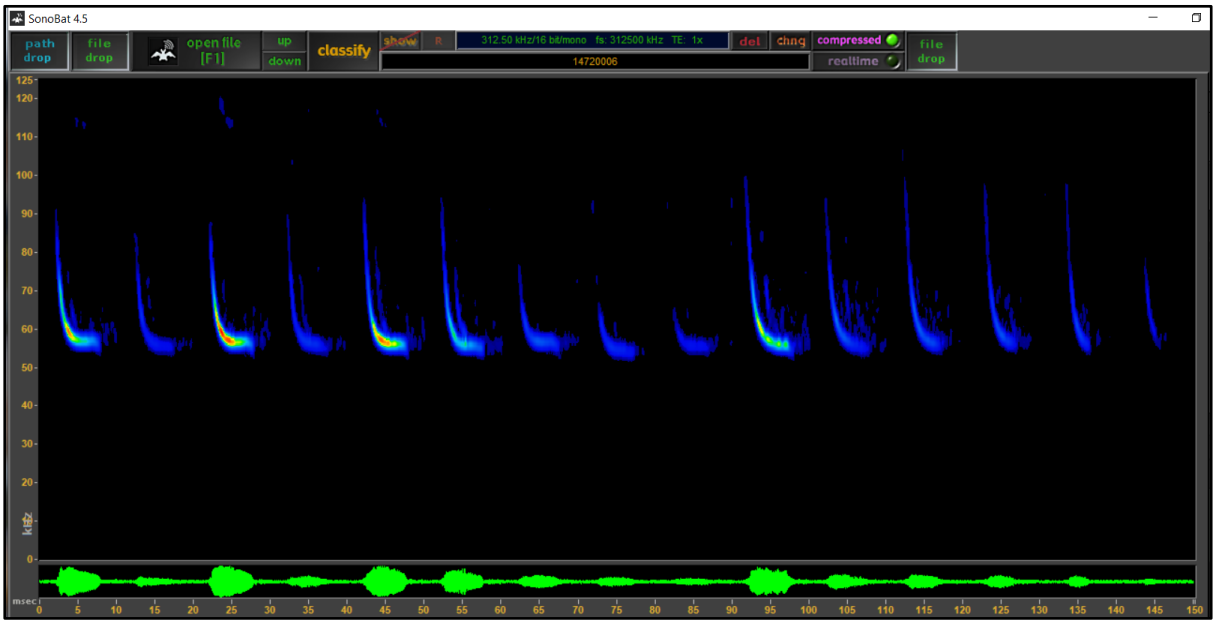
Image showing side (west elevation) of survey buildings.

Example of intact roof underside with roof lights. This example is typical of roof underside in all of the buildings. Lack of roof liner in this type of building reduces the likelihood of use by day roosting and hibernating bats.

Example of external wall cavity.

Image of deep wall cavity taken using endoscope– no evidence of use by bats.

Infrared image taken on camera during emergence survey showing roof verge and roof covering of Building 2.



Sonogram of soprano pipistrelle bat activity recorded during the survey. Bat was flying through the survey site (not emerging from the buildings).