Providing *ecology* support for *everyone*

Mr Philip Austin
Facilities Director
Stonyhurst College
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 9PZ

19th June 2025

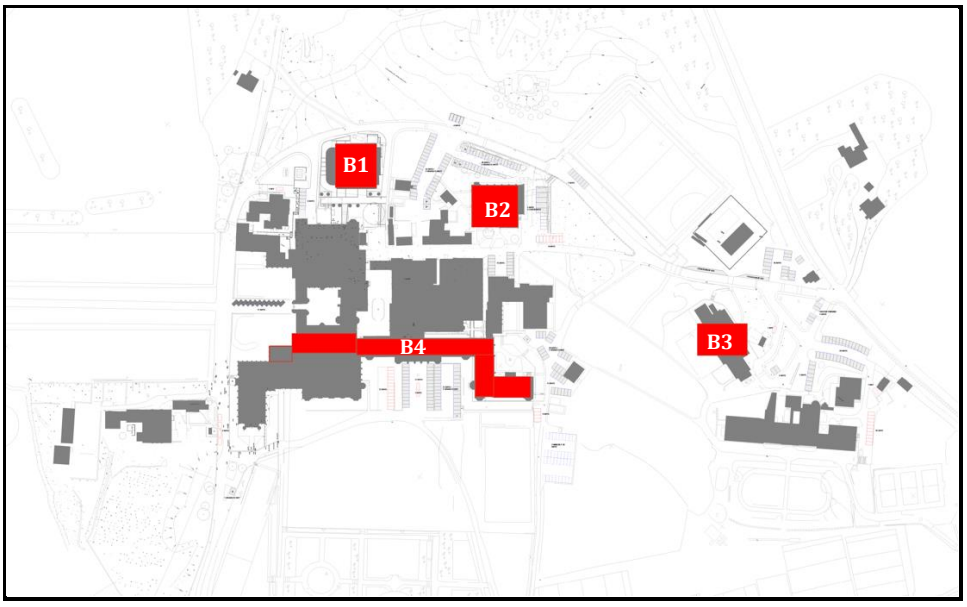
Dear Philip

Proposed solar installation at Stonyhurst College, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 9PZ

Thank you for your request for a bat and bird survey relating to proposed solar installation at the above site.

We understand the proposed work will involve the installation of external mounted solar panels to the roof areas of four separate buildings, as illustrated on the plan and listed below:

- Building 1: New Refectory
- Building 2: Sports Centre
- Building 3: St Marys Hall Sports Hall
- Building 4: South Fronts (including West Wing)



Plan of proposed location of solar panels at Stonyhurst

www.ecologyservice.co.uk
Ecology Services UK Limited
Chipping | Lancashire | PR3 2GH
T 01995 61492 E info@ecologyservice.co.uk
Registered in England and Wales no. 5329675

2.0 Personnel and Qualifications

The daytime survey and assessment were carried out by Pat Waring and Janette Gazzard.

Pat is a licensed bat worker (Class 2 licence), registered consultant of the Bat Mitigation Class Licence, 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 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 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 trees, including the requirements and condition necessary for bat roosting. He also has recognised skills relating to bat surveys and assessment. Pat has undertaken several bat surveys of buildings and trees at Stonyhurst College since 2014.

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 ecology work, including tree surveys, assessments and judgements of value in relation to bats, as well as selection and monitoring of mitigation features. Janette has undertaken several bat surveys of buildings and trees at Stonyhurst College since 2014.

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 regard currency and its impacts on decision making are included in relevant sections below.

2.0 Methodology

In order to assess the likelihood of bats and bat roosts being present at the proposed work areas a daytime inspection of the buildings and their surroundings was carried out on 30th May 2025.

Internal and external observations were made from the ground and roof top level as well as from roof top vantage points. A Ridgid CA300 endoscope was available but not required on the day. 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.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-978-1-7395126-0-6

2.1 Limitations

It is recognised that limiting the survey to a single visit in May 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.

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 not closely inspected were visible through binoculars and this enabled an assessment to be made in relation to potential external roosting areas for bats.

3.0 Results of the Survey

Building 1 –New Refectory comprises a flat metal sheet roof on steel roof supports, with lower-level flat roof sections on the north and south elevations covered with a sealed membrane. There are no roof voids and no suitable features for use by roosting bats.

Building 2 –Main Sports Centre comprises a shallow pitched metal sheet roof with stone parapet gables and steel roof supports. There are no roof voids and no suitable features for use by roosting bats.

Building 3 - *St Marys Hall Sports Hall* comprises a shallow pitched metal sheet roof on steel roof supports and roof lights. There are no roof voids and no suitable features for use by roosting bats.

Building 4- South Fronts (including West Wing) comprises a flat roof covered with a bitumastic membrane roof liner and lead flashing trim along the base. There are stone chimneys, air conditioning units and heavy-duty cable trays present on the roof top. There are no roof voids, and apart from a lift chimney cap stone on one of the chimneys, all other features and structures are sealed tight with no suitable features for use by roosting bats. The gap associated with the lifted chimney cap stone was too large and open for use by bats but does provide potential shelter for use by nesting birds.

Bats

No bats or evidence of bats was found associated with the proposed work areas during the daytime inspection.

Potential roosting features for bats are:

Night roosting
Negligible potential – the proposed work areas are not suitable for use by night roosting bats

Day roosting
Negligible potential – the proposed work areas are not suitable for use by day roosting bats

Hibernation roosting
Negligible potential – the proposed work areas are not suitable for use by hibernating bats

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; there is insufficient potential to support the need for any further investigation.

Nesting birds

A well-known, established kestrel nest site is present within one of the towers on South Fronts (Building 4). Although no kestrel activity or recent signs of nesting was found during the survey, the tower structures have high potential for use by bird species including Kestrels throughout the year.

Two active dunnock nests were observed within maintained ground level shrubs on the south west corner of the New Refectory building (Building 1).

There is high potential for nesting birds to be present within mature trees, shrubs and woodland habitat in close proximity to Buildings 1, 2 and 3 during the nesting season (February to September).

There is high potential for nesting birds to utilise building features such as the towers, ledges and cavities (e.g. lifted chimney cap stone) during the nesting season (February to September) on Building 4.

4.0 Advice and recommendations

4.1 Bats

Species	Impacts, Issues & Rationale	Action
Bats	There are no predicted impacts to roosting bats as a result of the proposed solar installation. Bats will forage over the survey areas 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).	**Advice:** No action required **Recommendation(mitigation):** If any new lighting is to form part of the proposed development this should be designed to reduce light spill upwards and there should be no light spill onto any vegetation present within close proximity. This will help to avoid any impacts on bat activity, including foraging and commuting. **During and Post development.**

Table 1. Bats – Impacts and Issues

4.2 Nesting birds

Species	Impacts, Issues & Rationale	Action
Nesting birds	There <u>are predicted</u> impacts (disturbance, damage and destruction) to nesting birds, nests and eggs as a result of the development. There is high potential for a range of nesting bird species to be present and/or nesting 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.	**Advice (protection & mitigation):** It is advised that a glint and glare assessment should be undertaken to ensure potential impacts on nesting birds are addressed. For example, bird such as kestrels may be prevented from nesting at the towers and/or disturbed as a result of solar glare. **Prior to any work commencing.** **Advice (mitigation):** All people working at the proposed development site should be made aware of the likelihood of encountering nesting birds and should be made aware of the legal protection of nesting birds and their own responsibilities as regards implementation of precautionary measures. **Prior to any work commencing.** **Advice (mitigation):** It is advised that the most appropriate way to address the risk to nesting birds is: • Avoid working on Building 4 and/or in close proximity to vegetation around Building 1, 2 and 3 during the nesting season Or • If works cannot take place outside the nesting season, the following measures should be adopted: • All people working at the site should attend a tool box talk by an ecologist

Species	Impacts, Issues & Rationale	Action
Nesting birds continued		• All areas for removal/disturbance should be carefully checked by an ecologist, immediately prior to works commencing. • 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 nesting birds are found at the proposed development site, or close enough to cause unlawful activities as a result development works, it will be necessary to delay works or seek advice as to whether or not any development can proceed lawfully at that time. Under these circumstances, work must stop until advice has been sought from an appropriately experienced Ecologist. **Prior to any work commencing (checks) and throughout works in nesting season (monitoring)**

Table 2. Nesting birds – Impacts and Issues

Compliance with the actions outlined in the Table 2 will help to avoid committing offences in relation to 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. nesting birds) being present, but further investigative surveys are not required prior to development works.

For this site, it is recommended that if proposed works are not undertaken before April 2026, 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
Tel: 07842 694 618

Image showing (external) roof covering of Building 1

Image showing (internal) roof underside of Building 1

Image showing (external) roof covering of Building 2 (yellow arrow) and its context, with other buildings and vegetation in close proximity

Image showing (internal) roof underside of Building 2

Image showing external view of Building 3 red arrow) with mature trees and vegetation behind and in close proximity

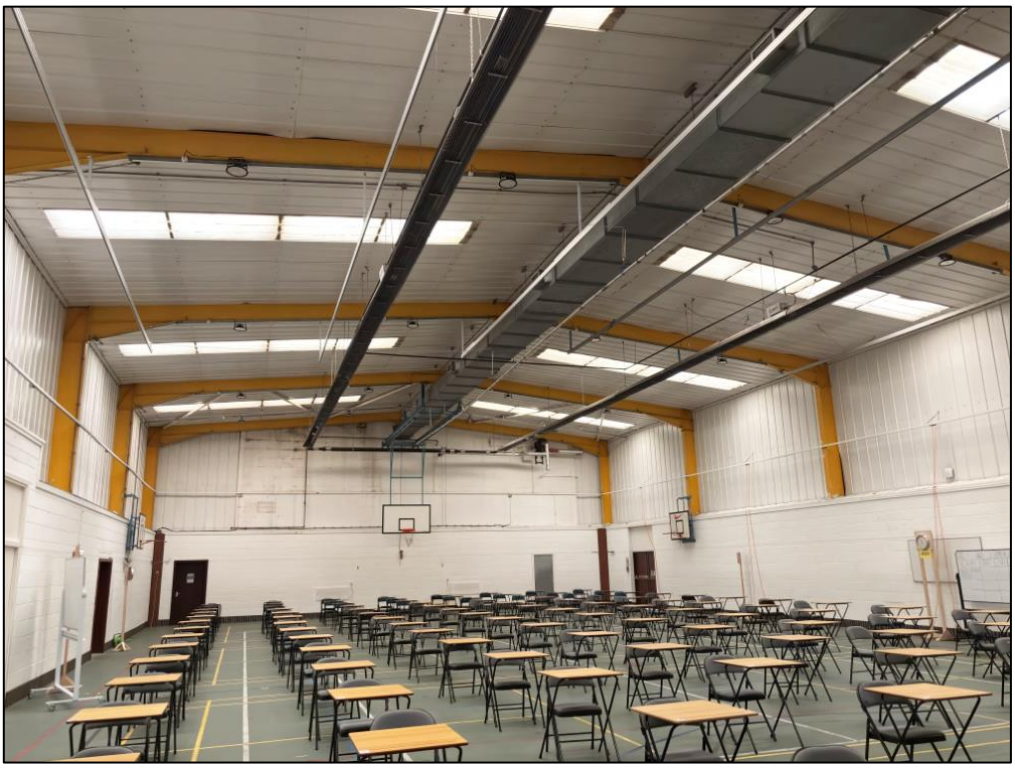


Image showing (internal) roof underside of Building 3

Ground level image of Building 4 showing Towers, known nest site for kestrels

Image of roof top showing sealed liner and stone chimney stacks on Building 4

Image showing example of ledge features below roof top (proposed work area). These ledges have potential for use by birds during the bird nesting season (February to September)