Providing *ecology* support for *everyone*

Mr Oliver Nuttall
Wilpshire Lane Cottage
Vicarage Lane
Wilpshire
Blackburn
BB1 9HY

11th November 2025

Dear Mr Nuttall

Re: Bat survey at Wilpshire Lane Cottage, Vicarage Lane, Wilpshire, BS9 1HN

Thank you for your request for a bat survey at the above site.

We understand that this survey has been requested to inform a planning application for a double storey extension to the west elevation of an existing dwelling house.

We understand that:

- The proposed extension roof abuts the existing gable wall.
- On the south elevation the new roof will be below the existing roof by 250mm.
- The new roof on the north elevation will directly abut the existing slate roof covering.
- There is sufficient overhang on the existing slates to create a weatherproof lap without removing the existing roof covering.

1.0 Background and Qualifications

The survey was 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 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 is a licensed bat worker, a full member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Management

Janette has over 20 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, 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.

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 Wilpshire Lane Cottage, a daytime inspection of the building and its surroundings was carried out on 29th October 2025.

Observations were made from ground level, as well as from telescopic ladders. 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 October 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, can change over time. Ecology surveys are therefore always time-limited in their currency.

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

There is no accessible roof void as all the first-floor rooms are vaulted and internally sealed. A small narrow roof void remains along the length of the ridge but this area could not be inspected due to the lack of an access hatch.

3.0 Results of the Survey

Wilpshire Lane Cottage is a detached two-storey dwelling house with adjoining single storey extension to the east. The walls are constructed of stone, in a good state of repair with no gaps. There are two dual pitched roof sections covered with slate and a stone chimney with lead flashing to the west. The chimney and associated lead flashing are well sealed with no visible gaps. The roof coverings, although in good condition, do support a range of small gaps between the slates, at the ridge, along the roof verge and at the apex of the east gable. In addition, wall top gaps are also present along the north and south elevations of the main house. All of these features, in this type of building in this landscape setting have potential for use by roosting bats as well as nesting birds.

Internally, the first-floor rooms are vaulted and there is no accessible roof void. The single storey extension is fully vaulted with Velux windows and no roof void present. A small, shallow roof void remains enclosed along the length of the ridge on the main house. Small sections of bitumastic hessian roof liner are visible roof edge gaps, confirming that at least part of the roof is underlined with bitumastic hessian roof liner. This type of feature (enclosed dark space with slate roof and bitumastic liner), in this landscape setting has potential for use by roosting bats.

Habitats and surroundings

Wilpshire Lane Cottage is located in a rural area to the north of the village of Wilpshire. The immediate surroundings comprise gravel and hardstanding driveway and patio areas, a well-maintained garden with mown lawn and mature border planting of trees and shrubs.

The close and wider surroundings include a low-density dwelling houses with gardens, mature trees and tree belts associated with an adjacent railway line. A substantial part of the landscape comprises open green space and farm fields with areas of permanent grass, hedgerows and trees.

Overall, the immediate, close and wider landscape provide high potential shelter and foraging resources for bats as well as high potential shelter and foraging for birds.

The levels of artificial lighting are expected to be low based on low density housing and lack of street lighting.

Bats

No bats or evidence of bats was found during the daytime inspection.

Potential roosting features for bats are:

Night roosting
Negligible potential –There are no suitable features for use by night roosting bats.

Day roosting
Low potential – roof coverings and wall tops.

Hibernation roosting
Low potential – roof coverings and wall tops.

The assessment above reflects the condition of the features and their environment. It is the professional judgement of Ecology Services UK Ltd that <u>if all impacts to the existing roof coverings, as well as north and south elevation wall tops can be avoided then no further surveys are warranted at this time.</u>

Impacts include scaffold placement and use, covering of existing roof slates, as well as removal, lifting and replacements of existing roof slates.

Nesting birds

Bird droppings were found at the wall top on the north elevation.

There is high potential for nesting birds to utilise the building, during the nesting season (February to September).

There is high potential for nesting birds to utilise garden vegetation as well as the mature trees in close proximity to the western boundary and proposed work area 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 known impacts to bats or bat roosts as a result of the proposed works. It is advised that there are potential roost features suitable for bats associated with gaps beneath roof coverings and gaps at wall tops. In this location and landscape setting, these features have at low potential for bats to use throughout the bat active season (April to October). Based on the information provided there are no predicted impacts to potential roost features i.e. existing gaps beneath roof coverings and at the wall tops.	**Advice (surveys):** It is understood that no works or disturbance to the existing roof are required as part of the proposed development. **At all times** If any work to the existing roof coverings and/or roof structure is required, further advice should be sought from a suitably qualified Ecologist at that time. **At all times** If any work to the existing roof coverings and/or roof structure is required a minimum of 1 bat emergence/re-entry survey during the bat active season (May to September) will be necessary to comply with the current best practice guidance, as detailed in Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition).* **Prior to works affecting the existing roof.** **Advice (mitigation):** All personnel involved in proposed works should be carefully advised about bats, by a suitably experienced Ecologist, so that all works.

Protected Species	Impacts, Issues & Rationale	Action Required
	Bats will forage over the survey area and the adjacent landscape during their active season. All bat species and bat roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).	are undertaken with a clear understanding about legal aspects, precautions to be adopted and what to do if a bat is found. **Prior to development.** **Advice (mitigation):** If bats are found at any time during the development, work must stop until advice has been sought from an appropriately experienced Ecologist. If the work affects bats, a licence may be required and suitable mitigation put in place. **At all times.** **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

4.2 Nesting birds

Protected species	Impacts, Issues & Rationale	Action Required
Nesting birds	There are no known impacts (disturbance, damage and destruction) to nesting birds, nests and eggs as a result of the proposed works. It is advised that there is high potential for birds to be nesting within the building and vegetation in close proximity 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 disturbing works on or close to the building during the nesting season. Or If works cannot be delayed, the proposed work area and predicted impact zone 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.** **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.**

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.

For this site, it is recommended that if proposed works are not undertaken before May 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

[redacted]

Janette Gazzard MCIEEM
Senior Ecologist
Ecology Services UK Ltd
Tel: [redacted]

Image of Wilpshire Lane Cottage, south (front) elevation of two storey detached, main house

Image of Wilpshire Lane Cottage, east (side) and north (front) elevations of two storey main house and single storey extension

Image of east gable, verge is mortared and sealed but single gap present at the apex

Image of west gable showing chimney, ridge and roof coverings. Roof verge and apex sealed but suitable gaps are present in roof coverings and along adjacent ridge

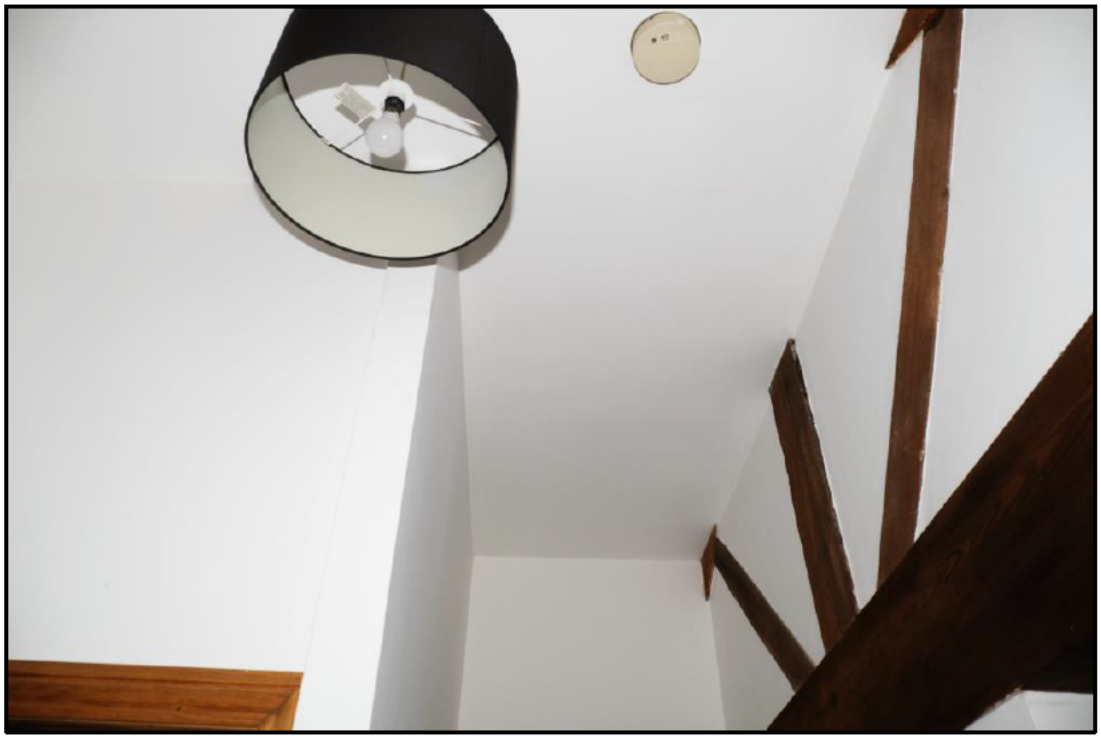

Image showing vaulted ceiling in first floor stairwell.

Image showing bird droppings below wall top gap north elevation. Wall top gaps have potential for use by bats.

Image of Wilpshire Lane Cottage and garden setting, showing close proximity of mature trees and established garden vegetation with potential to support nesting birds.