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Mr Peter Sayle

77 Hacking Drive
Longridge
Preston
PR3 3EP

23 April 2013

Job ref: B 1301

Dear Mr Sayle

Re: Protected Species Survey: 77 Hacking Drive, Longridge, Preston, PR3 3EP

Introduction

You have requested a protected species survey as a condition of a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council for proposed building alterations at the above property.

The Local Planning Authority must take account of the impact of a development on protected species in accordance with PPS9. The planning authority requires an appraisal of the likely impact of the proposed development on all bat species that are present or likely to be present at the property, in addition to any mitigation, compensation or enhancement proposals that may be required.

A daylight scoping survey was undertaken on Friday 19 April 2013 between 10.00 and 10.45. The weather at the time of the survey was mild, dry and overcast (maximum temperature: 11°C, cloud cover: 90% high cloud, wind: calm, rain: nil) providing satisfactory conditions for a scoping survey.

Survey methodology

The survey includes both internal and external inspections of the property; the existing building is shown in figures 1 to 6 of this report. The location of the proposed works is shown in figure 1 within the red broken line.

The survey methodology follows the recommended guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust - *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd Edition, Hundt, L (2012)*), Natural England (*Survey Objectives, Methods and Standards as outlined in the Bat Mitigation Guidelines, 2004*) and Chapter 3 - Survey and Monitoring Methods, (*Bat Worker's Manual, JNCC, Mitchell-Jones AJ and McLeish, AP, 3rd Edition 2004*).

The aim of the scoping exercise is to consider the potential value of the site for European Protected Species (EPS) and to establish whether bats and other protected species have been active within any part of the property that will be affected by the proposed development.

Non-invasive survey methods were used to assess the use of the property by protected species (bats).

The search was made using a high-powered lamp (Clu-lite CB2 - 1,000,000 candle power), close-focussing binoculars (Leica Trinovid) and digital camera (Kodak MD41) were used to view all likely areas of the building for the presence of bats, ie. droppings and urine spots, bat corpses, roost staining or evidence of feeding remains such as discarded moth and butterfly wings and other insects fragments typically found in a perching and feeding area. Extension ladders and 900mm flexible endoscope were also available if required.

The survey methodology is designed to determine the likely presence of bats within the property and does not necessarily prove absence. All internal and external features that are likely to be affected by the proposed building alterations were included in the survey, these include visual inspections of the main roof void, external fascia soffits, roof verges, ridge tiles, lead work, brick work, windows, sills, doors and frames.

Survey limitations / constraints

Crevice-roosting bat species are able to roost within very narrow gaps usually less than 25mm wide; solitary bats are sometimes overlooked during daylight inspections, particularly in situations where they conceal themselves inside cavity walls or beneath wall cladding, fascia boards, soffits and roofing materials.

The survey is outwith the main activity period for bats (May to September); evening emergence / dawn swarming / acoustic bat surveys have not been undertaken at this property.

Evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings or staining on external walls and surfaces is frequently removed by the action of wind and rain; absence of evidence is therefore evaluated with caution.

Personnel

The survey was carried out by David Fisher (EED) - an experienced ecological consultant with more than 25 years experience of bat ecology and field survey work and a Natural England licence holder since 1989.

Natural England licence No: 20122876 (August 2012), Conservation, Science and Education.

Pre-survey data search (10km-grid square: SD 53)

The desk-top study includes information on:

- (1) European Protected Species (EPS) – ie. locally significant bat roosts or species records within the district.
- (2) Locally, regionally or nationally important wildlife and conservation areas and site designations.
- (3) EPS surveys previously carried at the property or at neighbouring properties.
- (4) National Biodiversity Network (NBN) terrestrial mammal records (chiroptera) for the 10km grid square.
- (5) Local bat records within a radius of 2.5km of the site.

The NBN database has identified the following four species present within the 10km recording square SD53:

Whiskered bat	(<i>M. mystacinus</i>)
Brown long-eared bat	(<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)
Common pipistrelle	(<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)
Soprano pipistrelle	(<i>P. pygmaeus</i>)

Pre-existing information (survey location NGR: SD 598 363)

The nearest records* of bat roosting / flight activity are at:

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (1) Chapel Hill, Longridge | (SD 604 365) – common pipistrelle |
| (2) Alston Reservoirs | (SD 604 364) – common pipistrelle |
| (3) New Town, Longridge | (SD 604 366) – common pipistrelle |
| (4) Lower Lane, Longridge | (SD 608 369) - pipistrelle species |
| (5) Hacking Drive, Longridge | (SD 598 363) - pipistrelle species |

*EED / ELBG (2000 – 2013)

There is no known history of roosting bats at this property.

Limitations of the data search

National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and East Lancashire Bat Group (ELBG) database records, whilst indicative of the bat species likely to occur within a 10km-grid square, do not confirm presence or absence of a species or habitat.

Description of the property

The property is a modern semi-detached two storey house (built mid-1990's) with brick and block work cavity wall construction and duo-pitched tiled roof. There is a single storey rear extension with mono-pitch tiled roof and velux-style windows (figure 2) in addition to an adjoining single storey side porch with duo-pitched tiled roof built approximately 4 years ago (figure 3).

The timber-trussed main roof is lined with bitumastic felt and the roof void insulated with a glass fibre material covering the first floor ceiling joists (figures 5 and 6). The void is dark, dry, clean and well-ventilated and the area boarded for access and storage.

Externally, the house is well-maintained and all roof areas appear to be secure. The roofs have PVC verge tiles and fascia soffits and are mostly secure although one small gap at the apex of the side entrance porch currently has a pair of nesting birds. All remaining soffits are well-sealed and there is no evidence of access by bats. Two ventilation tiles along the ridge (fig. 1) are sealed with mesh to prevent access by birds or bats.

All windows and doors are sealed D/G units and there are no gaps around frames or sills.



Figure 1: front elevation



Figure 2: rear elevation



Figure 3: side elevation



Figure 4: side elevation

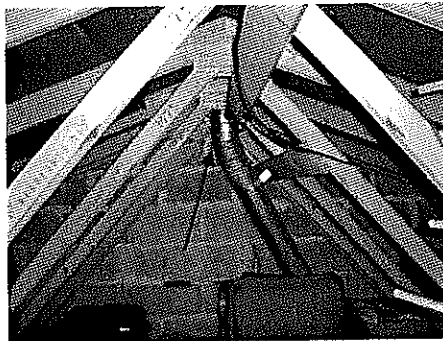


Figure 5: main roof void



Figure 6: roof void

Location of the property (NGR: SD 598 363: elevation: 90m; close to south-western edge of Longridge).

The property is situated in an urban / sub-urban location within a well-established residential area and close to other properties of similar age, design and construction. The house is not adjacent to open ground, woodland or water channel although there is open countryside within 200m to the south of the site.

The location is sub-optimal in terms of feeding, foraging and commuting habitat for bats; the site is not adjacent to a woodland or plantation and there are no extensive woodlands within 500m of the site. There are no river channels, riparian woodlands or significant area of standing open water nearby.

A local data search has shown there are no designated nature conservation sites adjacent to the property – ie. Special areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Biological Heritage Sites (BHS), National Nature Reserves (NNR's), Local Nature Reserves (LNR's) or Regionally Important Geological and Geo-morphological Sites (RIGS).

Proposed works

It is understood the proposed two storey side extension (located by red broken line in figure 1) will require removal of the existing duo-pitch tiled roof on the single storey side porch in addition to removal of two lean-to tiled roofs on the side elevation above a door and a window (figure 1).

Survey results

There are several small mammal droppings (approximately 6) on the block work (party) wall within the roof void, immediately below the apex (as located by arrow in figure 5); the droppings are likely to be those of a pipistrelle bat (DNA analysis has not been undertaken). Additionally, two bat droppings were present close to the roof apex on the external gable wall.

There are no accumulations of droppings or signs that roosting bats are currently present.

There is no evidence of bat droppings on any external feature and there are no signs of roosting, feeding or access by bats to the property.

Coal tits (*Periparus ater*) were nesting in the apex roof of the side entrance porch at the time of the survey, birds are gaining access through a 25mm gap between the fascia boards.

Evaluation of results

The presence of a small number of bat droppings close to both apex walls is indicative of irregular / occasional access by solitary bats (probably gaining access beneath the ridge tiles). Bats are highly mobile and opportunistic; individuals frequently access roofs in modern house roofs where a roofing felt is present.

Significantly there is no evidence of regular or significant roosting, perching, feeding or flight within any part of the property and there is no evidence of a day roost, maternity roost, mating roost or place of hibernation.

It is unlikely that roosting bats will be disturbed or exposed during the proposed building alterations.

Timing constraints are not required at this site.

The overall scale of impact of this development on local bat populations is likely to be negligible.

Main recommendations

It is recommended the proposed works proceed with reasonable caution and vigilance for the 'unexpected' presence of solitary roosting bat, although the risk of disturbing / exposing bats at this site is likely to be low.

Further protected species surveys including dusk emergence, dawn re-entry and acoustic activity surveys are not required at this property.

SUMMARY

The proposed building alterations are **unlikely to cause disturbance to bats** or result in the loss of a bat roost or cause injury or death of a European Protected Species – (Bats) or result in any significant impact on a local bat population.

The scale of impact of the development at site level on local bat populations is likely to be negligible.

An EPS development licence is **not required**.

Nesting wild birds are present in the apex of the side entrance porch; nesting birds must not be disturbed during the proposed roofing work. (The nesting season is defined as the period between April and July).

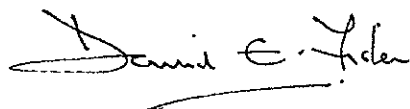
Appropriate mitigation guidance

Mitigation refers to the practices adopted to reduce or remove the risk of disturbance, injury or death of a protected species or damage to a roost. The Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Natural England, 2004) define mitigation as "...measures to protect the bat population from damaging activities and reduce or remove the impact of development".

ACTION	METHOD / NOTES
1. Further survey effort	No required
2. Timing constraints	Not required
3. EPS Licence requirement	Not required
4. Removal of roofing materials	Awareness at all times; very occasionally, solitary roosting bats are disturbed or exposed beneath some roof materials such as roofing tiles, bitumen felts, fascia boards and soffits.
5. Accidental exposure of bats	In the event of bats being exposed or vulnerable to harm, all work in that area must stop immediately. Cover the exposed bats to reduce further risk of harm and seek further advice.
6. Legal protection	Site contractors and project managers should be fully aware of the legal protection afforded all species of bat in the UK and procedures should be in place to mitigate for the potential impact on bats - see notes on 'Bats and the Law' in this report.
7. Emergency advice on bats	If you require specific advice on injured or exposed bats during the building works please contact David Fisher immediately on 01200 446859 (office) or 07709 225783 (mobile).
8. General advice on bats:	If you require further information on bats refer to the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) website. Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) also provides a bat helpline number: 0845 1300 228
9. Nesting wild birds	All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence (with certain exceptions) to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.

Please note: I do not provide a copy of this report to the local planning authority, therefore it is your responsibility to forward the report to Ribble Valley District Council with the planning application.

Yours sincerely



David Fisher

Wildlife legislation – Bats and the law

All bat species in the UK receive full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended by the Environment Protection Act 1990). The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the Wildlife and Countryside Act to also make it an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct a place that bats use for shelter or protection. All species of bats are listed on Schedule 5 of the 1981 Act, which makes it an offence to:

- *intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bat.*
- *intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection. This is taken to mean all bat roosts whether bats are present or not.*
- *intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.*

The protected status afforded to bats means planning authorities may require extra information (in the form of surveys, impact assessments and mitigation proposals) before determining planning applications for sites used by bats. Planning authorities may refuse planning permission solely on grounds of the predicted impact on protected species such as bats. Recent case law has underlined the importance of obtaining survey information prior to the determination of planning consent¹.

*"It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by a development proposal, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision."*²

All British bat species are included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, (also known as Habitats Regulations) which defines 'European Protected Species' (EPS).

¹ Bat Mitigation Guidelines, AJ Mitchell Jones, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, (2004) ISBN 1 86107 558 8

² Planning Policy Statement (PPS9) (2005), Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. ODPM.

Protected species (Bats) and the planning process¹

For development proposals requiring planning permission, the presence of bats, and therefore the need for a bat survey, is an important 'material planning consideration'. Adequate surveys are therefore required to establish the presence or absence of bats, to enable a prediction of the likely impact of the proposed development on them and their breeding sites or resting places and, if necessary, to design mitigation and compensation. Similarly, adequate survey information must accompany an application for a Habitats Regulations licence (also known as a Mitigation Licence) required to ensure that a proposed development is able to proceed lawfully.

The term 'development' [used in these guidelines] includes all activities requiring consent under relevant planning legislation and / or demolition operations requiring building control approval under the Building Act 1984.

Natural England (Formerly English Nature) states that development in relation to bats "covers a wide range of operations that have the potential to impact negatively on bats and bat populations. Typical examples would be the construction, modification, restoration or conversion of buildings and structures, as well as infrastructure, landfill or mineral extraction projects and demolition operations".*

*(Tony Mitchell-Jones, 2004)

¹ 2.2.3 - Planning for development, p10, Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines, BCT (2007).

Other references:

Bats, development and planning in England, (Specialist support series) - Bat Conservation Trust, 5th Floor, Quadrant house, 250 Kennington Lane, London, SE11 5RD, 0845 1300 228

Defra Circular 01/2005 (to accompany PPS 9) - Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
www.defra.gov.uk

Natural England - Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside offices are located at:

Crewe: Natural England, Electra Way, Crewe business park, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 6GJ 0300 060 2922

Kendal: Natural England, Juniper House, Murley Moss, Oxenholme Rd, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 7RL 0300 060 2122

Manchester: Natural England, 3rd Floor, Bridgewater House, Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 6LT 0300 060 1062

