

4 Kidmore Road, Reading

Preliminary Roost Assessment
Mr P. Byfield

December 2022



Document Control

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

- In November 2022 Daniel Ahern Ecology was commissioned by Mr P. Byfield to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), also known as a bat inspection survey, to support a planning application. The site consisted of a three-storey detached house and an adjoined single storey extension.
- No SAC with Annex II bat species cited as primary or qualifying features for the designation were recorded within 7.5km. 14 EPSL for bats were recorded within 2km of the site.
- The PRA recorded the Building 1 had **NEGLIGIBLE** bat roost potential for bats due the absence of PRF and any evidence of bats. Building 2 housed a **CONFIRMED** roost believed to be for brown long-eared bats.
- **Bats are not considered to present an ecological constraint to the proposed development of Buildings 1 or 2 as none of the planned work to Building 2 will enter the roof.**
- No further survey work of Building 1 or 2 is recommended.
- Mitigation and habitat enhancement measures based on the current plan of works are set out in section 6.1.

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In November 2022 Daniel Ahern Ecology was commissioned by Mr P. Byfield to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), also known as a bat inspection survey, to support a planning application. The site consisted of a three-storey detached house and an adjoined single storey extension, Buildings 1 & 2.

1.2 Site Location and Description

4 Kidmore Road, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', is situated in the suburb of Caversham outside of Reading, (NGR SU 70980 75308). An aerial photo view of the site is outlined in red and can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Red line boundary for the Site.



1.3 Development Proposals

The proposals are:

- Building 1 – Extend the ground floor, and remove bay windows
- Building 2 – Close up a single doorway – no roof works

1.4 Survey Objectives

The objectives of the bat inspection survey comprise the following:

- Assess the structures for the potential for bats to use them to roost.

1.5 Quality Assurance

All ecological surveys are led by Ecologists who are members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) at the appropriate level. By joining the CIEEM staff sign up to a professional code of conduct.

Methodology

2.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment

An internal and external bat inspection was undertaken on 26th October 2022 by Daniel Ahern (2020-44508-CLS-CLS). The inspection followed methods described in the Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines (third edition) (Collins; 2016).

2.2 Desk Study

A desk study was carried out with the aim of supplementing the field survey results by collating and reviewing existing ecological information relevant to the site and the local area.

Bat European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) records from within 2km of the site were obtained from the MAGIC website, in addition details of designated sites, within 7.5 km of the site, relating to Annex II bat species were also obtained from the same website.

2.3 External Inspection

The exterior walls and roof of the building were viewed from ground level and features that provide potential bat access points or roosting places were noted and referred to as potential roost features (prf). Features that were looked for include:

- cracks/holes in mortar;
- gaps between ridge tiles and ridge and roof tiles;
- gaps in soffit boxes;
- gaps under wooden cladding; and
- gaps around the eaves.

Areas where bat droppings may accumulate, such as on the ground, ledges, windowsills and walls, were also inspected.

Any features that may potentially be used by bats were identified and any evidence of bat activity, as listed below, were noted.

2.4 Internal Inspection

The internal inspection comprised a thorough search of the roof void within the building, see Figure 2 below for a floor plan, for evidence indicative of past or current use by roosting bats. Direct evidence of bat presence may include:

- live bats or bat corpses;
- droppings;
- bat sounds;
- scratch marks;
- urine stains; and
- clean, cob-web free gaps around potential entrance points.

Potential access points and roosting sites were also noted.

In any roof voids, a systematic search for evidence of bat presence was undertaken, concentrating on roof beams, ceiling joists and exposed surfaces.

Any evidence was recorded.

2.5 Bat Roost Assessment

The findings of the internal and external surveys inform an assessment of the structure, classifying the bat roost potential it has. The different classifications are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Bat Roost Assessment Classifications

Classification	Description
NEGLIGIBLE	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats
LOW	A structure with one or more potential roost sites which could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter or protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats, (ie unlikely to be suitable for hibernation or maternity).
MODERATE	A structure with one or more potential roost sites which could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and suitable surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
HIGH	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and suitable surrounding habitat.
CONFIRMED	Evidence of bats roosting in the building or structure is recorded, bats, their droppings or feeding remains.

2.6 Equipment

The following equipment was available to use during the survey:

- close-focusing binoculars;
- P7 Lenser torch;
- camera;
- Eazyview endoscope.

2.7 Limitations

The data provided by the online resources were not exhaustive. It is possible that bat species not included in the data search occur within the vicinity of the proposed development site.

The internal and external inspection survey provides a snapshot of conditions at the time of survey. Bats are mobile creatures that will move into and out of areas.

The details within this report will remain valid for a period of 12 months; beyond that date it is advised that a review of ecological conditions is undertaken.

Results

3.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.2 Desk Study

3.2.1 Statutory Conservation Sites

Records of Special Areas of Conservation relevant to Annex II bat species within 7.5km of the Site are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Statutory Designated Sites.

Name	Area (ha)	Designation	Description	Distance & direction from the Site
Statutory sites				
None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Key

SAC – Special Area of Conservation

3.2.2 Bat species

Records of bat EPSL within 2km of the Site are presented in Table 3 below recorded within the last 30 years.

Table 3: Bat EPSL Records within 2km of the Site

EPSL Reference	Species named	Distance & direction from the Site
EPSM2013-6155	common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	1809m southeast
2014-2980-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	1054m west
2015-13539-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle	12334m west
2015-14137-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle	1615m west
2015-18560-EPS-MIT	brown long-eared <i>Plecotus auratus</i> , soprano pipistrelle	1565m north
EPSM2013-6025	brown long-eared	1730m north
EPSM2011-3175	common pipistrelle	945m east
2017-28045-EPS-MIT	Daubenton's <i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	1609m southeast
2017-29064-EPS-MIT	soprano pipistrelle	1263m west
2016-27061-EPS-MIT	brown long-eared, common pipistrelle	282m south

EPSL Reference	Species named	Distance & direction from the Site
2018-33476-EPS-MIT	serotine <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	1668m east
2018-35917-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle	1417m north
2014-3600-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle	1481m northwest
2014-1343-EPS-BDX	soprano pipistrelle	522m east

3.3 Bat Inspection Survey

The results of the building inspection are set out in Table 4, below.

Table 4: Bat inspection External & Internal Survey Results

Building	External description	Internal description
1 – main house.	A large three storey detached building. The roof of the bay window and patio door was a pitch design and clad with machine made clay tiles. The walls were constructed from brick. No PRF were recorded in the roof cladding. No evidence of bats recorded externally.	No void accessible in either of the two spaces seen in photos 1 and 2. No PRF were recorded internally. No evidence of bats was recorded internally.
2 – single storey extension	A more recent extension of the original house. The roof was of a dual pitch design, clad with machine made clay tiles. A MODERATE number of PRF were recorded where roof tiles were slightly misaligned, slipping or missing. No evidence of bats was recorded externally.	A large single roof void was present in the single storey extension. There was no felt present, and the tiles laid directly onto the wooden battens. Approximately 100 bat droppings were scattered throughout the void area. There were no significant accumulations in any one place. From their shape and size the droppings are believed to be from brown long-eared bats.

Building 1 has been assessed having NEGLIGIBLE bat roost potential. Building 2 was recorded as housing a CONFIRMED bat roost, see Table 5 below.

Table 5: Bat Roost Potential for the Buildings Surveyed

Building	Bat Roost Potential	Reason	Recommendations
1 – main house.	NEGLIGIBLE	- No PRF recorded internally or externally - No evidence of bats recorded internally or externally	No further survey work required
2 – single storey extension	CONFIRMED	- A MODERATE number of PRF were recorded externally - C100 bat droppings recorded in the roof void, suspected BLE.	No further survey work required

4.0 Legislation

4.1 Bats

All species of bat found in the UK are listed under Schedule 5 of *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended 2018) and are afforded protection under Section 9(1), Section 9(4)(b&c) and Section 9(5) of the Act. Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally or recklessly:

- Kills or injures any bat;
- Disturbs any bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- Obstructs access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection.

Bats are afforded additional protection through their inclusion on Schedule 2 of *The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017* (as amended). Under Part 3 of this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he:

- Deliberately captures, injures or kills a bat;
- Deliberately disturbs a bat; or
- Damages or destroys a bat breeding site or resting place.

Disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce, rear or nurture their young, migrate or hibernate. It also includes any disturbance likely to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species. Consequently, attention should be given to dealing with the modification or development of an area if aspects of it are deemed important to bats, such as flight corridors and foraging areas.

4.2 Breeding Birds

Wild birds, their nests and eggs, are afforded protection under Section 1(1) of *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally:

- Kills, injures or takes any wild bird;
- Takes, damages or destroys the nest of a wild bird included in Schedule ZA1;
- Takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or
- Takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird.

Discussion and Recommendations

5.0 Discussion

5.1 Desk based assessment results

No SAC with Annex II bat species cited as primary or qualifying features for the designation were recorded within 7.5km. A total of 14 EPSL for bats were recorded within 2km of the site, and covered common species; brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, Daubenton's, serotine and soprano pipistrelle.

5.2 Survey results – Preliminary Roost Assessment

The preliminary roost assessment concluded that Buildings 1 as having **NEGLECTABLE** bat roost potential. Building 2 was **CONFIRMED** as housing a bat roost for the brown long-eared species of bat based on c100 droppings being recorded.

On this basis bats are not considered to present an ecological constraint to the proposed development of Buildings 1 or 2 as none of the planned work to Building 2 will enter the roof.

6.0 Recommendations

No further survey work is recommended.

The findings of this report are valid for 12 months from the issue.

References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Photographs

Photo 1 – Building 1, bay window



Photo 2 – Building 1, porch doors



Photo 3 – Building 2, roof



Photo 4 – Building 1, roof



Photo 5 – Building 2, inside void



Photo 6 – Building 2, inside void

