



Preliminary bat roost assessment

Site Location	43 Oakley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RN
Document reference	CE1478
Date of Site visit	18 th June 2020
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Validity of data

The findings of this study are valid for a period of 24 months from the date of survey. If works have not commenced by this date, it may be necessary to undertake an updated survey to allow any changes in the status of bats on site to be assessed, and to inform a review of the conclusions and recommendations made.

Executive Summary

Chase Ecology undertook a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at the named site on the 18th June 2020. The aim of the assessment was to consider the value and suitability of the structures for roosting bats & nesting birds as detailed below;

Survey Methodology	An internal & external survey was carried out by Garry Smith for the potential roosting and usage of the structure for bats & nesting birds. See section 3 (Methodology). Additional to the visit further research has been carried out on the Magic.gov database and National Biodiversity Network
Results of Preliminary Bat Roost Inspection	SEE SECTION 6.0 Following a Preliminary Roost assessment of the property, it has been established that the structure and surrounding habitats offer value to bats. The eaves coverings across the West facing elevation where development is planned to take place offers a gap of low value throughout of adequate proportion to offer access to bats into the enclosed void which crevice & void dwelling bats may take advantage of for seasonal daytime roosting. This feature couldn't be ruled out during the Preliminary Roost Assessment. No internal or external evidence of bat was identified throughout the visible areas of the structure including the roof void spaces. A search of previous Granted European Protected Species Applications revealed 12 granted European Protected Species applications for Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared, Natterer's and Daubenton's bats. A 2km radius search has demonstrated habitats of value to bats including woodland, parkland, open fields, hedgerows and waterbodies of which support feeding & commuting.
Evidence of Nesting Birds	No evidence of nesting birds identified

Requirements for Additional Survey	In line with current accepted guidelines a structure offering low value for bats should have a single emergence or re-entry survey during the optimal survey season from May to August to fully rule out or confirm activity within from bats. If bats are observed to be using features within the structure where disturbance would be offered during development a further two emergence and or re entry surveys for bats would need to take place to establish the type of roost, species, numbers and to meet the requirements for a protected species mitigation licence. See Appendix 2: Bat Conservation Trust flow chart See Appendix 3: Description of the categories used to assess a building or tree's bat roost potential and the survey effort required to determine the likely presence or absence of bats
Predicted Impacts of Development on Bats and Nesting Birds	Further assessment required to determine any impacts to protected species during development works.
Mitigation and Compensation of Proposed Impacts	Further assessment required
Licensing Requirements for Bats	Further assessment required
Required Actions	See section 6.0 It is advised that no further works take place to the identified areas of value to bats at this stage as this may cause disturbance to bats and their roosts. see section 2.0 of this report

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1.0 Introduction

Brief

- 1.1** This report will present the findings of a preliminary bat roost assessment and nesting bird survey of the named site and further research of the area online.

Site description

- 1.2** An occupied two storey semi-detached dwelling, see section 5.0 images.

2.0 Legislation

2.1.1 All British bats are classed as European Protected Species and therefore receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making it an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat;
- Deliberately disturb bats;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place

2.1.2 In addition, all British bats are also listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses

2.1.3 If proposed development work is likely to destroy or disturb bats or their roosts, then a licence will need to be obtained from Natural England, which would be subject to appropriate measures to safeguard bats.

2.1.4 In the UK, the provisions of the Birds Directive are implemented through the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected it an offence to: • kill, injure, or take any wild bird; • take, damage or destroy the nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or • take or destroying an egg of any such wild bird.

2.1.5 Special protection against disturbance during the breeding season is also afforded to those species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** All survey and reporting undertaken by Mr Garry Smith who is an experienced licensed bat ecologist in England [Class 2 registration 2017-28032-CLS-CLS] with over 9 years' experience practical of professional ecological surveys.
- 3.2** Preliminary roost assessments can be undertaken throughout the year and can provide conclusive results, which can save expense and time for Planning Applicants. The optimum time to investigate for the presence of bats is during their active season when signs of presence can be more easily located.
- 3.3** A thorough interior and exterior inspection of the building for bat roosting and potential roosting features was undertaken. Signs surveyed for included droppings, dead bats, feeding remains (beetle, moth and butterfly remains), urine staining and grease marks around crevices and down walls, and any noises such as scratching and audible bat calls.
- 3.4** During the survey, the surrounding area was assessed in relation to suitable habitat that may be of value to bats.
- 3.5** Surveys were conducted following "The Bat Workers Manual "(JNCC 2004), "The Bat Mitigation Guidelines" (EN 2004) and the Bat Conservation Trust 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines' (2016) recommendations.
- 3.6** All areas of the building internally were inspected with the aid of a 2 million c/p lamp and inspection camera. External features were also inspected where possible and observations were aided with binoculars where needed.
- 3.7** A desk top survey was also completed to establish the biodiversity of the area along with its habitat structures including statutory and non-statutory designations
- 3.8** Biological records were not obtained for this survey

4.0 Results

Desk Study

Environmental record search

4.1 A data search from freely available resources was undertaken to assess the names species for distribution/record within a 2km study area which demonstrated records for;

- Common Pipistrelle
- Daubenton's

4.2 Designated sites; Statutory (5km)

Site	Designation	Distance (km)	Direction
CLAYFIELD COPSE	LNR	1.70	NE
LOUSEHILL COPSE	LNR	3.20	SW
MCILROY PARK	LNR	3.70	W
BLUNDELLS COPSE	LNR	4.00	SW

Non-Statutory (2km)

Site	Designation	Distance (km)	Direction
NON-IDENTIFIED			

Priority Habitat Inventory within 2km

HABITAT	Distance (km)	DIRECTION
DECIDUOUS WOODLAND	0.10	SW
DECIDUOUS WOODLAND	0.20	N
DECIDUOUS WOODLAND	0.90	SW
WOODPASTURE & PARKLAND	1.00	NE
DECIDUOUS WOODLAND	1.40	N

None of the above names sites/locations would be effected in any way from the proposed development plan for this site, including both habitats and species.

4.3 Aerial photographs of the site were consulted to determine if there are important landscape features surrounding and within vicinity of the site.

4.4 A search of previous Granted European Protected Species Applications revealed 12 granted European Protected Species applications for Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared and Natterer's, Daubentons bats.

Field study

4.5 The Preliminary Roost Assessment for bats was carried by Garry Smith [Class 2 registration 2017-28032-CLS-CLS] where the dwelling and surrounding areas were assessed for the possible usages of bats & birds.

External	Features of value to bats	Notes
External Stonework	No	The brickworks to the structure has demonstrated a fair level of condition with no observed features of value to bats noted throughout each facing elevation.
Window/door frames	No	No gaps or features of value to bats observed within or surrounding the door/window frames.
Eaves coverings	Yes	The eaves to the West facing elevation have demonstrated a gap of around 15mm – 25mm between the soffit boards and brickworks of which offers access value to bats within. The eaves would offer an enclosed habitat of value to bats for daytime roosting within. The eaves to the North & South facing elevations looked to offer no features of value to bats.
Roof coverings	No	The roof coverings including the ridge tiles have demonstrated a fair level of condition with no observed features of value to bats such as raised/slipped or missing tiles.

Internal	Features of value to bats	Notes
Membrane coverings	No	No membrane coverings below the roof tiles.
Floor coverings	No	Insulated/timber coverings throughout.
Protruding daylight	Yes	A small element of light between the tiles coverings was observed in areas, however this feature didn't offer a sizable gap of value to bats.
Evidence from bats	No	No evidence of bats such as droppings, urine stains or feeding remains observed both internally or externally.
Restrictions	No	Full access available during the survey.

Limitations

4.6 Many species of bat in the UK are crevice dwelling, and signs of bats and bats themselves can be difficult to find within a building or within areas that are inaccessible such as the gaps within roof coverings, eaves and cavities within the stonework's.

5.0 Plans & Photographs

Image 1 – Front North facing elevation of the property



Image 2 – West facing elevation of the property



Image 3 – Eaves coverings across the West facing elevation which offers suitable access features of value to bats which would lead into the enclosed void section of the eaves which would be a suitable seasonal daytime roosting environment



Image 4 – Rear South facing elevation of the property



Image 5 – Close view of roof coverings across the West facing elevation which have demonstrated a fair condition throughout



Image 6 – Internal view from within the main roof void spaces to the property



Conclusion and recommendations

All recommendations provided in this section shall be on Chase Ecology's current understanding of the site proposals and current planning application, correct at the time the report was compiled. Should any aspect of the proposals alter, the conclusions and recommendations made in the report should be reviewed to ensure that they remain appropriate

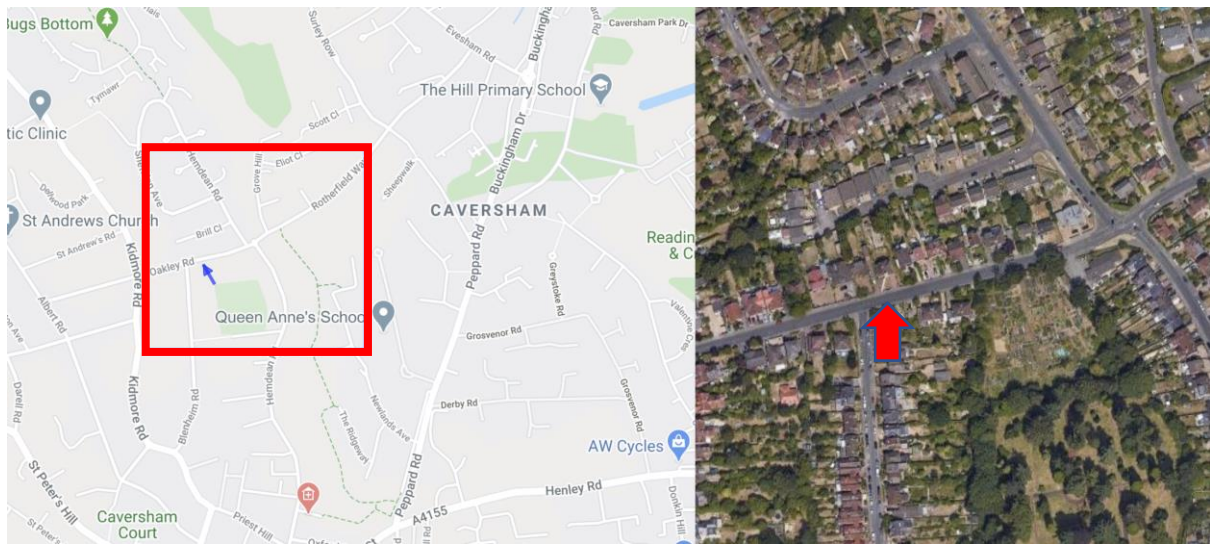
- 5.1** Following a Preliminary Roost assessment of the property, it has been established that the structure and surrounding habitats offer value to bats.
- 5.2** The eaves coverings across the West facing elevation where development is planned to take place offers a gap of low value throughout of adequate proportion to offer access to bats into the enclosed void which crevice & void dwelling bats may take advantage of for seasonal daytime roosting. This feature couldn't be ruled out during the Preliminary Roost Assessment.
- 5.3** No internal or external evidence of bat was identified throughout the visible areas of the structure including the roof void spaces.
- 5.4** A search of previous Granted European Protected Species Applications revealed 12 granted European Protected Species applications for Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared, Natterer's and Daubenton's bats.
- 5.5** A 2km radius search has demonstrated habitats of value to bats including woodland, parkland, open fields, hedgerows and waterbodies of which support feeding & commuting.
- 5.6** In line with current accepted guidelines a structure offering low value for bats should have a single emergence or re-entry survey during the optimal survey season from May to August to fully rule out or confirm activity within from bats.

If bats are observed to be using features within the structure where disturbance would be offered during development a further two emergence and or re entry surveys for bats would need to take place to establish the type of roost, species, numbers and to meet the requirements for a protected species mitigation licence.
- 5.7** It is advised that no further works take place to the identified areas of value to bats at this stage as this may cause disturbance to bats and their roosts. see section 2.0 of this report

6.0 References

- Mitchell-Jones, A.J, & McLeish, A.P. Ed., (2004) 3rd Edition Bat Workers' Manual. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004) Bat Mitigation Guidelines. Natural England, Peterborough.
- British Trust for Ornithology (2016) www.bto.org/
- Magic database (2017) <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> accessed on 08/03/2017.
- Google Earth (2017)

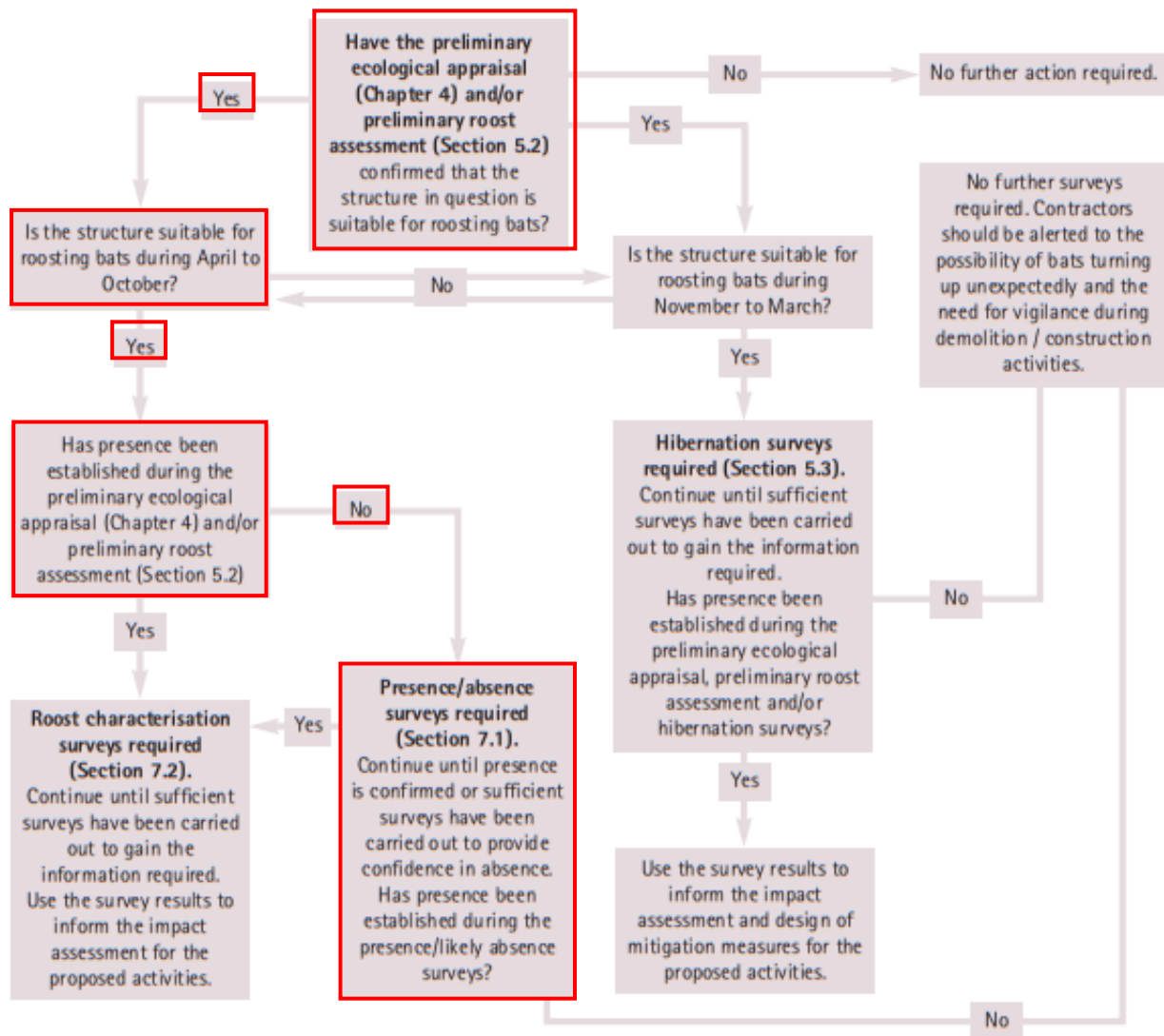
Appendix 1: Location plan



Appendix 2: Below flow chart taken from the Bat Conservation Trust, Good Practice Guidelines used when assessing the suitability of a structure and any additional survey requirements.

Bat Conservation Trust

Figure 5.1 Flow chart illustrating the process used to establish which types of surveys are necessary for roosts in structures.



Appendix 3: Description of the categories used to assess a building or tree's bat roost potential and the survey effort required to determine the likely presence or absence of bats

Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	No further surveys required.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation) A tree of sufficient size and age to contain features but with none seen from the ground or features seen	One dusk emergence or pre-dawn re-entry surveys between May and August.
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only i.e. irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Two surveys, comprising one dusk emergence and a separate pre-dawn re-entry surveys between May and September with at least one between May and August.
High	A structure or tree 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 surrounding habitat.	Three dusk emergence and/or pre-dawn re-entry surveys between May and September. Optimum period May – August. Two surveys should be undertaken during the optimal period and at least one survey should be a pre-dawn survey
Confirmed	Bats or evidence of bats found.	Surveys would be required to establish the status of the roost. Generally, three dusk emergence and/or pre-dawn re-entry surveys between May and September. Optimum period May – August (two surveys should be undertaken during the optimal period and at least one survey should be a pre-dawn survey).