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Reference: TT2999-34 Sherwood Street, Reading-L02-Bat Survey Report-Rev00

Results of Preliminary Roost Appraisal on 34 Sherwood Road, Reading.

Dear Mr Sirmenis,

This letter report presents the results of a Preliminary Roost Appraisal (PRA) for bats carried out at 34 Sherwood Street, Reading, RG30 1LJ. The survey was carried out in connection with proposed loft conversion of the building to increase the available living space.

The proposed works will involve the conversion of the loft and alterations to the layout of existing solar panels. This work will impact upon a small areas of roof tiles, exterior gable wall, rear wall and roof space of the property. *Figure 1* shows the site location and *Plates 1 & 2* show the front and rear of the property.

Figure 1. Site Location

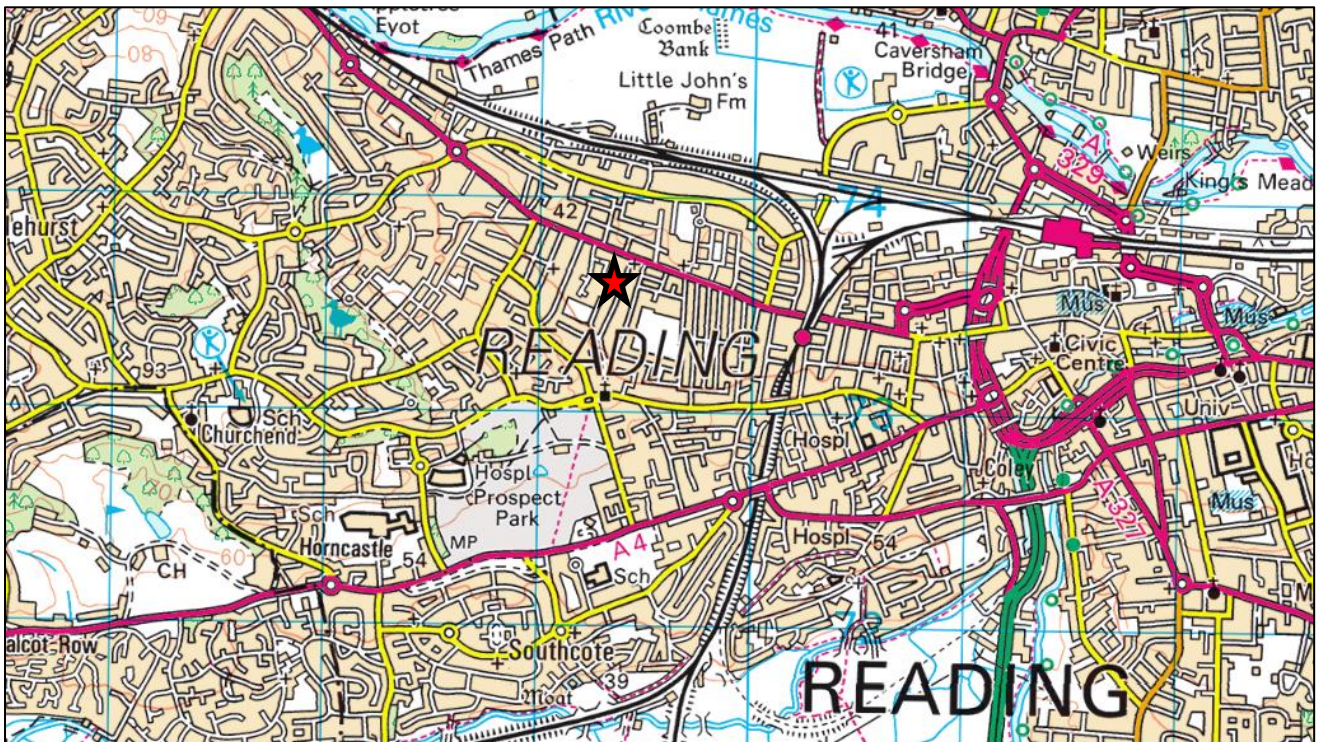


Plate 1 – Front view of 34 Sherwood Street



Plate 2 – Rear View of 34 Sherwood Street



Methods

Due to the proposed alterations to the building a Preliminary Roost Appraisal was advised. The survey was carried out on 6th August 2020 by Simon Parker of Turnstone Ecology Limited. Simon holds a Natural England CL-18 Class Licence (2015-14470-CLS-CLS) as well as the Bat Mitigation Class Licence CL-21 (RC122) for the disturbance of bats in all counties of England. The assessment involves a consideration of various factors including;

- Light levels;
- Temperature regime and protection from weather;
- Access to the interior or to other suitable roost sites;
- Potential roost sites;
- Tree structure; and
- Habitat context.

Based on these factors, an assessment was made of whether the building might support bats and the type and number of roosts that might be present.

A detailed inspection was made of the exterior and interior of the building for any evidence of bat use, such as live or dead bats, droppings, scratch marks, staining and prey remains, and in some cases the absence of cobwebs. Large quantities of cobwebs in roof voids or at access points tend to be suggestive of no bat use, although this evidence is not conclusive.

Features identified as possible bat access points or potential roosting locations were thoroughly searched where applicable, using powerful torches and binoculars to facilitate the process, an endoscope was also available should it have been required.

The survey was undertaken in good light conditions and no internal cleaning or sweeping had been undertaken.

Buildings and trees are categorised according to their suitability for roosting bats as follows (Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn.) (2016¹):

Negligible – Habitat features on site with very low suitability to be used by roosting bats.

Low – A structure or tree 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). Or a tree of sufficient size and age to contain

¹ Collins, J. (ed) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn) The Bat Conservation Trust, London

potential roost features but with none seen from the ground, or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.

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).

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. They could be suitable for maternity roosts or hibernation sites.

Confirmed – Roosting bats confirmed as being present, either by the discovery of live or dead bats, droppings, prey remains, scratching or fur-staining.

Habitats within and immediately adjacent to site were assessed for their suitability for use by foraging or commuting bats. Areas of particular interest vary between species, but generally include sheltered areas and those habitats with good numbers of insects, such as woodland, scrub, hedges, watercourses, ponds, lakes and more species-rich or rough grassland.

Results

34 Sherwood Street lies within an urban area in the western area of the large town of Reading and is surrounded on all sides by residential properties and gardens. In the surrounding area are predominantly further residential houses, terraced properties and shops, with the nearest open green space a school playing field approximately 360 m to the south. The River Thames is approximately 1 km to the north. In the wider area there are areas of pastoral farmland, public open space, further dense residential development and commercial warehousing/office space.

The surveyed building is approximately 110-120 years old and is a semi-detached two storey residential house constructed of brick. To the front the building has a bay window and an overhanging porch area. The building has cavity walls and internally has an open loft with a ridge height of approximately 2.4m.

Internally the roof is constructed with an untrussed frame and has been insulated and lined with boarding on the floor and at the rafters. The loft is currently used as a storage room. *Plate 3* shows the interior of the loft.

No bats or evidence of bats was identified in the interior of the loft and all areas could be checked during the survey.

Externally the building has a roof covered with interlocking clay tiles which fit tight and well across the visible areas of the roof. The majority of the roof is covered with solar panels, with eight cells on each slope of the roof. The ridge is tight with no obvious mortar gaps and the same is true to the pointing at the verge. There are two chimneys, both with lead flashing around. The rear chimney flashing has a small gap which may offer potential roosting opportunities for bats, though this is outside the proposed working area. No other potential for bats was noted.

Plate 3 – Internal view of loft space



No evidence of bats was noted in any part of the building where work is proposed and while a single potential roosting location was identified at the rear of the property this is considered to be not at risk as a result of the proposed works. The distance between the site and any likely suitable foraging habitat (over 1 km) also reduces the likelihood of the building being used by bats.

Overall the building has been rated as having *Negligible potential* for roosting bats in the areas of proposed works.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Following the Preliminary Roost Appraisal no evidence of use by bats or potential features for roosting was identified in the areas of the building being affected by the proposals. Accordingly, no direct recommendations to protect bats during works are recommended. One low potential feature was noted on the building away from works but it is considered that due to the nature of works, should individual bats be present, there would be no impact from disturbance.

In the extremely unlikely event of bats being present during works then works must cease immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted.

In order to enhance biodiversity at the site a single bird box should be erected on site, with a hole type box suitable for a variety of species erected above 3 m up on the southern gable wall.

If wish to discuss further any of our findings please do not hesitate to contact me on 07766 08846 or email me at sparker@turnstoneecology.co.uk.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sparker".

Simon Parker
(Principal Consultant)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T.E.". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Tristan Evans
(Director - Review)