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Dear Zoe,

16 Vale Crescent – Preliminary Roost Assessment

I write to you in regard to the bat preliminary roost assessment conducted of the garage/utility room at 16 Vale Crescent in January 2020.

Methodology

Ecology by Design were commissioned to conduct a bat preliminary roost assessment (PRA) of 16 Vale Crescent, Reading, RG30 6ED (central grid reference SU 67391 74313). The survey is to inform a planning application for the demolition of the garage and utility room and the construction of a garden room in the same location.

The survey was conducted by Ecologists Emily Bartlett and Kate Philpot. The assessment was based on the guidance included in the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)¹ and Government standing advice².

The building was inspected for potential bat use by examining the exterior and interior of the building for active roosts or roosting sites and suitable entry and exit points on the outside of the building, and by searching for other evidence of bat activity such as droppings, smells, sounds, carcasses or food remains. A torch (LEDLenser Lamp) was used to illuminate any dark recesses inside the building. Close focusing binoculars were used to inspect external features.

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

² Gov.uk (2015). *Guidance. Bats: surveys and mitigation for development projects*. Natural England and Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Worcester.

Results

The building is a garage with attached utility room within the garden of the house at 16 Vale Crescent on the edge of Reading which appears to be in regular use. The building is generally in good condition.

The garage section is constructed from concrete blocks with a large metal garage door to the south east and windows to the north west and north east. The north west of the garage has large wooden doors which appear to be no longer in use. The utility room section is brick with tightly fitted wooden cladding and windows to the north west and north east. The building has a pitched corrugated metal roof.

A few features were recorded externally including a raised fascia to the north west of the building, a small hole in a window surround and a small hole at the apex to the south east. These features were very densely cobwebbed or did not form, or lead to, a suitable roosting feature for bats. Furthermore, no evidence of bats was recorded externally in the form of droppings, scratching or staining.

Internally, the building was well lit by the windows and no loft void was present. A small cavity was present above the utility room and two holes were noted leading into the cavity. However, no ingress points were noted into the utility room itself therefore it is considered that the cavity is not accessible to bats. No bats or evidence of bats in the form of droppings, scratching, or staining were observed during the survey.

The building was assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats.

Two Leyland cypress (*Cupressus × leylandii*) trees were recorded to the north of the building which are also to be removed as part of the proposed works. These trees were in good condition with no features which could support roosting bats or evidence of bats recorded.

The trees were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats however, they would provide suitable habitat to for nesting birds.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The preliminary roost assessment concluded that the building and the two trees north of the building have negligible potential to support roosting bats. In the site's current state, bats pose no constraint to the proposed works.

The trees would support a number of nesting bird species. All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. Any dense vegetation removal should be completed outside of the bird-nesting season

(March to August inclusive) or preceded by a check for nests by an experienced ecologist. If nests are found, they should be left undisturbed until the nest is no longer active.

Yours sincerely,



Emily Bartlett

Ecologist

Appended: Site Photos

Appendix 1 – Photographs

Photograph 1: South east aspect of the building showing garage and utility room



Photograph 2: South east aspect of the utility room with wooden cladding



Photograph 3: Internal view of the garage



Photograph 4: North west aspect of the building



Photograph 5: Heavily cobwebbed raised fascia to the north west



Photograph 6: Two Leyland cypress north of the building

