

16 September 2016

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Dear Greg,

132 St Peter's Avenue Preliminary Roost Assessment

I write to you in regards the preliminary roost assessment we conducted of the above building on Monday 12th September 2016.

Methodology

Greg Allen commissioned Ecology by Design to conduct a preliminary roost assessment of the bungalow, garage and shed at 132 St Peter's Avenue, Reading.

The survey was conducted by Principal Ecologist Ben Gardner of Ecology by Design in sunny and dry conditions. The assessment was based on the guidance included in the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn) (Collins. J, 2016)¹ and Bat Workers Manual (JNCC 2004)².

The buildings were inspected for potential bat use by examining the internal structures for active roosts or roosting sites and suitable entry and exit points on the outside of the buildings, and by searching for other evidence of bat activity such as droppings, smells, sounds, carcasses or food remains. A torch was used to illuminate the dark recesses inside the buildings to carefully inspect any features of potential value to roosting bats and a thermal camera used to identify any 'hotspots' that may indicate roosting bats.

Equipment used included:

- LEDLenser Lamp
- Nikon 10x42mm close focusing binoculars
- FLIR C2 Thermal Camera

During the survey the buildings were thoroughly inspected including:

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

² Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. Ed., (2004), 3rd Edition Bat Workers' Manual, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough
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- Roof structure - gaps in tiles, under and over wall plates where accessible, gaps in wooden beam structure, between tile roof and beams. Internally through tears in roofing felt.
- Walls - Gaps in walls, between beams and the walls.

Evidence searched for included:

- The presence of free hanging bats and bats within gaps, crevices.
- Bat droppings, urine stains, rub marks, scratch marks, in wall holes, exposed battens and across the ceiling.
- Feeding remains scattered around the buildings, along the ridgeline and on top of stored materials.

Results

The building was a red brick bungalow in an L-shaped layout with adjoining garage and external timber shed. The bungalow had a pitched tile roof and a flat bitumen roof above the garage.

The buildings were fully accessible both externally and internally. Externally the bungalow appeared well sealed with only a handful of broken tiles or missing mortar under ridge tiles. The broken tiles appeared superficial with the remains of the tiles still blocking access into the gap between the tiles and felt liner. The missing mortar under the ridge tiles on the southern elevation and in the south east corner both appeared superficial and had cobwebs and moss blocking access into the features. The timber shed and garage did not appear to have any suitable access features externally.

Internally the bungalow loft space was similarly L-shaped and appeared in good condition with no signs of light ingress, insulation throughout and bitumen felt lined pitches. No evidence of bats was identified within the space and with no signs of access features it makes the loft extremely unlikely to support roosting bats in the future.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The inspection did not identify any evidence of roosting bats internally or in external crevices and any external features were deemed unsuitable for access or roosting. Bats pose no constraint to the development of the site.

Commensurate with local planning policy and to enhance the site for biodiversity it is recommended that a single bat box be built into the proposed building. There are various off the shelf products, however it is recommended that a Habibat box (www.habibat.co.uk) finished using the same brick as the building would offer the best solution. See appendix 2 for details.

Yours Sincerely



Ben Gardner
Principal Ecologist

Appended:

- Site Photos
- Enhancement Measures

Appendix 1 – Photographs



Photo 1 – bungalow from road



Photo 2 – eastern elevation



Photo 3 – southern elevation



Photo 4 – western elevation



Photo 5 – broken tile



Photo 6 – gap under ridge tile



Photo 7 – Missing ridge tile mortar

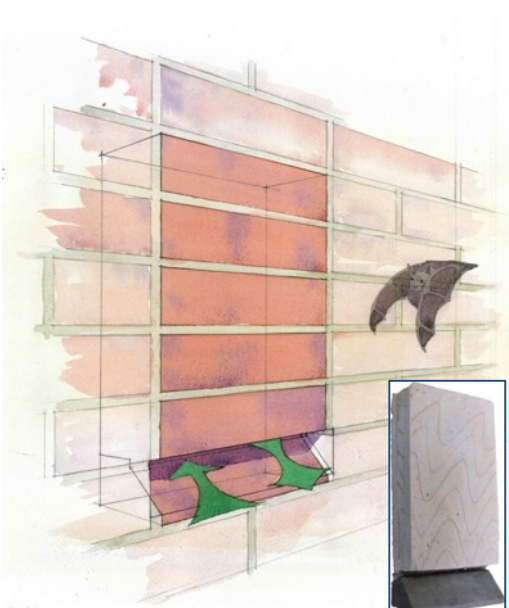


Photo 8 – Inside loft space looking west



Photo 9 – Inside loft space looking south

Appendix 2 - Enhancement Measures

	A Habibat 001 bat box. A box designed for roosting bats that can be built into the wall structure. It is left unfinished by the manufacturer to enable covering with the finished wall material such as stone or timber leaving only a small single brick sized opening at the base. http://www.habibat.co.uk/bat-boxes/
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