



Bat Survey Letter of report: 27 Shepherds Lane, Caversham RG4 7JJ.

20th September 2016

Dear Chris Goodson,

Wychwood Environmental Ltd was instructed to undertake a bat scoping survey to assess the protected species potential of the above site. The survey was necessary to collect information relating to the possible presence of roosting bats and to provide any necessary guidance and mitigation advice to ensure that no bats or roosts are adversely affected by the proposed development works. The development consists of a proposed extension to the south facing aspect of the bungalow at the above address.

Bats are European protected species, protected via The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations (2010) and also the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Therefore, it is an offence to kill or injure a bat or interfere with any roosting or resting site. A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time.

Details of legislation and legal protection afforded to all species of British bats are given in Appendix 1.

Survey Methods

The building inspection was conducted by Dr Ryan Walker BSc MSc PhD MCIEEM CEnv (Bat Class license holder: CL 1385) on the 14th September 2016 following best practice survey techniques as outlined by Collins, J.(ed.) (2016)¹ and Mitchell-Jones and McLeish (2004)².

All floors, walls and exposed surfaces within the areas of the bungalow proposed to be impacted by the works were checked, both internally and externally, for signs of use by bats including:

- Bat droppings (size of droppings grouped into small, medium or large to signify type of bat that may be present);
- Feeding remains (certain bat species often eat the bodies and leave the wings of invertebrate prey including moths, butterflies and larger flies such as lace wings);
- Oil (from fur) and urine stains;
- Scratch marks;
- Presence of 'clean' gaps and crevices in the fabric of building which could indicate regular movement of bats;

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 (2004). *Bat mitigation guidelines*. English Nature.

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- Bat corpses; and
- Actual sightings.

The areas of the bungalow proposed to be impacted by the works were examined using direct observation with the aid of close focusing binoculars, a high power torch and ladders where necessary to enable closer inspection of suitable features. The bungalow supports a single small roof void upon the south facing aspect of the building, that was also subject to inspection.

Results

The bungalow is set within a suburban setting and is surrounded by a number of similar detached residential properties with moderate sized gardens. The surrounding habitat provides moderate potential foraging habitat for a number of the commoner species of bats (Fig. 1). The proposed development area is therefore assessed as having a moderate suitability for bats.

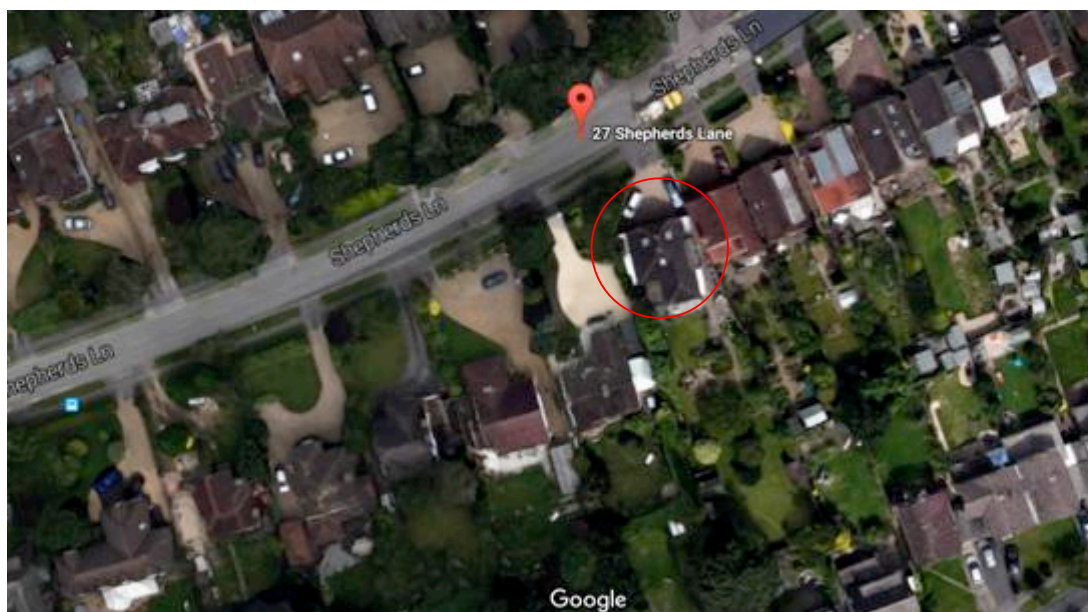


Figure 1. Google Earth screen grab of the location of the bungalow proposed for development at 27 Shepherds Lane. Figure orientated north to south.

Building survey

The bungalow is single storey, however part of the original roof void appears to have been converted within the recent past into bedroom space. There is a small roof void spanning part of the south facing footprint of the bungalow. The void measures approximately 1.3m floor to apex with a floor space of approximately 2x5m (Fig. 2). The void is timber framed, unlined and is moderately cobwebbed, suggesting that void roosting bats have not been using this roof space within the recent past. There is no evidence to suggest that bats have used this void as a roost within the recent past.

The bungalow supports a largely, well fitting tiled roof (Fig. 3). There are two small gaps between the tiles upon the lower run of the roof, however these were inspected with a torch and endoscope and there was no evidence to suggest that crevice roosting bats had been using these gaps within the recent past. The soffits, brick work and wooden edging along the tops of the walls (Fig. 4) are all well fitting and devoid of gaps that could be considered suitable for supporting crevice roosting bats. There is no evidence to suggest that any of the south facing external aspects of the bungalow, within the areas of the building that are proposed for development have been used by crevice roosting bats within the recent past.



Figure 2. Internal aspects of the roof void upon the south facing aspect of the bungalow.



Figure 3. The south facing aspect of the bungalow proposed for the extension.



Figure 4. The well fitting wooden soffits and edging around the tops of the wall of the south facing aspect of the bungalow.

Discussion and Recommendations

The results of the survey suggest that the site and wider area supports moderate foraging habitat for some of the commoner species of bats. However, there is no evidence to suggest that void roosting bats have been using the small roof void within the bungalow within the recent past. All south facing external aspects of the bungalow are well fitting and devoid of crevices that could be considered suitable for supporting crevice roosting bats. The two small gaps between the lower roof tiles appear to be devoid of roosting bats or evidence to suggest that they have been using these spaces within the recent past.

No further surveys or mitigation in relation to bats is required for the proposed development within this site.

Should you need any further advice on the information provided above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Rosalind Salter BSc MSc MCIEEM

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Appendix 1 - Legislation and Policy

Bats

All species of British bat are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended through inclusion in Schedule V. All bat species in the UK are also included in Schedule II of the Habitats Regulations 2010 which transpose Annex II of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora ("EC Habitats Directive") which defines European protected species of animals.

Bat species are afforded further protection by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000; and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Under the above legislation it is an offence to:

- kill, injure or take an individual;
- possess any part of an individual either alive or dead;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place or structure used by these species for shelter, rest, protection or breeding;
- intentionally or recklessly disturb these species whilst using any place of shelter or protection; or
- deliberate disturbance in such a way as to be likely to impair their ability to:
 - survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
 - to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;
- keep (possess), transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead bat, or any part of, or anything derived from a bat.

It is also an offence to set and use articles capable of catching, injuring or killing bats (for example a trap or poison), or knowingly cause or permit such an action. In the case all species of British bat there is also protection under *Schedule 6 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) relating specifically to trapping and direct pursuit of these species.

A European Protected Species License (EPSL) in relation to bats is required from Natural England for any work that would result in an otherwise unlawful activity (e.g. damage to a bat roost). A license can only be issued to permit otherwise prohibited acts if Natural England are satisfied that all of the following three tests are met:

- The proposal is for 'preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment';
- There is no satisfactory alternative; and
- The action authorised by the license will not be detrimental to the maintenance of bat populations at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

A bat roost is defined by the Bat Conservation Trust publication *Bat Surveys—Good Practice Guidelines 2nd Edition* as "*the resting place of a bat*"³. Generally however, the word roost is interpreted as "*any structure or place, which any wild bat uses for shelter or protection.*"

Bats tend to re-use the same roosts; therefore legal opinion is guided by recent case law precedents, that a roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time. This can include for summer roosts, used for breeding; or winter roosts, used for hibernating.

³ Bat Conservation Trust (2012) *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.