

# MEMO

**TO:** Will Charlton, Brooke Smith Planning

**FROM:** Lynn Spencer, Consultant Ecologist

**SUBJECT:** Rising Sun Public House, Reading – Bat Roost Potential Assessment

**DATE:** 21 March 2017

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## INTRODUCTION

WSP | PB was commissioned to undertake a preliminary bat roost assessment in response to proposals for demolition of a building in Reading.

All native bat species are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). Taken together, this legislation prohibits the reckless or intentional:

- Capturing, killing or injuring of a bat;
- Disturbing a bat in its roost;
- Damage or destruction of a bat roost (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time);
- Possession of or advertising for sale a bat (dead or alive) or any part thereof; and
- Obstructing access to a bat roost.

A bat roost is defined as “any structure or place, which is used for shelter or protection” or a “breeding site or resting place”. A bat roost is still a roost irrespective of whether a bat is currently occupying the structure or place. Bats are generally faithful to roosting sites occupying them year after year; however bats will have a number of roosting sites which provide different environments at different times of the year, i.e. maternity sites, hibernation sites, which they will move between.

WSP | PB was commissioned to provide an assessment of the likelihood that the proposed works will result in any infringement to current wildlife law.

## METHODOLOGY

The building appraisal comprised an external assessment and internal inspection of the Rising Sun Public House in Reading.

An assessment of the building was undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition (Collins, 2016). This was undertaken by an experienced ecologist and an assistant. Following initial assessment the building was categorized according to its Bat Roost Potential (BRP), to indicate whether bats were or could be present and inform the need for further surveys.

## FINDINGS

The building was categorised according to its Bat Roost Potential as shown in **Table 1**, below

|                                  | Building/Structure                                                                | Description of relevant features                                     | Bat Roost Potential |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Rising Sun Public House, Reading |  | Some loose roof tiles, bats may use for roosting on occasional basis | Low                 |

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the external inspection of the building it was noted that some of the tiles on the roof had become loose and slipped, allowing for the gaps to potentially be used for roosting.

There were no other points of access into the building or gaps in the lead flashing around the chimney or in the walls.

The internal inspection confirmed the building was in good condition and that there were no points of access from outside the building to the interior. There were no gaps in the loft space allowing access to the exterior, and no evidence of bats roosting within the building.

Whilst no signs of bat roosting was confirmed at the Rising Sun Public House, it was noted that some loose tiles on the roof could be used by a small number of bats such as crevice dwelling bat species, such as pipistrelle species, as a day roost on an occasional basis and the building was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats.

In order to determine whether bats are utilising the building for roosting it is recommended that one emergence survey be undertaken between May and August in-line with current best practice (Collins, 2016). It is recommended that the survey is undertaken in advance of any works so as to ensure the required works do not result in any infringement to legislation.

Should works be delayed, or the condition of the buildings change significantly prior to works, it is recommended that further advice from an ecologist be sought prior to works commencing.

Prepared by:

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