

ASTUTE ECOLOGY

Ecological Consultants

BAT EMERGENCE AND RE-ENTRY SURVEYS

50 ALBERT ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING, BERKSHIRE,
RG4 7PF.

Report Reference: AE17.110.1
May 2017

Client	Mr Noel Scott	
Site:	50 Albert Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7PF	
Grid Ref:	SU 7072 7558	
Report Ref:	AE17.133	
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1 Summary

Astute Ecology were commissioned by Mr Noel Scott to undertake two bat surveys to confirm presence or likely-absence of roosting bats on a single building located at 50 Albert Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7PF. The proposed application involves works to the buildings elevations and roof for the construction of extensions and new upper storey.

Key Messages

- The dusk emergence and dawn re-entry bat activity surveys did not reveal any evidence of bats roosting within the building, and did not reveal any notable foraging or commuting areas on site.
- The proposed works will not impact upon any bat roosts or have any impact upon foraging and commuting bats.
- Owing to the likely absence of a bat roost within the building, no further surveys or mitigation is required.
- A Natural England bat development licence is not required in order for the development works to proceed.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Astute Ecology were commissioned by Mr Noel Scott to undertake two bat surveys to confirm presence or likely-absence of roosting bats on a single building located at 50 Albert Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7PF, herein referred to as the 'site'. for single-storey extension to front, two storey extension to rear, a new upper storey to the side and associated internal and external changes.
- 2.2 A Preliminary Roost Assessment was previously undertaken at the site by ARBTECH (27/01/17) on the 23rd January 2017, which assessed the building to be of 'Moderate Potential' to support roosting bats. No evidence of roosting bats was found on or in the building, but the building supported several low and moderate potential roost features. A dusk emergence survey and a single dawn re-entry survey, in accordance with BCT Bat Survey Guidelines (Collins 2016), was recommended to confirm likely absence of bats roosting within the buildings features. Please refer to the Preliminary Roost Assessment for full details.
- 2.3 The site is located at National Grid Reference SU 7072 7558, and comprises an area of approximately 0.1ha. There is one building within the site boundaries. The site is situated in central Caversham, a district of Reading in north Berkshire.
- 2.4 Results and recommendations contained within this report have been prepared by an experienced ecologist and are therefore the view of Astute Ecology. The survey is based on information provided by our client, the development proposals, and the results of the desk study and our survey of the site. This report pertains to this information only. The legislation relevant to protected species within the United Kingdom is summarised within Appendix 1.

3 Methodology

3.1 Dawn Re-entry and Dusk Emergence Surveys

A dusk emergence survey and a dawn re-entry survey were undertaken by two experienced bat surveyors on the 1st May 2017 (dusk survey) and 16th May 2017 (dawn survey) in suitable conditions (Table 1). During the two surveys, all elevations and roof areas of the building were observed whilst using bat detectors and thermal imaging equipment to observe any bats potentially entering, or emerging from the building and to record activity, species and call type. The surveys were undertaken in accordance with BCT Bat Survey Guidelines (Collins 2016).

Table 1: Survey conditions

Date	Sunset	Start	Finish
01/05/2017 – Dusk emergence	20:27	20:10	22:30
Weather:	Temperature: 12°C	11°C	
	Humidity: 63%	70%	
	Cloud cover: 2/8	3/8	
	Wind: Light breeze	Light breeze	
	Precipitation: None	None	
Date	Sunrise	Start	Finish
16/05/2017 – Dawn Re-entry	05:13	03:13	05:28
Weather:	Temperature: 16°C	15°C	
	Humidity: 79%	85%	
	Cloud cover: 8/8	8/8	
	Wind: None	None	
	Precipitation: None	None	

3.2 Surveyors

Surveys carried out by Andrew Bird BSc. (Hons.) Head of Ecology: Astute Ecology. Bat Licence Number: 2017-27866-CLS-CLS, David Gibbs BSc. (Hons.) Ecological Consultant and Katarzyna Kociniowska BSs. (Hons.) MSc. Assistant Ecologist.

3.3 Reporting

Where applicable, this report was prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management; Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. CIEEM (2015).

3.4 **Equipment used:**

- 2 x Echometer Touch with iPad Mini 4.
- 1 x Batbox Duet with Tascam DR-05 Portable Handheld Recorder
- 1 x SM4BAT-ZC with SMM-U1 microphone
- 1x Flir One thermal imaging camera with Tripod
- Torches, Thermometers, and Hygrometers

3.5 **Limitations**

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description and survey of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment during a 'snap shot' study.

3.6 **Report Lifespan**

Given the transient nature of the subject, we would consider the survey results contained to be accurate for 12 months.

4 Results

4.1 Survey Results

The position of each surveyor, equipment and any observed bat movements over a map are provided within Appendix 3. There were no bat roosts identified during the survey. No bats were seen flying into or out of the building and activity in the area was considered as low. Tables 2 and 3 below summarises the results of the dusk emergence and dawn re-entry surveys undertaken.

Table 2: Summary of Dusk Emergence Survey (01/05/17)

Surveyors	Record of bat activity
Andrew Bird (AB) David Gibbs (DG) Katarzyna Kociniowska (KK) Static Equipment: SM4BAT-ZC Flir One Camera	At 20:40 and 20:45 a faint common pipistrelle (CP) <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> call was heard by AB. Further calls of CP were heard at 22:00. A single CP was heard by DG and KK at 21:20. No bats were seen by DG and KK during the survey. No heat signatures were picked up by the Flir camera. The SMBAT-ZC correlated with the timed recordings by AB. No bats were seen emerging or flying near the building at any stage.

Table 3: Summary of Dawn Re-entry Survey (16/05/17)

Surveyors	Record of bat activity
Andrew Bird (AB) David Gibbs (DG) Katarzyna Kociniowska (KK) Static Equipment: SM4BAT-ZC Flir One Camera	Two brief and faint signals of common pipistrelles (CP) <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> were heard but unseen at 04:15 and 04:17 by AB. No bats were seen or heard by DG or KK. No bats were seen or recorded flying close to the building or entering the building at any stage of the survey. The SMBAT-ZC recorded the same call as heard by AB. No heat signatures were picked up by the thermal imaging Flir One camera.

5 Evaluation, Recommendations and Enhancements

5.1 Desk Study Impacts

The proposed development site is not designated for its wildlife interest at an International, national or local level. There will be no impacts to designated sites as a result of the proposed works.

5.2 Roosting foraging and commuting bats

- The dawn re-entry and dusk emergence bat activity surveys did not reveal any evidence of bats roosting within the building, and did not reveal any notable foraging or commuting areas on site.
- The proposed works will not impact upon any bat roosts or have any impact upon foraging and commuting bats.
- Owing to the likely absence of a bat roost within the building, no further surveys or mitigation is required.
- A Natural England bat development licence is not required in order for the development works to proceed.

5.3 During Works

- Care must be taken when removing any roof tiles, lead flashing and fascia boards, and if bats are found at any point during the development, work must stop immediately and advice sought from Natural England or a professional bat ecologist.
- If the development of the site does not begin within twelve months of this initial survey it will be necessary to conduct an additional survey to determine if bats are roosting within the building on site.

5.4 Site enhancements

- Site enhancements for bats such as; bat boxes for trees (Schwegler 2F) and/or buildings (integrated style bat box/brick) would be viewed positively, in light of the NPPF (2012) which seeks biodiversity enhancements and net gain through the planning process.
- Any new soft landscaping on site should ideally include a mix of native species as detailed in the Preliminary Roost Assessment.

Appendix 1. References

- ARBTECH (2017) Preliminary Roost Assessment: 50 Albert Road, Reading
- Bat Conservation Trust's 'Good Practice Survey Guidelines' (Rev 2012).
- Bell, S. McGillivray, D. (2006) *Environmental Law*. 6th ed. Oxford University Press.
- Byron, H (2000) *Biodiversity and Environmental Impact Assessment: A Good Practice Guide for Road Schemes*. The RSPB, WWF-UK, English Nature and the Wildlife Trusts, Sandy.
- CIEEM (2015) Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester
- Collins, J (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, (3rd edition), Bat Conservation Trust, London
- Mitchell-Jones A.J. McLeish, A.P. (2004) *Bat Workers Manual* (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservation Committee.
- Mitchell-Jones A.J. *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* 2004. English Nature.
- National Planning Policy Framework, (2012).
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>
- Treweek, J. (1999) *Ecological Impact Assessment*. Blackwell Science.
- Williams, C. (2010) *Biodiversity for Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, A Technical Guide for New Build*. Riba Publishing.

Appendix 2. Legislation, Guidance and Methodology

Roosting Bats

All bats in the United Kingdom and their habitats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

It is an offence to damage or destroy any bat roost, intentionally or recklessly obstruct a bat roost, deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat or intentionally kill, injure or take any bat.

Ecological Enhancement

In March 2012 the Department for Communities and Local Government published the National Planning Policy Framework. This sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity through the planning system. The document states - *opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged*.

Usually when reviewing how ecological enhancements can be implemented the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for the area is considered.

For new buildings guidance such as in the following will be used:

Williams, C. (2010) *Biodiversity for Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, A Technical Guide for New Build*. Riba Publishing

Designated Protected Areas

Designated areas are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) while others have been designated as having European protection status. Local authorities can also designate areas for nature conservation and in doing so may impose local authority byelaws to support local nature conservation objectives.

European designated status includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs) that preserve areas for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which provides protection for habitats and the species which these habitats supports. Laws stipulate that SSSIs, SPAs and SACs have to be maintained in a 'favourable condition' which requires efforts to preventing any potential impacts to these sites.

Appendix 3. Surveyor and equipment position plan

