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18 March 2016

Our ref: 855711 – University of Reading Rural History Centre letter report – Rev 02

Dear Imran,

ECOLOGY UPDATE FOR SITE OF THE FORMER RURAL HISTORY CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF READING

Background

RSK were commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) in relation to proposed demolition works of the Rural History Centre at Reading University, on the 24th September 2014. At the time of survey there were no plans to redevelop the site however it is now known that a temporary building will be erected on the footprint of the former building.

The survey in 2014 identified one of the buildings as a confirmed bat roost (Building 6) and other buildings as having potential to support roosting bats. In addition a *Fraxinus excelsior* (Ash) tree was categorised as high potential for roosting bats. The site also had suitable habitat for low numbers of nesting birds in areas of scrub and scattered trees (RSK 2014).

The following reports have been submitted for this site and provide a more detailed assessment of the ecology of the site prior to demolition:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report, Rural History Centre, University of Reading RSK 2014
- Phase 2 Bat Survey Report, Rural History Centre, University of Reading. RSK 2015

This letter summarises the findings of these surveys and the work undertaken to date in relation to the demolition of the buildings.

Work undertaken to date

Following the PEA further bat emergence surveys were undertaken on the buildings which identified Common and Soprano Pipistrelle's roosting in building B4b and a single Common Pipistrelle recorded roosting in building B7 (RSK 2015). The buildings were subsequently demolished under a Low Impact Licence issued by Natural England to Wildwood Ecology in October 2015. No bats were found during the demolition. The Ash



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tree was inspected through tree climbing aerial survey and one emergence survey on the 8th and 30th October 2014 and no evidence of bats was found. This tree was subsequently felled.

All vegetation clearance was undertaken outside of the nesting bird season to protect birds during the sensitive nesting period.

Current situation on site

The buildings have been demolished and the tree with roosting potential has been felled resulting in no features with potential for roosting bats remaining on the site. In addition all the vegetation has been cleared and therefore it is unlikely that there will be any features of ecological interest remaining on site.

Further Actions

During construction of the new temporary building, no further actions are required with respect to ecology. However the building will be in place for five years, therefore it should be maintained to ensure that no opportunities are created which could attract bats to roost within the building (e.g. cracks or crevices, holes in soffit boxes). In the unlikely event that a bat is discovered during removal of the temporary building at the end of the five year period, all works should stop and an ecologist consulted immediately.

If you have any questions regarding this letter please do not hesitate to contact me on 07917 187520 or email csimmonds@rsk.co.uk

Yours faithfully,



Corin Simmonds
Principal Ecologist

Reviewed



Louise Denning
Principal Ecologist