

To Richard Eatough

07th May 2015
Our reference: Garrard House

Dear Richard,

Bridgeway Consulting Limited was asked by Andmore Planning and Titan Property Developments to provide an ecological assessment of Garrard House (30 Garrard Street, Reading RG1 1NR) following communication from you regarding the possibility to have black redstarts nesting at Garrard House.

Black redstart protection, records, ecology and building potential

The black redstart is a protected species in the UK under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act* (as amended) 1981 (Schedule 1) which protects 'the birds, its eggs and nestlings from killing and injury, and damage or destruction to its nest.'

Black redstarts are predominantly found in the urban areas of England and are reliant on old industrial estates and brownfield sites. They need cavities in vertical facades (walls replicating cliff structures) and/or gravel mounts to breed and sparse vegetation for foraging (invertebrates) and vertical post to look for predators. It is also possible to get black redstarts on some town building roofs if those have a supply of gravel (for nesting) and soil where invertebrates are present (for foraging).

"In Berkshire, it is recorded in small numbers each year, principally as a passage migrant, although there have been occasional records of birds over-wintering, and it is a scarce and erratic breeder in the county. There are records from a wide variety of sites of birds on passage, but breeding sites are almost always in built-up areas" (source the Berkshire Bird Atlas). A few pairs of black redstarts are known to breed on Reading Town Centre rooftops and there are records of black redstart 90m south-west and 270m south of Garrard House dating from 2005.

Based on the photographs provided by Stephen Birrell (Andmore Planning) on 01st and 07th May 2015 as well as phone conversation about the rooftop condition, it is considered unlikely that Garrard House main rooftop would have been used by black redstarts as:

- The rooftop comprised of concrete slabs and buildings (before demolition) without gravel or rubble piles and as such black redstarts would have been unlikely to be breeding there due to the absence of suitable habitats. From the further away pictures, it appeared that there were possible post-demolition rubble piles on the rooftop however, close up pictures of the area showed the rooftop to be clear of rubble and gravel with the concrete slabs intact; and,
- The absence of soil material makes it highly unlikely that an invertebrate population is present on the rooftop and as such, the rooftop would have been unlikely to be used by black redstarts for foraging.

Photos provided for the production of this letter are shown at the end of the letter.

Bat protection, records, ecology and building potential

In England, all bat species and their roosts are legally protected (Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended); the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000; the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006); and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010)) against:

- Deliberate capture, injury or killing of a bat;
- Intentional or reckless disturbance a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats;
- Damaging or destroying a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time); and,
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

Bats can be found roosting in buildings (inside the buildings and/or gaps/cracks in walls, tiles...), caves and trees. Records of bat species around Garrard House include Daubenton's, noctule, common and soprano pipsitrelle bats with the closest (soprano pipsitrelle) recorded 110m east of the site.

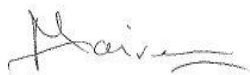
Garrard House was assessed at street level and the building appeared to be in good conditions with no obvious cracks/crevices which could be used by bats. Based on this assessment, it was found to be of negligible bat roosting potential.

Limitations

The building adjacent to Garrard House was surveyed on 17th April 2015 but Garrard House itself was only assessed from street level (with more attention paid to the eastern facade as it was the one which could have been impacted by the development of the building located at 29 – 35 Station Road). The above assessment of the rooftop potential by breeding black redstart was based on photographs of the rooftop after building demolition and phone conversation only. This letter is meant to provide information about black redstart and bat's ecology and features they need when breeding/nesting/roosting/foraging compared with Garrard House features but it does not replace an ecological survey.

If you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me,

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sophie Mairesse", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sophie Mairesse

Senior Ecologist

(m): 07442534850

Email: Sophie.mairesse@bridgeway-consulting.co.uk

Photograph of the rooftop used for the production of this letter (far away pictures):



Photograph of the rooftop used for the production of this letter (close up pictures):



Area which appeared to have had gravel/rubble pile on the far away photograph but no piles can be observed on the close up photograph.



