



Ref: A087545

Sent by email only to: darren.kennett@barratthomes.co.uk

30th September 2014

Dear Darren,

Land at Roundstone Lane, Angmering

Background

An Ecological Assessment was completed at the site by Aluco Ecology in 2011 (Aluco Ecology, 2012). A survey of the on-site trees for their potential to provide roosting structures for bats was also undertaken. During this survey mature oaks and ash trees present within the hedgerow running through the centre of the site from north to south were assessed. Most of the trees were considered to be still relatively young and free from damage and hence lack the associated potential access for bat roosts. Three trees required further detailed emergence surveys based on account of holes and other features providing potential roosting locations for bats. The nocturnal emergence / return surveys were completed by Aluco Ecology in June / July 2011.

No evidence of bat roosts was noted during the nocturnal survey work completed by Aluco Ecology in 2011, with bats generally present on site after sunset moving southwards from the direction of a number of older properties to the north, which lie beyond to the site boundary.

Although no evidence of roosting bats had been found to date, the Ash tree was still considered highly likely to support periodic roosting bats, and, as such an update bat roost assessment of this tree was completed in August 2014 by WYG ecologists, followed by a nocturnal survey in September 2014.

Site location and general description

The site, which is located to the west of Angmering, consists of three semi-improved grassland field compartments with boundary hedgerows utilised as paddocks for grazing horses. The proposed site is approximately 6.4ha and centred on OS grid square TQ075040. The entirety of the eastern boundary is bordered by the A280 while the western boundary is adjacent to Roundstone Lane, with residential housing beyond, and a single residential property with associated garden and a semi improved grassland field. Manor Nursery and Garden Centre together with a single large residential property and associated grounds is situated to the north while the entirety of the southern boundary is situated adjacent to Worthing Rugby Football Club.

Methodology

An update bat roost assessment of trees scheduled for removal was completed by WYG ecologist Emily Hare on 5th August 2014 as three years had passed since the initial surveys were completed. The ash tree (T20 on the ACD Tree Constraints Plan) still appeared to exhibit features suitable to support roosting bats such as woodpecker holes. As such a pre-commencement nocturnal emergence / swarming survey was recommended to determine the current status of the tree.

Consequently, a nocturnal bat survey was carried out at the ash tree (T20 on the ACD Tree Constraints Plan) with features considered suitable to support roosting bats in September 2014, using two surveyors. Surveyors were positioned either side of the tree so that all features could be viewed. The surveys were carried out in suitable weather conditions (i.e. not during heavy rain, low temperatures or strong winds) as



recommended within the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines* (Hundt, 2012).

In order to detect any bat activity each surveyor was equipped with a 'Bat Box Duet' bat detector with an MP3 recorder attached. This allowed all ultrasonic frequencies to be monitored and recorded simultaneously for later analyses.

The purpose of the nocturnal surveys was to determine whether bats were roosting within the ash tree (T20) scheduled for removal at the time of the survey, and if so, to identify which species and their abundance. The tree was subject to one dusk emergence and one dawn re-entry survey. The dusk emergence survey commenced approximately thirty minutes before sunset and lasted for approximately one and a half hours after sunset. During the dawn return survey, approximately one and half hours before sunrise, the surveyors returned to the positions used for the emergence survey (from the previous night) and remained in position until after sunrise, to determine if any bats were returning to the tree.

Table 1. Weather conditions during nocturnal bat surveys

Date	Dusk / Dawn times	Survey Time(s)	Weather
17/09/2014	19:12	18:42 – 20:42	19°C; 100% cloud cover; light breeze; nil precipitation
18/09/2014	06:40	05:10 – 06:40	13°C; 0% cloud cover; light breeze; nil precipitation

Limitations

The nocturnal survey was completed during towards the end of the optimal survey season, however the survey was completed in ideal weather conditions, and hence the survey is considered to be reliable. Access was possible to view all aspects of the tree as surveyors were positioned on both side of the tree. Bats are a highly mobile species, and surveys provide a snap shot of bat activity at the time of the survey.

Results

17/08/2014: Dusk Emergence

During the dusk emergence survey no bats were seen to emerge from the tree. There was very little activity as both surveyors heard one bat only which was a common pipistrelle which was heard but not seen by both surveyors at approximately 20:24 which was approximately an hour and 12 minutes after sunset.

18/08/2014: Dawn Emergence

During the dawn return survey no bats were seen returning to the tree. There was very little activity heard by the surveyors. One *Myotis* bat considered most likely to be a whiskered / Brandt's was heard but not seen at approximately 05:14.

Summary of survey results:

Two species of bat comprising common pipistrelle and a *Myotis* bat considered most likely to be a whiskered / Brandt's were recorded during the surveys. There was generally a low level of bat activity recorded at the site and no bats were recorded emerging from or returning to the tree surveyed.



The surveys were carried out during the optimal survey season, during highly favourable conditions for carrying out bat surveys, with temperatures only falling to 13°C overnight. The low level of bat activity recorded is an indication that the site is of low value to bats.

Conclusion

No bats were confirmed to be roosting within the mature ash tree (T20) during the nocturnal emergence / return surveys completed on 17th and 18th September 2014. In addition very little bat activity was noticed in proximity to the tree line in which the tree is situated. It is considered therefore that removal of the tree can proceed without impacts to roosting bats.

Please note that the findings of this report are valid only for one year and should removal of T20 not occur within this period, then further bat assessment is recommended. In the unlikely event that a bat is encountered during the removal of the tree, it is recommended that all works cease and a suitably qualified and licensed bat ecologist is contacted for advice.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Hare
Consultant Ecologist

Tamsin Clark MCIEEM
Associate Ecologist

References

Aluco Ecology (2012). Ecological Assessment, Land at Roundstone Lane, Angmering.

Hundt (2012). *Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines 2nd Edition*, Bat Conservation Trust, London.