

14 December 2020

Dear Chris Barker,

Re: The Breakers, 29 Tamarisk Way East Preston, West Sussex BN16 2TE

A preliminary roost assessment walkover was carried out by Natalie Evans (Natural England Bat licence number Bat Licence 2018-37888-CLS-CLS) on 09/12/20 to assess the suitability of the structures on site for roosting bats following completion of the proposed plans. Bat Conservation Trust best practice guidelines have been followed throughout.

An inspection of the loft voids was not possible on the day, but previous inspections have revealed no evidence of bat use, and generally poor suitability for void dwelling species.

The development proposal is described as - *removal and reconstruction of an existing western single storey wing which will continue to contain a log store, mower tractor store and gardeners w.c. and the removal and rebuilding of a pool house, with vegetable and quite garden between, combined with a new secure garage for three cars and in increase in depth to an existing garage. This application includes proposed replacement windows, a proposed rebuilt southern rear garden balcony and change of roof covering.*

The site is located at grid reference TQ06460152.

A desk study has been carried out using the Magic database. There are no priority habitats within impact distance of the site, and there have been no EPSLs granted within 1km. The landscape has limited value for bats, with the mature garden habitats providing the most valuable commuting and foraging resources in the area. The coastal location will reduce the likelihood of bat roosting in the most windswept locations, and only the hardier pipistrelle species are likely to be present.

Summary

B1 dwelling and attached extension

The main dwelling is considered to have moderate habitat value for crevice dwelling bats overall. This is mostly attributed to the clay hanging tiles on the northern elevation (moderate suitability), but also gaps under the eaves, under barge boards and around dormer windows (low suitability). The hanging tiles will be retained as a traditional feature on the building.

These features are unlikely to support high conservation value roosts due their size and location, and if bats are present it would only likely be small non-breeding roosts of common or soprano pipistrelles. These species are tolerant of more exposed coastal conditions and are known to be present locally. The properties either side of The Breakers have high habitat value for bats as they are covered with hanging tiles. These buildings are more likely roost sites for any bat populations present in the area, and although the presence of bat roosts in the survey building cannot be completely ruled out, the likelihood of presence is low when taken in the context of the surrounding properties and limited resources in the local landscape.

The potential impacts to bats as a result of the development are as follows:

- Disturbance of roost sites under hanging tiles – low risk
- Destruction of roost sites under eaves– low risk
- Destruction of roost sites around dormer windows– low risk
- Killing or injury of bats– low risk

Due to the low risk of the development, it is considered suitable here to take a precautionary approach. To delay an application until summer 2021 by having to wait for a single dusk emergence survey to be carried out on a single building categorised as 'low roost suitability' is considered disproportionate to the risk of harm to bats. Instead, the roof works must be carried out when bats are unlikely to be present: restricted to the period of October-April, and must be supervised by a suitably qualified and bat licensed ecologist. This approach would prevent any disturbance of bats in potential roost sites under hanging tiles, and reduce risk to a degree small enough to be considered proportionate. The ecologist will check all suitable roosting areas under the eaves and in the loft voids using a torch and endoscope immediately prior to roof removal. If any bats or evidence of recent bat use is found then the work will need to cease until a full suite of emergence and re-entry surveys has been carried out and an EPSM licence obtained where necessary.

The above methodology can be secured through a suitably worded planning condition such as 'The roof works will be carried out as per the recommendations in the Arbtech report dated December 2020. The works will be supervised by a suitably qualified and bat licenced ecologist, and if any evidence of bats is found then work must stop and a full suite of bat emergence and re-entry surveys will be carried out, and a European protected species licence will be obtained from Natural England before the works can continue. A record of the works and any bat evidence found will be kept by the ecologist and will be submitted to the council for approval prior to occupation.'

Outbuildings

The outbuildings on site have negligible habitat value for bats and any works to these buildings can proceed with no risk to bats or bat roosts.

Survey photographs



Photo 1: northern elevation of the building. Red arrows indicate location of suitable roosting crevices for bats.



Photo 2: close up of gaps under the eaves running along the northern elevation of the single storey extension.



Photo 3: close up of the gap under the eaves of the northern gable end. The top eaves on this elevation appear to be tight fitting.



Photo 4: close up of gaps under hanging tiles on the northern gable end.



Photo 5: western elevation of B1, there are no suitable roosting features for bats on this elevation.



Photo 6: southern elevation of B1. Suitable bat roosting features indicated by red arrows.



Photo 7: close up of gaps at the corner of the dormer window which could provide suitable roosting habitat for crevice dwelling bats.



Photo 8: eastern and southern elevations of B1. Gaps are present along the lengths of the eaves on the two storey and single storey areas of the building and also under the barge boards along the northern edge.



Photo 9: close up of gaps under the eaves on the eastern facing, two storey elevation.



Photo 10: close up of gaps under the barge board on the eastern facing elevation of the two storey section.



Photo 11: gaps under the eaves and under purlins on the southern facing elevation of the single storey extension.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me via 07860951397 or ne@arbtech.co.uk.

A black and white photograph of a handwritten signature, 'N. Evans', on a piece of paper.

Author

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Bat licence: Natural England 2018-37888-CLS-CLS