



RE: Bat survey - The Old Barn, Ferringham Lane, Ferring, West Sussex, BN12 5LL

Dear Mr Fornieles,

18th May 2012

Azure Ecology was instructed to undertake a bat scoping survey within the grounds and property of the above address. The property is proposed to be developed from its existing use as a redundant workshop and associated buildings, into a residential property.

The survey was required to establish the potential presence of roosting bats within the building. If it is thought that the proposed development could potentially negatively impact any local populations of bats, necessary guidance and mitigation advice to ensure that offences are not committed under EU and UK wildlife law are suggested.

All species of bat occurring within the UK are European protected species, protected via The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations (2010) and also the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Therefore, it is an offence to kill or injure a bat or interfere with any roosting or resting site. A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time.

Survey Methods

The survey of the buildings and associated grounds was conducted by Ryan Walker BSc (Hons), MSc, MIEEM, CEnv (Natural England Bat Survey License holder: 20112966) on the 17th May 2012, following best practice survey techniques as outlined by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT). The interior of the buildings were searched for signs of bat use such as scratch marks, staining from bat fur, bat droppings and insect feeding remains (e.g., wing cases) as well as bats themselves. Externally, the buildings were surveyed for possible entry points, evidence of staining, scratch marks and bat droppings.

Results

The site consists of a traditional Sussex barn, with a modern asbestos slate roof; a modern single story annex with a bitumen sealed tiled roof and a modern single story warehouse, supporting a corrugated asbestos roof. The property is set within a redundant gravel drive/parking area and surrounded on the south, west and north by large residential properties and gardens and to the east by Ferringham Lane and St Andrews Church. Three large mature trees are growing to the northern boundary of the site – one native and two

non native deciduous species. The internal structure of the annex is sub divided into rooms with sealed roof voids. The internal structures of both the barn and warehouse are open plan with, no internal roof void. Internally the barn and warehouse are light and airy on account of two large roof lights allowing natural light into the buildings. The Annex supports a further four roof lights. The property is set within a residential area supporting medium to large gardens, with mature and semi mature tree lines offering good foraging habitat for bats.

The scoping survey revealed no evidence of bats using the internal structures of the buildings as roosting habitat. The internal structures of the buildings appear unsuitable for species such as brown long ear bats (*Plecotus auritus*) which commonly favor the internal structures of barns and building roof voids as roosting habitat. The sealed bitumen coated roof void of the annex appears unsuitable for both roof void roosting species and crevice roosting species such as the pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus* sp.). The barn supports tightly fitting modern asbestos slates, fixed to wooden roofing batons with no roofing felt lining, therefore significantly reducing the likelihood of the availability of crevice roosting opportunities for these species within the wider roof structure. However, the ridge tiles within the barn roof support small gaps between the tiles offering potential roosting opportunities. It is unlikely given the small number of ridge tile gaps and the subsequent small available area that the property supports a maternity roost and if is indeed used, is most probably as summer roost for a small number of bats.

The large native deciduous tree closest to the site entrance has a moderate potential of supporting crevice roosting bat species. The two large non native tree species closest to the barn have a low potential to support crevice roosting bat species.

Discussion and mitigation recommendations

The scoping survey has revealed no evidence of current bat use within the property. However, there are some structures within the site such as the large native deciduous tree and the small number of gaps between the ridge tiles of the barn, which could potentially be used as crevice dwelling bat roosting habitat.

I feel with careful planning and appropriate and proportional mitigation measures, the development of this property will have no potential lasting negative impact to local populations of bats. With the will of the developer this development could indeed enhance the roosting and foraging opportunities for the local bat population. In keeping with best practice mitigation guidelines for developers, as outlined by the BCT and Natural England, to enable the developer to stay within UK and EU law, I suggest the following mitigation/enhancement measures:

1. All alteration works to the structure of property are to be carried out during the summer months when roosting bats are at their least vulnerable to disturbance.
2. Prior to the commencement of any works two purpose build Schwegler 2F Bat Boxes: (http://www.wildcareshop.com/Products_Detail.php?ProductID=64) are to be erected within the native deciduous tree at the entrance to the site by a suitably qualified ecologist.
3. The removal of the roof structure of all buildings should be undertaken by hand under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist. If in the unlikely event that any bats are discovered during the roof removal process, the suitably qualified ecologist will transfer the bats by hand to one of the erected bat boxes.
4. In an effort to replace the potential crevice roosting opportunities offered to bats, four of the roof tiles on the most south facing part of the roof will be wedged up to provide easy access for bats to the space between the roof tiles

and roofing felt. The wedges will provide a gap not less than 15mm (approximately enough room to push an index finger under the tile) for the bats to use to access the roof. Access tiles should be positioned approximately half way up the roof where it does not often become too hot and there is less disturbance from ground level activity.

5. All external lighting needs to have downward facing baffles so that light is not directed upwards, which could inhibit the flight paths and foraging routes of bats.
6. The plan to replace the area currently occupied by the warehouse, into a garden and pond area will improve the number and diversity of flying insects within the site and will only enhance the foraging opportunities for bats. Preference should be given to native species when planning the planting scheme to maximize the habitat for insects. Leaving the pond unstocked with fish will again improve the habitat for insects and other native fauna.
7. Retaining the large native tree and felling one or both of the two nonnative trees with the potential replacement by native tree species or a native species hedge within the northern boundary of the site will improve the foraging habitat for bats.

If all of these seven points are undertaken during the course of the development I have no hesitation in stating that this proposed development will not have any adverse impact on the favorable conservation status of any local bat populations. Intern, the developer will not be violating any aspect of EU and UK protected species law. Indeed, if these seven points are adhered to the development will be positively enhancing the area as potential bat roosting and foraging habitat and will also enhance the site for biodiversity in general.

Should you need any further advice on the information provided above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Paul Whitby BSc MSc MIEEM