

Jane Wood
57 River Road,
Littlehampton,
West Sussex
BN17 5BN

28 June 2021

Dear Jane,

**Report of Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment at 57 River Road, Littlehampton,
West Sussex BN17 5BN**

You instructed us to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (also referred to as the; "PRA survey, report") at the above-named property. The survey was undertaken on 23 June 2021. My qualifications and experience are summarised at the end of this report.

As I have already discussed with you on site, the probability that bats are roosting at your site and you might engage the legislation that protects them by progressing your development without the benefit of further investigation or mitigation is extremely low. Consequently, I have no further recommendations.

My full report follows.

Aims

In a manner that is proportionate to scale, nature and intensity of the proposed development and its probable interactions with ecological receptors, specifically bats:

Survey

To describe the physical evidence and to evaluate the significance of features that contribute to or detract from the 'roost suitability' of the site, in the context of the desk study, and the proximate and wider landscape.

Evaluation

To describe the constraints to the proposed development as a result of the risk of harm or disturbance to bats (if any).

To set out any recommendations for further survey effort, where this risk is unacceptable or a complete understanding of how bats are using the site cannot be defensibly argued.

To inform any subsequent mitigation proposals in order to achieve a planning or other statutory consent, and to comply with wildlife legislation.

Methods

Survey

For the desk study:

To objectively demonstrate the presence of roosting bats or evaluate the likelihood of presence of roosting bats and offer an assessment of how they could be using the site, I undertook a desk study. This included review of all statutory and non-statutory designated sites, Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats and granted EPSML records for bats held on governmental databases (including magic.gov.uk) within a 1km radius of the site. I also made an assessment of the surrounding landscape structure, using aerial images from Google Earth and Ordnance Survey maps.

General:

I systematically assessed all features that will be impacted by the development proposals for bats, evidence of bat activity, and roosting or commuting habitat.

For buildings:

Internally, I made an inspection of the building, including the living areas of derelict or abandoned buildings and the accessible roof spaces of all buildings, using an endoscope, torch and ladders. I paid particular attention to the floor and flat surfaces, window shutters and frames, lintels above doors and windows, and carried out a detailed search of all accessible features within the roof space.

Birds:

I also made a note of any other ecological constraints observed during the survey. Commonly, this relates to the risk of harm to breeding birds, and the suitability of the site to support barn owls *Tyto alba*.

Evaluation

The evaluation that drives an assessment of likelihood is, by nature, probabilistic. The evaluation methodology I employed is described by (Collins, J. (Ed) 2016). and summarised in the table below:

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Evidence, likelihood of presence and significance of habitat features	
Possible survey findings	What this means for you
⇒ Bats ⇒ Evidence of bat roosting or activity ⇒ Quantitatively significant or qualitatively important features for roosting ⇒ Connectivity to high quality habitat for roosting, foraging and commuting in the proximate and wider landscape	There are probable and foreseeable impacts to bats and their roosts in consequence of your development. These impacts present a real risk of harm or disturbance to bats. In order to prevent this outcome and any criminal liability, further survey effort is necessary to appropriately inform mitigation and enhancement. Thereafter, a planning decision can be defensibly made in favour of the proposed development.
⇒ No bats ⇒ No evidence of bat roosting or activity ⇒ A small number of qualitatively poor features for roosting (if any) ⇒ Limited connectivity to poor-quality habitat in the proximate and wider landscape (if any)	Any impact to bats and their roosts is extremely improbable or negligible. Bats and their roosts do not present any constraints to your development. A planning decision can be defensibly made in favour of the proposed development without delay.

Limitations

None.

Findings

The findings collate the data of the desk study, the evidence of the physical survey and any other substantiation (such as the result of DNA tests of physical evidence collected on site).

Photographs with descriptions are only included where appropriate i.e., where they enhance the reader's comprehension of the relevance of salient features on site, or provide valuable context to the evaluation, foreseen impacts and recommendations.

Description of the site and proposed development

The site consists of a semi-detached two-storey building with an adjacent carpark. The River Arun runs adjacent to the west of the site. The building is brick and stone-built with a pitched and gabled roof clad in slate roof tiles.

The development proposals are for partial demolition of the existing building and a replacement apartment building. A planning application is being prepared for submission to Arun District Council.



Figure 1a: North eastern elevation of B1.



Figure 1b: South eastern and south western elevations of B1.

Site Plan

Figure 2: Proposed Plan (not available).

Summary of Desk Study

There is excellent connectivity to proximate and wider landscape features that could benefit bat populations by providing commuting and foraging habitat.

Summary of Physical Survey

There were missing roof tiles that bats and birds could use to enter the building. The external walls are in a poor state of repair. No evidence of bat activity was located internally or externally on the building.

Discussion

I have taken into account the findings of the desk study, the physical survey and made a qualitative evaluation of the habitat value at site and its utility to support roosting bats.

There is very good habitat in the vicinity of the site; however, no roosting features are present internally or externally on the building.

Conclusion

My assessment is that bats should not present a constraint to development as the risk of harm or disturbance is highly unlikely.

Foreseen Impacts and Recommendations (if any)

The installation of a Schwegler bat box (or similar) on the new building will provide additional roosting habitat for bats and link to nearby bat foraging habitat.

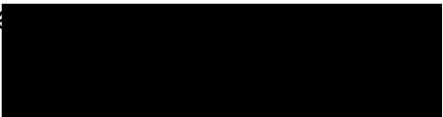
Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level, away from artificial sources of light, facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance.

References

- Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Garland & Markham (2008) Is important bat foraging and commuting habitat legally protected?

- Google Earth (2021).
- Magic database (2021) <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>.
- Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.

Report ends.

I trust this is sufficient for your assessment. However, if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me via 



Author

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Seven years' experience as an ecological consultant in the private sector.

Bat licence: Natural England Protected Species Licence Number: 2017-32515-CLS-CLS

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