The Hop Poles
2 Mount Pleasant Road,
Alton,
Hampshire
GU34 1NG

Phase 1 Bat survey

MARCH 2021

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Prepared by

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The contents of this report were correct at the time of the site visit. The report is provided for the sole use of the named client and is confidential.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consultant Chartered Ecologist Dr.Jonty Denton FRES FLS MCIEEM CEcol was commissioned to undertake a Phase 1 bat survey of the Hop Poles, 2 Mount Pleasant Road, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 1NG

This is required to support a planning application seeking to convert the existing structure into two separate properties with the erection of a new detached dwelling adjacent within the site.

The Daytime Bat Assessment / Phase 1 Bat Survey was undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2016).

There was no evidence of any bat activity within the buildings, but there are a couple of potential access points into the hang tiles on the south-west gable and therefore has low potential and a phase 2 emergence survey is recommended.

A phase 2 (two viewers will be required in this instance) should be carried out in suitable weather between 1st May and the end of September.

INTRODUCTION

I was contracted to undertake a Phase 1 Daytime Bat assessment of The Hop Poles, 2 Mount Pleasant Road, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 1NG.

This report presents the findings of the survey undertaken on the 1st march 2021, which is aimed at assessing the suitability of the structures to support bats.

Site Proposals

This proposal is to refurbish and divide the existing dwelling and erect a new structure to the north. The out -buildings will also be demolished.

METHODS

Phase 1 Bat Survey Methods

The Daytime Bat Assessment / Phase 1 Bat Survey was undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins 2016).

The Phase 1 Bat Survey was carried out on the 1st March 2021; and comprised of a daytime walkover of the site, internally and externally, to record evidence of any bat species.

Details of the survey methods are given below;-.

The workshops were investigated externally to identify potential bat access/egress locations and roosting areas such as gaps or holes between wooden cladding, roof tiles, fascias and soffits and to record direct evidence of bat presence such as droppings and urine staining. This was followed by a detailed investigation of all accessible internal spaces to record evidence of bat roosting activity such as droppings, feeding remains, live animals, corpses, urine staining and fur staining. The building was assessed as to its suitability for supporting roosting bats. The survey conformed to current Bat Conservation Trust guidelines (Bat Conservation, (2016) *Bat surveys for professional ecologists*: *Good practice guidelines* 3rd edition).

The details of the assessment criteria used to determine the ecological value of on-site attributes is outlined below. During the Phase 1 survey the assessment criteria are based on the potential for the site to support the species considered. However, in many cases Phase 2 surveys will be required to confirm presence /absence of any bat species and hence the importance of a population at the site, therefore the assessment of value should be considered as provisional.

Where possible, a provisional assessment of potential will be made although this may well require Phase 2 surveys to confirm status.

> *High Potential*- High potential buildings are those that have features highly suitable for use by roosting bats, including gaps around soffits, hanging tiles, extensive roof spaces etc. High potential buildings are often, but not always, buildings of more historic construction. Further Phase 2 surveys will be required to confirm the presence/absence of bats.
>
> *Medium Potential*- Medium potential buildings have a moderate number of features that may be utilised by bats for roosting, these may include loose fascias, roof spaces etc. Further Phase 2 surveys are likely to be required to confirm the presence/absence of bats.

Low Potential- Low potential buildings are those that provide limited bat roosting potential although some features that may be utilised by bats may be present. Further Phase 2 surveys are likely to be required to confirm the presence/absence of bats.

No/Negligible Potential – These are buildings that are extremely unlikely to support roosting bats due to the absence of suitable features. Further Phase 2 surveys are unlikely to be required for buildings with negligible potential.

Phase 1 Survey Timing and Weather Conditions

The Phase 1 bat survey was carried out on the morning of the 1st March 2021, which was clear cool day with 0% cloud cover, and an ambient temperature of approx.8°C.

Phase 1 Survey Equipment

During the Phase 1 survey the surveyor was equipped with 10x42 close focus binoculars and a high-powered torch.

RESULTS

Bats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, and also receive additional protection via The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations (2010) from intentional killing and injury and from intentional damage, destruction or obstruction of access to a place of shelter. 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 or not. Barbastelle Bats, Bechstein's Bat, Noctule, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared Bat, Greater Horseshoe Bat and Lesser Horseshoe Bat are also UK BAP Priority Species and SPI.

According to the DEFRAs MagicMap, one bat licence has been issued for a site within 1km of the workshops: 640m to the south-west near the Butts Junction.

Site description

The plot is situated in the town centre in a built up area surrounded by dense housing/workshops.

The land around the pub is a mix of tarmac driveway and artificial turf grass areas.

Main public house.

External assessment

This is a grade II listed two-storey structure with brick walls with a very low pitch double-span roof covered in slates.

The eaves and in good order with no obvious access points on the un-faced external walls.

The south-east facing gable is covered in close fitting hang tiles which hare in excellent order and have no openings (see figure 1).

Fig. 1. Hope Poles public house: Looking North.

Fig 2. South-west gable looking North-east. Red arrows indicate potential access points for bats.

The south-west gable is covered in sand-coated cement hang-tiles which have been disturbed by encroaching ivy in the past. These have failed in places near the barge boarding and house sparrows were seen entering (see fig. 2).

There is a single-storey extension to the rear. This has felted flat-roofed extension with plastic tight-fitting soffits. This has negligible potential for bats with no internal voids and

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

The roof void was accessed via a hatch at the South-east end and an opening in the plasterwork at the north end. The apex is only 1m above the loft floor and the inside of the roof is lined with softwood planting and felting. No light was visible internally and the void had extensive scaffold webbing filling the area around the under-eaves and apex. The horizontal surfaces examined were clear of

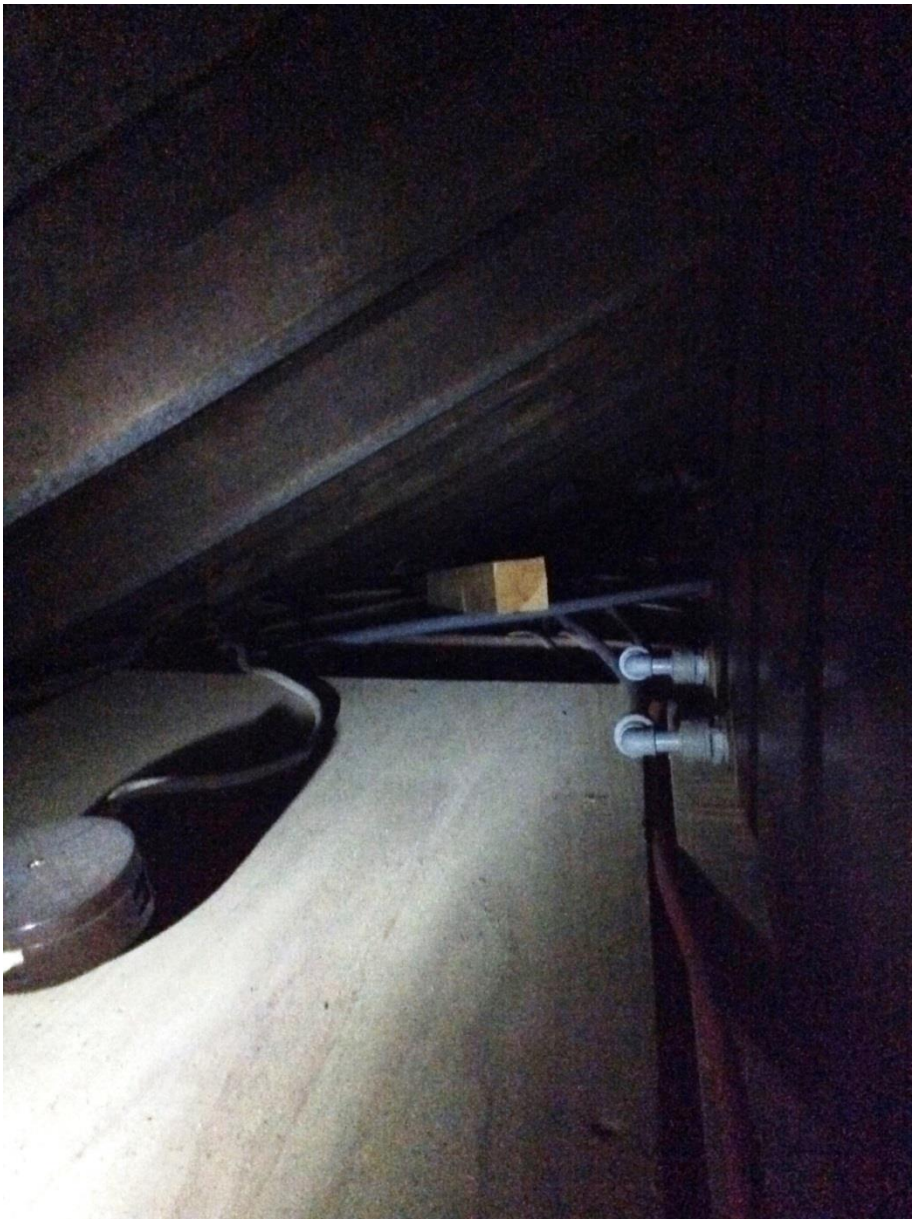

Figure 3. Loft void looking north.

Timber shed

The shed is faced with ship-lap planking on a wooden frame with an a sloping corrugated cement sheet roof, which overlaps the vertical faces forming a tight seal..

The planking is unlined

Figure 5. storage shed

EVALUATION, IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Protected Habitats

No protected habitats were present on site which is a mix of tarmac hard-standing and artificial grass on concrete.

Protected Species

Reptiles

Negligible potential for reptiles on site as there is no structured habitat.

Amphibians

Negligible potential for amphibians on site as there is no structured habitat.

Breeding Birds

There were no signs of hirundine nesting as there are no overhanging eaves. House sparrows were observed entering the under-eaves on the south-west elevation, and may well use it for nesting. Therefore the works should ideally be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season, which is typically 1st March to 31st August.

If any works occur within the breeding bird season the area should be checked, ideally by an ecologist, and if any nesting birds are found there is a legal obligation to protect the affected area with a buffer zone of 10m until after the young have fledged.

Phase 1 Bat Survey

There was no evidence of any bat activity within the buildings, but there are some potential access points into the under-tile space on the south-west elevation. Therefore this has low potential and a phase 2 emergence survey is recommended.

A phase 2 (two viewers will be required in this instance) should be carried out in suitable weather between 1st May and the end of September.

REFERENCE

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.