# **Bat Roost Assessment**

BE-1348.1

9 Tarn Moor Crescent, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 1LT



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Grid reference	SD 98427 52456
Report composed by	David Watts MCIEEM
Client	Mr T. White
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# **Executive Summary**

David Watts Associates Ltd have been instructed by Mr T. White to produce a Bat Roost Assessment of the building at 9 Tarn Moor Crescent, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 1LT.

The site survey did not identify any signs of bats within the building. No potential access points were identified within the roof void, and no features suitable for bats on the exterior of the building were identified. As such, the building is considered to have negligible potential for roosting bats. Therefore, there are no further considerations regarding bats due to any proposed development on the site.



# 1. Introduction

# 1.1. Background

David Watts Associates Ltd have been instructed by Mr T. White to produce a Bat Roost Assessment of the building at 9 Tarn Moor Crescent, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 1LT, hereafter referred to as 'the site'.

The purpose of the report is to:

- Determine if bats are present or absent in the building on the site.
- If bats are found to be present, to estimate the size and status of the roost.
- If necessary, to identify the requirement for further surveys, and for mitigation measures including avoidance of ecological impact, compensation and ecological enhancement.

## 1.2. Legislation and Policy

A summary of legislation and policy affecting bats in the UK can be viewed in Appendix 2: Legislation and Policy.

## **1.3.** Site Details

The site is located at grid reference SD 98427 52456 and is accessed off the west of Tarn Moor Crescent, to the north of Skipton. The site consists of a detached single storey property, its associated garden and driveway.

#### 1.4. Development Proposals

The development proposals are to demolish the existing bungalow on the site and replace it with a two-storey dwelling.



# 2. Methods

## 2.1. Ecological Data Search

Aerial imagery and other online sources were consulted in order to give an appraisal of the surrounding landscape regarding its suitability for bats.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) Magic Maps website and the Natural England website were consulted as to any land-based designations and protected/notable species within 2 km of the site.

## 2.2. Bat Scoping Survey

The site survey was carried out in suitable weather conditions on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020. The survey was undertaken by David Watts BSc (Hons) PGCert FdSc MCIEEM, an experienced ecologist who holds Natural England class licences to survey bats (2016-24731-CLS-CLS) and barn owls (*Tyto alba*) (CL29/00320).

The survey was based upon methodologies prescribed by Collins (2016), Mitchell-Jones (2004) and Mitchell-Jones and McLeish (2004). This involved an inspection of the exterior and interior of the building. Any structural features with potential for use by roosting bats were recorded and any suitable access points were identified. Where possible, features were inspected with a Ridgid CA300 endoscope. Any direct evidence of bats, such as scratch marks, oil stains, droppings and feeding remains were also identified.

Taking account of the structural features of the building and the surrounding habitat, the building was assigned a level of roost suitability based upon professional judgement (see table 1).

Bat Roost Suitability	Description
Confirmed presence	Bat presence confirmed during the scoping survey
High	Buildings that have many areas suitable for roosting which are obviously suitable for use by a larger number of bats including maternity colonies.
Moderate	Buildings with a smaller number of areas suitable for roosting, but still supporting feature that could be attractive to bats and potentially support maternity colonies.
Low	Buildings with limited roosting opportunities but which could be used on a sporadic or occasional basis by a low number of bats, but which are unsuitable for maternity roosts.
Negligible	Buildings which appear unsuitable for roosting bats due to a clear lack of roosting spaces such as voids and/or absence of suitable access points.

#### Table 1. Bat roost suitability and descriptions

#### 2.3. Nesting Bird Survey

An inspection of the building was undertaken for any signs of nesting birds, including nests, feathers and unhatched or broken eggs.



# 3. Results

# 3.1. Data Search

A search on Magic Maps (DEFRA, 2020) and Google Earth Pro (2020) found the immediate surrounding land use to be residential. Approximately 100 m east of the site, on the opposite side of Grassington Road (B6265) the land use is agricultural, consisting of fields divided by hedgerows and trees. Skipton Woods, an ancient/semi natural woodland is located 540 m east of the site. Overall, the site has moderate connectivity to semi-natural habitat.

DEFRA and Natural England (2020) hold no records of designated sites within 2 km of the site.

DEFRA hold records of four granted European Protected Species (EPS) licences for bats within 2 km of the site. These include:

- 2014-4326-EPS-MIT allowed destruction of a resting place of Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*). The start date was 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and the end date was 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015.
- 2014-744-EPS-MIT allowed destruction of a resting place of brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle. The start date was 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014 and the end date was 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014.
- 2015-6817-EPS-MIT allowed destruction of a resting place of common pipistrelle. The start date was 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and the end date was 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015.
- EPSM2012-4673 allowed destruction of a resting place of common pipistrelle. The start date was 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012 and the end date was 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

# 3.2. Bat Scoping Survey

The building consisted of a single storey building with a pitched roof. The roof was constructed of concrete tiles, with clay ridge tiles. All were in good condition, with no visible gaps. Soffit boxes to the east and west were in good condition, with no visible gaps. The brickwork was rendered with pebbledash on all aspects.

The ground floor was well-lit, with no suitable access points or features suitable for roosting bats.

The roof void was divided into three separate sections, divided by brick walls. The gables were constructed of brick, and were well sealed. The roof consisted of a queen post construction. The ridgeboard, rafters and purlins were in good condition. The interior of the roof was lined with bituminous felt. The majority of the this was in good condition, with the exception of the central section, where felt had been torn in several places. Rat droppings were observed throughout the roof void. No signs indicative of bats were identified.

#### 3.3. Assessment

The surrounding area provides suitable habitat for roosting bats, with moderate terrestrial connectivity between the site and semi-natural habitat. There are four records of granted EPS licences



for bats within 2 km of the site, all of which comprised day/transitionary roosts of four separate species.

No signs of bats were identified within the building and no features suitable for roosting bats were identified on the exterior or within the roof void of the building. The building is, therefore, considered to have negligible potential for roosting bats.

## 3.4. Nesting Birds

No signs of nesting birds were identified within the building.



# 4. Conclusion and Recommendations

It is not anticipated that bats are roosting within the building, and therefore no further surveys or mitigation is recommended.

In the unlikely event that bats are identified during development works, works should cease and a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted immediately.



# 5. References

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

DEFRA (2020). *Magic Maps* [online]. Available at: ><u>www.magic.defra.gov.uk</u>< [accessed 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020]

Google Earth Pro (2020). *Google Earth* [online]. Available at: ><u>www.earth.google.com<</u> [accessed 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020]

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J., McLeish, A.P. (2004). *Bat Workers Manual*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Natural England (2020). *Designated Sites View* [online]. Available at: ><u>www.designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk</u>< [accessed 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020]



Appendix 1: Photographs



Plate 1: East aspect



Plate 2: North aspect





Plate 3: West aspect



Plate 4: South aspect





Plate 5: Roof void, north gable



Plate 6: Roof void, mid section





Plate 7: Roof void, south gable



Appendix 2: Legislation & Policy

# Legislation

All bat species are protected under Schedule II of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations makes it an offence to kill, capture or damage a bat, or to destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat. Any development which compromises the protection afforded to bats under the regulations will require a European Protected Species License from Natural England.

All British bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, extended by the Rights of Way Act (2000), making an offence to deliberately or recklessly:

- Injure, kill or capture a bat.
- Disturb a bat (whether in a roost or not).
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen of a bat.
- Destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for protection by a bat species.
- Sell, barter or exchange a bat.

## Policy

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) includes a list of 943 national priority species and 56 habitats of principal importance, with all species and habitats having specific action plans defining the measures required to ensure their conservation. Although the UKBAP has since been superseded by the UK-Post 2010 Biodiversity Framework and a focus on County Biodiversity Plans, it remains a useful point of reference.

Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 required that any public bodies take into consideration any species and habitats listed in the UKBAP when implementing their duty and exercising any normal functions.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should aim to protect or enhance biodiversity and conservation interests, and where possible any development should aim to increase net gains in biodiversity.

