

Mr. M. Probert
Primrose Barn,
Littleon Lane,
Winford,
Bristol BS40 8HF

19 March 2021

Dear Mr. M. Probert,

Report of Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment at Agriculture Barn, Dundry Lane, Dundry, Bristol, BS41 8JF

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 11 March 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:

Evidence, likelihood of presence and significance of habitat features	
Possible survey findings	What this means for you
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ 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 	<p>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.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ 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) 	<p>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.</p>

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 barn located on agricultural land. The barn is built from corrugated metal sheeting and has a pitched and gabled roof. The barn is open-sided and has large sliding doors on the south western elevation.

The development proposals are for a barn conversion. A planning application is being prepared for submission to North Somerset Council.



Figure 1a: South western elevation of B1.



Figure 1b: North eastern elevation of B1.

Site Plan

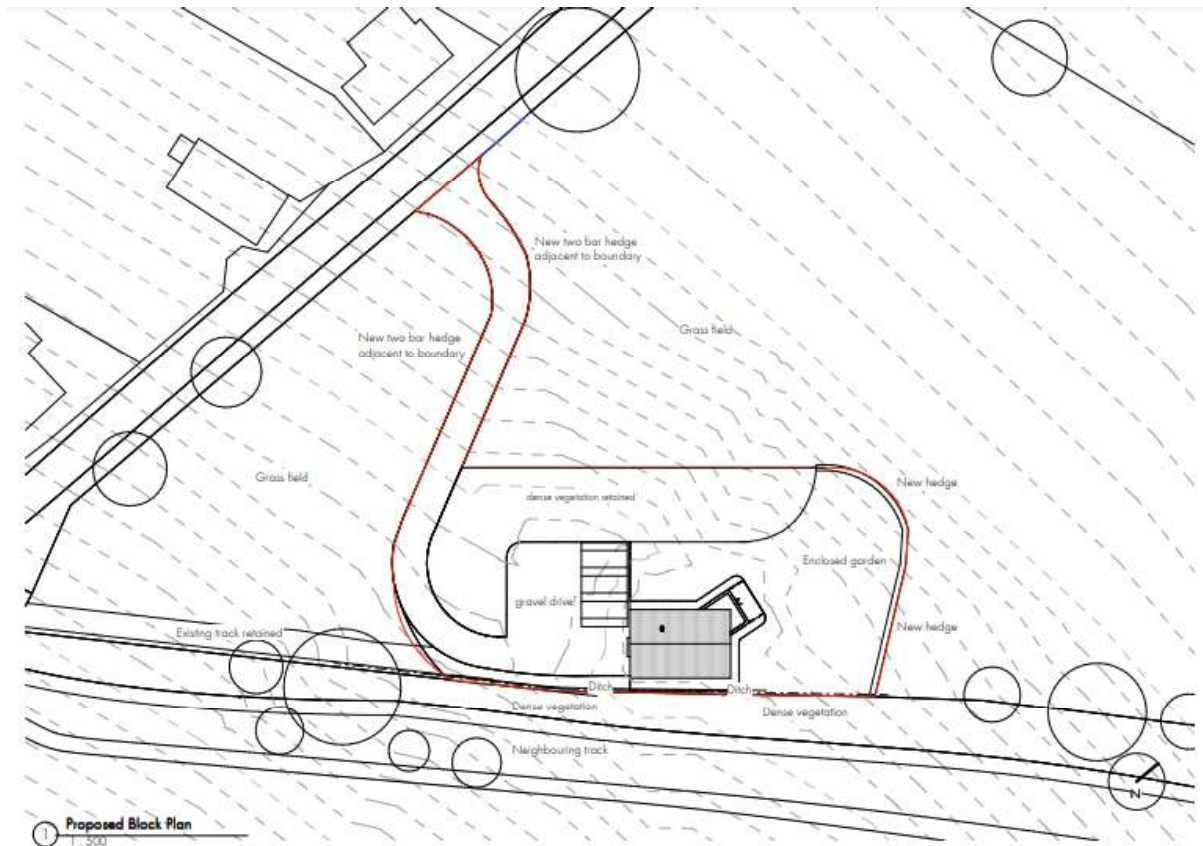


Figure 2: Proposed Plan

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

The barn is in very good condition. No suitable roosting features were located internally or externally on the survey building and no evidence of bat activity was found.

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 good habitat in the vicinity of the site; however, no roosting features are present 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)

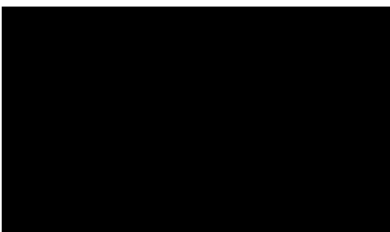
None.

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 07872127684 or joeslade@arbtech.co.uk.



Author

Joe Slade BSc (Hons), Senior Consultant

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

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

Terms and Conditions of Use

Arbtech Consulting Ltd has prepared this report for the sole use of the above-named client or their agents in accordance with our General Terms and Conditions, under which our services are performed. It is expressly stated that no other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or any other services provided by us. This report may not be relied upon by any other party without the prior and express written agreement of Arbtech Consulting Ltd. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based upon information provided by third parties. Information obtained from third parties has not been independently verified by Arbtech Consulting Ltd.

© This report is the copyright of Arbtech Consulting Ltd. Any unauthorised reproduction or usage by any person other than the addressee is strictly prohibited and may be chargeable at the absolute discretion of Arbtech Consulting Ltd.