

Peter Burns
78 Dawstone Road,
Wirral,
Merseyside,
CH60 8ND

15 March 2021

Dear Mr Burns

Report of Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment at 78 Dawstone Road, Wirral, Merseyside, CH60 8ND

You instructed us to undertake a preliminary bat roost assessment of trees (also referred to as the; “PRA, survey, report”) at the above-named property (also referred to as the; “site, building, structure”). The survey was undertaken on 9th March 2021. My qualifications and experience along with those of the reviewer of this report are summarised at the end of this report.

A previous PRA was carried out by Arbtech on this site in December 2017. It was concluded during this survey that no trees on site were found to possess any suitable bat roosting features. Due to the lapse in time between the 2017 survey and the proposed works, an updated PRA has been carried out to ensure there are no material changes in bat habitat on site.

As I have already discussed with you on site, the probability that bats are roosting within the trees on 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) 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.

RECORD was not commissioned to provide bat records for within 2km of the site. This was primarily due to the relatively small scale of the proposed development and lack of expected impact upon bats.

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.

I made a visual inspection from ground level using binoculars and where accessible and safe to do so, an internal inspection of potential roosting features using an endoscope, torch and ladders. If an aerial, climbed inspection of trees has taken place, I have specifically described this in the *Findings* section, below.

Evaluation

The evaluation that drives an assessment of likelihood is, by nature, probabilistic. The evaluation methodology I employed for the PRA is described by Colins (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 survey site consists of an area of bare ground with scattered trees. The proposed plans are for the construction of new residential dwellings. The site situated at National Grid Reference SJ 2753 8100 and lies adjacent to the existing dwelling 78 Dawstone Road. The previous survey was carried out on 16 individual trees, three groups and three hedgerows. Since the 2017 survey the site has been separated from the adjacent property (78 Dawstone Road), and as such only trees within the immediate site boundary were included within the scope of this re-survey, as only these trees will be impacted by the proposed development. The table below provides a summary of all trees included within this survey, which are referred to as the previously designated tree numbers in the 2017 survey:

Tree/hedge number	Species	Previous assessment	Updated assessment	Photo
T6	Pine <i>Pinus sp.</i>	Negligible. No PRFs present on the tree	No material changes since 207 survey. Negligible.	

T7	Beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Negligible. No PRFs present on the tree.	No material changes since 207 survey. Negligible.	
T8	Beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Negligible. No PRFs present on the tree.	No material changes since 207 survey. Negligible.	
T9	Pine <i>Pinus sp.</i>	Negligible. No PRFs present on the tree.	No material changes since 207 survey. Negligible.	

T10	Silver birch <i>Betula pendula</i>	Negligible. No PRFs present on the tree.	No material changes since 207 survey. Negligible.	
T11	Fir <i>Abies sp.</i>	Negligible. No PRFs present on the tree.	No material changes since 207 survey. Negligible.	
T12	Pine <i>Pinus sp.</i>	Negligible. No PRFs present on the tree.	Removed from site.	N/A
G1	6x Apple <i>Malus sp.</i>	Negligible. No PRFs on the trees.	Removed from site.	N/A
G2	Unknown	Negligible. No PRFs present on the tree.	No material changes since 207 survey. Negligible.	

Site Plan

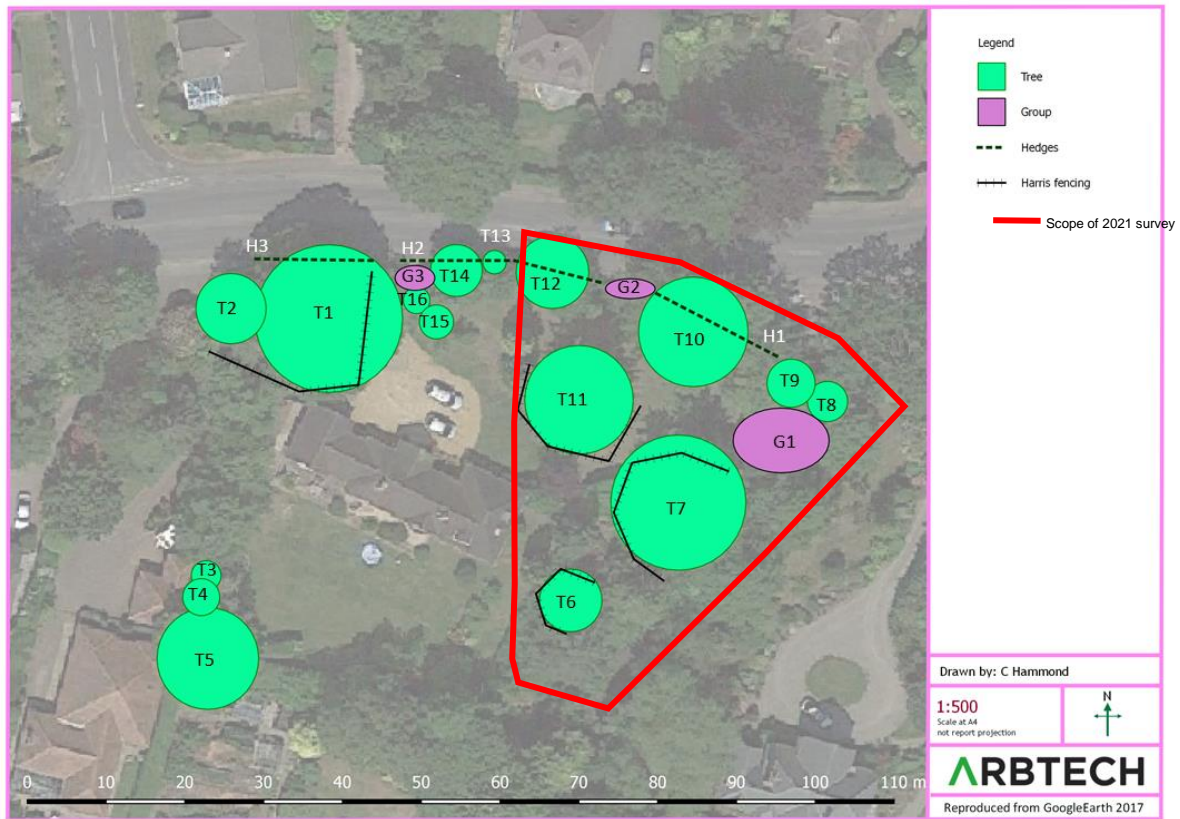


Figure 2: Site plan

Summary of Desk Study

A full desk study was completed within the 2017 report. A new desk study was completed to ensure no changes have occurred. There were no changes in the 2017 desk study. Please refer to the 2017 report for full details of the desk study.

Conclusion

My assessment is that there have been no material changes in the condition of habitat on site for bats and that bats should not present a constraint to development as the risk of harm or disturbance is highly improbable. All trees on site were found to have negligible habitat value for supporting roosting bats.

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) accessed on 15/03/2021.
- Magic database (2021) <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> accessed on 15/03/2021.
- 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 07711591700 or melreid@arbtech.co.uk.



Author

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