



BAT SURVEY REPORT

NEATHAM GRANGE

NEATHAM, ALTON

GU34 4NP



1. Introduction

1.

1. Bearfoot Ecology was contracted in August 2021 to carry out a Preliminary Roost Assessment of Neatham Grange, Neatham, Alton GU34 4NP. The Ordnance Survey grid reference for the Site is SU73984073.
2. The Site is located in the hamlet of Neatham, located approximately 2.4km to the northeast of Alton town centre.
3. The Site is situated within a rural area, with the River Wey forming the boundary to the northwest. A large property is immediately adjacent to the north west, this is the former mill. Areas of woodland are to the north west and south east. The A31 is approximately 75m to the north west, beyond the woodland.
4. The client intends to submit a planning application for a single storey extension with a sloping roof to the southwest wall. The top of the new roof will be beneath the first floor windows.



Figure 1: Site location red line boundary¹

¹ MAGiC.gov.uk

2. Methodology

- 2.1. The Site was inspected on 20th August 2021 by Brian Hicks MSc MCIEEM. Brian is an ecologist with many years of experience in commercial ecology consultancy and wildlife conservation. He holds Natural England survey licences for bats (2015-14880-CLS-CLS), dormouse and great crested newt.

Data Search

- 2.2. The MAGIC website was searched for any designated sites and European Protected Species Licences for bats granted within 2km radius of the Application Site. The search also included Impact Risk Zones (IRZ's) which the Application Site lies within.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 2.3. A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken². This is an external and internal inspection survey, the purpose of which is to assess the likelihood of bats being present and the need for further survey and/or mitigation.
- 2.4. A systematic search was made of the building and the ground, especially below potential access points where present. Such features include windows sills, windowpanes, walls, tiles, weather boarding, lead flashing, eaves, behind peeling paintwork or surfacing materials and under tiles, and other cracks and crevices that provide protection from the elements. Such features are known to be used by roosting bats.
- 2.5. The survey was carried out using torches and an endoscope where appropriate. Evidence of bat activity searched for include droppings, urine staining and bat corpses, and clean swept floors (which may indicate evidence has been removed).

² Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

3. Results

Data Search

- 3.1. The MAGIC data search revealed that the Application Site is within the IRZ of one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), however as this is a householder application no consultation with Natural England is required.
- 3.2. The closest designated site is Wick Wood and Worldham Hangers SSSI, approximately 2.5km to the southeast.
- 3.3. Two granted EPSM licences for bats are within 2km of the Application Site. The nearest is approximately 920m to the southwest and was for the destruction of a soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle and brown long eared resting place in 2012 (EPSM2012-4102). The other site is 990m to the west and was granted for the destruction of a brown long eared breeding and resting places in 2010 (EPSM2010-1770).

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 3.4. Neatham Grange is a grade 2 listed building of brick construction. The property is two-storey in the northwest with a pitched roof clad in clay tiles, and three-storey in the south-eastern part with a slate roof and clay hanging tiles. Several alterations and additions have been made over many years. A conservatory is present to the south. The upper level of the northwest part of the house is clad in clay hanging tiles on the south facing side which are bonded to the wall. Windows, doors and soffits are of wooden construction.
- 3.5. The tiles are all in good condition, with no visible gaps present. No visible gaps are present beneath lead work, around windows or soffit boxes. The hanging tiles on the south facing wall are bonded with cement to the wall leaving no gaps beneath.
- 3.6. The wall is clad with a Wisteria plant, this plant did not obscure any gaps suitable for roosting bats, nor was it sufficiently mature to provide any roosting habitat itself. It would be suitable however, for nesting birds, although no evidence of this was recorded during the survey.
- 3.7. The house is situated within a garden which contains several mature trees, and which is connected to surrounding gardens. This area of connected gardens and tree lines is

[Type here]

considered suitable for foraging and commuting bats. However, it should be noted that the garden is not affected by the proposals.



Photograph 1: Southern side of building.



Photograph 2: Southern facing side of building showing the numerous additions.



Photograph 3: Hanging tiles bonded to wall on the southern side of the building.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1. During the bat survey no evidence of roosting bats was recorded. Furthermore, the area of the building that is to be affected was found to be of negligible suitability for roosting bats.
- 4.2. If the wisteria plant is to be removed within the bird nesting season of March to August, inclusive, then a pre-felling check by an ecologist will be required.
- 4.3. As such, the proposals will have no significant effect on protected species. Lighting recommendations follow which would maintain the suitability of the gardens for foraging and commuting bats.
- 4.4. Artificial lighting will be minimised within the scheme and lighting will minimise light spill either into the sky or onto linear features (e.g., tree lines) of the site, or onto the building itself. Considerations will be given to:
 - Lighting will only be installed where there is a significant need, a minimal amount of light will be used, and lighting should be dimmed during periods of low public use;
 - Avoid the use of high-pressure sodium lights, white LED broad spectrum lights (Stone et al 2012³, Stone 2013⁴) HPS and short wavelength 'blue' white sources (Falchi *et al.* 2011⁵) throughout the Development Site.
 - No 'upward pointing' or bare bulb lights will be installed anywhere on the Approved development.
 - Using narrow spectrum lights with no UV content such as low-pressure sodium and warm white LED; and
 - Lights must have a focussed luminance on target area preventing light pollution into existing flight lines and habitat features of value to foraging and commuting bats.
- 4.5. The proposals would conform to Policy CP21 of the East Hampshire District Council Local Plan adopted in 2014. As a contribution to Biodiversity Net Gain, consideration should be given to the installation of a bat box such as a Schwegler 1F or similar, on

³ Stone, E., et al., Conserving energy at a cost to biodiversity? Impacts of LED lighting on bats. *Global Change Biology Journal* (2012)

⁴ Stone, E.L. Bats and lighting: Overview of current evidence and mitigation. University of Bristol, UK. (2013).

⁵ Falchi, F., et al., Limiting the impact of light pollution on human health, environment and stellar visibility, *Journal of Environmental Management* (2011),

one of the mature trees within the garden. A Schwegler 1B or similar bird nesting box is also recommended on these trees.

APPENDIX 1: Legislation

Bats and the Law

All UK bat species are protected by European and UK legislation: the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and amendments and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This affords complete legal protection to all bats and their roosts.

Offences:

- To kill, injure or handle a bat
- Disturb bats when they are roosting
- Obstruct, damage or destroy the places where bats live (this applies even if the bats are not in residence)
- Possess, control, transport, sell, exchange or offer for sale/exchange any live or dead bat or any part of a bat
- Keep bats in captivity