

16 May 2023

Attention: Jo Mitchell
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Dear Jo,

Teleris, Pamber Road, Silchester – Preliminary Roost Assessment

I write to you regarding the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) survey conducted of Teleris, Pamber Road, Silchester, RG7 2NU (national OS grid reference: SU 61754 62561).

Background and Proposals

Teleris is a residential property located in Pamber Heath, a village to the south west of Reading. The proposals are for the northern aspect of the second storey to be extended outwards to be flush with the existing ground floor, which will involve re-roofing the northern elevation. A preliminary roost assessment is required to inform the planning application.

Methods

An external and internal Preliminary Roost Assessment was conducted by Ecology by Design on the 20th April 2023. The assessment was based on the guidance in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016) and government guidance (Gov.uk., 2015).

The survey was conducted by Ecology by Design Ecologist Jo Sykes QCIEEM (Natural England Level 1 Licence 2021-10092-CL17-BAT) and Ecology by Design Assistant Ecologist Aoife Sweeney. Jo has over four years as a full-time ecological consultant and Aoife for over a year, with both surveyors having extensive experience carrying out preliminary roost assessments during this time. Conditions during the survey were mild, clear and dry (15°C, cloud 1/8 oktas¹, 1 wind Beaufort 2²).

The surveyors used a high-power torch (LEDLenser Lamp), 10x42mm close focusing binoculars and 3.8m telescopic ladder to inspect features of interest. All external areas of the buildings were

¹ Cloud cover is measured using the system called oktas. The visible sky is divided into eight and cloud presence is determined within each section. A value of one to eight is then assigned (1 okta being cloudless to 8 oktas being total cloud cover).

² The Beaufort scale is an empirical measure from 0-12 which relates wind speed to observed conditions. . 0- Calm, 1- Light air, 2- Light breeze, 3- Gentle breeze, 4- Moderate breeze, 5- Fresh breeze, 6- Strong breeze, 7- Moderate gale, 8- Fresh gale, 9- Strong gale, 10- Whole gale, 11- Storm, 12- Hurricane force.

inspected as well as internal areas. Evidence searched for included the presence of free hanging bats and bats within gaps and crevices, bat droppings, urine stains, rub marks, scratch marks and feeding remains. Where bat droppings were found, a sample was collected to enable DNA analysis to identify the species at a future date, if required.

Results and Interpretation

The site is bound by woodland to the north and heathland to the south. The wider landscape supports large areas of woodland and open greenspace, with residential and industrial development to the west. There are three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are located within 2km of the site, with Pamber Forest and Silchester common SSSI immediately adjacent to the south and Decoy Pit, Pools & Woods SSSI 0.57km to the north west. As such there is suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat in the vicinity of the building/property. A search on MAGIC returned eight European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) for bats within 2km of the site. The closest granted licence relating to bats is located 0.33km to the south west of the site and was granted in 2017 for the destruction of a resting place for brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*).

External inspection

A brick-built structure, which is single storey on the southern aspect and two storey on the northern aspect. The southern aspect has three separate hipped pitches, each with clay roofing, hip and ridge tiles (Photograph 1). The southern aspect has a second storey extension supporting hanging tiles (Photograph 2), with a long pitch on the eastern side. The building supports plastic soffits throughout.

Five potential roosting features (PRF) are present on the northern aspect; gaps beneath the corner hanging tiles (PRF1, Photograph 3), gaps between hanging tiles and window frame (PRF2, Photograph 4), access into the plastic soffit on the western facing section where two roof pitches meet (PRF 3, Photograph 5), a gap between hanging tiles and lead lining (PRF 4, Photograph 6) and a missing hanging tile on the western elevation where a satellite dish has been installed (PRF5, Photograph 7) which provides direct access into the loft space. No PRFs were identified on the southern aspect, the roof is well sealed and in good condition.

Internal inspection

The building has been extended into the loft space, leaving one small central loft void section (approximately 1m high) spanning the length of the property and a void around the peripheries on the building. All sections of loft voids are directly connected. All loft spaces are timber framed with a central ridge beam (Photograph 8). There is a combination of modern bitumen lining and older, degraded membrane where sections have worn away to expose roofing tiles (Photograph 9). The void

also supports insulation throughout. Approximately 10 old bat droppings were identified within the central loft void section (Photograph 10), indicative of pipistrelle species based on the size and shape.

Potential Impacts and Recommendations

The building has been assessed as having moderate suitability to support roosting bats due to the presence of numerous suitable external features, particularly on the northern elevation, with historic evidence of previous occupation by bats recorded within the roof void. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, the proposals could result in the damage/destruction of bat roosts and potentially the injury or killing of bats present within them. It is therefore recommended that two nocturnal roost surveys are carried out within the active season (May – September) to determine if bats are currently roosting within the building and if so, characterise the roost(s). Should bats be recorded roosting within the building during either survey, one further survey will be required to satisfy the requirements for the production of a licence. Following best practice guidelines, the building will require two surveys with three surveyors.

Yours sincerely,



Jo Sykes BSc (Hons) QCIEEM
Ecologist

Appended:

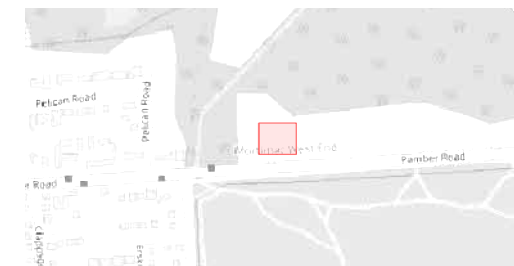
- Preliminary Roost Assessment Figure (EBD_2956_DR001)
- Site Photographs



LEGEND

○ Potential Roosting Feature

Location (1:10,000):



Project:

Teleris, Pamber Road

Client:

Nigel and Lisa Page

Drawing Title:

PRA results map

Drawing No.:

EBD_2956_DR001

Scale (@A3):

1:150

Central Eastings, Northings:

461750, 162561

Date Drawn:

12/05/2023

Drawn by:

JS

Approved by:

KL

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Site Photographs

Photograph 1: Southern aspect



Photograph 2: Northern aspect.



Photograph 3: Gaps beneath corner hanging tiles



Photograph 4: Gaps between hanging tiles and window frame



Photograph 5: Access into plastic soffits



Photograph 6: Gap between hanging tiles and lead flashing



Photograph 7: Missing tile behind satellite dish



Photograph 8: Example of loft void



Photograph 9: Example of roof with degraded membrane



Photograph 10: Bat droppings

