



Preliminary Roost Assessment

Larchwood, Sauchen

Grid ref. NJ698120

Survey Date: 24 October 2023

Countrywise

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1. Summary

Planning permission is being sought to demolish and replace this house. A Preliminary Roost Assessment was carried out which assessed the building as having low bat roost potential because of its construction, however signs of roosting bats were found. Further surveys and an European Protected Species license will be required before any work can proceed.

2. Objectives of the Survey

The objectives of the survey are to establish:

- The location of any roost
- The species and numbers of bats if found on the site
- The impact of the development

3. Legislation

All British bat species are listed on Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive, and fully protected through The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Amendment (Scotland) Regulations 2007) transposed in Scotland as The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Amendment (Scotland) Regulations 2007 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Amendment (No.2) (Scotland) Regulations 2008

These Regulations make it illegal to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture bats, deliberately disturb bats, damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts, whether or not bats are present at the time, and disturb a hibernating or migrating bat. The UK is also a signatory to the Bonn Convention, the Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe which also protects key feeding areas. A NatureScot licence is required for operations that will damage or destroy bats or their roost sites.

4. Description

This is a harled block and tile bungalow in reasonable condition but appears to have been empty for some time. It is located in a group of buildings close to the village of Sauchen.

There are trees surrounding the site, a small watercourse nearby and well connected to woodlands in the wider area providing very good bat habitat.

The owners propose to demolish and replace the building.

5. Personnel

The survey was carried out by Isobel Davidson who has held a roost visitor license for over 20 years.

6. Method

6.1 Desk Study

A data search was carried out for details of any known roosts in the area.

6.2 Daytime Survey

The building was searched carefully to identify any suitable entry holes and roosting spaces following methodologies outlined in Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines (2016).

All accessible surfaces and crevices and the attic were checked using a strong torch for droppings or other signs such as insect parts or dead bats.

7. Limitations of the Survey

There were limitations to the survey. The optimum time for carrying out bat surveys is between May and September when bats are in their summer roosts. This survey was carried out with that preferred timescale, however signs of use by bats are likely to be visible and weather conditions were good. It is possible to assess buildings and any signs found to determine the species and extent of use by bats.

8. Results

8.1 Desktop Study

There records of common and soprano pipistrelle, Daubenton's and brown long eared bats within 5km of the site.

8.2 Daytime Surveys

The house appears to be in reasonable condition though there are clear signs of water ingress on the northeast corner and the fabric of the building is very dated.

There is good access to the attic space. There is insulation on the floor of the attic. There are boards under the roof covering. These show signs of damp and the surfaces are mouldy.

Bat droppings were found on the West side of the chimney breast in the attic. There also appears to be water ingress in this area and there is plastic sheeting, probably to protect the ceiling below. There is no fireplace in the house so the chimney has not been in use for some time.

The droppings appear to be pipistrelle, possibly a small maternity roost.

A full summer survey will be required to confirm the species and numbers.

8.4 Hibernation Potential

Little is known about hibernating bats so it is difficult to fully assess the potential of buildings. No bats were found roosting in the attic or anywhere else in the building during this survey but it does have potential for hibernating bats as it is unheated and there is evidence of a summer roost.

9. Impact Assessment

Proposal: Demolish and replace the house.

Impact: Low/Moderate – a bat roost will be destroyed.

Risk: With mitigation, the impact can be reduced

Mitigation: A Species Protection Plan and European Protected Species license will be required once a summer survey has been completed.

10. Photographs



South



Southwest

Larchwood, Sauchen
Preliminary Roost Assessment



Northwest



Likely roost entrance



Attic



Bat droppings adjacent to disused chimney



Roosting area



Droppings in cobwebs