QUINBURY FARM COTTAGE, HAY STREET, BRAUGHING, WARE, SG11 2RE

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT REPORT – 6th APRIL 2022

1.0 Introduction

1.1 In April 2022, ACD Environmental Ltd were commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of Quinbury Farm Cottage, Hay Street, Braughing, Ware, SG11 2RE, hereafter referred to as 'the Application Site'.

1.2 The Application Site is located approximately 1km to the northwest of Braughing. The nearest town is Buntingford approximately 4.5km to the northwest. The grid reference for the centre of the Application Site is TL 39557 26143.

1.3 The Application Site is situated within a rural setting, with a main building and an agricultural barn building in close proximity. There is woodland to the east, a small area of residential dwellings to the west and open arable fields dominating the surroundings of the Application Site. The Application Site is shown in **Image 1**.

1.4 On 1st September 2021 Hertfordshire County Council approved a permitted development certificate (**3/21/1751/CLPO)** for a two-storey rear extension and two single-storey side extensions.

1.5 This application is for a new dwelling which will cover a smaller surface area and replace the existing dwelling (**3/22/0138/FUL)**. The new dwelling will be built within the footprint of the existing dwelling. A proposed development plan is shown in **Image 2.**

Image 1: Application Site location – Building shown in red.

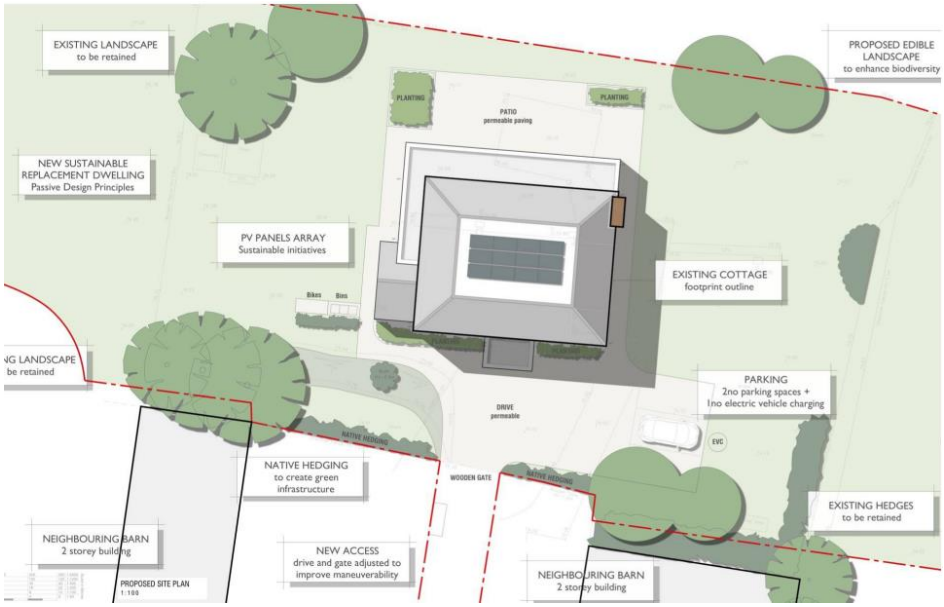

Image 2: Proposed Development (Proposed by Kirby Cove Architects).

2.0 Methodology

Data Search

2.1 The Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was searched for any designated sites and European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licences for bats granted within a 2km radius of the Application Site.

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2.2 The PRA survey was carried out on the 6th April 2022 by Brian Hicks MCIEEM, Senior Ecologist at ACD Environmental Ltd. Brian holds a Natural England Level 2 (CL18) licence to survey all UK bat species (2015-14880-CLS-CLS). Weather conditions were 10°C, overcast with a moderate breeze.

2.3 The PRA was carried out with reference to best practice guidelines[1]. 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 following equipment was used for the bat inspection:

- Elevation and baseline drawings of the building or structure.
- Binoculars.
- Powerful torch to illuminate dark corners from the ground.
- Ladders.
- Camera to record evidence and potential roosting sites.

2.6 Personal protective equipment (e.g., boots, gloves, helmet, mobile phone).

2.7 No access was available to the internal loft space. This is considered to be a minor limitation as no access suitable for bats to enter the loft space was noted during the PRA.

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

3.0 Results

Data Search

3.1 The MAGIC data search revealed that the closest designated site is Great Hormead Park SSSI, approximately 3.3km to the northeast of the Application Site. In addition, the Application Site is within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) of one SSSI, however, given the small scope of the proposed works (i.e., householder extension) no consultation with Natural England is required.

3.2 The MAGIC search also showed one granted European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence for bats within 1km of the Application Site. This is approximately 900m to the south and was for the destruction of a common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, brown long eared *Plecotus auritus* and barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* resting place and was valid between January 2013 and January 2017 (reference number: EPSM2013-5862).

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3.3 Quinbury Farm Cottage is a two-storey residential property of brick construction with a pitched roof clad in slate tiles. The roof tiles are in good condition and are close fitting (Photographs 1 and 2).

3.4 An extension is present on the eastern side with a sloping roof clad in corrugated asbestos sheets.

3.5 Several gaps are present beneath the soffits, however inspection revealed that the gaps are blocked with no access available for bats.

3.6 The building which will be impacted by the proposed construction works was considered to have negligible suitability to support roosting bats due to a lack of available roosting features.

Photograph 1: Southeast corner of building.

Photograph 2: Northwestern view of building

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 During the PRA, no bats or evidence of roosting bats was recorded within the building. The building is considered to have negligible suitability to support roosting bats. Therefore, no further surveys are required.

4.2 Due to the small scale of the proposals, it is not considered that lighting levels will change significantly from baseline conditions. However, where required for security reasons any lighting will be designed to minimise light spill into the sky, onto linear features (e.g., tree lines) and 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 use.
- Avoid the use of high-pressure sodium lights, white LED broad spectrum lights[2,3] HPS and short wavelength 'blue' white sources[4].
- No 'upward pointing' or bare bulb lights will be installed anywhere on the new extension.
- Using narrow spectrum lights with no UV content such as low-pressure sodium and warm white LED.
- Lights must have a focussed luminance on a target area to prevent light pollution into existing flight lines and habitat features of value to foraging and commuting bats.

4.3 As an enhancement it is recommended that integrated bat boxes are installed into the walls of the new building. Recommended boxes are produced by Habibat Ltd. These boxes can be constructed to match the proposed brick or render.

Conclusion

4.4 With implementation of the measures outlined above, it is considered highly unlikely that there would be any impacts on bats or their roosts; and that the proposed works will be in line with relevant legislation and planning policy.

[2] Stone, E., *et al* (2012). *Conserving energy at a cost to biodiversity? Impacts of LED lighting on bats*. Global Change Biology Journal.
[3] Stone, E.L. (2013). *Bats and lighting: Overview of current evidence and mitigation*. University of Bristol, UK.
[4] Falchi, F., *et al* (2011). *Limiting the impact of light pollution on human health, environment and stellar visibility*. Journal of Environmental Management.