

SPECIALISTS IN: HABITAT AND SPECIES SURVEY · ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT · MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND ADVICE

Wenlock, Shropshire TF13 6HY. ECO TECH Ecological Consultancy was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment in relation to bats and a check for nesting wild birds, in order to assess potential impact on, and legal obligations for, these species groups.

This report provides details of the method, results and conclusions of the requested assessment.

In summary, the works are understood to comprise stripping the pitched roof with tiles set aside for re-use, installation of breathable felt and with timber rafters as required, before re-tiling.

2 Survey Methodology

2.1 Method

General

The location of the building subject to survey and its immediate surrounds is shown on Map 1 below. The property is located at National Grid Reference SJ621003.

Preliminary Roost Assessment and Survey for Evidence of Nesting Wild Birds at 24 Sheinton Street, Much Wenlock, TF13 6HY

Bats

On the 10th November 2023, the building was subject to a preliminary roost assessment, including search for droppings and other signs of bat use (such as corpses or skeletons, oily marks from fur, and

The surveyor was Robert Mileto who has 30 years of experience of bat survey.

The survey was undertaken essentially as per the Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition), 2023 – 'the guidelines'.

Wild Birds

A visual search for signs of nests or signs of nests was undertaken whilst undertaking the bat preliminary roost assessment.

2.2 Constraints to survey

No significant constraints to survey were encountered.

November 2022

1 Introduction

With regard to the proposed re-roofing of the listed building at 24 Sheinton Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire TF13 6HY, ECO TECH Ecological Consultancy was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment in relation to bats and a check for nesting wild birds, in order to assess potential impact on, and legal obligations for, these species groups.

This report provides details of the method, results and conclusions of the requested assessment.

In summary, the works are understood to comprise stripping the pitched roofs with tiles set aside for re-use. Installation of breathable felt and with timbers replaced as required, before retiling.

2 Survey Methodology

2.1 Method

General

The location of the building subject to survey and its immediate surrounds is shown on Map 1 below. The property is located at National Grid Reference SJ621003.

Bats

On the 10th November 2023, the building was subject to a preliminary roost assessment, including search for droppings and other signs of bat use (such as corpses or skeletons, oily marks from fur, and feeding remains). Binoculars, a high-power torch and an endoscope were used as required.

The surveyor was Robert Mileto who has 30 years of experience of bat survey.

The survey was undertaken essentially as per the Bat Conservation Trust's *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edition), 2023 – "the guidelines."

Wild Birds

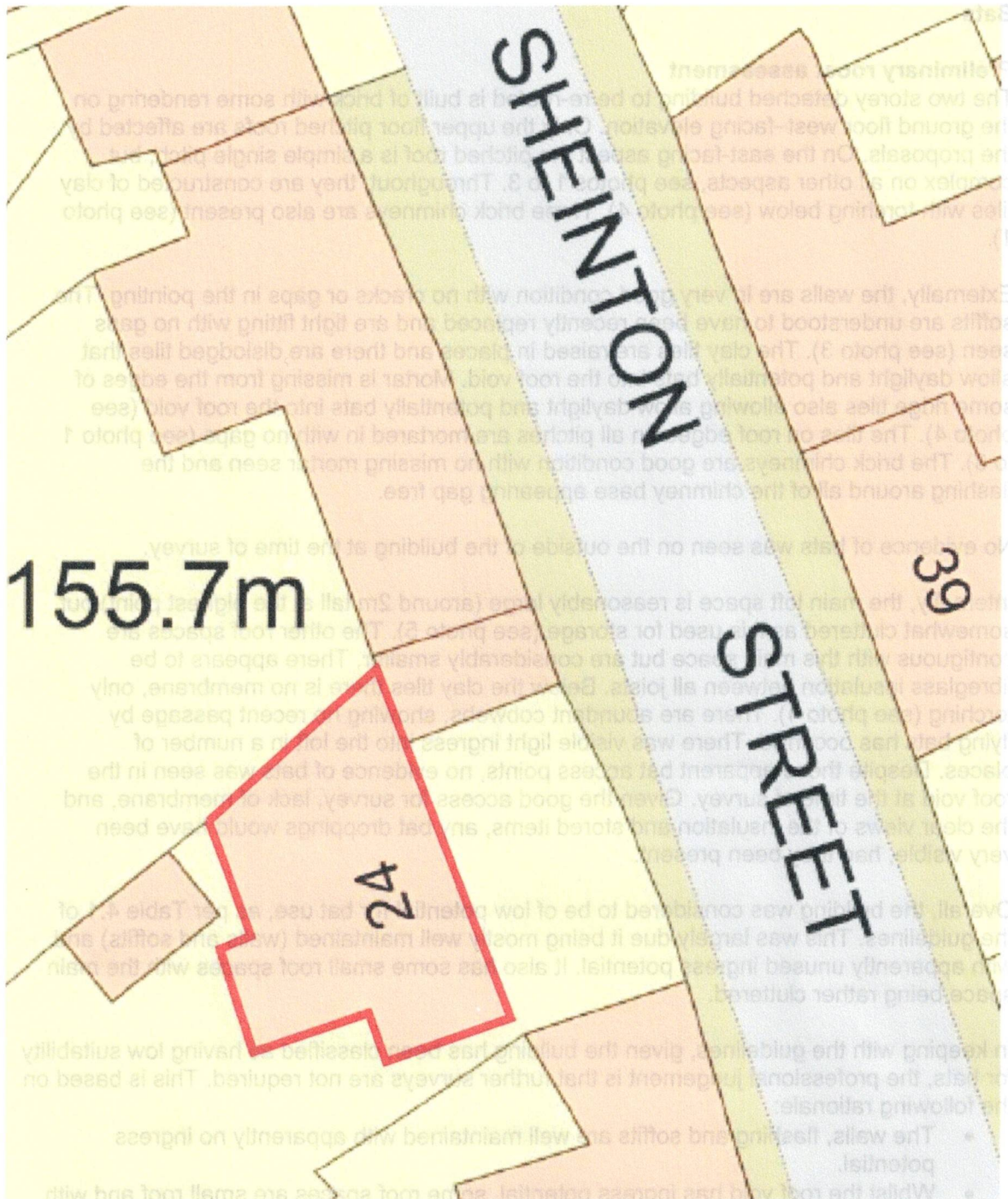
A visual search for nests or signs of nests was undertaken whilst undertaking the bat preliminary roost assessment.

2.2 Constraints to survey

No significant constraints to survey were encountered.

November 2023

Map 1 Location of the building subject to assessment/survey (outlined in red)



Crown copyright Lic no 100066662

3 Results

Bats

Preliminary roost assessment

The two storey detached building to be re-roofed is built of brick with some rendering on the ground floor west-facing elevation. Only the upper floor pitched roofs are affected by the proposals. On the east-facing aspect the pitched roof is a simple single pitch, but complex on all other aspects, see photos 1 to 3. Throughout, they are constructed of clay tiles with torching below (see photo 4). Three brick chimneys are also present (see photo 1).

Externally, the walls are in very good condition with no cracks or gaps in the pointing. The soffits are understood to have been recently replaced and are tight fitting with no gaps seen (see photo 3). The clay tiles are raised in places and there are dislodged tiles that allow daylight and potentially bats into the roof void. Mortar is missing from the edges of some ridge tiles also allowing daylight and potentially bats into the roof void (see photo 4). The tiles on roof edges on all pitches are mortared in with no gaps (see photo 1 to 3). The brick chimneys are good condition with no missing mortar seen and the flashing around all of the chimney base appearing gap free.

No evidence of bats was seen on the outside of the building at the time of survey.

Internally, the main loft space is reasonably large (around 2m tall at the highest point) but somewhat cluttered as it is used for storage (see photo 5). The other roof spaces are contiguous with this main space but are considerably smaller. There appears to be fibreglass insulation between all joists. Below the clay tiles there is no membrane, only torching (see photo 4). There are abundant cobwebs, showing no recent passage by flying bats has occurred. There was visible light ingress into the loft in a number of places. Despite these apparent bat access points, no evidence of bats was seen in the roof void at the time of survey. Given the good access for survey, lack of membrane, and the clear views of the insulation and stored items, any bat droppings would have been very visible, had they been present.

Overall, the building was considered to be of low potential for bat use, as per Table 4.1 of the guidelines. This was largely due it being mostly well maintained (walls and soffits) and with apparently unused ingress potential. It also has some small roof spaces with the main space being rather cluttered.

In keeping with the guidelines, given the building has been classified as having low suitability for bats, the professional judgement is that further surveys are not required. This is based on the following rationale:

- The walls, flashing and soffits are well maintained with apparently no ingress potential.
- Whilst the roof void has ingress potential, some roof spaces are small roof and with the main space being rather cluttered.
- Survey was thorough but found no evidence of bat use (or that any had been cleaned up) which should have evident, had it been present.

Wild Birds

Evidence of previous nesting was seen in a gap under a ridge tile. This is likely to have been house sparrow.

Photos

(cont)



Photo 1 – shows the east and south-facing elevations.



Photo 2 – shows the west and south-facing elevations

Photo 3 – showing the somewhat cluttered main
bird

Photo 4 – missing mortar from the ridge tile
allowing light and potentially, but ingress

4 Outline Legislative Background

Bats

The government advice regarding legislation pertaining to bats can be found at the following webpages: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bats-surveys-and-mitigation-for-development-projects> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bats-protection-surveys-and-licences> (accessed November 2023).

Therein, the law is summarised as follows:

“You’re breaking the law if you do certain things including:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill bats
- damage or destroy a breeding or resting place
- obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places
- possess, sell, control or transport live or dead bats, or parts of them
- intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it’s in a structure or place of shelter or protection

Either or both of the following could happen if you’re found guilty of any offences:

- you could be sent to prison for up to 6 months
- you could get an unlimited fine.”

Birds

The government advice regarding legislation pertaining to birds can be found at the following webpages: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wild-birds-surveys-and-mitigation-for-development-projects> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wild-birds-protection-surveys-and-licences> (accessed November 2023).

Therein, the law is summarised as follows:

“You’re breaking the law if you:

- intentionally kill, injure or take wild birds
- intentionally take, damage or destroy a wild bird’s nest while it’s being used or built
- intentionally take or destroy a wild bird’s egg
- possess, control or transport live or dead wild birds, or parts of them, or their eggs
- sell wild birds or put them on display for sale
- use prohibited methods to kill or take wild birds

...You could get an unlimited fine and up to 6 months in prison for each offence if you’re found guilty.”

5 Conclusions & Recommendations

5.1 Bats

It is considered that the survey undertaken adequately established that building is unlikely to currently be used as a place of breeding, resting, shelter or protection by bats (=roost) and has a low suitability for such use. Hence no significant impact or offence in regard to this species group is predicted if the proposal is permitted.

Given this, no mitigation is required. However:

- An informative may be appropriate suggesting due diligence by contractors during the works period. For example, in the very unlikely event that bats, or evidence of bats, are encountered during any part of the development, then works should cease immediately, or an offence may be caused. A consultant ecologist and/or Natural England should be consulted before works recommence;
- Serious consideration should be given to the use of bituminous roofing felt that does not contain polypropylene/polyethylene filaments. Such filaments can be pulled out by roosting bats and pose an entanglement (and this death or injury) threat to bats. Non-bitumen-coated roofing membranes are not obligatory under any Building Regulations. Ventilation, regardless of the roofing felt used, is still required (see British Standard BS 5250:2011). See <https://www.bats.org.uk/advice/im-working-on-a-building-with-bats/things-to-consider-when-planning-works/roofing-membranes> for more information (accessed. November 2023).

By way of enhancement and in keeping with local and national policies, one 'woodstone' bat box (or direct equivalent) should be provided in the locality of the application. An example can be found [here](#) (accessed November 2023). Further information about the erection of boxes can be found [here](#) (accessed November 2023).

5.2 Wild Birds

The survey undertaken established that the building has been used as a bird nesting site.

Given this, mitigation is required and the following is proposed:

- A condition or an informative suggesting appropriate timing of the works to avoid damage or destruction of an active nest (eg: work to commence in the period September to February inclusive) and/or due diligence by contractors during the works period. For example, in the very unlikely event that an active wild bird nest is encountered during any part of the development, then works should cease immediately, or an offence may be caused. A consultant ecologist and/or Natural England should be consulted before works recommence.
- If commencement in the timeframe noted above is not possible, it is suggested that the roof is subject to a survey for bird nesting activity by a suitably experienced individual, no more than 48 hours before works commence. If no active nests are found or considered likely, then no offence in regard to this species group is likely.
- One 'woodstone' sparrow terrace (or direct equivalent) should be provided in the locality of the application. An example can be found [here](#) (accessed November 2023). Further information about the erection of boxes can be found [here](#) (accessed November 2023).

6 Reference

Collins, J. (ed.), 2023: Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Photos (cont.)



Photo 3 – shows the south-facing elevation with an example of the recently replaced and thus tightly fitting soffits

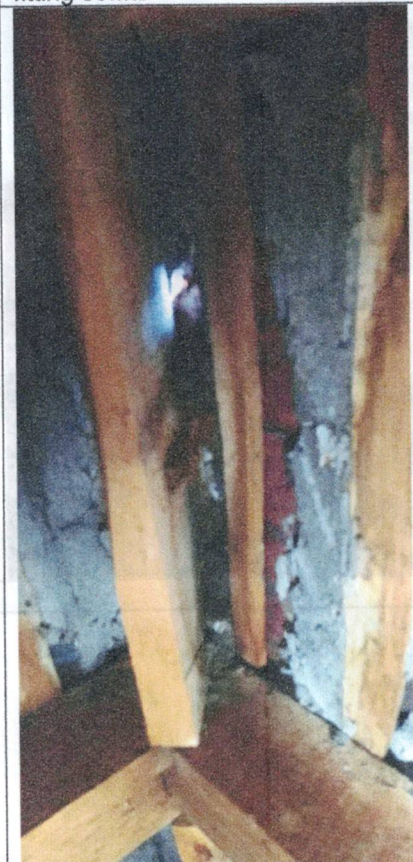


Photo 4 – missing mortar from the ridge tile allowing light and, potentially, bat ingress



Photo 5 – showing the somewhat cluttered main roof void