



PRELIMINARY ROOST
APPRAISAL

42 HODGETTS LANE
KENILWORTH CV8 1PJ

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Client: Mr Balraj Jagpal

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1. INTRODUCTION

Location

1.1 The site is located at 42 Hodgetts Lane, Kenilworth CV8 1PJ. National Grid Reference: **SP 26713 76189**.

Site description

1.2 The site is a detached, one and a half storey dwelling. Immediate habitats are of low quality for bats and include modified grassland lawns, scattered trees and shrubs. Adjacent habitats are dominated by improved grassland and arable agriculture with hedgerows and scattered mature trees, although more moderate habitat¹ can be found close by where small patches of deciduous woodland occur which are connected to the Site via local tree lines.

Scope of Survey

1.3 A planning application is being prepared to alter and extend the house and this will involve removal of the roof, although no plans have been provided. Martin Ecology was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Roost Appraisal for bats (PRA) in order to assess whether or not the proposals would impact them and find out whether or not a European Protected Species License (EPSL) may be required for the proposals to go ahead. This report details the findings of the PRA and makes recommendations based on these.

Legislative context-bats

1.4 All species of bats are protected under *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended by the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000*), *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* and it is an offence to:

- deliberately kill, injure, recklessly disturb or take bats;
- obstruct access to their roosts (or place of rest);
- damage or destroy bat roosts;
- Possess or sell bats unless acquired legally

1.4.1 Bats commonly use man-made structures to roost within and when undertaking building work in houses or other structures such as remedial work, extension, renovation or demolition there is potential to contravene the legislation outlined in 1.4.

Planning context

1.5 According to planning policy, prior to planning permission being determined it is expected that all survey work pertaining to protected species (and mitigation scheme if required) should be completed and reported.

1.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that development should enhance the environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

Licensing

1.6 The presence of bat roosts that will be affected by proposals that would trigger the above legislation (such as removal of a roof / roof tiles or demolition of a building) necessitates the application for EPSL from Natural England. Such licences permit activities that would otherwise be unlawful. Licences are only issued if three tests are satisfied, and these are:

¹ Source: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> checked 11/12/2023.

- there is no satisfactory alternative
- there are overriding reasons of public interest and,
- the favourable conservation status of bat populations is maintained.

Legislative context-birds

1.7 All species of wild bird and their nests and eggs are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended by the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000*). This makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; and
- Intentionally take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

1.7.1 Schedule 1 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* gives some bird species greater protection against disturbance whilst breeding (including barn owl).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Building inspection

2.1.1 A daytime visit was made to the Site and the interior of the building was searched for bats and evidence of bats (such as droppings, fur, feeding remains and roost exits). All accessible roof void sections were examined, and the inspection was made using a ladder and with the assistance of a one million candlepower torch and a Bosch GIC 120 C endoscope. All accessible potential roosting features (PRFs) where bats might roost were inspected for bats, or evidence of bats.

2.1.2 An inspection was made of the exterior of the building for signs of bats such as: staining, grease marks, urine, fur, feeding remains and droppings on windowsills and walls, or PRFs that might offer access for bats into the building (such as cracks and fissures on or around roof and ridge tiles, soffits, barge boards or brickwork). A one million candlepower torch, an extendable ladder, a Bosch GIC 120 C endoscope and binoculars were used to undertake the external inspection and all accessible features were inspected for bats or evidence of bats.

2.1.3 During the visit signs of breeding birds was also looked for within the buildings and at the exterior also. A photographic record was made of the site and some photos are included within Table 1.

2.1.4 Dean Martin (MCIEEM) conducted the survey work on 8th December 2023. Natural England bat licence number: 2015-10605-CLS-CLS.

2.1.5 The building was assessed along with local habitats and considered to show potential for common and widespread crevice-dwelling and void-seeking bat species. Google maps was used to make a general assessment of the Site and local habitats. The government website (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>) was checked for European Protected Species (EPS) licences issued by Natural England for bats within 2km of the Site which revealed licences issued for common pipistrelle bat, soprano pipistrelle bat, barbastelle bat and brown long-eared bat.

2.1.6 Constraints
None were identified.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Building inspection

3.1.1 The building was a brick, one and a half storey detached dwelling that appeared to have been built during the mid-twentieth century. The roof was clad with concrete interlocking tiles and included a flat roof dormer at either pitch. The roof was generally in good condition, showing no PRFs; the ridges and verges were intact and sealed and the fascia boards were also well sealed. Elsewhere around the structure, PRFs were discovered and included:

- A feature behind exterior felt attached to the chimney flashing at the south east elevation. This was closely inspected by lifting the felt away and the feature was full of old cobwebs, although no evidence of bats was present.
- At the soffit of the south corner of the house where rot had occurred. This was a large hole and the soffit was found to be wet inside and did not contain any evidence of bats. The feature had been stuffed with a rag to prevent animal ingress and tis had fallen inside.
- At the porch where the soffit had decayed. This left an opening into the soffit, although inside this was found to be full of cobwebs and no evidence of bats was encountered.
- At the north west gable where mortar had fallen from a brick joint. However, this was shallow and suitable only for opportunistic use by bats.

3.1.2 The dormer at the south west elevation was clad with UPVC and was well-sealed. The dormer at the north east elevation was clad with shingles, although these overlapped neatly and consequently this dormer was also well-sealed.

3.1.3 Inside the roof void it was found that the height was a depth of less than one metre and the roof was supported by a light weight purlin and rafter design. The roof was lined with fibreglass insulation and the ridge supported cobwebbing which suggested no disturbances by bats or other animals had occurred in recent years. The floor was covered in loft insulation that was covered in an old layer of dust although no evidence of bats was encountered. Beneath this was older material this was exposed by lifting the newer material, and no evidence of bats was encountered on this surface. Scattered mouse droppings were present.

3.1.4 The house was considered to show negligible bat suitability.

3.1.5 The garage had a flat roof clad with felt and was a well-sealed structure and had no bat suitability.



Photo 1 South east gable



Photo 2 North west gable



Photo 3 North east shingle clad dormer



Photo 4 Sealed ridge



Photo 5 PRF at soffit southern corner

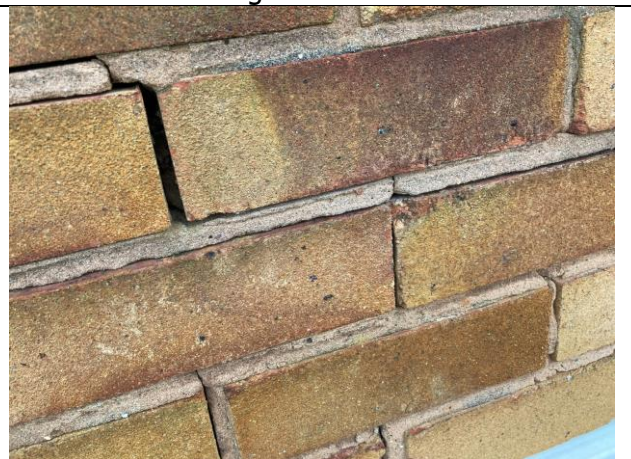


Photo 6 Superficial PRF at north west gable



Photo 7 PRF porch soffit



Photo 8 PRF behind felt at chimney



Photo 9 Roof void



Photo 10 Cobwebbed ridge

4. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 No evidence of bats was encountered either at the exterior or interior of the building, either in association with the PRFs discovered and examined, or the rest of the building which is well-sealed. The structure is considered to show negligible bat suitability, and it is thought that bats are unlikely to be impacted by the proposals and so no further surveys are recommended.

4.2 No evidence of breeding birds was discovered, although the soffit at the south corner showed potential for breeding birds. Prior to works commencing (between now and February 2024) it is recommended that the PRFs shown in photo 5 is blocked off to prevent ingress by birds in future.

Lifespan of this report

4.3 Should one-year elapse from this survey being carried out without the proposals going ahead, a repeat 'top up' bat inspection will be required to obtain more up to date information on the bat roosts / breeding birds at the Site.

5. RELEVANT LITERATURE

Bat Conservation Trust (2023) *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines*.

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