



PRELIMINARY ROOST
APPRAISAL

10 BINSWOOD AVENUE
LEAMINGTON SPA CV32 5SQ

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1. INTRODUCTION

Location

1.1 The site is located at 10 Binswood Avenue, Leamington Spa CV32 5SQ. National Grid Reference: **SP 31509 66504**

Site description

1.2 The site is an end-terrace three storey house with an attached and converted single storey outbuilding. Immediate habitats are of low quality for bats and include suburban housing that support modified grassland lawns, scattered trees and shrubs. These connect the Site better habitat¹ for bats that can be found within 1.5km located at: Newbold Common, Welches Meadow, Leam Valley Local Nature Reserve, Radford Road Meadows Nature Reserve which support patches of broadleaf woodland, wet grassland, and the River Leam corridor.

Scope of Survey

1.3 A Listed Buildings Consent application is being prepared to extend the property which will involve demolition of the rear outbuilding conversion, removal of the single pitched roof of the two storey rear element, and re-slating of the main roof including insertion of a velux window. (Plans provided: A101, A102, A103 and A104). A Preliminary Roost Appraisal for bats (PRA) was requested by the LPA to try to assess whether or not the proposals would impact bats and find out whether or not a European Protected Species License (EPSL) would be required for the proposals to go ahead. The survey would also look for the presence of and potential for breeding birds to assess potential impacts.

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.

¹ Source: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> checked 26/02/2024.

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:

- 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 at the exterior. 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 23rd February 2024. Natural England bat licence number: 2015-10605-CLS-CLS.

2.1.5 The building was assessed along with local habitats and their potential for widespread crevice-dwelling and void-seeking bat species was considered. 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

granted by Natural England for bats within 2km of the site which revealed licences issued for common pipistrelle bat, soprano pipistrelle bat and Daubenton's bat. One of the licences issued for common pipistrelle was for a property within fifty metres of the Site.

2.1.6 Constraints
None were identified.

3. RESULTS

3.1.1 The building was a stucco brick, three storey Regency villa. The main roof was pitched and clad with natural slate tiles and included a parapet at the north elevation. The roof appeared in reasonable condition, although the flashing in the valley between the roof and neighbouring roof was in poor condition but no PRFs or ingress points were observed in association with it.

3.1.2 The roof void was taken up mostly by living space, although a small void was accessed. Inside the void it could be seen that the roof was supported by relatively new timbers and bitumen lining and the small area was stuffed with fibreglass insulation. No evidence of bats was encountered on the upper surface of the insulation or areas beneath which were inspected by lifting the insulation.

3.1.3 The ridge supported significant cobwebbing which was considered to provide evidenced that the ridge had not been disturbed by bats or other animals in recent years. The main roof was considered as having no bat suitability.

3.1.4 Adjoining the main structure was a two storey section that had a single pitched roof. This was covered with natural slates and was in reasonable condition, although some areas of the east verge appeared to show gaps where mortar had fallen away. On closer inspection from an adjacent gable window it could be seen that the damage was superficial and that no access points / PRFs had arisen from it. The structure was considered as having no bat suitability.

3.1.4 To the rear of the double storey brick section was a small, single storey brick outbuilding that appeared to have been converted to kitchen space. This had a single pitched roof clad with natural slate tiles which appeared to be in reasonable condition showing no PRFs. The structure was considered as having no bat suitability.



Photo 1 South elevation

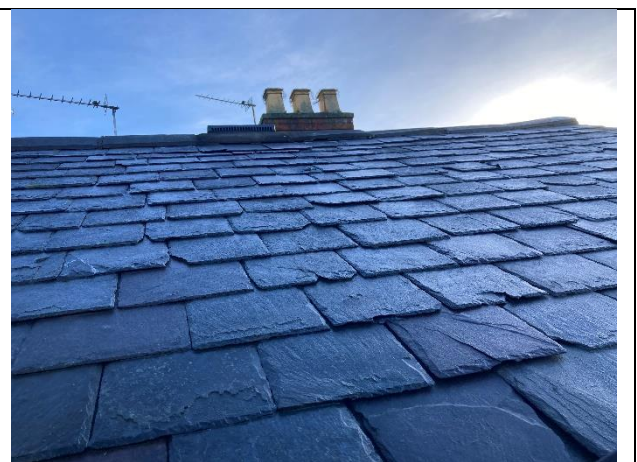


Photo 2 Main roof west pitch



Photo 3 Main roof west pitch



Photo 4 Small void above main roof



Photo 5 Small void above main roof



Photo 6 East verge rear (south) two storey section



Photo 7 Single pitch over two storey section to rear



Photo 8 Rear outbuilding

4. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 No evidence of bats was encountered either at the exterior or interior of the buildings. It is considered that bats have not been able to ingress the structure because it lacks suitable PRFs / ingress points.

4.2 Each element of the building is considered to show negligible bat suitability, and consequently that bats are unlikely to be impacted by the proposals and no further surveys are recommended.

4.3 No evidence of breeding birds or scope for breeding birds was encountered, and so no mitigation is recommended.

Proposed 'Net Gains' for Biodiversity

4.4 The Site is in an area where swifts are frequently recorded. Integral universal nesting habitats (x2) could be incorporated into the proposed east elevation of the two storey section. Model used could be 'S brick' (one and a half brick length) which can be found at: <https://www.actionforswifts.com/>. Refer to Figure 1 for a graphic and Figure 2 for suggested locations.

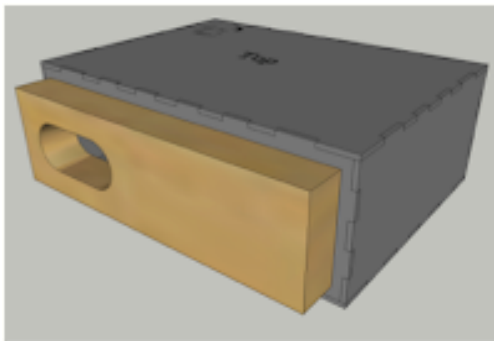


Figure 1

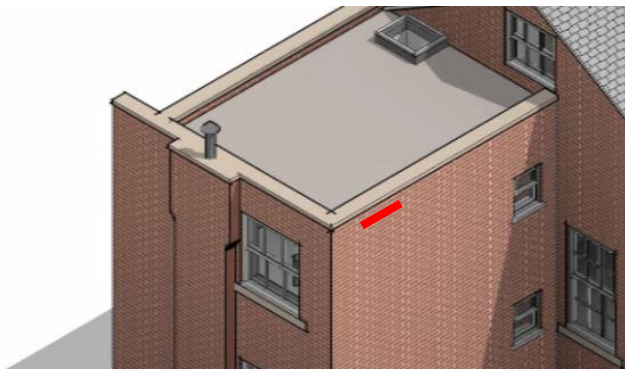


Figure 2 Locations marked red

4.5 Validity of data

Should one-year elapse from this survey being carried out without the current proposals or similar proposals being implemented, 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*.

Schober, W and Grimmberger, E. (1993) *Bats of Britain and Europe*. Hamlyn.

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Joint Nature Conservation Committee, (2004) *Bat Workers' Manual*, Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Stebbing, R. E. (1986) *Bats*. Mammal Society.