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18 Dean Street
Crediton
Devon
EX17 3EN

Ref: ORB_3975_BG

Date: 15 March 2024

Dear Mr and Mrs Watson,

Re: Bat and Bird Survey No Impact Letter – 18 Dean Street, Crediton

On the 13th of March 2024, Orbis Ecology Ltd assessed the property '18 Dean Street' for its suitability to support roosting bats and nesting birds. The findings are presented in this letter which can be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) as part of your planning/listed building consent application. The Devon Wildlife Checklist is included at the end of this letter should it be required by the LPA.

The assessment was undertaken by Bryony Gillett of Orbis Ecology Ltd. Bryony is a Registered Bat Consultant under Natural England Earned Recognition and has a level 2 Survey Class Licence 2015-14233-CLS-CLS BER0184 and is a Full member of CIEEM. The survey was completed in accordance with the '*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists*' Guidance (2023) and the recommendations provided in this letter are in-line with British Standard 42020:2013.

Background to the legislation

All species of bat are protected under Schedules 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended) and are also protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. They are listed under Appendix III of the Bern Convention and Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive. Bats and their habitats are also listed under Appendix II of the Bonn Convention and therefore the UK has an obligation to protect their habitat, including links to important feeding areas.

It is unlawful to kill, capture, injure or take a wild bat anywhere in the UK. It is unlawful to disturb bats anywhere (roost, flights or foraging areas) in particular if the level of disturbance can be shown to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce or to rear or nurture their young or hibernate. It is illegal to damage or destroy a place used by a bat for breeding or resting.

It is also an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used by a bat for shelter or protection.

All wild birds are protected under part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Therefore, in the UK it is an offence to:

- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is being built or in use.
- Kill, injure or take any wild bird
- Take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird.

Proposed Development

It is proposed re-roof the property, which requires listed building consent from the local authority. It is proposed to remove and replace all the roof tiles and re-felt and batten the roof. There will be no removal of fascia boarding or any work to wall plates. There are no proposed extensions.

PRA Survey

The survey comprised a preliminary roost assessment for bats, based on guidance produced by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023). A systematic search was made of the interior and exterior of the building to identify *potential* or *actual* bat access points and roosting places and to locate evidence of bat use. Evidence of bats could include live animals, carcasses, droppings and feeding remains. Sometimes bats leave no visible sign of their presence even inside of a building, particularly when there are concealed cracks, crevices and voids. The PRA includes an assessment for all roost types (summer day roosts, maternity roosts and hibernation roosts etc), with the structure categorised according to the description shown in **Table 1** below.

Evidence of the presence of birds (e.g. active nests, feathers, old nesting material, eggs or pellets) was also recorded.



Table 1: Categories for bat roost potential in buildings.

Suitability	Description
None	No roosting habitat features on site likely to be used by bats at any time of year (i.e a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats opportunistically at any time of year. However, these do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by large numbers of bats (i.e unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool stable hibernation site.

Survey Findings

The weather conditions were overcast (10°C) with a moderate breeze. The property is located in a residential area, on the southern side of the market town of Crediton, Devon. The property is an end of terrace two storey house with a small, enclosed garden at the rear. The house is constructed from rendered cob and has two artificial slate roofs, one of which is hipped. The rear roof is a single pitch construction. Both voids are insulated and partially boarded and lined with bitumen felt. The roof has an open eave construction with fascia boarding for weather proofing. There are gaps along the wall plates on all elevations due to the undulating nature of the cob wall.

No evidence of bats such as bat droppings or feeding remains were found inside the voids. The roof tiles are in a general good condition, with no obvious areas for roosting on either of the roofs. The open eaves do have suitable features to support roosting bats because the undulating wall plate creates small crevices and cavities that bats could use.

The property is situated in a residential area, with no connected habitat or foraging opportunities within the immediate surroundings. This reduces the likelihood of bats being present in the structure.

The property is assessed as having **Low Suitability** for roosting bats (**Table 1**). However, the areas of concern (wall tops) will not be impacted by the proposals as the proposed works are limited to felting/battening and re-tiling.

There was evidence of nesting sparrows along the front elevation of the property along the top of the wall plate. Nesting material was noted, but no nesting activity observed. Sparrows were active in the

bushes opposite the property. Therefore, there are potential impacts predicted to nesting birds if the work is carried out during the bird nesting season.

Recommendations

Bats

No further survey work is required. The works are not expected to impact bats. It is considered a proportionate approach to recommend precautionary measures to the re-roofing works given the residential location, the limited scope of works and the small scale of the re-roof.

There will be no removal of fascia boarding or infilling of any wall top gaps. If this becomes necessary, Orbis Ecology must be contacted for advice. If a bat (or signs of bats, such as droppings) is found then works should stop and a licensed bat ecologist should be consulted. Bats should not be handled unless they are injured, in which case using gloves, the bat should be placed in a small breathable container and advice sought from:

- Orbis Ecology 01626 638042 enquiries@orbisecology.co.uk

Nesting Birds

Works to the front roof will not commence until after the bird nesting season (1st March – 31st August) unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a nesting bird check within 24 hours of the proposed works and can provide written confirmation that no birds are currently nesting.

Yours sincerely,

Bryony Gillett MSc MCIEEM

Principal Ecologist

Orbis Ecology Ltd



Area with nesting material observed from within the roof void



Gaps under fascia board on single pitch rear roof





Rear of the property

Devon Wildlife Checklist (to be filled in by the ecological consultant and included in the front of the Wildlife Report)

A.1 Protected and priority species (relates to question 13a in the planning application form).

A tick or cross must be placed in all boxes in column two (shaded) and then, where there is a tick, all other boxes in that row. Where species are present please email this form to Devon Biodiversity Records Centre - DBRC@dbrc.org.uk.

Location: 18 Dean Street, Crediton

Grid reference for centre of site (6 digit): SX83639999

Planning Application reference:

Name of surveyor and consultancy: Bryony Gillett, Orbis Ecology

Date that surveys carried out: 13/03/24

Sent to DBRC: N

Species - terrestrial, intertidal, marine	Walkover shows that suitable habitat present and reasonably likely that the species will be found? <u>Tick or cross</u>	Detailed survey needed to clarify impacts and mitigation requirements?	Detailed survey carried out and included?	Species Present or Assumed to be present on site Indicate with P or A and name the species	Impact on species?	Detailed Conservation Action Statement included? Sets out actions needed in relation to avoidance / mitigation / compensation / enhancement	EPS offence committed? Three tests met?	Grid reference for specific location of species (if required for large sites)
Bats (roost)	X							
Bats (flight line / foraging habitat)	X							
Dormice	X							
Otters	X							
Great crested newts <i>(*check consultation zone)</i>	X							
Cirl buntings <i>(*check consultation zone)</i>	X							
Barn owls	X							
Other Schedule 1 birds	X							
Breeding birds	Yes	No	n/a	A. sparrows			n/a	
Reptiles	x							
Native crayfish	X							
Water voles	X							
Badgers	X							
Other protected species	X							
UK BAP priority species	X							
Devon BAP key species	X							
Invasive species	x							

- Devon consultation zones for cirl buntings and great crested newts - <http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/wildlife.htm>
- UK BAP priority species - <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5717>

- Devon BAP key species - http://www.devon.gov.uk/dbap-section_e.pdf (note that this list is currently being updated)

A.2 Designations / important habitats / sites of geological importance (relates to questions 13 b & c in the planning application form)

A tick or cross must be placed in all boxes in column two and then, where there is a tick, all other boxes in that row.

Designation	Within site or potential impact. Tick or cross	Name of site / habitat	Detailed Conservation Action Statement included in report?	Habitat balance sheet included (showing area of habitats lost, gained and overall net gain)	Relevant organisation consulted & response included in the application?
Terrestrial, intertidal, marine					
<i>Statutory designations</i>					
European designations - Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and RAMSAR site or within Greater Horseshoe consultation zone	X		Sufficient information included for the LPA to undertake an HRA?		
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	X				
Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)	X				
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	X				
<i>Non-statutory wildlife designations</i>					
County Wildlife Site (CWS)	x				
Ancient woodland	X				
Special Verge	X				
UK BAP Priority habitat	X				
Local Biodiversity Network (mapped by Devon Wildlife Trust / through Green Infrastructure work)	X				
<i>Non-statutory geological designation</i>					
County Geological Site (CGS or RIGS)	X				

- List of UK BAP priority habitats - <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5718>

Table headings last updated: 22nd September 2014

