

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Ecological Consultants.**



LYNN ROAD GATEHOUSE, ELY.

OS REF: TL 5638 8147.

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT.

Ref No: 230573.

Date: 16th June 2023.

Cliff Edge, Cliff Road, Darfield, Barnsley, S73 9HR.
Tel. 01226 753271. Fax. 01226 270993.
info@whitcher-wildlife.co.uk www.whitcher-wildlife.co.uk
Company No. 4401613.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. Network Rail have plans to demolish the Lynn Road Gatehouse property adjacent to the Lynn Road crossing on the BGK line.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd was therefore commissioned to carry out a bat survey of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. This survey was carried out on 2nd June 2023. This report outlines the findings of the survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.4. Appendices I and II of this report provides additional information on bats, nesting birds and the protection afforded to them and is designed to assist the reader in understanding the contents of this report.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. The buildings were thoroughly checked internally and externally for potential bat roosting sites by looking for the following signs: -

- * Holes, cracks or crevices.
- * Bat droppings.
- * Prey remains.
- * Staining on external walls.

2.2. Unless otherwise stated, all lofts were accessed and inspected using a high-powered torch and where necessary an endoscope.

2.3. A thorough external inspection was carried out from ground level for any gaps or openings in the roof and ridge tiles, behind soffits and fascia's and in the walls of the structure for suitable roost access points and field signs to indicate possible use by bats.

2.4. All window sills, walls and the ground around the structure were checked for signs of bat droppings or staining to indicate possible use by bats. Where necessary, ladders were utilised to gain access within the limits of health and safety. Any access constraints encountered are outlined within the following report.

2.5. All survey work was carried out in line with Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition)*, with an assessment of the buildings suitability for roosting bats made in accordance with these guidelines.

2.7. This survey was carried out by Jess Mason MSc ACIEEM FRGS. Since 2018 Jess has had experience in a professional capacity as an Ecologist carrying out ecology surveys and phase I habitat surveys. Jess holds a Natural England Level 2 survey licence in respect of bats, and a Scottish Natural Heritage survey licence in respect of barn owls. She has also successfully completed a number of courses run by FSC in the relative protected species and carrying out phase I habitat surveys and has a MSc in Biological Recording. Jess is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. A data search request was sent to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environmental Records Centre for records of bats and bat roosts within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.2. The data search returned records various bat species, including common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, brown long-eared, and Daubenton's bat.

3.1.3. The closest record to the survey area is a vague 100m² record of an unidentified bat species, which is considered to be a historical record at more than twenty years old. The record overlaps the surveyed property, as well as three other properties, and a location name is not provided to be able to identify the property that held a roost. However, comments within the record describe timber cladding which was to be replaced with PVC cladding, and it is clear that the surveyed property does not have or has never had timber/PVC cladding. It is assumed that the record relates to the next-door property which does have PVC cladding,

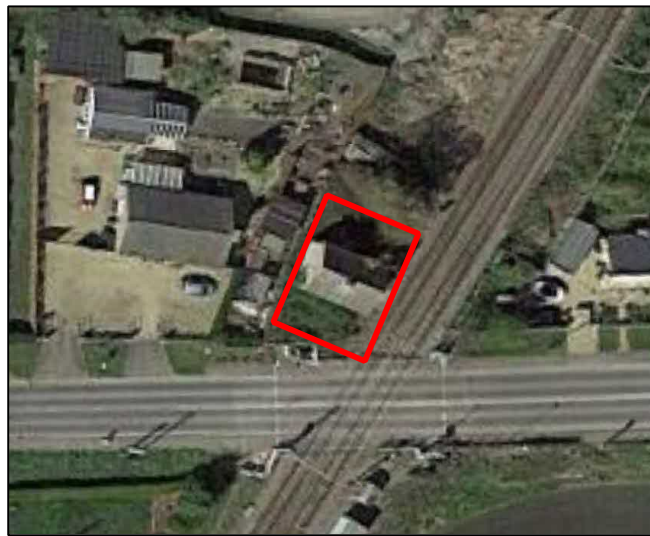
3.1.3. The aerial imagery below shows the location of the closest records to the surveyed property. The property is shown by the red star and records are shown by the red grid squares.



3.1.4. The full data search is available to the client upon request, but the results cannot be made public.

3.2. Site Description.

3.2.1. The surveyed building is Lynn Road Gatehouse within the Queen Adelaide area of Ely, Cambridgeshire. The property is adjacent to the Lynn Road level crossing on the BGK line.



3.2.2. The immediate surrounding environment is predominantly urban, comprising residential dwellings and their associated gardens. However, there are railway lines and watercourses with associated linear vegetation within the wider area which are likely to provide suitable foraging/commuting habitat.



3.2.3. The survey area is a detached two-storey house built with brick walls. The property has a pitched roof with overlapping tiles and it is shown in the photographs below from both the front and the rear. A single-storey, flat-roofed porch is also present to the rear of the property.



3.3. Daytime Survey Results.

3.3.1. Externally, the walls of the building are in excellent condition with no sections of missing mortar or other defects. They are well pointed with no gaps to allow access for bats within. Ivy was present on all sides of the building, but this was not mature enough or did not have thick enough stems to create potential roosting opportunities for bats. The ivy was also firmly attached to the building, leaving no voids.



3.3.2. The roof of the building is also in a very good condition with no defects. All roof tiles and ridge tiles are firmly in place and none appear to offer suitable opportunities for bats to access beneath.

3.3.3 The flashing around the chimneys is also flush to the roof offering no access for bats. Both the roof tiles and chimneys can be seen in the photograph below.



3.3.4. The mortar along the gables is in excellent condition, with none missing to allow bats access into the building or below the tiles.



3.3.5. Soffits are present on all sides of the building and they are in good condition, and are fitted flush to the walls with no gaps behind, offering no access opportunities for bats.



3.3.6. Internally, the property has a loft space which comprises timber rafters and ridge boards. The roof is lined with the lining in excellent condition and no external light could be seen. The photograph below shows the loft space.





3.3.7. The loft space was thoroughly inspected for bats or their field signs, such as droppings and insect remains. Neither bats, nor their field signs were found.

3.3.8. The immediate surrounding habitat comprises neighbouring dwellings and vegetated gardens, which provides moderate suitability for foraging and commuting bats. However, there are railway lines and watercourses with associated linear vegetation within the wider area which are likely to provide suitable foraging/commuting habitat.

3.3.9. Overall, no potential roost features were identified which could be impacted by the demolition, and no bats or their field signs were found. Therefore, in line with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines, the property is assessed as having **negligible potential** for roosting bats.

3.3.10. The ivy on the external walls has the potential to be used by nesting birds during the nesting bird season, as does the vegetation in the surrounding garden.

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. The building is assessed as providing **negligible** potential for roosting bats in line with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines due to the absence of potential roost features. Therefore, the proposed demolition works will have no impact on roosting bats.

4.2. No bats or their field signs were identified during the survey.

4.3. The surrounding habitat offers moderate suitability for foraging and commuting bats due to the vegetated gardens within the residential estates. However, this habitat will not be impacted by the works and therefore, there will be no negative impact on foraging and commuting bats.

4.4. The ivy-covered walls provide suitable nesting habitats for birds within the breeding season (March to September each year). Therefore, the demolition of the building could have a high impact on breeding birds if carried out within the bird breeding season. Furthermore, the demolition is likely to destroy or disturb the surrounding vegetation within the garden, which could also have a high impact on nesting birds if carried out within the bird breeding season.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. The building is assessed as having **negligible** potential for roosting bats and in line with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines, no further surveys are recommended, and no licence from Natural England is required prior to works commencing.

5.2. However, individual bats can roost almost anywhere on a temporary basis. Therefore, in the highly unlikely event that a bat is found during the works, it should be kept safe and covered and professional advice should be sought immediately.

5.3. It is recommended that the works are undertaken outside of the nesting bird season, which extends from March to September each year. If this work is required during the nesting bird season, this must be immediately preceded by a thorough nesting bird survey. Any active nests found must be left undisturbed until young have fledged.

Prepared by:	
Jess Mason MSc ACIEEM FRGS	Date: 16 th June 2023.

Checked by:	
Ruth Georgiou. BSc, MCIEEM.	Date: 18 th June 2023.

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Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.

Ecology

There are currently 18 species of bat residing in Britain, 17 of which are known to breed here. They are extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

All appear to be diminishing in numbers, probably due to habitat change and shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet.

As their diet consists solely of insects, bats hibernate during the winter when their food source is at its most scarce. They will spend the winter in hollow trees, caves, mines and the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly the pipistrelle (the commonest and most widespread British bat) can quickly adapt to man-made structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

Surveys

During walkover surveys, bat roosts can be identified by looking for:

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices within any building, tree or other structure.
- Bat droppings along walls, window cills, or on the ground.
- Prey remains, such as insect wings.

Further investigations can be made using endoscopes, by carrying out aerial inspections of trees or by conducting bat activity surveys during dusk and dawn over summer months.

Legislation

Bats are protected under Appendix II and III of the Bern Convention (1982), Schedule 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (some species under Annex II), Annex II of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) and EUROBATs agreement. Numerous species are

also listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) making them species of principal importance.

All bats and their roosts are therefore protected in the UK. This makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any bat, to interfere with any place used for shelter or protection, or to intentionally disturb any animal occupying such a place.

The UK has designated maternity and hibernacula areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) under the Habitats Directive. Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan also includes action for a number bat species and the habitats which support them.

Where development proposals are likely to affect a bat roost site, a licence is required from Natural England.

Appendix II. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.

Ecology

The nesting season will vary according to the weather each year but generally commences in March, peaks during May and June and continues until September. It is also worth remembering that some birds nest in trees and scrub but others are ground nesting or prefer man-made structures or buildings.

Surveys

Nesting bird surveys search for potential nest sites in vegetation, buildings etc. Potential nesting sites are observed over a suitable period of time for bird movements or calling male birds that would indicate the presence of a nest. The presence of a nest can be identified from the field signs without the necessity to see the nest itself, thereby avoiding any disturbance of the nests. The best way to avoid this issue is to plan for vegetation clearance to be carried out outside the bird-nesting season.

Legislation

Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part 1. -(1) Of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - kills, injures or takes any wild bird; takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Part 1. -(5) of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturbs young of such a bird, he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the above by inserting after “intentionally” the words “or recklessly”

