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11 August 2020

Dear Mr Jason

Report of Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment at The Kings Head, Hampton Court Road, Hampton Wick, Kingston Upon Thames KT1 4AE

You instructed us to undertake a preliminary bat roost assessment (also referred to as the; “PRA, survey, report”) at the above-named property (also referred to as the; “site, building, structure”). The survey was undertaken on 04 August 2020. My qualifications and experience along with those of the reviewer of this report are summarised at the end of this report.

As I have already discussed with you on site, the probability that bats are roosting at your site and that you might engage the legislation that protects them by progressing your development (without the benefit of further investigation or mitigation) is extremely low. Consequently, I have no further recommendations.

My full report follows.

Aims

In a manner that is proportionate to scale, nature and intensity of the proposed development and its probable interactions with ecological receptors, specifically bats:

Survey

To describe the physical evidence and to evaluate the significance of features that contribute to or detract from the 'roost suitability' of the site, in the context of the desk study, and the proximate and wider landscape.

Evaluation

To describe the constraints to the proposed development as a result of the risk of harm or disturbance to bats (if any).

To set out any recommendations for further survey effort, where this risk is unacceptable or a complete understanding of how bats are using the site cannot be defensibly argued.

To inform any subsequent mitigation proposals in order to achieve a planning or other statutory consent, and to comply with wildlife legislation.

Methods

Survey

For the desk study:

To objectively demonstrate the presence of roosting bats or evaluate the likelihood of presence of roosting bats and offer an assessment of how they could be using the site, I undertook a desk study. This included review of all statutory and non-statutory designated sites, Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats and granted EPSML records for bats held on governmental databases (including MAGIC) within a 1km radius of the site. I also made an assessment of the surrounding landscape structure, using aerial images from Google Earth and Ordnance Survey maps.

The London Bat Group was not commissioned to provide bat records for within 2km of the site. This was due to the relatively small scale of the proposed development. From local knowledge, species such as Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, pipistrelle *Pipistrellus spp*. and serotine *Eptesicus serotinus* are reasonably widespread throughout the local area.

General:

I systematically assessed all features that will be impacted by the development proposals for bats, evidence of bat activity, and roosting or commuting habitat.

For all structures:

Externally, I made a non-intrusive, visual appraisal from the ground using binoculars, inspecting the external features of the structure(s) for potential access and egress points, and for signs of bat use.

For buildings:

Internally, I made an inspection of the building, including the living areas of derelict or abandoned buildings and the accessible roof spaces of all buildings, using an endoscope, torch and ladders. I paid particular attention to the floor and flat surfaces, window shutters and frames, lintels above doors and windows, and carried out a detailed search of all accessible features within the roof space.

Birds:

I also made a note of any other ecological constraints observed during the survey. Commonly, this relates to the risk of harm to breeding birds, and the suitability of the site to support barn owls *Tyto alba*.

Evaluation

The evaluation that drives an assessment of likelihood is, by nature, probabilistic. The evaluation methodology I employed for the PRA is described by Colins (2016) and summarised in the table below:

Evidence, likelihood of presence and significance of habitat features	
Possible survey findings	**What this means for you**
⇒ Bats ⇒ Evidence of bat roosting or activity ⇒ Quantitatively significant or qualitatively important features for roosting ⇒ Connectivity to high quality habitat for roosting, foraging and commuting in the proximate and wider landscape	There are probable and foreseeable impacts to bats and their roosts in consequence of your development. These impacts present a real risk of harm or disturbance to bats. In order to prevent this outcome and any criminal liability, further survey effort is necessary to appropriately inform mitigation and enhancement. Thereafter, a planning decision can be defensibly made in favour of the proposed development.
⇒ No bats ⇒ No evidence of bat roosting or activity ⇒ A small number of qualitatively poor features for roosting (if any) ⇒ Limited connectivity to poor-quality habitat in the proximate and wider landscape (if any)	Any impact to bats and their roosts is extremely improbable or negligible. Bats and their roosts do not present any constraints to your development. A planning decision can be defensibly made in favour of the proposed development without delay.

Limitations

None.

Findings

The findings collate the data of the desk study, the evidence of the physical survey and any other substantiation (such as the result of DNA tests of physical evidence collected on site).

Photographs with descriptions are only included where appropriate i.e., where they enhance the reader's comprehension of the relevance of salient features on site, or provide valuable context to the evaluation, foreseen impacts and recommendations.

Description of the site and proposed development

➢ The survey site is located at National Grid Reference TQ 17490 69340 and has an area of approximately 300m^2.

➢ The site consists of a two-storey gable-ended building which has been used a public house (now closed), with some hardstanding around the south-west corner of the building.

➢ The proposals are for the addition of a first-floor balcony on the south-west corner of the building.

➢ A planning application has been submitted to London Borough of Richmond upon Thames under application number 19/0357/FUL.

Principal Photo

Figure 1: The Old Kings Head pub on Hampton Court Road. The proposals are for the addition of a first-floor balcony on the south-west corner of the building.

Site Plan

Figure 2: Phase 1 Habitat Map of the site, which consists of a two-storey gable-ended building which has been used a public house (now closed), with some hardstanding around the south-west corner of the building.

Summary of Desk Study

There are excellent foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in close proximity to the site, most notably Hampton Court Park which is adjacent to the site and will offer plentiful insect foraging for bats.

Summary of Physical Survey

There are a number of loose/missing roof tiles, most notably on the northern elevation of the building, as well as gaps in the lead flashing around both chimneys. These gaps will provide habitat value for crevice-roosting bats.

The loft space was tightly-sealed, with no gaps to the outside of the building; it is therefore unlikely that this building offers any habitat value for void-dwelling bats.

Discussion

I have taken into account the findings of the desk study, the physical survey and made a qualitative evaluation of the habitat value at site and its utility to support roosting bats.

The development proposals will not affect the roof tiles of the building, which is the only habitat value the building offers for bats, and therefore the risk of harm or disturbance to bats is extremely low.

No impact on any other protected species is predicted.

Conclusion

My assessment is that bats should not present a constraint to development as the risk of harm or disturbance is negligible.

Foreseen Impacts and Recommendations (if any)

None.

References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Garland & Markham (2008) Is important bat foraging and commuting habitat legally protected?

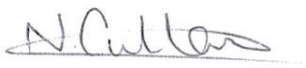
Google Earth (2019) accessed on 06/08/2020.

Magic database (2019) http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx accessed on 25/06/2019.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.

Report ends.

I trust this is sufficient for your assessment. However, if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me via 07593 442104 or nicolegullan@arbetch.co.uk.



Author

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Accredited Agent to Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2019-43774-CLS-CLS

Reviewer

Mel Reid BSc (Hons) MRes, Consultant

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