



PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST APPRAISAL

18 THE FAIRWAY, BURBAGE LE10 2TZ

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Client: RCI Design

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1. INTRODUCTION

Location

The Site is located at 18 The Fairway, Burbage LE10 2TZ. National Grid Reference: **SP 43888 93324**.

Site description

1.2 The Site is a detached two storey dwelling house. Immediate habitats are generally of low quality for bats and include mature gardens that support scattered trees and shrubs and modified grassland lawns. These habitats offer discontinuous connectivity to good bat habitat¹ (in the local context) within 1km including a minor water course, and patches of deciduous woodland, within 1km to the north and east respectively.

Scope of Survey

1.3 It is understood that a planning application is being prepared to extend the property which will result in removal of the existing roof (drawings provided: none at the time of writing). Martin Ecology was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Bat Roost Appraisal (PBRA) which would include breeding birds to try to determine whether the proposals would impact upon them and whether or not a European Protected Species License (EPSL) application would be required for the development to go ahead.

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 a 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 3/07/2024.

- 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 buildings were 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. 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 buildings 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 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 nesting birds was also looked for within the building and at the exterior also. A photographic record was made of the Site and some photos are included within a table in this report.

2.1.4 Dean Martin (MCIEEM) conducted the survey work on 28th April 2025. 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 3km of the Site which revealed licences issued for common pipistrelle bat and brown long-eared bat.

2.1.6 Constraints
None were identified.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Building inspection

3.1.1 The house was a brick structure built during the mid to late twentieth century. It had a hipped roof clad with clay plain tiles; these were all in good condition, showing no PRFs and other areas which commonly offer PRFs / ingress points such as the lead at the chimney breast, bonnet tiles and soffit box. These areas were all well-sealed to the exclusion of bats and birds.

3.1.2 Inside the roof void it was apparent that the roof was supported by light weight timbers and was lined with traditional bitumen felt. Cobwebs were abundant at the roof timbers, suggesting that bats hadn't roosted at the roof timbers in recent years.

3.1.3 The loft floor was part-covered with boards and loft insulation. No evidence of bats was encountered on any upper surfaces or anywhere else within the roof void.



Photo 1 North elevation sealed roof



Photo 2 East elevation sealed roof



Photo 3 Sealed roof north east elevation



Photo 4 Sealed roof south west elevation



Photo 5 Sealed soffit



Photo 6 Sealed bonnet tiles



Photo 7 Clean loft floor



Photo 8 Cobwebbed roof timbers

4. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 There are no PRFs on the building and no evidence of bats was encountered, and so it is considered unlikely that bats would be impacted by the proposals. The house shows no bat suitability, and therefore no further surveys for bats are recommended at this time.

4.2 Bats are known to be active within a short distance with known roosts within 1.5km of the Site. Furthermore, conditions in the natural environment change over time and new opportunities for bats can arise at any time as structures age, and weathering gives rise to new features. Planning consent remains extant for three years prior to any works being required to be undertaken, which can allow time for changes in conditions to the natural environment. Therefore, all destructive works to the roofs will be undertaken carefully by hand with the expectation that bats could be found. Should any bats be found during destructive works to the roofs, work will immediately stop until the Local Planning Authority and Natural England (0300 060 3900) have been contacted for advice on how to proceed. In such a scenario it is likely that an EPSL application would need to be made to Natural England before works could recommence.

4.3 Breeding birds

No evidence of breeding birds or scope for breeding birds was identified in association with the building, and therefore no recommendations for mitigation are currently required.

4.4 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 at the Site.

5. RELEVANT LITERATURE

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

CIEEM (2023) UK BAT MITIGATION GUIDELINES. A guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats.

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.