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Report for

Oakfield, Orton Lane, Cross Hands, nr Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire Protected Species Survey

Date of Report – 8th September 2011

Proprietors

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Protected Species Survey at Oakfield, Cross Hands

Name of Client: Marion Carter

Name of Agent: Bailey Design Ltd, contact- Tim Bailey

Address of Agent: The Manor House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B79 7QF

Date of Survey: 8th September 2011

Weather Conditions: 50% cloud, windy, dry, warm, 20^0C

Address of survey site: Oakfield, Orton Lane, Cross Hands, nr Sheepy Magna, Atherstone, CV9 3RR

Planning Application Number:

Grid Reference of survey site: SK 3290 0249

Name of Surveyor: A.B.Gibney BSc (Hons), MIEEM

Licence Numbers: Great Crested Newt 20103624, Bat 20103625 & Barn Owl 20103623 issued by Natural England

1) Background

1.1 Reason for survey

There are plans to extend the existing building, which includes re-roofing the building. A protected species (particularly bats) survey was requested to apply for Planning Permission to carry on the development.

1.2 Description of site

The site was in a rural setting, and consisted of a part two and part single-storey detached house surrounded by garden, which included mown lawn, shrub/herbaceous planting and hardstanding, which included slabs and a tarmac parking area. The nearest tree was about 10m away, and is unaffected by the proposals. The site was surrounded by another domestic residence, and agricultural land. The agricultural land was permanent improved grassland and arable. The site would be considered to be of 'limited wildlife interest'.

1.3 The Building



Photo 1: Treetops, viewed from front

The house had brick walls and a tile roof (clay 'rosemary' tiles). It had plastic soffits and fascias, but there were no gaps between these and the walls, also the eaves were also covered in webs. The roof was in sections, one being on a flat roof two-storey extension, one was a pitched roof (with equal pitches) on a single-storey extension, and one was a sloping roof on a lean-to extension, plus the main roof, which was an unequally pitched roof. The main roof was supported by rafters and purlins. The tiles were lined with roof felt. The loft was fully accessible for survey. The single-storey roof also had a loft, which was fully accessible. It had a roof light. The flat roof had no accessible roof void, being a wooden roof with tarred felt covering. The lean-to roof void also wasn't accessible. Both of these were totally sealed, and wouldn't be accessible for bats. The roofs had gable ends.



Photo 2: showing webs on roof timbers

The roof timbers were covered in spiders' webs. There were no gaps under the tiles, and no missing tiles. The ridge tiles were all in place, with no gaps between them. There were no gaps in the pointing under the ridge tiles. The pointing was all in place on the gable ends, under and between the tiles.



Photo 3: Rear view of property

The building had plastic framed windows and doors, all gaps being sealed with silicon. The chimney plus all the roof joins had all flashing in place, with no gaps.

2) Survey Methods

The building was searched in a systematic pattern, all available spaces were searched, looking for signs of bats, in particular droppings, insect remains (where bats have fed), lack of spiders' webs (where bats have roosted), the bats themselves and body oils stains (where bats have squeezed through gaps). Particular attention was paid to undisturbed surfaces, walls (where bat droppings sometimes stick) and window sills (both inside and outside the buildings). The search was carried out with a high power torch inside the building and binoculars on the outside (particularly searching under eaves and ridge tiles). All cavities were checked using an endoscope to establish if anything was within them. Bats are likely to be active at the time of year that the survey was undertaken, and a bat detector was on at all times, in case light from the torch disturbed bats.

Signs of birds were also noted, particularly old nests. Birds are likely to be nesting at the time of year that the survey took place.

The ground was searched for tracks, trails or signs (particularly droppings and food/feeding signs) of other protected species.

3) Results

3.1 Bats – There was no evidence of bats found during the survey, there were no droppings or other signs, all surfaces and cavities were covered in spiders' webs and dust. There did not appear to be any potential entry points for bats to enter the building or roof spaces.

3.2 Birds – There were no nests found, and there was no vegetation in the vicinity of the proposed building that would be suitable for birds to nest in.

3.3 There was no evidence of any other protected species on the site, and there did not appear to be any habitat suitable for other protected species.

4) Conclusions

4.1 The site would be classed as of limited wildlife value, i.e. garden and buildings being the habitats affected. (England Field Unit 2007).

4.2 Bats had not used the buildings as a roost site; and there were no access points for bats to get under the tiles.

4.3 No evidence of birds' nests was found.

4.4 There were no indications of any other protected species on the site.

5) Recommendations:

5.1 The proposed development is unlikely to have a negative effect on the biodiversity of the area, as it will only affect an area, which would be classed as of limited wildlife value, i.e. garden and buildings being the habitats affected. (England Field Unit 2007).

5.2 There are no further recommendations for this proposed development.
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References

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. [ed.] (1999) *The Bat Workers' Manual* JNCC

Parsons K. (ed.) (2007) *Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines* Bat Conservation Trust

England Field Unit (2007) *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey – a technique for environmental audit* JNCC

Report Produced by

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