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Report for

Caldecott Croft, Desford, Leicestershire

Protected Species Survey

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Date of Report – 18th September 2008

Proprietors

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Protected Species Survey at Caldecott Croft, Desford

Name of Client: Mr D. Saigal

Address of Client: Caldecott Croft, Leicester Lane, Desford, Leicestershire

Date of Survey: 16th September 2008

Weather Conditions: 100% cloud, dry, slight breeze, warm, 19°C

Address of survey site: Caldecott Croft, Leicester Lane, Desford, Leicestershire

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Previous Planning Application Number: 07/00188/FUL

Grid Reference of survey site: SK49630251

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

Licence Numbers: Bat 20073155 issued by Natural England

1) Background

1.1 Reason for survey

It is proposed to extend the property at some time in the future, plus convert part of the property to a dormer bungalow. A protected species survey (particularly bats) was requested as part of the Planning Permission conditions to carry on the development.

1.2 Description of site

The proposed site is situated in a rural setting, and is a single storey property surrounded by a garden, which is made up of mown lawn, some conifers and tarmac drive.

1.3 The Building

The building had brick rendered walls and a slate roof. The walls were solid (no cavity). There were various different roofs, the majority pitched and hipped, and one flat. There were valleys between the various roofs. The flat roof had a tarred felt finish. The roof had not been lined, but it had been torched originally, however much of the torching had fallen out leaving gaps between the slates. All the roofs had a timber construction, with purlins and rafters. There were bargeboards supporting the guttering, but no soffits, leaving a gap between the bargeboard and the wall. There were several tiles which had slipped, leaving large gaps, this allowed access into the roof void. The roof void was above a ceiling, and was

about 1.3m high. It was very dusty with many spiders' webs. There were mouse droppings and nibbled pipe insulation throughout the roof space.

2) Survey Methods

2.1 Methods

The building was searched in a systematic pattern, particularly in the roof where the extension is to be built. 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). A bat detector was on at all appropriate times to check whether bats were disturbed in the roof spaces when the light was shone into them. Particular attention was paid to undisturbed surfaces, walls (where bat droppings sometimes stick) and windowsills (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, ridge tiles, and between the tiles).

A note was made of any signs of other protected species, or whether there was any appropriate habitat for other protected species.

3) Results

3.1 Bats – Evidence of bats using the property was found in the roof space above the eastern wing. Droppings were concentrated in one spot, with more than 100 droppings being present, some looked fresh, other droppings were scattered on the roof insulation and ceiling timbers throughout the roof void in very small numbers. These were identified as Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus* sp.) bat droppings. No bats were discovered during the survey.

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3.2 There was no evidence of any other protected species on the site.

4) Conclusions

4.1 The roof space above the eastern wing of the house had been used as a bat roost, probably by a number of Pipistrelle bats.

4.2 The homeowner was happy for the bats to remain roosting in the eastern wing of the property after the re-roofing work had been completed, and was happy to incorporate facilities for the bats to gain access to this area. The eastern wing of the property is to remain relatively unchanged, other than re-roofing to make the roof water-tight. This would include lining the roof.

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

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5) Legislation

Bats: Bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CRoW Act 2000), and by the European Habitats Regulations 1994. To summarise; it is an offence to damage or destroy any place of shelter and protection used by bats (their roosts); deliberately, intentionally or recklessly obstruct a bat roost; deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat; or intentionally kill, injure or take any bat.

6) Recommendations and Mitigations

Bats – a European Protected Species (EPS) licence should not be required to carry out the work on the building, as re-roofing can be carried out without disturbing a roost, providing it is carried out when bats aren't present and access to the roost is maintained after the development and providing the work is completed before the bats need to access the roost. This roost is unlikely to be used as a hibernation roost (this is indicated due to the presence of mice in the roof void, mice are known to eat hibernating bats).

It is therefore recommended that the work should be carried out during the period when bats hibernate (between November and March).

However if the work is undertaken outside this period, further surveys should be undertaken to establish whether or not bats are present in the roost.

Under no circumstances should the work be undertaken between mid-May to the end of July. This is a precautionary measure in case the roost is a maternity roost. Pipistrelle bats usually have their young through this period and disturbing them in any way at this time can lead to animal welfare issues beyond the scope of their normal protection.

Appropriate mitigation requirements is likely to include that the work is carried out when the bats are not using the roost, that suitable access points are incorporated into the new roof allowing bats access into the new roof space and that a suitable material is used as a roof lining to allow bats to roost (modern roof linings are generally considered poor for bats to roost on or under).

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References

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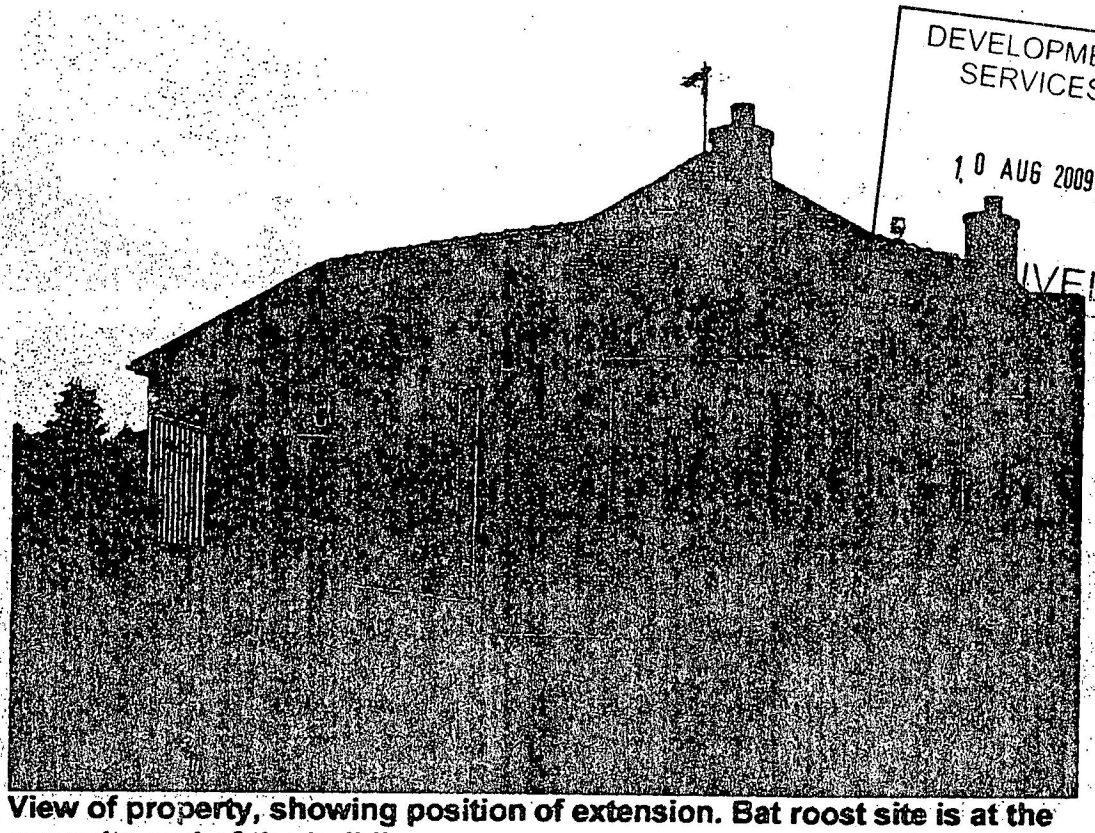
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Report Produced by

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Appendix 1: Photograph of Site



View of property, showing position of extension. Bat roost site is at the opposite end of the building

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