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Report for

Outbuildings and house at 1 Rectory Lane, Nailstone, Leicestershire
Protected Species Survey

Date of Report – 22nd June 2011

Proprietors

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Protected Species Survey at 1 Rectory Lane, Nailstone

Name of Client: Mr & Mrs Elwell

Address of Client: Glebe Farm, 1 Rectory Lane, Nailstone, Leicestershire, LE14 2NW

Name of Agent: Hayward Architects, contact- Jim Huckerby

Address of Agent: 19 Station Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire, LE10 1AW

Date of Survey: 22nd June 2011

Weather Conditions: 80% cloud, breezy, dry, warm, 18^0C

Address of survey site: Outbuildings to rear and house at Glebe Farm, 1 Rectory Lane, Nailstone, Leicestershire, LE14 2NW

Planning Application Number:

Grid Reference of survey site: SK 4176 0740

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 house, which includes altering the outbuildings in the rear garden, and joining the extension roof into the existing main roof. 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 is within a village setting, in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough. It consists of a yard (concrete hardstanding and some lawn and shrubbery) surrounded by a two-storey residence and various single-storey outbuildings. Beyond the site boundaries were agricultural land (permanent grass and arable), agricultural buildings and other residential properties.

There were no ponds on the site, or any field ponds within 100m of the site, as far as could be ascertained from the local maps/aerial photos.

There were trees in the near vicinity of the site, the nearest being above one of the outbuildings. There were no ponds on the site. There was no vegetation to be removed within the area of the proposed site.

1.3 The Buildings



Photo 1: The Main house

The house was detached, with solid and cavity brick walls (it had a flat roof extension) and with a tile roof (clay and composite flat tiles). It was two-storey, with a loft, the loft and roof timbers being accessible for survey. The flat roof extension had no loft. The main roof was in sections with hipped or gable ends to each section, and was at more than one height, with equal pitches either side of each pitched section. The roof was supported by rafters and purlins. The tiles were unlined, but did have cement torching blocking any gaps.



Photo 1: webs on roof timbers

The roof timbers were covered in spiders' webs, some of which stretched from the ridge board to the ceiling joists, which would indicate that the space had not been disturbed for some time. There were no missing tiles or ridge tiles, and no gaps between them, however some had slipped from position, but there was still no gaps.

There were some fascias, but no soffits. There were no gaps between the walls and the fascias/roofing materials, as any gap was filled with cement mixture pointing, and the eaves were covered in spiders' webs. There were no gaps in the pointing under the ridge tiles or in the gable ends, between the tiles. There were no bargeboards on the gable ends. The lead flashing on the chimney joints was all in place and tight fitting.

There were wooden door and window frames, and there were no gaps or cavities around these. The flat roof section had no gaps or other features, which would provide access for bats, and the fascias around it were heavily webbed up.



Photo 3: Attached garage

This garage had solid brick walls and tile roof (clay/composite flat tiles). It was single-storey with a loft area, which was accessible.

The roof had a gable end, and was at one height, with equal pitches either side. It was attached to the main house at the other end. Timber purlins and rafters supported the roof. The tiles had a felt backing. The roof was open and fully open for inspection.

There were many webs on the roof timbers, particularly on the ridge board and between the rafters, which would indicate that nothing had disturbed the space for some time. There were no missing tiles or ridge tiles, and no gaps between them. However there were gaps around a shuttered window into the loft space.

There were fascias, but no soffits. The eaves were covered in spiders' webs. There were no gaps in the pointing under the ridge tiles or in the gable ends, between the tiles. There were no bargeboards on the gable end.

There were wooden door and window frames, and there were no gaps around these.



Photo 4: Attached Outbuilding 1

This outbuilding had solid brick walls and tile roof (clay/composite flat tiles). It was single-storey with no loft area.
The roof was at one height, with equal pitches either side. It was attached to the main house at one end and to another outbuilding at the other. The roof was completely sealed behind plaster, and there were no access points into the void.
There were no missing tiles or ridge tiles, and no gaps between them. There was pointing on all joints, which sealed the void.
There were fascias, but no soffits. The eaves were covered in spiders' webs. There were no gaps in the pointing under the ridge tiles. There were wooden door and window frames, and there were no gaps around these. There did not appear to be any access points for bats to gain entry into any roof void.



Photo 5: Outbuilding 2

This outbuilding was open fronted: it had solid brick walls and tile roof (clay/composite flat and interlocking tiles). It was single-storey with no loft area, the roof timbers being fully open and accessible for survey.
The roof was in sections with gable ends, and was at one height, with equal pitches either side. It was attached to the main house at the other end. Timber beams, purlins and rafters supported the roof. The tiles had a felt backing. The roof was open and fully open for inspection.
There were many webs on the roof timbers, particularly on the ridge board and between the rafters, which would indicate that nothing had disturbed the space for some time. There were some missing tiles, but there ridge tiles were all in place, with no gaps between them. There was plenty of access for bats and birds into this building.
There were no fascias or soffits. The eaves were covered in spiders' webs. There were no gaps in the pointing under the ridge tiles or in the gable ends, between the tiles. There were no bargeboards on the gable ends. There were wooden door and window frames, and there were no gaps around these. There was a large tree overhanging this building, plus it was a firewood store, which meant it would be continually disturbed.

Survey Methods

The buildings were 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, and it would be possible to assess whether or not it was active.

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

2) 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. The outbuildings were unheated, shaded and cold and seemed unsuitable as a roosting place for bats. It was also in regular usage, being used for storage/workshop and as a firewood store.

3.2 Birds – There were old nests found in one of the outbuildings, but it did not appear to be active. There was an active swallow *Hirundo rustica* in another part of the property (unaffected by the proposals). There was no vegetation in the vicinity of the proposed development that would be suitable for birds to nest in. There was no evidence of barn owls found.

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.

3) Conclusions

4.1 Bats had not used the buildings as a roost site.

4.2 The buildings had been used for birds to nest. There was no vegetation suitable for birds to nest in, which would be affected by the proposals.

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

5) Recommendations

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

- No protected species are likely to be affected by this proposed development, as far as could be ascertained. Although it should be noted that if there is any doubt as to whether birds are nesting in the near vicinity of the proposed works, it is advised to get the area checked by a suitably qualified ecologist. Should an active nest be found, the nest must remain undisturbed until the young birds have fledged, which may cause a delay in the proposed works. Nesting Birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs.

- Although no evidence of bats was found during the survey, a precautionary approach should be taken, as bats are highly mobile animals that change roosts regularly and there were points at which bats could gain access into the buildings and roof spaces. It is advised that prior to the work being undertaken, any contractors should have been advised of the possibility of the presence of bats, and to carry out works carefully checking for bats as the work progresses, and they should be informed of what to do if one is found during the course of the work. If a bat is discovered during works, the work needs to cease immediately and Natural England should be contacted for further advice. Work on the area where the bat was found (should one be found) should not recommence until such advice is received from Natural England.

References and Bibliography

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

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

Hill, D., Fasham, M., Tucker, G., Shewry, M. & Shaw, P. (Eds) (2006) *Handbook of Biodiversity Methods: Survey, Evaluation & Monitoring* Cambridge

Report Produced by

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Appendix: Legislation

Bats: All bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (*as amended*) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. You must not:

- deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat;
- intentionally or recklessly disturb a group of bats; where the disturbance is likely to significantly affect the ability of any significant group of animals of that species to survive, breed or rear or nurture their young or likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species, whether in a roost or not;
- damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat;
- possess a bat (alive or dead), or any part of a bat;
- intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost;
- sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (alive or dead), or parts of bats.

Nesting Birds: Nesting Birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (*as amended*), which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. In addition to this, for some rarer species (listed on Schedule 1 of the Act), it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb them while they are nest building or, at or near a nest with eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

The recommendations are issued in accordance with this legislation.