



Preliminary Roost Assessment

43 Beechwood, Meopham, Gravesend, DA13 0TX

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Contents

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Background information
- 1.2 Purposes of this document
- 1.3 Scope of works

2 Relevant Legislation

- 2.1 The Law
- 2.2 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
- 2.3 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

3 Survey Results

- 3.1 Results
- 3.2 Risk of Bats
- 3.3 Recommendations

Appendix: Photographs

1. Introduction

1.1 Background Information

1.1.1 Bass Ecology was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 43 Beechwood Drive, Meopham, Gravesend, DA13 0TX centred on grid reference TQ644622.

1.1.2 The site is approximately 0.0743 hectares in size and comprises of mixed scrub with ruderal herbs. There is a mature oak tree and a hedgerow to the west edge against the roadside.

1.1.3 There is an existing building located to the western end of the development site.

1.1.4 Bordering the site to the east is a broadleaved mixed and yew woodland that runs north to south, increasing in size to the north.

1.1.5 A previous Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was carried out by Bass Ecology. The results of this report identified potential roosting features for bats within the existing building and potential foraging habitat on site within the scrubland. A further PRA was recommended.

1.2 Purposes of this document

1.2.1 This document is here to assess whether the site, specifically its roof, is capable of supporting roosting bats; this is not a bat survey. The document will carefully consider the findings of the survey and, based upon the results, will issue recommendations to the client as to the need for further surveys or mitigation.

1.3 Scope of works

1.3.1 The proposed development constitutes the removal of an original dwelling and the construction of a new dwelling with associated landscaping.

2 Relevant Legislations

1.1 The Law

1.1.1 A Bat is a European protected species and a Schedule 5 Animal. The following list provides the Laws for the protection of ecological features in England and Wales:

- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) *
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) *
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992*
- Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996*
- Invasive Alien Species Regulation 2014 (as amended)
- Protection of Birds Act 1954
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997
- Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000

An overview is provided below for the laws above marked with an asterisk*.

2.2 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

2.2.1 Species protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 are listed on Schedule 2 of the regulations and are known as European Protected Species. Under these regulations, a Schedule 2 animal is protected under Section 41 of the regulations in such a way that a person who;

- deliberately captures, injures or kills a European Protected Species,
- deliberately disturbs such an animal,
- deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or
- damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,

is guilty of an offence. In defining what constitutes disturbance in the above provision, the regulations state that a disturbance is something likely to;

- impair their ability
 - to survive, breed or reproduce, or rear or nurture their young, or
 - in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
- affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

2.3 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

2.3.1 Species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are listed on Schedule 5 of the Act. Under this Act, a Schedule 5 animal is protected by the

provisions of Section 9 of the Act in that it is an offence if a person intentionally kills, injures or takes any Schedule 5 animal, or if a person intentionally or recklessly;

- damages or destroys any structure or place which a Schedule 5 animal uses for shelter or protection,
- disturbs any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection; or
- obstructs access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

3 Survey Results

3.1 Results

3.1.1 An on-site inspection was undertaken on the existing building. The building was inspected on all exterior walls, guttering, interior and tiled roofing. Two roost features were identified on the building.

3.1.2 During the walkaround, damage was noted to the exterior of the building, and open access to the loft from a gap under the apex of the tiled roof. Upon further inspection, 20 roosting features were observed; see **pictures 1** and **2**.

Commented [1]: what were they?

Picture : showing a significant gap under the roof which could allow bats to access the roof to roost.



Picture 2: Showing another hole under the end wall allowing for roosting bats to access the roof to roost.



3.2 Risk of Roosting Bats

3.2.1 The scrubland to the east of the building provides potential bat foraging areas with ample flight paths up to the building. To the east is a broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland, connecting the foraging habitat to a wider landscape.

3.2.2 The structure on site has one or more potential roost sites with suitability in size, shelter, protection, and conditions.

3.2.3 These factors indicate a moderate to high potential for roosting habitats in structures, flight paths, and foraging habitats as per the 2024 Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines.

3.3 Recommendations

3.3.1 The on-site inspection concluded a moderate to high potential for bat roosting habitat and surrounding foraging and flight path habitats.

3.3.2 It is recommended, in accordance with current UK bat guidance, that a minimum of two nocturnal emergence/re-entry surveys be carried out between May and September, spaced three weeks apart.

Appendix: Photographs





