

Bat Risk Assessment of:

108 Cambridge Avenue
Hebburn
NE31 2RT

Prepared for:

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Job Ref: Wardale_108CambridgeAve_Bat1.1

Report prepared by	Position	Date
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Report

1.1.1 Dendra Consulting Ltd was commissioned by Mr Sean Wardale to undertake a bat risk assessment of 108 Cambridge Avenue in Hebburn, South Tyneside. The bat risk assessment was carried out in order to accompany a planning application to extend the property, as per Section 1.2 below. The scope of the report was to:

- Undertake a risk assessment of the building with regards to potential bat usage,
- Assess the potential for the current proposals to affect bats,
- Advise on any further survey work, if required,
- Formulate an appropriate mitigation strategy, if required.

1.2 Details of Proposals

1.2.1 The proposed works involve the construction of a two storey extension with a hipped roof to the side (south-western elevation) of the property, and a single storey extension with mono-pitched roof to the rear (south-eastern elevation) of the property. Both of the proposed extensions will sit below the height of the existing roof.

1.3 Survey Timing, Methodology & Personnel

1.3.1 A site visit was conducted by Sarah Edwards and Frances Mudd on 29th March 2016, both of whom hold Natural England Level 2 Bat Survey Class Licences (WML-CL18) and are full members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management. The purpose of the visit was to carry out an external and internal inspection of the building in order to assess the site's suitability for bats, signs of bats and potential entry/exit points. The survey was conducted in accordance with best practice guidelines (Hundt 2012). The weather on the day of the visit was fine and dry.

1.4 Legal Status of Bats

1.4.1 All UK species of bat are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). This law makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
- Deliberately disturb a bat^[*]
- Damage or destroy a bat roost or resting place

^[*]Disturbance of bats includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to:

- Impair their ability
 - to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - to hibernate or migrate
- Affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

2.0 REPORT FINDINGS

2.1 Pre-Existing Information

2.1.1 Durham Bat Group was contacted, and any records held of bat roosts and activity within 2km of the site was requested. The results have not yet been sent and will be inserted here once available.

2.2 Status of Species Recorded in the Search Area

2.2.1 Local level

There is insufficient data available to assess the status of bats in the local area. The county/regional status of the species likely to exist in the search area is therefore likely to provide the most reasonable assessment.

2.2.2 County/regional levels (Durham Biodiversity Partnership)

- Common pipistrelles are found on modern housing estates and are ubiquitous throughout the whole of the DBAP area.
- Soprano pipistrelles are known to occur on the Tees, Wear and Derwent but are probably more widespread.
- Brandt's bat is much rarer and the roosts in the Durham area are of national importance.
- Whiskered bats are fairly widespread but localized. Roosts in the Durham area are of national importance.
- Daubenton's bats are widespread along water courses and near water bodies throughout the region.
- Brown long-eared bats are reasonably widespread, but localised. They require large undisturbed roof spaces within flying distance of suitable woods.
- Natterer's bats roost in trees and large roof spaces, where they can warm up before leaving; this is one of Durham's rarer species.
- Noctule bats are localised in the area's mature woodland, in rural areas.

2.2.3 National level (Bat Conservation Trust 2012)

- Common pipistrelle – Common
- Soprano pipistrelle – Common
- Brandt's bat – Common in north and west England, rare elsewhere
- Whiskered bat – Common in north and west England, rare elsewhere
- Daubenton's bat – Common
- Brown long-eared – Common
- Natterer's bat – Common
- Noctule – Uncommon

2.3 Site Location and Surrounding Area

2.3.1 The property is located on Cambridge Avenue, in Hebburn, South Tyneside. The OS National Grid reference for the site is NZ317642. The approximate altitude is 31m AOD. The property is situated in a residential area, and is surrounded by residential properties to the north and Campbell Park, an area of open green space containing grassland and compartments of mixed woodland to the south and south-east. Schools, with associated playing fields, sit to the west. Beyond this, land is predominantly in residential and commercial use, with areas of amenity grassland and small pockets of scattered mixed woodland. Two small ponds are located 290m to the south-west and 540m to the south-east, whilst the closest watercourse is the Bede Burn, 920m to the east. The Monkton Burn flows 1km to the south-east. Overall, the surrounding area offers suitable, but patchy, bat foraging habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats and therefore is of low ecological value. Figure 1 shows the site location and surrounding area.

Figure 1 - Site location and surrounding area. Not to scale.



2.4 Site/Building Inspection

2.4.1 The property consists of a two storey brick built semi-detached dwelling with pitched, tiled roof (Photographs 1 and 2). Brickwork is well pointed and the roof is in good condition, with no lifted tiles or potential access gaps beneath ridge tiles. Lead flashing provides a good seal at the base of the chimney. All windows and door frames are uPVC and are well sealed to the brickwork. Guttering is supported on wooden soffit boxes to the front and rear of the property and a small number of potential access points were noted at the base of the soffits on both elevations. An area of absent mortar was also noted along the roof edge at the south-western gable (Photograph 3), providing access into the baton space between the roof tiles and membrane beneath. However, each of these potential access points will not be affected

by the proposals as the extension to the rear is single storey so will not affect the soffits, and plans show that the extension to the side of the property will not meet the existing roof at the point of the mortar gap. Overall, opportunities for roosting bats are limited. No evidence of bats, such as droppings or staining was noted during the external inspection.

2.4.2 Internally, the loft space is open and uncluttered and is unused (Photograph 4). The tiles are lined internally with a bitumen type membrane which appears in very good condition. Light penetrates into the void from a mortar gap towards the top of the gable wall. Wasps were heard within the mortar gap. Fibre glass insulation is present on the floor of the void. Conditions within the void are clean, cold and airy and no evidence of use by bats was found, such as staining, droppings or live/dead bats.

2.4.3 In summary, no evidence of use by bats, such as staining, droppings, live or dead bats was observed during the inspection.

Photograph 1 – North-west elevation of 108 Cambridge Avenue.



Photograph 2- Area to be affected by proposals.



Photograph 3 - Section of absent mortar on south-west elevation.



Photograph 4 - Interior of 108 Cambridge Avenue.



3.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

3.1 Limitations

3.1.1 The bat risk assessment survey was conducted in March, when bat species are less active, and visible evidence of their presence is less likely to be encountered. Throughout the year, bats are known to roost deep in cracks, crevices and cavity walls making roosts difficult to identify during a visual assessment. Furthermore, bats may move between several roosts depending on metabolic and social requirements (English Nature, 2004) and therefore may not be resident at a particular roost at the time of survey. A lack of evidence should not therefore be considered proof of a lack of bat roost, as roosts remain protected throughout the year, including periods during which they are not occupied.

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Information regarding bat data within the locality has not yet been supplied by Durham Bat Group, and therefore any conclusions drawn from the field visit alone may be subject to change once data becomes available. From the remaining desk study and field survey, it can be seen that the property is situated in a suburban area, within close proximity of low value bat foraging habitat.

3.2.2 The proposed works involve the extension of the property to the side and rear. Despite the presence of a small number of potential access points into the soffits and baton space of the roof, it is considered that the proposals do not pose a potential risk to bats or their roosts as the designs show that the soffits and existing roof edge will not be affected.

3.2.3 Overall the building is classified as having low potential to contain roosting bats under current industry guidance (Collins 2016), however the area to be affected by the proposals is considered to be of negligible risk due to a lack of potential access points.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The area of the building to be affected by the proposals has been classified as having a negligible risk of containing roosting bats under current industry guidelines and therefore no further survey work is recommended. No restrictions on the timing of the works are deemed necessary with regards to bats.

4.2 As a measure of good working practice, the following information should be supplied to contractors undertaking the building works:

- In the highly unlikely event that bats are found all works will stop and the consultant will be contacted immediately – **Barry Anderson 07900894160**. If the consultant cannot be reached the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) should be contacted via their emergency helpline number 0845 1300 228.
- If the roost is still intact, or can be repaired, this should be done immediately with bats left *in situ*.
- Any injured bats, and bats which cannot be returned to the roost and may be vulnerable to inclement weather and/or predation, should be collected using gloved hands and placed into a suitable container with breathing holes. Anyone bitten by a bat should seek immediate medical attention.
- In all cases where bats are found, the Senior Nature Conservation Organisation (SNCO) must be informed: In this instance the appropriate body is Natural England. Telephone: 0300 060 2219.
- A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) license may be required for the works to continue if bats are found.

5.0 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2012). *The state of the UK's bats: National Bat Monitoring Programme Population Trends 2012.* Bat Conservation Trust & JNCC: London.

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn).* The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Durham Biodiversity Partnership. *Bats Action Plan.* Available at <http://www.durhambiodiversity.org.uk/bats/>. Viewed 7th July 2015.

Mitchell-Jones A. J., (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines.* English Nature. Peterborough.

Report end