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Bat Risk Assessment at:
2 Ferndale Grove
East Boldon
South Tyneside
NE36 0TG

Prepared for:
Paul Loughlin
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Job Ref: Loughlin_Ferndale_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 Paul Loughlin to undertake a bat risk assessment survey of no. 2 Ferndale Grove, a residential bungalow in the village of East Boldon, 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 demolition of the existing rear bathroom extension and the removal of the existing pitched tiled roof prior to extending the footprint of the building on the front and rear elevations and the addition of a new pitched roof incorporating three roof lights.

1.3 Survey Timing, Methodology & Personnel

1.3.1 A building inspection survey was conducted on the 12th February 2018, by Shaun Morrison, an experienced ecologist who holds a Natural England Level 2 Bat Survey Class Licence (WML-CL18). The purpose of the visits was 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 (Collins, 2016). The weather on the day of the visit was calm 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 (DBG) was contacted, and any records held of bat roosts and activity within 2km of the site was requested. The records indicate the presence of Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*) and several unidentified bat species commuting and foraging within the search area. The closest roost record is from 2004 for an unknown number of an unidentified bat species reported in a bat box in a residential garden on Beckenham Avenue, within 700m north of the site.

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 (North East England Nature Partnership)

- Common pipistrelles are found on modern housing estates and are ubiquitous throughout the whole of the DBAP area.
- 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.

2.2.3 National level (Bat Conservation Trust 2014)

- Common pipistrelle – Common.
- Natterer's bat – Common.

2.3 Site Location and Surrounding Area

2.3.1 The site is located within a semi-urban area on the southern outskirts of East Boldon in South Tyneside. The OS National Grid Reference for the site is NZ367610. The approximate altitude is 32m AOD. The property sits within its

own grounds and is bounded by mature lawned gardens with ornamental planting to the north and south. The wider environment is predominantly mixed commercial and residential development interspersed with open green spaces and scattered trees, which then leads on to areas of mixed use agricultural land bordering East Boldon village. Grange Park, a municipal open green space, with ornamental shrub planting and semi-mature broadleaved trees is located within 400m north-west of the site. The nearest woodland is Colliery Wood, a 30ha site planted in 1999 and managed by South Tyneside Council which lies approximately 2km to the north-west. The nearest named watercourse is the River Don which at its closest point lies approximately 900m to the north-east of the site. Overall the surrounding habitat is considered to provide moderate quality bat foraging habitat. Figure 1 shows the site location and surrounding area.

Figure 1 - Site location and surrounding area. Scale 1:25,000



2.4 Site/Building Inspection

2.4.1 The property is a detached brick built bungalow with a pitched tiled roof (Photograph 1). A small bathroom extension with a pitched tiled roof is present on the rear elevation, and small wooden shed is present in the rear garden (Photograph 2). The building is currently unoccupied and has been unheated for approximately two months. The tiled roof is generally in good condition with no broken, missing or slipped ridge/roof tiles noted. uPVC barge boards, fascias and soffits are present, which are all sealed well to the supporting brickwork (Photograph 3). A section of hexagonal hanging tiles is present between above the main entrance on the front elevation (Photographs 1 & 4), with several gaps noted behind loose and raised tiles. These gaps were inspected with an endoscope and although no evidence was found they do provide potential access behind the remainder of the tiled section. The doors and windows are uPVC framed and are all sealed well to the surrounding brickwork. The brickwork is in good condition with no mortar gaps noted. A small section of intact pebble dash render is present on the front elevation.

2.4.2 Internally there is a large uncluttered roof void present (Photograph 5). The roof tiles are supported on modern timber trusses and are lined with an intact membrane, with no visible daylight entering the roof void. The roof timbers are slightly cobwebbed along the ridge beam (Photograph 6). Fibreglass insulation is present between the joists. Occasional scattered rodent droppings were present next to concentrations of chewed up foam pipe lagging.

2.4.3 No evidence of bats, such as droppings, fur-oil staining, scratch marks, feeding remains, squeaking noises, odour or live/dead bats was noted during the external and internal inspections (see also Section 3.1 below).

Photograph 1 – Front (north-west) elevation of no. 2 Ferndale Grove.



Photograph 2 – Rear (south-east) elevation of no. 2 Ferndale Grove.



Photograph 3 – Sealed uPVC barge boards on the front elevation.



Photograph 4 – Hanging tiles on the front elevation of the property.



Photograph 5 – Large uncluttered roof void.



Photograph 6 – Intact membrane roof tile backing.



3.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

3.1 Limitations

3.1.1 This risk assessment was carried out in mid-February, when bats are known to be hibernating 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. Bat roosts remain protected throughout the year, including periods during which they are not occupied.

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Several field and roost records were provided by Durham Bat Group from within a 2km search area of the site and from aerial imagery it can be seen that the property lies within close proximity of moderate value bat foraging habitat.

3.2.2 The proposed works involve the demolition of the existing rear bathroom extension and the removal of the existing pitched tiled roof prior to extending the footprint of the building on the front and rear elevations and the addition of a new pitched roof incorporating three roof lights.

3.2.3 During the risk assessment survey no evidence of use by bats was found either internally or externally. The several loose and raised hanging tiles on the front elevation were examined with an endoscope and although no evidence was found they could potentially lead deeper behind the tiled section. In addition the building lies in close proximity to moderate value bat foraging habitat, and therefore the front elevation of the property has been

classified as having a low potential risk to contain roosting bats under current industry guidance (Collins, 2016).

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Bats

4.1.1 Under current industry guidance (Collins, 2016), the section of hanging tiles on the front elevation of the property has been assessed as holding a low potential risk of supporting roosting bats. The proposed building works will involve the removal of this section of tiles, and therefore a precautionary approach is recommended during the construction phase of the project.

4.1.2 Based on the evidence gathered, it is recommended that the section of hanging tiles above the main entrance door on the front elevation of the property (Photographs 1 & 4), are removed carefully by hand, under the supervision of a licensed bat ecologist. The ecologist will then undertake a check of the exposed surfaces and tiles for signs of roosting bats, prior to the works proceeding. In the unlikely event of signs of bats, such as droppings, being noted, the crevice will be considered a roost and the area will be reconstructed on a like-for-like basis to ensure the continued ecological functionality of the roost and therefore compliance with current wildlife legislation. It may be necessary to carry out further survey work and apply for a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence from Natural England to allow the proposed works to take place and further advice, where necessary, will be provided by the supervising ecologist. This level of supervision is deemed appropriate and proportionate to the risk assessment level assigned to the building.

5.0 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust (2014). *The state of the UK's bats: National Bat Monitoring Programme Population Trends 2014*. Bat Conservation Trust & JNCC: London.

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

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Report end