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Mr Brian Wisbey and Mr Les Cullen
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Kent
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FAO: Les Cullen

19th April 2022

**Protected Species Survey:
Patterdale Farm, Cut End Rd, Fishtoft**

Dear Mr Wisbey/Mr Cullen,

This letter has been prepared for the purpose of providing evidence relating to a Protected Species Survey completed by Archer Ecology Ltd at the above premises on 12th April 2022. It is understood that a planning application will be submitted in connection with alterations to an existing, redundant dwelling and detached garages at the above site; centred at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) TF 36903 41361. The proposals entail the refurbishment of the dwelling to allow for future residential occupancy.

The purpose of the survey is to determine any potential interactions between the development proposals and ecological receptors, specifically nesting birds and roosting bats, and to advise proportionate mitigation measures to avoid or reduce any potential adverse impacts to an acceptable level. This is to ensure that the proposals are compliant with legislation which protects UK wildlife.

Legislation

Roosting bats

Bats receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, as amended). It is an offence to take, kill or injure a bat, damage or destroy a resting place of a bat, or disturb a bat whilst it is occupying a place of shelter.

Nesting birds

All nesting birds and active nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, as amended).

This makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

It is also an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, as amended) while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Methodology

Bat Roost Potential Survey

Detailed inspections of the redundant dwelling and detached garages was carried out by Principal Ecologist and bat license holder (Level 2 Class Licence issued by Natural England; 2015-14111-CLS-CLS) Helen Archer BSc (Hons) who is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and has over twelve years' full-time experience as a consultant ecologist. Helen was accompanied by Assistant Ecologist Abbie Smith BSc (Hons).

The inspections were undertaken in line with methodologies contained within the survey guidelines issued by Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) (Collins, 2016)¹ and involved identifying potential roosting features associated with the buildings, including loft spaces, wall cavities and structural defects, together with any evidence of roosting bats, including urine staining, guano, feeding remains and/or live and dead bats.

Nesting Bird Survey

A pre-works nesting bird survey was undertaken by Helen Archer who was equipped with high-focus 10x42 binoculars. All evidence of current and historic nesting activity was recorded, including nest building, calling chicks, feeding parents and active/redundant nests.

Results

Bat Roost Potential Survey

The redundant dwelling comprises a single-story, detached building constructed from a combination of breezeblock and brick walls (see Photograph 1, Appendix I). These support the remains of a single pitched

¹ Collins (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd Edition*. Bat Conservation Trust.

roof together with a flat, felted roof along an extension adjoining the western elevation, in addition to a single, intact chimney stack (see Photograph 2, Appendix I). The building features both wood framed and UPVC windows and doors across all elevations and an integrated garage along the northern aspect.

It is understood, through corresponding with the applicant, that the dwelling was subjected to a major fire incident in September 2017, resulting in severe damage and collapse of the former pitched roof. Any remaining sections of the roof are clad with interlocking concrete tiles (see Photograph 3, Appendix I). These are affixed directly onto the rafters with no separating membrane in between.

The brickwork of the dwelling was observed to be in reasonable condition and intact throughout, lacking any observable features with a potential to support roosting bats. Although the absence of a roof has exposed wall cavities, these were subjected to weathering and offered sub-optimal environments for roosting bats. The internal rooms were also subjected to high levels of ambient light which equally provide sub-optimal conditions for roosting activity.

The detached garages comprise a small, detached and single-story building constructed from bricks and mortar (see Photograph 4, Appendix I). This supports a single-pitched, unlined, pantile clad roof with gable walls along the north-eastern and south-western elevations. The external brickwork of the dwelling was observed to be intact throughout with occasional spalling observed. However, no associated potential roosting features were noted. The roof was observed to be in reasonable condition and, with the exception of occasional lifted tiles (see Photograph 5, Appendix I), no inherent defects were recorded.

Observations of the interior of the garages indicated that the building is separated by a partitioning wall and is currently used for storage. The roof features skylights which have subjected the interior of the building to high levels of ambient light (see Photograph 6, Appendix I), contributing to sub-optimal conditions for roosting activity.

In view of the condition, construction and architectural style of the redundant dwelling and garages, these buildings lacked any observable features with a potential to sustain bat roosts. No evidence of current or historic roosting activity, such as guano and live/dead bats. In line with roosting categories contained within BCT guidelines, both buildings were appraised as having 'negligible' potential to support roosting bats. However, it should be considered that internal inspections of all sections of the dwelling interior could not be achieved at the time of the survey due to both access and safety limitations.

Nesting Bird Survey

No evidence of former or current nesting activity was found to be associated with either the redundant dwelling or detached garages. There is, however, a possibility that horizontal surfaces, apertures and guttering associated with both buildings could offer potential nest sites and, in the case of the dwelling, exposed wall cavities.

Conclusion / Recommendations

Roosting bats

The buildings were appraised as having 'negligible' potential to support roosting bats which was mainly attributed to by the condition and simplistic architectural styles of both buildings, together with a lack of inherent features with a potential to sustain bat roosts. It is advised that the following precautionary measures are taken when completing the building works:

- All contractors working on the building must be briefed on the legal protection afforded to bats and their identification.
- Works to the roof of the garages should be undertaken in a slow and controlled manner. Each roof tile should be carefully lifted and meticulously checked underneath for any evidence of bats (including live/dead bats, droppings and urine staining) before being carefully removed/discarded.
- **Should any evidence of bats be encountered during the works, all site activities must stop immediately**, and an appointed ecologist contacted. The ecology contact for this project is Helen Archer (Archer Ecology Ltd): 07583 802069.
- If a bat is found under a tile or any other aperture, **works will stop immediately**. If the bat does not voluntarily fly out, then the aperture will be carefully covered over to protect the bat(s) from the elements.
- Any injured bats should be gently placed in a secure ventilated box in a cool, quiet and dark place (e.g. cardboard box with a sealed lid) by the contractor for the bat's protection, whilst awaiting the arrival of the ecologist.

Nesting birds

All intrusive preparatory works to the existing buildings, including renovations, together with hedgerow, tree and/or scrub removal should be undertaken outside of the main bird nesting season (i.e., during September to February, inclusive). If this is not possible, it is advised that a nesting bird check is completed during the main bird nesting season and immediately prior to works commencing (within 24 hours).

Should you wish to discuss your requirements further, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,



Helen Archer BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

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Appendix I – Photographs



Photograph 1: Redundant dwelling viewed from eastern elevation



Photograph 2: Single storey dwelling and intact chimney stack



Photograph 3: Remaining section of dwelling roof with inter-locking concrete tiles



Photograph 4: Detached garage at northern extent of the application site



Photograph 5: Pantile roof viewed from northern elevation



Photograph 6: Underside of pantile roof viewed from interior