62 BROADWOOD AVENUE, RUISLIP MIDDLESEX

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

A Report to: The Drawing Room (London) Ltd

Date: May 2024

MMECOLOGY

E-mail: mmecology@outlook.com Tel: 07803475753

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

In May 2024, The Drawing Room (London) Ltd. commissioned MMEcology to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment at 62 Broadwood Avenue, in Ruislip, Middlesex. This survey is required to inform a planning application associated with works to the existing dwelling.

To fulfil the above brief, it was necessary to assess the potential for the existing dwelling on site to support roosting bats. Therefore, a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment was undertaken on 10 May 2024. This report details the results of the Preliminary Roost Assessment.

1.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey, detached dwelling, within the residential area of Ruislip. The site is located at National Grid Reference TQ 09329 88363.

The dwelling is set within an urban setting, with residential buildings and their private gardens located to west and east. To the south is Broadwood Avenue, beyond which is more dwellings and their gardens. Immediately to the north of the site is a large block of woodland, Ruislip Woods, designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserve (NNR). The wider landscape is dominated by residential buildings, woodland, Kings College grounds and waterbodies (e.g. River Pinn, Ruislip Lido). Figure 1 shows the location of the application site within the wider landscape.

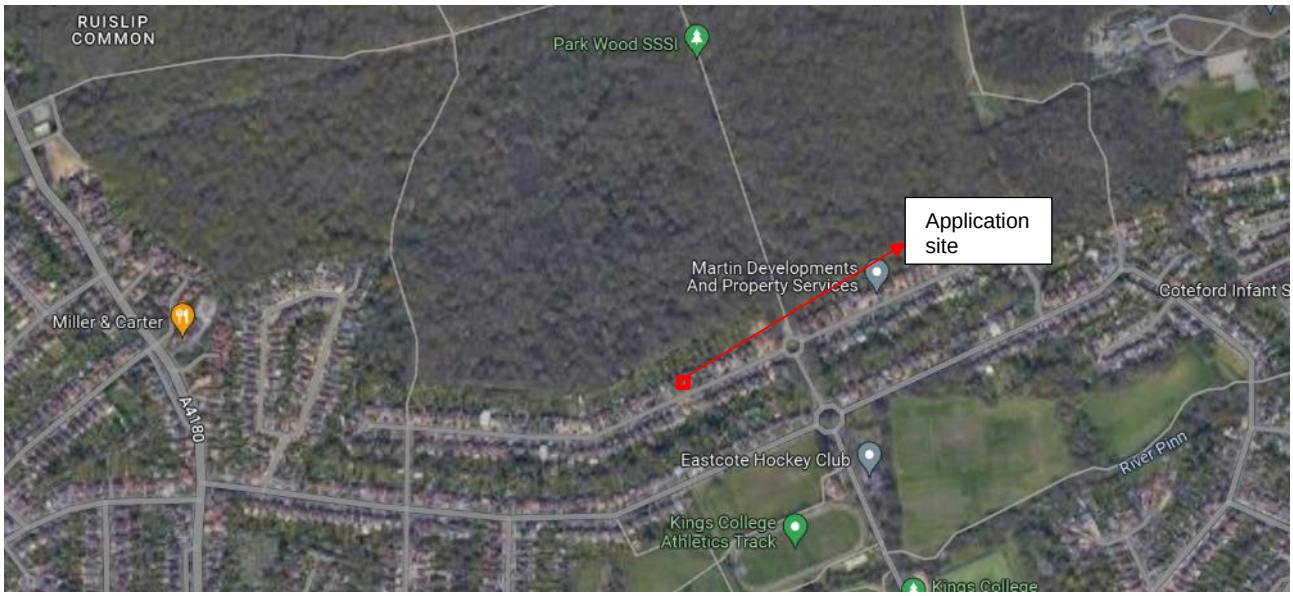

Figure 1. Aerial imagery showing the site in the wider landscape (Source: Google maps)

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT

In line with the specifications detailed in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition (Collins, 2023), a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of the building on site was conducted. The Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment was conducted on 10 May 2024 by Maral Miri, Principal Ecologist, MSc, MCIEEM, CEnv, Natural England Level 2 bat class licence holder. A visual assessment was undertaken to determine the presence of any Potential Roost Features (PRFs), together with a general appraisal of the suitability of the site for foraging and commuting. Example of PRFs include behind hanging tiles, weatherboarding, soffit boxes, lead flashing and between tiles and the roof lining.

Any accessible PRFs were inspected using binoculars, a torch and endoscope for evidence of possible bat presence. Buildings were surveyed externally and internally.

Based on the PRF's present, the building on site was assessed using the suitability classes detailed within the Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023), as detailed in table below:

Suitability	Description
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.

2.2 DATA SEARCH

Defra's MAGiC interactive map was searched for all granted European Protected Species Application within a 2km radius, with the findings summarised in the Table below:

Granted European Protected Species Applications (England)	Description	Distance from the application site
EPSM2010-1919	Licence allowing the destruction of a resting place belonging to common pipistrelle. Licence Start Date 28/06/2010 Licence End Date 30/11/2010	860 south-west
EPSM2012-4855	Licence allowing the destruction of a resting place belonging to common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle. Licence Start Date 08/10/2012 Licence End Date 01/09/2015	1.2km south
2014-2993-EPS-MIT	Licence allowing the destruction of a resting place belonging to common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats. Licence Start Date 11/09/2014 Licence End Date 01/10/2016	1.4km north-east

3. SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 EXTERNAL INSPECTION

The vacant dwelling on site is a detached, two-storey, red brick building, with a part-pitched, part-hipped roof, covered by clay tiles. A two-storey extension with a flat roof is located to west. The upper storey of the dwelling is covered by clay hanging tiles. The brickwork is in good condition with no cracks, areas of missing mortar or holes present suitable for roosting bats.

Figure 2. View of the front and rear elevations of the dwelling

Figure 3. View of the side elevations

The roof tiles are generally in good condition; however, due to their hand-made nature, a number of small gaps were recorded below them. Similarly, a number of gaps were recorded behind the hanging tiles. Small gaps are also present along the flat roof capping. Gaps are also present between the soffit and the brickwork, particularly along the eastern elevation, where the chimney breast is located.

Figure 4. Example of gaps under roof tiles

Figure 5. Example of gaps behind hanging tiles

Figure 6. Example of gaps behind hanging tiles

Figure 7. Example of lifted flat roof capping

Figure 8. Example of the gaps between the soffits and the brickwork

Figure 9. Example of the gaps between the soffits and the brickwork

The rear garden is laid to lawn, with shrubs.

Figure 10. View of the rear garden

Numerous PRFs in the form of lifted roof tiles and hanging tiles, gaps behind flat roof capping and gaps between the soffits and the brickwork was recorded during the survey. No evidence of roosting bats was found during the external inspection of the dwelling.

3.2 INTERNAL INSPECTION

Internally, a single loft void is present. The floor to apex height is approximately 2m. The loft floor was insulated and not boarded. Weatherboarding was present between the roof tiles and the timber rafters, which was in a good condition and tightly fitted. The gable-ends were of breezeblock construction.

Figure 11. View of the loft void

Figure 12. Example of tightly fitted weatherboarding in a good condition

During the internal inspection, evidence of roosting bats in the form of a light scattering of old bat droppings on the loft floor was recorded, with a concentration below the southern gable-end. The dwelling is therefore a confirmed bat roost. To robustly identify the species of bat roosting in the building, a sample of the droppings should be sent for DNA analysis.

Figure 13. Example of bat droppings found during the internal inspection

Figure 14. Example of bat droppings found during the internal inspection

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

Potential roost features/entry points into the loft were recorded during the external assessment of the dwelling, including lifted roof tiles and hanging tiles, gaps behind flat roof capping and gaps between the soffits and the brickwork. Furthermore, evidence of roosting bats in the form of bat droppings was recorded during the survey work.

The dwelling is therefore considered to be of high potential and a confirmed bat roost.

4.3 POTENTIAL IMPACT ON BATS

As the dwelling on site has been confirmed as a bat roost, the proposal is likely to result in the disturbance, potential killing/injury of bats and loss/modification or damage of a roosting site.

All UK bats are European protected species and therefore no unlicensed work can be undertaken which will contravene the legislation.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The dwelling on site has been identified as a confirmed roost due to the presence of bat droppings. Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023) recommends that for structures with a confirmed roost, three dusk emergence surveys with the aid of infrared night vision cameras are undertaken during the bat active season to determine the status of the roost (active, historical, occasionally used), the species and number of bats present and the roost type (e.g. day roost, maternity roost, etc.). Peak bat survey season extends from May to August.

It will also be necessary to send a sample of the droppings found within the loft space for DNA analysis, to robustly identify the species of bat roosting on site. Available records of bats from the Local Environmental Records Centre will also be necessary to apply for a European Protected Species licence.

As presence of roosting bats has been confirmed, a Natural England European Protected Species licence or a Bat Mitigation Class Licence will be required to enable the proposals. Prior to a licence being issued, planning permission must be granted and relevant conditions relating to protected species must be discharged.

REFERENCES

Collins, J. (ed). (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.