

Preliminary Roost Assessment

**Down Park Place, Down Park, Turners Hill Road, Crawley Down,
West Sussex, RH10 4HQ**

Survey conducted 25th February 2023

Document Control Sheet

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SUMMARY

An internal and external daytime inspection for evidence of bats and bat roosting potential was conducted by ecologist Lisha Price of Plan Ecology at Down Place Park, Crawley Down on the 25th of February 2023.

The proposed plans for the property have yet to be finalised and will be added into the report once they are completed.

The Site consists of detached, brick-built bungalow with gardens and a garage.

The building was carefully inspected, and the potential features were examined in the accessible spaces using an endoscope. Bat roosting potential was identified in the form of the wooden soffits, gaps between the soffits and the wall, the raised flashing and a few raised roof tiles. The bat roosting potential was assessed according to the scale negligible, low, moderate, or high and the house and was deemed to have high bat roosting potential.

No evidence of bats was found during the internal inspection.

Three bat activity, dusk and dawn, surveys are recommended for the building during optimal weather conditions. The surveys need to take place between May and September.

Following these activity surveys, it will be possible to assess if bats are roosting and the type of bat roost present.

If any roosts or access points will be destroyed, altered, or disturbed due to the planned works it may be necessary to apply for a European Protected Species Licence (EPS) with Natural England (NE) and a bat mitigation plan designed from the survey results to minimise disturbance and reinstate bat roosting areas and access points.

Biodiversity enhancements including bat and bird bricks have been recommended.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Description

Down Park Place, Down Park, Turners Hill Road, Crawley Down, West Sussex, RH10 4HQ is a detached, brick-built house with an adjacent back garden and garage situated in a rural location.

1.2 Proposed works

The proposed plans for the property have yet to be finalised and will be added into the report once they are completed.

1.3 Aims of the survey

A Preliminary Roost Assessment was carried out with the aim to look for evidence of bats roosting and for the presence of structures within the buildings which hold bat roosting potential.

1.4 General information about bats and buildings

Loft spaces can potentially be utilised by bat species such as e.g. Brown Long-eared bats or Serotine bats which are known to commonly roost inside loft spaces. This can generally be discovered via droppings inside the loft as the droppings will stay protected from weather elements.

External features of the building can potentially be used as roosting sites by e.g. Pipistrelle bat species (*Pipistrellus* spp). Pipistrelle bats are the most common bats out of the British species, and they are known to roost inside buildings utilising areas such as cavity walls, soffits and fascia boards, and between tiles and roofing felt. It is not practical to carry out a full physical examination of such building features, which is why activity surveys have to be done during summer months (May-September) when the bats are fully active.

Access points of 1-2 centimetres only are used by bats to enter and exit their roosting sites. Most buildings will have gaps of such size in roof areas, as ventilation of the roof void would otherwise not be possible.

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Survey conducted 25th February 2023

1. METHODOLOGY

The surveys were undertaken in accordance with the methods described in the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn), Bat Conservation Trust (BCT).

External and internal inspection – Preliminary Roost Assessment

The buildings were surveyed during the daytime on the 25th of February 2023 by Lisha Price (Natural England bat licence No. 11503-CLS) of Plan Ecology.

The building was examined internally and externally to identify any changes in existing roost features and/ or to identify any new features/ structures that hold bat roosting potential within or on the church which could affect the overall assessment of the building for use by roosting bats. The bat roosting potential was assessed according to the following scale (adapted from Collins, J. 2016):

- Negligible: Negligible potential roost features likely to be used by roosting bats
- Low: simple structure buildings that have very few potential bat roosting features, which could only be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions, or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats.
- Moderate: a structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats in some way, but which are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (such as a maternity roost).
- 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 due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
- Confirmed: evidence of bats such as live or dead bats or bat droppings are present, or there are confirmed records of a bat roost in the building.

The building was inspected for evidence of bats in the form of live or dead bats, droppings, urine staining and insect feeding remains such as moth and butterfly wings. A careful visual search using a Clulite torch was conducted of the loft space. An endoscope (Ridgid) was used for spot checks of internal and external gaps. The exterior of the building was surveyed for droppings on walls and window ledges.

2. RESULTS

External and internal inspection results – Preliminary Roost Assessment

Bat roosting potential: The building was carefully inspected, and the potential features were examined in the accessible spaces using an endoscope. Bat roosting potential was identified in the form of the wooden soffits, gaps between the soffits and the wall, the raised flashing, and a few raised roof tiles. The bat roosting potential was assessed according to the scale negligible, low, moderate, or high and the house and was deemed to have high bat roosting potential.

See APPENDIX 1 for photographs

Evidence of bats: No evidence of bats was found during the internal inspection.

3. ASSESSMENT

Constraints on study information

All accessible areas of the buildings could be surveyed without restrictions.

A biological record data search was not conducted as the results of a data search is not likely to impact on the decision-making process at this stage.

Bat survey results are generally considered to be valid within a year of the survey date or until the next active bat season of May-September. The County Council Ecologists and/or Natural England may ask for updated surveys if the reports are older than one year.

Potential impacts on bat foraging and commuting habitat.

The works are small and localised and will not be detrimental to foraging or commuting bats.

Legislation and policy guidance

As population numbers have fallen, all bats and their roosts are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat;
- intentionally, recklessly or deliberately disturb a bat (in relation to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) the offence applies whilst the species is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 it applies anywhere);
- damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat;
- possess a bat (alive or dead), or any part of a bat;
- intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost;
- sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (alive or dead), or parts of bats.

Please refer to the original legislation for the definitive interpretation.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion of results

Three bat activity, dusk and dawn, surveys are recommended for the building during optimal weather conditions. The surveys need to take place between May and September with at least two of the surveys between May and August.

Following these activity surveys, it will be possible to assess if bats are roosting and the type of bat roost present.

4.2 Further Survey Effort

The house was deemed to have high bat roosting potential. Three activity surveys are therefore recommended to be carried in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Survey Guidelines.

Bat activity, emergence, and dawn surveys should be conducted over a period of at least 4 weeks to illustrate the use of the building as a bat roost over a period of time. The surveys need to be conducted during a time of year when bats are generally fully active (between May and September). The surveys will need to be carried out during optimal weather conditions, as outlined in the Bat Survey Guidelines.

4.3 Requirement for a Habitats Regulations (EPS) licence

If any roosts or access points will be destroyed, altered, or disturbed due to the planned works it may be necessary to apply for a European Protected Species Licence (EPS) with Natural England (NE) and a bat mitigation plan designed from the survey results to minimise disturbance and reinstate bat roosting areas and access points.

An EPS licence can be applied for once the further bat surveys have been carried out and any planning consents have been met.

Ecological Enhancement Opportunities

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), issued in March 2012 (Updated 2021), states that ‘development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.’

Proposed ecological enhancement are provided below....

- Minimising light and noise pollution on the site. In particular minimising the hours the construction site is lit.
- Bat brick on the exterior of the building can provide bat roost potential.
- Nesting bird potential can be enhanced with the inclusion of a bird brick.
- Bee brick on the exterior wall can provide opportunities for a variety of bee species.

Details of proposed biodiversity enhancement have been illustrated in Appendix 2. Positioning and suitability of biodiversity enhancements should be reassessed once plans have been drawn up.

5. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 1: Photographs



Photograph 1: Mouse droppings in loft.



Photograph 2: Loft space.



Photograph 3: Loft space with fibreglass insulation.



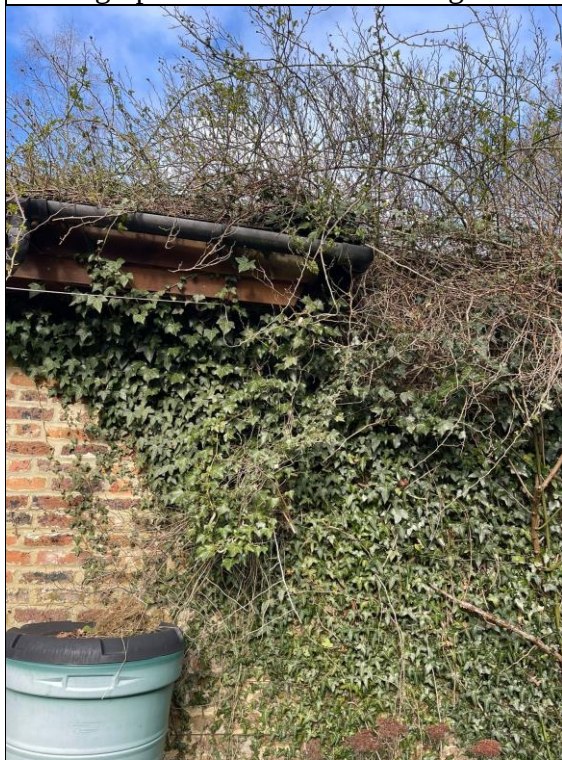
Photograph 4: Loft space with fibreglass insulation.



Photograph 5: Brick-built building.



Photograph 6: Brick-built building.



Photograph 7: Ivy covered wall.



Photograph 8: Wooden soffits.



Photograph 9: Brick-built detached house.



Photograph 10: Wooden soffits.



Photograph 11: No visible gaps under roof tiles.



Photograph 12: wooden soffits.



Photograph 13: Raised flashing and gap between roof tiles and guttering.



Photograph 14: Side elevation.



Photograph 15: Gap between soffits and wall.



Photograph 16: Adjacent garden.



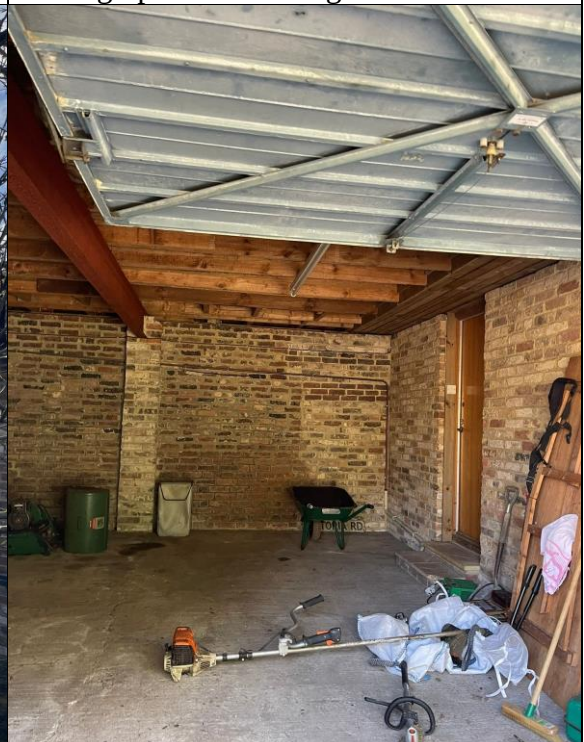
Photograph 17: Back Garden.



Photograph 18: Tree in garden.



Photograph 19: Tree in back garden.



Photograph 20: Garage interior



Photograph 21: Gravel driveway.



Photograph 22: Adjacent garage.



Photograph 23: Side of property.

APPENDIX 2: Biodiversity Enhancements

Woodstone Built in Open nest box



Forticrete Bat brick

