

19 Gander Hill

Haywards Heath

West Sussex

**Bat and Breeding
Bird Survey**

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1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

1.1 General

JG Ecological Surveys Ltd was commissioned by Mr S. Mogg to undertake a visual inspection survey of 19 Gander Hill, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1QU.

The survey was commissioned to support an application to carry out works to raise the roof height, replace the roof coverings and remodel the building exterior and interior.

The site was centred on OS grid reference TQ33532522.



Photograph 1: 19 Gander Hill

1.2 Survey Aims

Fieldwork was undertaken in order to identify whether the building supported roosting bats, breeding birds or Barn owl *Tyto alba*, ahead of the proposed works.

1.3 Summary of Results

Bats

No signs of bat use or potential access points were found on or within the building

Barn owl

No signs of Barn owl use of the building were noted and the building was unsuitable for the species and will not be considered further in this report.

Breeding Birds

No nest sites were noted on or within the property.

1.4 Implications for the Proposed Works

Bats

The results of the survey indicated that there would be no implications with respect to bats for the building. All bat species and their roosts are protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), through their inclusion on Schedule 5, as well as under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, which defines 'European protected species of animals'. These pieces of legislation combine to give substantial protection to bats and their roost sites (defined as 'dwelling places'). The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 introduced the term 'reckless disturbance' into the Wildlife and Countryside Act; this is a substantial strengthening of the legislation. The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) combine to make it an offence to undertake the following acts:

- Kill, injure or capture bats
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter or protection
- Recklessly disturb bats.

Nesting birds

The presence of nesting birds either within, or on, the building would impose timing constraints on any works that might disturb them due to their legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The nesting season is typically mid March to mid to end August but is prone to local variation depending on such things as weather conditions and food supply. Works that might impact on nesting birds would need to be timed for commencement after the last fledgling has stopped returning to the nest, and prior to the nesting season of the following year (the initiation of nest building is considered the point at which the sites are protected from disturbance).

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

2.1 Site Survey

Visual Inspection

A visual inspection survey was undertaken of the building by Jason Gillingham (a Natural England licensed bat surveyor) on the 16th December 2024. The building was searched visually, using a high-powered torch, binoculars and endoscope where required, for field evidence of bats, breeding birds and Barn owl, with particular attention being paid to sheltered areas such as window ledges and pipes where bat droppings might lie undisturbed from the weather. The interiors and floors were inspected in detail for bat droppings, urine staining or actual bats. Wall and beam tops were inspected for Barn owl nesting debris or whitewash, and the floors were checked for the presence of owl pellets associated with roosting Barn owl. The building was assigned a category for its potential to support a bat roost on the basis of Table 1 of Appendix 1.

The presence of current, or deserted bird nest sites were noted during survey.

2.2 Survey Limitations

There were no notable limitations to the visual inspection.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Building

Description

Wall construction	Brick and blockwork cavity wall construction
Roof construction	Concrete interlocking tiles set onto a bitumen underfelt



Photograph 2: Example of the gable wall showing fully mortared tile runs and mortar sealed wall top to tile junction



Photograph 3: Mastic sealed wall to soffit box junction



Photograph 4: Meshed vent to lower level and garage



Photograph 5: Condition of the hanging tiles and associated lead flashings

*Findings**Bats*

The building and roof coverings were in excellent condition with all tiles lying flat and interlocking with each other with no potentially exploitable gaps. All lead work to the chimneys and beneath the hanging tiles was in excellent condition with no lifting present. The wall tops were sealed to the roof structure via render at the gables and via a mastic sealant to the soffit boxes along the eaves offering no opportunities for bats to find access into the property. The mortar fillets along the end of the tile runs and along the ridge line were complete with no potential access points present.

The garage roof and lower level tiled section was sealed and had a fully meshed vent line preventing any bat access.

The hanging tiles were in excellent condition with no missing, damaged or slipped tiles present. The tiles around the window were fully sealed.

The interior roof space of the property contained no bat droppings or actual bats. The bitumen felt liner was in good condition. An endoscope was used to inspect behind the felt along the ridge and around the gable wall tops from the roof space interior with no signs of bat use being found.

No bats or bat field signs were found within the roof space nor on sheltered external surfaces.

The building was confirmed as not supporting a bat roost and offering negligible potential to do so due to its sound condition.

Breeding birds

No nest sites were observed.

4. CONCLUSIONS**4.1 Building***Bats*

It could be concluded that no bats had roosted within the building and that no potential access points existed for them to exploit.

Breeding birds

It could be concluded that no nesting birds were using the building.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Building

Bats

Legislative recommendations

There are no legislative recommendations with respect to bats for the proposed works. However it is important to note that bats use a variety of roost sites throughout the year and an itinerant individual may on occasion use the site for temporary rest or shelter. If a bat is uncovered during works then all activity in the area should cease and JG Ecological Surveys Ltd be contacted on 07909920283 for further advice.

Breeding birds

Legislative recommendations

There are no legislative recommendations with respect to nesting birds for the proposed works.

6. REFERENCES

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

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

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Classification criteria for assessing the potential value of buildings

It should be noted that the grading system below only reports on the situation at the time of survey; should bat activity levels change after the initial survey, or should the buildings be modified (for example if roof tiles are removed or fascia boards develop cracks), the category may need revision.

Please note: Intermediate categories (for example Low – Moderate value) may apply.

Category (Potential value)	Description
No/negligible value	Buildings with no or very few features capable of supporting roosting bats. Often buildings are of 'sound' well-sealed structure, or have a single skin and no roof void. They tend to have high interior light-levels, and little or no insulation. Buildings without any roofs may also fall into this category.
Low value	Buildings of largely unsuitable construction, but with few features of potential value to bats (e.g. gaps above windows, apparently shallow crevices). No supporting evidence (e.g. droppings / staining) found. Buildings may be surrounded by poor or sub-optimal bat foraging habitat, as is often the case in urban-centre locations.
Moderate value	Buildings usually of brick or stone construction with a number of features of obvious potential value to roosting bats e.g. loose roof / ridge tiles, gaps in brickwork, gaps under fascia boards, and/or warm sealed roof-spaces with under-felt.
High value	Buildings with a large number of features of obvious potential value to bats (as above). Bats may be suspected to roost within the building (at least at certain times of year), but no supporting evidence found.
Confirmed roost	Bats discovered roosting within the building, or recorded emerging from / entering the building at dusk and / or dawn. Building found to contain conclusive evidence of occupation by bats, such as bat droppings. A confirmed record (as supplied by an established source such as the local bat group) would also apply to this category.

Table 1. Appendix 1