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Report for
6 Cliffe Hill, Cawthorne, Barnsley
Protected Species Survey

Date of Report – 1st November 2011

Proprietors
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Protected Species Survey at 6 Cliffe Hill, Cawthorne

Name of Client: MEL (UK) Ltd

Address of Client: 17 Middlewoods Way, Carlton, Barnsley, S71 3HR

Name of Agent: MBooth Design Ltd, contact Mark Booth

Address of Agent: 11 Crowden Walk, Barnsley, S75 2LU

Date of Survey: 31st October 2011

Weather Conditions: 80% cloud, breezy, dry, warm, 15⁰C

Address of survey site: 6 Cliffe Hill, Cawthorne, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S75 4HJ

Planning Application Ref: EC1150 PT/KJA

Grid Reference of survey site: SE 284 081

Name of Surveyor: A.B.Gibney BSc (Hons), MIEEM

Licence Numbers: Great Crested Newt 20113998, Bat 20114275 & Barn Owl 20114276 issued by Natural England

1) Background

1.1 Reason for survey

There are plans to demolish the existing building, to build a replacement residence. A protected species (particularly bats) survey was requested to apply for Planning Permission to carry on the development.

1.2 Description of site

The site was in a village setting, on the edge of the village and consisted of a single-storey detached bungalow, plus attached single-storey garages surrounded by garden, which was lawn, shrub/herbaceous planting and hardstanding, which included slabs and compacted gravel. The garden had become overgrown. There were trees in the vicinity, the nearest was about 5m away, and is unaffected by the proposals. The site was surrounded by other domestic residences and agricultural land (mostly permanent grass). The site would be considered to be of 'limited wildlife interest'.

1.3 The Building



Photo 1: 6 Cliffe Hill, viewed from front

The bungalow had brick walls (some of the walls had stone cladding) and a tile roof (flat interlocking composite tiles). It had wooden soffits and fascias, and there were no gaps between the soffits and the walls, as any gap had been covered with a wooden quadrant, plus all the ventilation grills were in place, also the eaves were covered in webs. The roof was in sections, at more than one height, and had gables. Each section had equal pitches. The roof was supported by purlins and rafters. The tiles were lined, with felt. The loft was fully accessible for survey. It was insulated, the insulation being pushed into the eaves.



Photo 2: Webs on roof timbers

The roof timbers were covered in spiders' webs, and these webs ran from the rafters to the ceiling joists, showing nothing had disturbed the roof void for some time. There were no gaps under the tiles, and no missing tiles. The ridge tiles were all in place, with no gaps between them. The roof was covered in moss, which blocked any potential gaps between the tiles. There were no gaps in the pointing under the ridge tiles. The gables had wooden soffits and bargeboards, also any potential gap was covered in quadrant, and the pointing was all in place under the tiles on the gables. Also these eaves were covered in spiders' webs. The building had wooden and plastic framed windows and doors, all gaps being sealed with silicon.



Photos 3/4: Property viewed from rear

The attached garages had wooden flat roofs with a tarred felt covering; there was no roof void, the supporting timbers being open for inspection.

2) Survey Methods

The buildings was searched in a systematic pattern, all available spaces were searched, looking for signs of bats, in particular droppings, insect remains (where bats have fed), lack of spiders' webs (where bats have roosted), the bats themselves and body oils stains (where bats have squeezed through gaps). Particular attention was paid to undisturbed surfaces, walls (where bat droppings sometimes stick) and window sills (both inside and outside the buildings). The search was carried out with a high power torch inside the building and binoculars on the outside (particularly searching under eaves and ridge tiles). All cavities were checked using an endoscope to establish if anything was within them. Bats are unlikely to be active at the time of year that the survey was undertaken, however a bat detector was on at all times, in case light from the torch disturbed bats.

Signs of birds were also noted, particularly old nests. Birds are unlikely to be nesting at the time of year that the survey took place.

The ground was searched for tracks, trails or signs (particularly droppings and food/feeding signs) of other protected species.

3) Results

3.1 Bats – There was no evidence of bats found during the survey, there were no droppings or other signs, all surfaces and cavities were covered in spiders' webs and dust. All potential entry points were sealed by the quadrant on the eaves.

3.2 Birds – There were no nests found, but there was vegetation in the vicinity of the proposed development that would be suitable for birds to nest in.

3.3 There was no evidence of any other protected species on the site, and there did not appear to be any habitat suitable for other protected species.

4) Conclusions

4.1 The site would be classed as of limited wildlife value, i.e. buildings and garden being the habitats affected. (England Field Unit 2007).

4.2 Bats had not used the buildings as a roost site; and there were no access points for bats to get under the tiles.

4.3 No evidence of birds' nests was found, but there were potential sites for birds to nest in the vicinity of the development.

4.4 There were no indications of any other protected species on the site.

5) Recommendations:

- 5.1 The proposed development is unlikely to have a negative effect on the biodiversity of the area, as it will only affect an area, which would be classed as of limited wildlife value, i.e. buildings and garden being the habitats affected. (England Field Unit 2007).
- 5.2 No protected species are likely to be affected by this proposed development, as far as could be ascertained. Although it should be noted that if there is any doubt as to whether birds are nesting in the near vicinity of the proposed works, it is advised to get the area checked by a suitably qualified ecologist. Should an active nest be found, the nest must remain undisturbed until the young birds have fledged, which may cause a delay in the proposed works. Nesting Birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. It is recommended that any works to remove any vegetation are scheduled outside the bird nesting season (nesting season is normally considered to be March-August).

References

- Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. [ed.] (1999) *The Bat Workers' Manual* JNCC
- Parsons K. (ed.) (2007) *Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines* Bat Conservation Trust
- England Field Unit (2007) *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey – a technique for environmental audit* JNCC

Report Produced by

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