

Mr G. Springer
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on behalf of Jewish Care

31 August 2011

LUC Ref: 5236
BY EMAIL

Dear Mr. Springer,

KAY COURT: ECOLOGY WALKOVER SURVEY AND DAYTIME INSPECTION TO DETERMINE BAT ROOST POTENTIAL OF BUILDINGS AND TREES.

- I.1 At the request of Jewish Care an ecologist from LUC visited Kay Court (the site) on the 9th August 2011 to undertake an ecological walkover survey to identify potential ecological issues. Specifically this included an inspection of both the exterior and interior (where access was possible) of buildings and trees to determine their potential to support bat roosts. The survey was undertaken by an experienced LUC ecologist, with particular experience of bat surveys.
- I.2 In summary, this identified the two following issues:
- Requirement for further survey requirements to determine whether bats are roosting within buildings on the site.
 - Presence of potential bird nesting habitat (trees and scrub) and implications for the timing of vegetation clearance.
- I.3 This letter summarises the findings of the survey. Given the minimal ecological implications and that a full bat report will follow, a full survey report was not considered necessary.

METHODOLOGY

- I.4 The entire site was walked on 9th August 2011 to identify potential ecological issues. In particular, an external and internal inspection of the buildings and an inspection of trees within the site was undertaken to look for bats, evidence of bat activity and bat roost potential. The survey was informed by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT 2007) and Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC 2004) guidance. Binoculars and a high powered torch were used to assist the survey. Where possible access was gained to roof voids, however, use of the building as a private residence prevented entry to several roofs.

Bat Roost Potential (BRP) Categories

BRP Category	Description
Confirmed roost	Bats or evidence of bats recorded, both of recent and/or historic activity. Evidence may include live bats; bat droppings; corpses of young or adult bats; scratch marks; urine staining and/or grease marks; and sounds of bats in a roost.
High	Features include holes, cracks or crevices that extend or appear to extend back to cavities suitable for bats. In trees, examples include rot holes, woodpecker holes, splits and flaking or raised bark which could provide roosting opportunities. In buildings, examples include gaps in eaves, barge boards and gable ends; gaps in ridge tiles and loose/uneven hanging tiles; gaps in roof tiles particularly when underlying roofing felt is present; gaps in brick work; loose weather boarding; and/or gaps in brickwork permitting access to cavity walls. Ivy cover which is sufficiently well-established and matted so as to create potential crevices beneath.
Low	From the ground the building/tree appears to have features (e.g. holes, cavities or cracks) that may extend back into a cavity. However, owing to the characteristics of the feature, they are deemed to be sub-optimal for roosting bats. Alternatively, if no features are visible but owing to the size and age and structure, hidden features, sub-optimal for roosting bats, may occur that only an elevated inspection may reveal. In respect of ivy cover, this is not dense (i.e. providing BRP in itself) but may mask presence of BRP features.
Negligible	An inspected building/tree that is considered to have negligible potential for roosting bats.

FINDINGS

Description of Bat Roost Potential of Buildings and Trees

1.5 The following buildings were inspected:

368 Finchley Road

1.6 A large, three-storey, double fronted façade dating from c.1800's to early-1900's with several modern extensions at the rear. One of the extensions is a five storey block joined to the fronting and is larger than the original facade. The overall building contains a central flat roof with pitched sides. Under the flat roof, a single roof cavity was noted of approximate dimension 20m x 15m x 1.7m (length x width x height). Wooden soffits and barge boards were present on the front elevation of the building in addition to parts of the rear elevation. The side elevation of the building contained overhanging eaves exposing the ends of rafters. Numerous holes were noted from within the roof void in the broad location of the eaves. A number of other probable secondary roof voids were identified including two behind the gable ends at the front elevation of the building. Secondary roof voids could not be inspected as access was through occupied residential rooms which were locked. No evidence of bats was found in the central large roof void. In

addition, no evidence of bats was noted on or around the exterior of the building.

- 1.7 The building contained numerous features which would offer suitable roosting opportunities for bats including: wooden soffit boxes at front and rear, a large roof void with gaps suitable for bats to gain access, loose roof tiles with underfelt and hanging tiles at the front elevation.

370-372 Finchley Road

- 1.8 Two large, three storey semi-detached houses (connected to No. 368 by steel aerial walkways) which are modified so that internally they form one structure. The third storey of the building was situated within the pitched roof and two main loft voids (one above each of the former houses) were noted above this third storey. Both main loft voids were inspected and were approximately 15m x 5m x 2m (length x width x height). Probable secondary roof voids were identified behind the gable ends on the front elevation. These could not be accessed owing to the loft access point being in locked residential rooms. A large, modern single storey extension was noted at the rear of the building. The ceiling of this modern extension was open to the roof with no loft void present. No evidence of bats was found in either of the two main roof voids. In addition, no evidence of bats was noted on or around the exterior of the buildings.
- 1.9 The building contained numerous features which would offer suitable roosting opportunities for bats including: two roof voids with gaps suitable for bats to gain access, loose roof tiles with underfelt and/or timber sarking, gaps in brick work mainly at the rear elevation, wooden soffit boxes mainly at the front and rear elevations and overhanging eaves at the north elevation with exposed rafters and gaps which would permit bat access into the roof void.

Summerhouse at rear of garden of No. 368

- 1.10 A relatively small, single storey structure with a roof void of approximately 20m x 10m x 1.5m. The roof void was viewed from the loft hatch as it could not be accessed safely. No signs of bats were noted looking through the loft hatch and no signs of bats were recorded on or around the exterior of the building. This building has several features which would be suitable to support a bat roost including wooden soffit boxes and gaps which would permit bats access to the roof void.

Shed at rear of No's 370-372

- 1.11 This small structure has negligible potential to support a bat roost as it does not contain any roof void. It was constructed of well-sealed bitumen roofing felt, with walls of tight fitting wooden tongue and groove boarding which would not permit bats access to roost.

Trees

- 1.12 Trees within the site boundary mainly comprise ornamental specimens such as apple, pear, cherry and conifer cultivars. All trees are relatively small in girth and height and do not contain features which may be used by bats for roosting.

- I.13 The western side of two semi-mature ash trees which are situated just beyond the south eastern site corner were inspected for BRP as these trees are of a sufficient size to contain features which may support bat roosts. However, no features were noted. It was not possible to inspect the eastern side of these trees as this was on private land.

Further Survey Requirements

- I.14 No. 368, No's 370-372 and the Summerhouse all hold high potential to support a bat roost. As it cannot be categorically determined from a daytime inspection alone whether bats are present or not, further evening emergence and/or dawn re-entry surveys are required. Emergence/re-entry surveys would be used to determine if bats are present and if present which species are using buildings within the site boundary and the type and status of any roost. Should any bat roosts be identified this survey data would also be necessary to determine the level of mitigation required as part of a planning application and to inform a Natural England Mitigation Licence.
- I.15 BCT survey guidelines (BCT, 2007) suggest that 2-3 surveys must be undertaken in optimal weather conditions between May and September to determine whether a bat roost is present. Given the urban context in which the buildings are located and the fact that no bat field signs were identified during the daytime inspection it is recommended that two surveys will be sufficient. Given the complex layout of the buildings, in order to survey all areas of the building simultaneously a number of surveyors and possibly an Anabat detector may be used.

Other Ecological Issues

- I.16 I can confirm that in addition to bats, any removal of vegetation would need to be undertaken outwith the nesting bird season which is generally considered to be March - August (inclusive, weather dependent) to comply with the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. If this were not possible, vegetation clearance should only occur once an ecologist had undertaken a watching brief and was able to confirm that no birds were nesting within the vegetation to be removed.
- I.17 No other ecological issues were identified.

Yours Sincerely,



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References

Bat Conservation Trust (2007). *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

JNCC (2004). *Bat Workers' Manual - 3rd Edition*. JNCC, Peterborough.