



Bat Survey Letter of report: Garden House, Vale of Health, Hampstead, NW3 1AN

Dear Mr. Vlachos,

13th March 2012

Wychwood Environmental was instructed to undertake a bat scoping survey at the above address. The survey was necessary to collect information relating to the possible presence of roosting bats and to provide any necessary guidance and mitigation advice to ensure that no bats or roosts are affected by the proposed development. The proposed development involves the conversion of the existing structure.

Bats are European protected species, protected via The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations (2010) and also the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Therefore, it is an offence to kill or injure a bat or interfere with any roosting or resting site. A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time.

Survey Method

The survey was conducted by Rosalind Salter BSc MSc MIEEM (Bat license holder: 20114209) on the 6th March 2012. The building to be impacted by the proposed development was searched for signs of bat use. Internally, the building was searched for signs of bat use such as scratch marks, staining from bat fur, bat droppings and insect feeding remains (e.g., wing cases) as well as bats themselves. Externally, the building was surveyed (making use of a high powered torch and binoculars where necessary) for possible entry points, evidence of staining, scratch marks and bat droppings.

Results

The buildings located at Garden House are located in an area of low residential housing on the edge of areas of green space including Hampstead Heath and Kenwood. A large pond is also located at the bottom of the garden. Habitat observed surrounding Garden House provides good foraging and roosting opportunities for bats in the local area.

The buildings proposed for development include a two storey detached dwelling and a small outhouse. The dwelling was comprised of red brick with a concrete tiled roof (Photo 1). Wooden soffits were observed at each gable end. Roosting opportunities were found to be very limited as soffits and tiles were all tightly fitting. Internally the loft space was inspected. The void was cluttered, full of cobwebs and no evidence of roosting bats was observed (Photo 2). Numerous rat droppings were however recorded.

The outbuilding was in a very poor state of repair, with collapsing brick walls and a flat asbestos roof. No roof void was present. The building was very draughty and very limited opportunities for roosting bats were observed internally and externally. No evidence of roosting bats was observed.

Wychwood Environmental

82 Springfield Road, Westcott, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3PD. Tel: (+44) 01306743493. Mob: (+44) 07711779249.

Email: Rosalind@wychwoodenvironmental.com

www.wychwoodenvironmental.com

Several trees were recorded within the grounds, several of which had a thick coverage of ivy. These trees included a Yew *Taxus bacata*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Magnolia* and a species of Cypress. These trees were thought to have moderate potential to support bats.

See Appendix 1 for a detailed breakdown of features assessed to determine the likelihood of bats being present at Garden House.



Photo 1 – Garden House, Vale of Health



Photo 2 – Void of dwelling.

Photo 3 – Garden House, Outhouse

Discussion and Recommendations

The buildings surveyed were classified as having low potential to support roosting bats. Direct evidence of roosting bats was not observed during the survey. No further surveys are deemed necessary for the buildings, however the following mitigation/enhancements are advised:

- Should any bats be found work must cease immediately and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified and licensed ecologist.
- It is recommended that trees are not felled during the course of development. However if felling is necessary, it is advised that an Arboriculturist with knowledge of the protection afforded to bats is used to conduct the work. Trees must be checked for roosting bats (via tree climbing inspections or emergence surveys) before any work is conducted. If roosting bats are present then a license from Natural England will need to be applied for before felling can commence.
- Given the likely presence of foraging bats in the area it is recommended that, if external lighting is proposed, then 'bat friendly' lighting should be installed. Lights should be at a low level and emit low UV light (e.g. LED and Low-pressure sodium lights). A copy of 'Statement on the impact and design of artificial light on bats' issued by BCT will be provided along with this letter.
- Possible enhancements include bat friendly planting, which will help maintain/enhance foraging opportunities. A copy of 'Gardening for bats' will be provided along with this letter.
- The erection of 1-2 bat boxes, e.g. Schwegler 2F and 1FD Bat boxes, would provide additional roosting opportunities if placed on mature trees facing a Southerly aspect at a height of 3-6 metres.

By following these mitigation measures development can continue without risk of committing an offence under the WCA (1981), as amended, or The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations (2010). The provision of mitigation/enhancements also ensures that the local planning authorities are meeting requirements as stipulated under the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), which states that sustainable development should seek to achieve net gains in bio-diversity for nature.

Should you need any further advice on the information provided above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,



Rosalind Salter BSc MSc MIEEM

Wychwood Environmental

82 Springfield Road, Westcott, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3PD. Tel: (+44) 01306743493. Mob: (+44) 07711779249.

Email: Rosalind@wychwoodenvironmental.com

www.wychwoodenvironmental.com

Appendix 1: Likelihood of bats at Garden House.

Below are features of buildings that are assessed for their likelihood of bats being present. Ticks have been applied to those features that were assessed as being present in the building surveyed.

<p>Increased likelihood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pre 20th century or early 20th century construction <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural buildings of traditional brick, stone or timber construction. <input type="checkbox"/> Large and complicated roof void with unobstructed flying spaces. <input type="checkbox"/> Large (>20 cm) roof timbers with mortise joints, cracks and holes. <input type="checkbox"/> Entrances for bats to fly through. <input type="checkbox"/> Poorly maintained fabric providing ready access points for bats into roofs, walls, bridges, but at the same time not being too draughty and cool. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roof warmed by the sun, in particular south facing roofs. <input type="checkbox"/> Weatherboarding and/or hanging tiles with gaps <input type="checkbox"/> Undisturbed building roofs and structures. <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge structures, follies, aqueducts and viaducts over water and/or wet ground. <input type="checkbox"/> For rarer species, building or built structure is located in the core area of the distribution. <input type="checkbox"/> Buildings and built structures in proximity to each other providing a variety of roosting opportunities throughout the year. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buildings or built structures close to good foraging habitat, in particular mature trees, parkland, woodland or wetland, especially in a rural setting.
<p>Decreased likelihood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Modern, well maintained buildings or built structures that provide few opportunities for access by bats. <input type="checkbox"/> Small cluttered roof space.

Wychwood Environmental

82 Springfield Road, Westcott, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3P. Tel: (+44) 01306743493. Mob: (+44) 07711779249.

Email: Rosalind@wychwoodenvironmental.com

www.wychwoodenvironmental.com

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buildings and built structures comprised primarily of prefabricated steel and sheet materials. <i>Roof of outbuilding is asbestos sheeting</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cool, shaded, light or draughty roof voids. <i>The outbuilding was cool and draughty.</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roof voids with a dense cover of cobwebs and no sections of clean ridge board. <i>The void of the dwelling was filled with cobwebs.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> High level of regular disturbance. <input type="checkbox"/> Highly urbanised location with few or no mature trees, parkland, woodland or wetland.

Reproduced from Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines 2007