

Kenny Murphy  
By email: kenny@douglasandking.com

30<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Our Ref: RT-MME-123491

Dear Kenny,

**Updated Bat Surveys and Nesting Bird Check – 252 Finchley Road, London.**

**INTRODUCTION**

In September 2016 Douglas & King commissioned Middlemarch Environmental Ltd to undertake an updated Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment, a Nocturnal Emergence Survey and a Nesting Bird Check at 252 Finchley Road, London. These surveys are required to facilitate the demolition of the building and shed on site as well as vegetation clearance.

Middlemarch Environmental Ltd has previously carried out Bat Surveys, including Preliminary Roost Assessment, two Nocturnal Emergence Surveys and one Dawn Re-entry Survey at this site in August and September 2015. Findings of these surveys can be found in report RT-MME-120535.

**METHODOLOGY**

*Updated Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment*

In line with the specifications detailed in Bat Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature, 2004) and Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016), a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of the buildings was conducted during daylight hours. A visual assessment was undertaken to determine the presence of any Potential Roost Features (PRFs), together with a general appraisal of the suitability of the site for foraging and commuting. Any accessible PRFs were inspected using binoculars, a torch and endoscope for evidence of possible bat presence. Buildings were surveyed externally and internally.

For reasons of health and safety, the survey was only undertaken in areas accessible from 3.5 m ladders.

Based on the PRF's present, the survey area was assessed using the suitability classes detailed within Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016).

*Nocturnal Emergence Survey*

In line with the specifications detailed Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016), one updated nocturnal emergence bat survey was conducted on site. The survey commenced 20 minutes prior to sunset and continued until 120 minutes after sunset. The nocturnal emergence survey was conducted using electronic bat detectors (EchoMeter Touch and Bat Box Duet with associated recording devices) to facilitate the detection of bats and to aid in the determination of species of bat using the site. Subsequent computer analysis of recordings allowed all species of bat using the site to be identified.

*Nesting Bird Check*

The nesting bird survey took the form of passive and active observation. Passive observation involved the careful and methodical scanning of the site using binoculars. Observations were undertaken from a variety of vantage points scattered at strategic locations within, and adjacent to, the study area. Any evidence indicative of the presence of nesting birds was noted, e.g. visible nests, birds carrying nesting

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materials or agitated/territorial behaviour suggestive of birds holding breeding territories. Active observation involved a slow walkover of the field assessing the vegetation and conducting a detailed inspection for evidence of active nests, or for signs of behaviour suggestive of nesting birds being present.

**RESULTS**

The surveys were undertaken on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016 by Indre Barsketyte MSc Grad CIEEM (Senior Ecological Consultant), Jamie Fetcher (Ecological Projects Officer) and Victoria Aelen (Ecological Projects Officer). Weather conditions at the time of the assessment are provided in Table 1:

Parameter	Condition
Temperature (°C)	20
Cloud Cover (%)	10
Wind Force (Beaufort)	F0
Precipitation	None

**Table 1: Weather Conditions**

*Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment*

Inspection of the building and shed on site revealed no material change on site from the 2015 surveys. External assessment of the building has revealed a number of features that could be utilised by bats for roosting or as entrance points into the interior of the building, such as lifted/missing hanging tiles, gaps under ridge and roof tiles, lifted lead flashing, damaged brickwork, as well as gaps at the soffit box and wooden fascia (a full description of these features can be found in Middlemarch Environmental report RT-MME-120535). No evidence of bats such as droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and/or urine staining was identified on site during the updated survey.

Internal inspection of the building revealed that the lofts have been converted leaving only small, inaccessible roof voids of approximately 1 in height and 1.2 m wide (Plate 1). No evidence of bats was found within the proximity of the entrance that was created by asbestos survey.



**Plate 1: Small Roof Void Left After Loft Conversion**

Due to a presence of large number of suitable roosting features, this building was deemed to be of high potential to support roosting bats.

*Nocturnal Emergence Survey*

As a full set of activity surveys in line with the Bat Conservation Guidelines was undertaken in August and September 2015, only one Updated Emergence Survey was deemed to be necessary in order to establish if the status of the building with regards to roosting bats has changed.

The nocturnal emergence survey commenced 20 minutes prior to sunset and continued until 120 minutes after sunset. Sunset was at 18:41 hrs (BBC Weather Centre Data for London). One species of bat, common pipistrelle was recorded during the survey.

At 19:05 (24 minutes after sunset) a single common pipistrelle entered the site from the north east, briefly foraged around the back garden and left the site to the north east again. This bat did not emerge from or re-entered any of the features associated with the site. No other species of bat were detected or observed during this survey. Analysis of the sound recordings did not detect any further species of bat.

#### *Nesting Bird Check*

The survey area comprised scattered trees, unmanaged amenity grassland, scrub and ornamental planting. During the survey, several magpies, wood pigeons and wrens were observed on site. Observations of these birds revealed that they were not nesting on site and were moving around the vegetation. Therefore, it can be concluded that no active nests were present within the vegetation and buildings on site

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### *Bats*

No evidence of roosting bats was recorded on site and no bats emerged from or re-entered any of the roosting features associated with the site. It is therefore concluded that the site does not currently support a bat roost and the demolition works can proceed as planned. If development works to the surveyed building have not commenced by March 2017 it will be essential to update the survey effort to establish if bats have colonised the building in the interim.

In the unlikely event that a bat is found during site works all works in that area must immediately cease and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted.

#### *Nesting Birds*

As the vegetation and building on site did not contain any nesting birds, they can be removed as planned. As we are at the end of nesting bird season which extends from March to September inclusive, no further surveys with regards to nesting birds are required as long as the vegetation and building is removed by March 2017. If further vegetation/building clearance is required after March 2017 an updated nesting bird check will be required.

I trust that this report meets your requirements, however if you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

**For and On Behalf of Middlemarch Environmental Ltd.**



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