



Our Ref: JBA 21/346 ECO03

Ivor Watson
Marden Homes Ltd
10th February 2022

Dear Mr Watson,

RE: Updated internal and external inspection of buildings to be impacted at The Gables, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree, Essex.

Introduction and Background

James Blake Associates was instructed by Marden Homes Ltd to undertake an internal and external building inspection of buildings at The Gables, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree, Essex.

The site itself consists of buildings, hardstanding and horse-grazed pasture, located south of Kelvedon Road on the outskirts of the town of Tiptree, Essex. Adjacent habitats were similar, with commercial buildings further to the east and west. The wider landscape includes arable land, pockets of woodland, as well residential and commercial buildings of Tiptree to the southeast (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Site Location



Reproduced from Magic maps data licence number 100059700

Over 30 Years of Service, Value and Innovation

34-52 Out Westgate, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3PA
tel: 01284 335797 email: jamesblake@jba-landmarc.com

Chairman: James Blake BA (Hons) Dip LA (Hons) CMLJ

Company Secretary: Louise Blake BSc PGCE

Directors: Elzbieta Zebrowska MSc Eng LArch MScEnvSc CMLJ

Associate Directors: Vivienne Jackson : Marie Lowe CIMA Cert BA

Associate Director - Strategic Landscape Division: Abby Stallwood BSc (Hons) PG Dip LM CMLJ

www.jba-landmarc.com

Registration no.08169866 VAT no.512.4127.91

The survey was undertaken on the 7th February 2022 by Christopher Bridge BSc (Hons) and Bethan Feeney-Howells BSc (Hons). This report is intended to give an overview of the site condition at the time of the survey.

The method of the preliminary ground level roost assessment for bats was to observe the structure(s) carefully using binoculars where necessary, noting all potential roost features (PRFs) present including:

- Gaps/holes in mortise and tenon joints
- Gaps/holes in beam supports
- Gaps between corrugated roofing and walls/soffits
- Potential cavity/gaps between brick walls
- Top of gable end or dividing walls

A previous ecological assessment for the presence/absence of bats within the buildings to be impacted, was carried out in 2019 by Eco Planning. Results of this report found that majority of buildings on site lacked suitable roosting features for bats and no evidence of activity via droppings or staining was observed.

Results and Evaluation

The site consists of nine buildings of varying size and condition (see Figure 2 below for building references); with three being active accommodation.

Figure 2: Building References



Building A (The Annex)

Building A is a detached bungalow, with previous reports showing no evidence of bat activity within the loft space and no potential entry or exit points on the external. It was previously noted that the white rendered walls of the building had no staining, which would have been easily noticed and no sign of bat activity. No change was observed at the time of the survey, both internally and externally. It was noted

that the building was tightly sealed, with the plastic fascia in-tact and no displaced roof tiles. The loft space was also tightly sealed and insulated, with no bat activity, such as presence of droppings, found. Building A is considered to have 'negligible' bat roost potential (BRP).

Building B (Tower End)

Building B is also a detached bungalow, with previous reports showing no evidence of bat activity within the loft space and no potential entry or exit points on the external. It was also previously noted that the white rendered walls of the building had no staining, which would have been easily noticed. No change was observed at the time of the survey, both internally and externally. The loft was tightly sealed and insulated with no bat droppings found. Externally, the building is tightly sealed and in good condition, with no displaced roofing. Building B is considered to have 'negligible' BRP.

Building C (The Stables)

Building C is a single storey, detached building used as active stables. The layout of building C has not changed since the previous survey, with four stable bays to the southeast and three secure units to the northwest. No evidence of bats was noted in the previous survey, with no signs externally or internally including the loft space. Some change has occurred since the previous surveys and some features show potential for use by roosting bats; however, no evidence of bat activity was found. The loft space was inspected, with the only droppings found being from mice, and it was noted this space was sealed although not lined. Two small cavities were noted on the western wall of the building: one gap under the wooden panelling and one small hole on the wooden panelling. However, no staining was apparent on the white walls near these gaps and cobwebs were present. The eastern side of the building (stable end) is more open, with the door to the hay storage room generally left open. Within this hay storage room, a peacock butterfly was found hibernating which shows evidence that this room may be a constant low temperature and generally undisturbed; two factors that make a structure suitable for bats, particularly through hibernation. Although there was no access from each stable to the loft space, the stable bays themselves posed some potential, with an old swallow's nest noted. This is an actively used building, with external lighting, and only one room with dark and less disturbed conditions, therefore building C is considered to have 'low' BRP.

Building D (The Garage)

Building D is a single storey building used for storage and as a garage. Externally, brick foundations sit under wooden panelled walls and the roof is made from felt sheets. The previous survey found no evidence of bats and considered this space frequently disturbed and unsuitable for bats. No change has occurred since the previous survey, with no evidence of bats found internally or externally. The building as a whole was tightly sealed and no exit or entry points were observed. A note was made of a blackbird's nest behind one of the external lights on the northern wall. Building D is considered to have 'negligible' BRP.

Building E (The Office)

Building E is an office building, although not in regular current use. The previous survey commented on the tight seals to all walls and roofing, with no potential roosting features found. No change had occurred since the previous survey, with no features found, although with cobwebs around the exterior. Building E is considered to have 'negligible' BRP.

Building F (Main accommodation and link accommodation)

Building F is comprised of 2 single-storey buildings, actively used as residential properties. The building to the north has a loft, however access is not possible. The previous survey noted both buildings were tightly sealed and lacked any features that could be used by roosting bats. Some change has occurred to building F since the previous survey, although overall these buildings were intact and sealed, as well as being actively used. The only change observed was on the northern building with two cavities on the eastern fascia observed, and one gap under the fascia on the northern side. Part of the northern building

has white walls, with no staining apparent. The main accommodation to the north was considered to have 'low' BRP, with the link accommodation to the west considered to have 'negligible' BRP.

Building G (The Workshop)

Building G is used as a workshop and is active most days in the evenings. The building is comprised of concrete breezeblocks on the lower exterior, with a corrugated asbestos roof and cladding to the walls. At the time of the previous survey access into the building was not obtained however, conclusions were made that this was an unsuitable structure for bats. No change was observed since the previous survey, despite access being achieved. The building receives an abundance of daylight, with the only potential features behind the internal timber framing. Gaps in the asbestos roofing act as entry/exit points for any potential bats. Building G was considered to have 'low' BRP.

Building H (The stables on Pony's Farm)

Building H is in the form of disused stables comprised of white breezeblock walls, six brick pillars and a tiled roof. The previous survey commented on the amount of daylight the interior receives due to missing windows and half-doors. No features such as cracks or crevices suitable for bats were observed on the previous survey. However, there has been some change since the previous survey, with several features noted as well as dark and undisturbed sections considered suitable for bats. Several gaps were noted between the breezeblock walls on the northern and western ends of the building, with several lifted tiles also observed. Gaps were also noted between the wooden fascia and the breezeblock walls at the front of the building (eastern side). Building H consists of 4 stable bays, with the two bays to the north noted as having no exit or entry points through to the loft space. The two stable bays to the south were open through to the loft space, with several access windows and a hole in their shared wall. The loft space was examined from these two stable bays, where peeling and degrading roof felting was observed. One cavity in the western wall of the stable bay furthest south was observed to have been used by a nesting robin. Building H was considered to have 'moderate' BRP.

Building I (The Chapel)

Building I is a single storey, detached building with a corrugated asbestos roof and white boarded walls. The previous survey found no evidence of bats upon loft inspection. There has been some change since the previous survey, with some degradation of the building observed. On external inspection, shifted ceiling boards meant the loft was able to be accessed from the ground floor, with some dark and undisturbed corners noted, as well as hole in the asbestos roofing. Suitable, large gaps behind the boarding on the walls were also observed. However, no droppings were noted at the time of the survey. Building I was considered to have 'low' BRP.

Site photographs are shown in Appendix A.

Discussion and Recommendations

The site is not considered to have changes significantly since the previous surveys and therefore it is deemed necessary for further surveys. Furthermore, no evidence of roosting bats (past or present) was noted during the inspection.

However, if any bats are discovered using the buildings as roosts during demolition works, works must stop and advice from an ecologist sought. Works may then only proceed under the auspices of a European Protected Species (EPS) licence granted by Natural England. Mitigation would be required to offset the loss of roost, usually in the form of bat boxes (depending on type of roost).

Due to several of the buildings' potential for nesting birds, it is recommended that works are undertaken outside the nesting bird season. The nesting season is deemed to be from March to September, although these times can be temperature dependent. If works cannot be completed outside of the nesting season, a nesting bird check must be carried out by a suitably experienced person, no more than 48 hours between the check and the works. If the 'all clear' is given, then removal/works can

commence. The survey lasts for no longer than 48 hours. If works are not completed in this timeframe, then a re-survey will need to be carried out. If birds are found to be nesting, then no works should be undertaken within at least 5m of the nest (depending on species) until chicks have fledged.

It is also recommended that a number of bat boxes and bird boxes, such as swift bricks can be installed onto the new building.

Conclusion

An external and internal (where possible) building inspection in regards to bats was undertaken on 7th February at The Gables, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree. The survey found that some change has occurred in terms of the buildings BRP; however no significant changes were noted and no evidence of bat activity found.

Works which impact the buildings should be undertaken outside the nesting bird survey due to the potential for nesting birds.

Yours sincerely,

Bethan Feeney-Howells
Ecologist
James Blake Associates

References

Collins, J. (ed) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edition); The Bat Conservation Trust, London

https://www.swift-conservation.org/swift_bricks.htm

Eco Planning (2019) *Presence/Absence Eco Assessment – Bat Roost Assessment* (Ref 067/19)

Appendix A: Photographs of Site

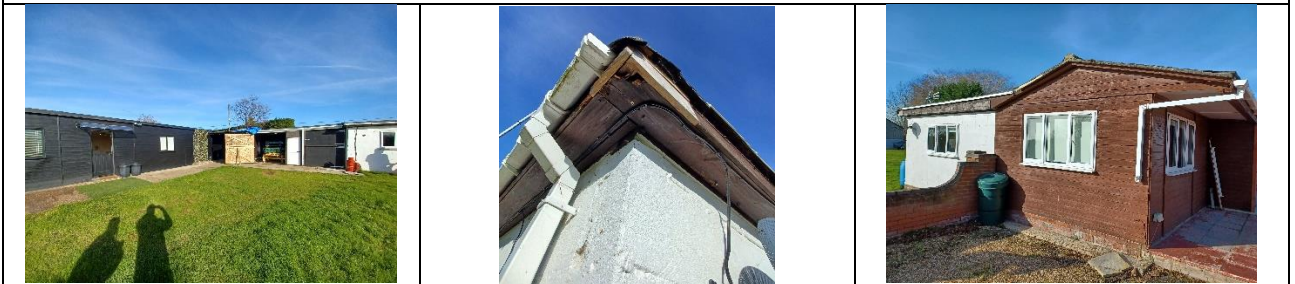




Building E



Building F



Building G



Building H





Building I

