

Preliminary Roost Assessment

3 Sunningdale Ave
Whitefield
Bury
M45 7GW

For
Archirama Ltd



Gritstone Ecology

www.gritstone.org | info@gritstone.org | 07958314 857

Contents

- 1. Introduction2
- 2. Methods5
- 3. Results7
- 4. Evaluation9
- 5. Impact assessment.....10
- 6. Required actions.....10
- 7. References.....11
- 8. Appendix 1 – Photographs.....12



1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the report

The report is written by Stewart Bradshaw for Archirama Ltd. Stewart carried out a Preliminary Roost Assessment of 3 Sunningdale Avenue, Whitefield on 10th Oct 2023.

1.2. Survey aims

The aim of the survey was to determine the actual or potential presence of bats and the need for further survey or mitigation.

1.3. Surveyor details

Stewart is licensed to disturb, take and handle all species of bats in all counties of England under licence number 2015-15615-CLS-CLS. He has more than 10 years of experience in ecological consultancy, including the planning & preparation of bat surveys, and mitigation licences.

1.4. Reason for survey

The development proposals are for the demolition of the property and construct a new two and half storey replacement property.

1.5. Site context

The house is located on Sunningdale Avenue, Whitefield, SD 79398 05274, approximately 1.5km southwest of Whitefield district Centre. The house is in a residential area surrounded by suburban houses and gardens, with open green-space to the west & north.

The site includes an occupied pre-1950's detached house, with a lawned garden to the rear, and areas of hard landscaping to the front.

Habitat within 50m of the house includes houses, gardens, small areas of open green-space, and busy well-lit roads.

Habitat within 500m includes, housing and busy roads, linked back gardens, large areas of open green-space, and mature trees.

Areas of open green space locally, and linked back gardens, potentially provide low quality foraging opportunities for bats. However, the area in general is fragmented by busy well-lit roads, noise, traffic, and other human activity.

The site and surrounding area provide low quality foraging, commuting, and roosting opportunities for bats, with higher quality habitat to the north.



1.6. Site location



1.6a Aerial view of wider area with site highlighted



1.6b Aerial view of site with site highlighted



2. Methods 2.1.

Survey timings

The survey was completed on 10th Oct 2023. Weather conditions during the survey were cloudy, cool, and dry, with a temperature of 12°C.

2.2. Desk study

No desk study of the site was undertaken, prior to the preliminary roost assessment, and no other ecological surveys have been carried out in relation to the proposals.

The development has a small footprint, and impacts beyond the site boundary are unlikely. A site-specific investigation was considered more suitable.

2.3. Habitat assessment

The habitat on site and in the surrounding area was assessed using Ordinance Survey mapping, and aerial photography. Habitat features on site, and those in the surrounding area were assessed for their suitability for use by bats during the site visit.

2.4. Building inspection

A systematic search of the exterior of the building was made to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate any evidence of bats such as live or dead specimens, bat droppings, urine splashes, fur-oil staining and or squeaking noises. Bat specimens and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence; the other types are not always the result of bat activity. Sometimes bats leave no visible sign of their presence on the outside of a building (even when they do wet weather can wash evidence away.)

The search included (where present) the ground beneath potential access points, window sills, window panes, walls, behind peeling paintwork and lifted rendering, hanging tiles, weatherboarding, eaves, soffit boxes, fascia's, lead flashing, gaps under felt, under tiles / slates and in existing bats boxes. Gaps in brickwork and stonework were searched (where present). All evidence of use by bats or features with the potential to be used by bats was recorded and photographed.

A systematic search of the inside of the building was undertaken to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate evidence of bats. Bat specimens (live or dead) and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence. Other evidence can include urine splashes, fur-oil staining, feeding remains, squeaking noises, bat fly (Nycteribiid) pupal cases (Hutson 1984) or odour.

Areas inspected include;

Within rooms

- floors and surfaces
- behind wooden panelling
- in lintels above doors and windows
- behind window shutters and curtains
- behind pictures, posters, furniture, peeling paintwork, peeling wallpaper, lifted plaster and boarded up windows
- inside cupboards and in chimneys accessible from fireplaces.



Within roof spaces

- the tops of any gable end and dividing walls
- the top of chimney breasts
- ridge and hip beams and other structural timbers
- mortise and tenon joints
- all beams
- the junction of roof timbers, especially where ridge and hip beams meet
- behind purlins
- between tiles and the roof lining (where accessible)
- under flat felt roofs.

The areas listed above were inspected (where present), any additional areas with potential for use were also inspected.

2.5. Equipment

The equipment listed below was available for use during the surveys and was used where required.

Clulite CB2 1,000,000 candlepower torch. Rigid Seesnake CA-300 digital endoscope with 0.9m cable reach with 17mm and 6mm imaging heads. Digital camera with 50x zoom. 8x25 close focussing binoculars, 4m ladders, bat handling gloves, DNA sampling tubes.

2.6. Survey limitations

None. All accessible areas of the house were inspected in detail. The survey was completed in early October, when bats are less active, and external signs of use, such as droppings, are less likely to be present.



3. Results

3.1. External inspection



3.1a – The front of the house.

No.3 Sunningdale Avenue is a pre-1950's detached house, which is currently unoccupied. Its main roof is hipped and covered with rosemary roof tiles. To the front there is a mansard style roof over the garage which has a small, pitched roof dormer. There are smaller hipped roofs over the front porch, bay window and side inglenook.

A ground floor extension to the rear has a flat roof covered with felt and decking above. At main roof level there are two flat roofs one small one at the front and a larger one spanning from the side to the rear over a large double storey extension.

Roof pitches face north, south, east, and west. Lead flashing is fitted to the base of chimneys, in roof valleys, around the front dormer and where roof tiles abut brickwork. New replacement UPVC fascia boards and boxed soffits are fitted all around the pitched and flat roof eaves.

Walls are brick with an insulating cavity, discreet steel lintels are fitted, sills are UPVC; window and door frames are UPVC, all glass is intact.

The building has been previously well maintained, and in good condition. Ridge tiles are fixed tightly, there are no damaged or missing ridge tiles. There are no damaged, slipped, or missing roof tiles. Roof tiles are tightly fitted, with no gaps between tiles. UPVC fascia boards and boxed soffits are fitted tightly against the walls gaps are filled with sealant. Walls are in good condition, with no missing mortar or cracks.

There are no boxed soffits around the flat roofs. Their fascia boards are tightly fixed to the brick walls with no route through to the internal roof construction / voids.

There are no features externally which are likely be used by roosting bats, and no evidence of use by bats was present during the inspection.



3.2. Internal inspection



3.2a – Typical main roof void.

The house has a hipped roof spanning in different directions but with single void, which is not used for storage, and is accessed infrequently for essential maintenance. There was access across the main voids by climbing over the purlins.

The roof has a timber rafter and purlin structure, lined with bitumen felt, and insulated with mineral wool between the ceiling joists. The roof lining is in good condition with no tears, or gaps.

The wall cavity has been filled with insulation and was inspected at the wall plate using an endoscope. There are no gaps at the wall-plate; and there are no gaps which give direct access to the roof void from the outside. Boxed soffits open into the roof void and were inspected from above.

The flat roofs are not accessible due to their method of abutment with the original dwelling roof tiles and the presence of lead flashing cloaking the areas. Externally there were no signs of any gaps or voids which would allow a route through to the main roof. Internally there were no signs of any gaps or voids from the main roof to the flat roofs.

The house has no cellar, and there are no other enclosed spaces which are suitable to be used by roosting bats.



3.3. Indications of use

No indications of use by bats was present during the survey, either internally, or externally.

3.4. Level of suitability

The house and has **negligible suitability** for use by roosting bats. This is as the building is well maintained, in good condition, and as no suitable roosting opportunities were noted during the building inspection.

4. Evaluation

The building is set in an area which, in general, provides low quality habitat, for foraging, commuting and roosting bats, although bats are likely to be present locally.

Areas of open green space, and linked back gardens locally provide limited foraging opportunities for bats, in an area which is fragmented by light and noise disturbance.

Houses immediately adjacent to good quality habitat are more likely to be used by roosting bats than those further away. However, the house is surrounded by low quality habitat, well-sealed, and has no features which could be used by roosting bats.

The area in general is fragmented by well-lit roads, traffic, noise, and other human activity. Fragmentation is likely to reduce the number of species present locally, and the number of individual bats.

The house is well maintained, and in good condition. There are no features externally, which are suitable, or likely to be used by roosting bats; the roof void has no gaps which could give direct access to roosting bats, and no evidence of use was found during the inspection.

The lack of any indications of use inside the roof void, such as bat droppings or feeding remains, reduces the likelihood of a significant roost being present. If bats were present inside the roof void, even in lower numbers, some evidence of use would be likely to persist.

Roof and ridge tiles are in good condition, ridge tiles are sealed with cement. There are no gaps between roofing materials which could be used by roosting bats.

The walls are brick with an insulating cavity. The wall cavity has been filled with insulation. Walls are in good condition, with no cracks, or missing mortar which could be used by crevice dwelling bats.

Window and door frames are fixed into the brickwork, gaps are filled with sealant, and offer no suitable roosting opportunities.

UPVC fascia boards and boxed soffits at the eaves are fixed tightly against brickwork, with no suitable gaps; wall cavities and boxed soffits open into the roof void, and were inspected from above.

The small gaps between brickwork, roof timbers, and roofing materials, in the roof void were inspected in detail using an endoscope. No droppings were found, and no suitable gaps were present which could give access, or shelter to roosting bats.

Taking into account the habitat surrounding the site, and the features present, the buildings are unlikely to be used by roosting bats and have **negligible suitability** for use.



4.1. Legal and planning context

All species of bats in the UK and their roosts are legally protected by UK and European legislation. The UK the legal protection is summarised as follows:

You will be committing a criminal offence if you:

1. Deliberately* capture, injure or kill a bat
2. Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
3. Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
4. Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
5. Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost even if bats are not present at the time

*In a court, 'deliberately' will probably be interpreted as someone who, although not intending to capture/injure or kill a bat, performed the relevant action, being sufficiently informed and aware of the consequence his/her action would most likely have.

5. Impact assessment

The development proposals are for the demolition of the property.

The building has no features which are suitable, or likely to be used by roosting bats and has negligible suitability for use.

The proposed work is unlikely to impact on bats or bat roosts; and, once completed is unlikely to provide any increase in levels of disturbance for bats locally.

6. Required actions

The building has **negligible suitability** for use by roosting bats, no field signs of use by bats were found internally or externally during the inspection, and no further survey work is required.



7. References

Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Policy Framework.

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

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). The Bat Workers Manual. (3rd ed.) JNCC



8. Appendix 1 – Photographs



1 – The front of the house.



2 – The rear of the house





3– Roof and ridge tiles are in good condition with no suitable gaps.



4– UPVC fascia boards and soffits at the eaves are fixed tightly against brickwork. UPVC windows are all in good condition and tightly fixed with silicone sealant.





5 – Brickwork and mortar and boxed eaves are in good condition with no suitable gaps.



6 – Front tiles are in good condition. There are some small gaps around the dormer but there is lead flashings and felt behind. Fascias and soffits are all closed UPVC construction.





7 – No gaps in felt and eaves in pitched roof void and was not being used for storage.



8 – Roof timbers are covered with dusty cobwebs.

