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Our Ref: RT-MME-124714-Rev A

Dear Martin,

Endoscope Bat Survey at Mill Rythe Holiday Village, Havant Road, Hayling Island

Introduction

Middlemarch Environmental Ltd previously completed a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment at Mill Rythe Holiday Village, Havant in August 2016. The external inspection of the buildings confirmed the presence of a small number of access points for bats in some of the buildings such as holes in the soffit, gaps under the ridge tiles, missing bricks and lifted lead flashing. However, it was not possible to fully inspect all the features listed above due to the height at which they were located and as such it was not possible to establish if bats had used these features to enter a roost location at the time of surveying. Following the Preliminary Roost Assessment a number of the buildings at Mill Rythe Holiday Village were identified as having low potential to support roosting bats, with the remaining buildings considered to be of negligible potential to roosting bats.

Middlemarch Environmental Ltd were commissioned in February 2017 by Away Resorts to undertake an endoscope assessment to inspect all areas where bats may be roosting. This survey was completed over two visits on 24th February and 28th March 2017.

Site Description and Context

The development site is an irregular parcel of land approximately 14 ha in size, located on Hayling Island, at national grid reference SU 731 008. The development site includes a holiday village with a number of self-catering accommodation units and associated leisure facilities. At the time of the survey, the site included circa. 50 buildings, tennis courts, bowling green, swimming pool, car parking and associated hard and soft landscaping. The east of the site was dominated by a mosaic of grassland, scrub and trees used as a golf course. A large lake was present in the north-eastern corner, with a smaller manmade lake in the north-western corner of the site.

A golf course forms the southern boundary of the site, with Chichester Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Chichester and Langstone Harbours RAMSAR and Special Protection Area (SPA) located to the north and east of the site.

Methodology

In line with the specifications detailed by English Nature (2004), a daytime (pre-dusk) walkover survey of the site was conducted. A visual assessment was undertaken of the site for activity and signs of possible bat presence. Any accessible holes/cracks and crevices, which could allow bat access into potential roosting areas, were inspected using an endoscope. The survey was supported by the use of a ladder and Mobile Elevated Working Platform (MEWP) to provide safe access to areas at height which could not previously be surveyed.

Results

The survey was completed by Penelope Holgate (Ecological Consultant, bat licence number 2015-14131-CLS-CLS) on 24th February and 28th March 2017.

Building 1

Building 1 was a small wooden structure adjacent to the lake in the north-western corner of the site. The building had a large hole in the soffit which could be utilised by bats to gain entry into the building and potential roost locations. This feature was fully inspected and did not lead to a suitable roosting cavity and the gap was exposed to the elements. Furthermore no evidence of bats such as droppings or staining were identified (Plate 1).



Plate 1: Gap in Soffit of Building 1

Building 1 is not considered to require any further survey effort at this stage.

Buildings 2, 3 and 4

Building 2, 3 and 4 were single storey brick buildings with rendered walls. These buildings had pitched roofs with interlocking concrete tiles and uPVC soffits. Buildings 2, 3 and 4 had small gaps under the ridge tiles and it was not possible to inspect these areas during the initial survey due to the height at which they were located. The gaps under the ridge tiles were fully inspected and found to be fully blocked up with moss and dirt and therefore not suitable for use by roosting bats (Plate 2).



Plate 2: Gaps Under the Ridge Tiles Were Blocked With Dirt and Moss

Buildings 2, 3 and 4 are not considered to require any further survey effort at this stage.

Building 5

Building 5 was a two storey brick building with some elevations covered by timber and uPVC cladding. The buildings supported flat felted roofs, with timber soffit boxes. Gaps were identified within the timber soffit boxes, providing potential access points into the building for bats. The majority of the gaps were found to be too narrow to allow bats access into the soffit cavities. The largest gap was found to be an inch wide, however the gap was filled with cobwebs suggesting no recent activity. Furthermore, no evidence of bats such as droppings or staining was identified within and around the feature (Plate 3).



Plate 3: Gap in Soffit of Building 5

As a precautionary approach, it is recommended that the soffits of Building 5 are removed by hand under the supervision of a suitably qualified and licenced ecologist

Building 10

Building 10 was used as an entertainment hall with an arcade located adjacent to it and was a large brick building with uPVC cladding and a flat felted roof. The southern section of this building supported a smaller flat roofed brick extension. The western gable end of Building 10 had a large pitched roof with interlocking clay tiles and wooden cladding.

The building had lifted lead flashing and lifted wooden cladding in the western gable end which could be of value to roosting bats. All areas of lifted lead flashing and wooden cladding was fully inspected. Roofing felt was identified behind the wooden cladding, none of which were broken to allow bats into the roof void. No evidence of bats such as droppings or staining was identified within and around the features, and the majority of the features were heavily cobwebbed suggesting no recent use by bats (Plate 4).



Plate 4: Example of Features On Building 10

As a precautionary approach, it is recommended that the wooden cladding and lead flashing of Building 10 is removed by hand under the supervision of a suitably qualified and licenced ecologist

Building 29

Building 29 was of an identical design to Building 5. A gap was identified within the timber soffit box, providing potential access points into the building for bats. The gap was found to be filled with cobwebs suggesting no recent activity. The wood was also found to be damp and rotten suggesting it is unsuitable for roosting bats. Furthermore, no evidence of bats such as droppings or staining was identified within and around the feature (Plate 5).



Plate 5: Gap in Soffit of Building 29

Building 46

Building 46 was a single storey brick building with flat felted roofs and a brick chimney breast. A number of weep holes and missing bricks were identified within the chimney breast. All the weep holes were found to be approximately 30 cm deep, however they became too narrow for bats after the first 10 cm. All of the weep holes contained cobwebs suggesting no recent activity and no evidence of bats such as droppings or staining were identified within or around the features (Plate 6). The chimney breast also contained a number of areas with missing bricks. Three of the gaps left by the missing bricks contained old bird nests. Further inspection of the gaps with the endoscope found that there was a large cavity between two layers of bricks which could be accessed by bats through the gaps left by the missing bricks. This feature was inspected with a torch and endoscope and no evidence of the current or past presence of bats was found (Plate 7).



Plate 6: Weep Hole in Building 46



Plate 7: Gaps in Brick Chimney of Building 46 Left by Missing Bricks

Conclusions and Recommendations

All buildings on site identified as having bat roost potential during the Preliminary Roost Assessment were fully inspected. Access was facilitated using long ladders, a scaffold and a MEWP. No evidence of the current or past presence of bats was found during this inspection, and the buildings are not currently considered to support any bat roosts.

Although no evidence of bats was found in Buildings 5 and 10, the features (soffit, wooden cladding etc) have the potential to provide a summer roost location for individual bats, therefore a precautionary approach is recommended. The following recommendation is made:

- R1** As a precautionary approach, it is recommended that the soffits on Building 5 and the wooden cladding and lead flashing of Building 10 is removed by hand under the supervision of a suitably qualified and licenced ecologist. Should any evidence of bats be found, work will cease and the need for a Natural England development licence will be determined.

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

Yours sincerely,
For and On Behalf of Middlemarch Environmental Ltd.

Penelope Holgate
Ecological Consultant