

Ecology Report: 2 West Haye Cottages, St. Peters Road, Hayling Island

Introduction

This report outlines the findings of an ecological survey conducted at 2 West Haye Cottages, St. Peters Road, Hayling Island. The primary purpose of this survey was to determine the presence of bats and other protected species in the area of the property where development is planned. This report will provide an overview of the site, methods used, results, and recommendations based on the findings.

Site Description

2 West Haye Cottages is a residential property located on St. Peters Road, Hayling Island. The site comprises a cottage with an adjacent garden area. The property is bordered by similar residential properties, gardens, and a mix of mature trees and shrubs, providing a potentially suitable habitat for various wildlife species.

Survey Methodology

Bat Survey

To assess the presence of bats, a preliminary roost assessment and an emergence survey were conducted:

1. **Preliminary Roost Assessment:** An external and internal inspection of the building was carried out to identify potential roosting features (PRFs) such as cracks, crevices, and roof voids.
2. **Emergence Survey:** This involved evening observations during peak bat activity periods (dusk) to detect bats emerging from roosting sites. The survey was conducted using visual observations.

Results

Bat Survey

- **Preliminary Roost Assessment:** The building was thoroughly inspected for potential roosting features. No signs of bat activity such as droppings, feeding remains, or staining were found in the area where the development is planned.
- **Emergence Survey:** During the emergence survey, no bats were observed emerging from the building. The survey was conducted on two separate evenings (1st and 2nd June). No bats were detected in the part of the house designated for development.

Additional Wildlife Observations

- **Birds:** Common garden bird species were observed in the vicinity, including sparrows, blackbirds, and robins. No active nests were found in the area affected by the development.
- **Other Mammals:** No evidence of other protected mammals, such as dormice or hedgehogs, was found on the site.
- **Flora:** The garden contains typical ornamental and native plant species. No rare or protected plant species were identified.

Discussion

The results of the survey indicate that the part of 2 West Haye Cottages where development is planned does not support a bat roost. The absence of bat activity suggests that the proposed development will not adversely affect local bat populations. Additionally, no other protected species were found to be using the site for roosting, nesting, or foraging in the area of the planned development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Proceed with Development:** The development can proceed as planned, as no bats or other protected species are utilizing the area affected by the proposed works.
2. **Timing of Works:** To avoid disturbance to breeding birds, it is recommended that any vegetation clearance or building work be scheduled outside the main bird nesting season (March to August). If work must occur during this period, a further check for active nests should be carried out by an ecologist immediately prior to commencement.
3. **Biodiversity Enhancements:** Consider incorporating biodiversity enhancements into the development. This could include installing bat boxes on the property and planting native shrubs and trees to support local wildlife.
4. **Monitoring:** It is recommended to conduct a follow-up survey post-development to ensure no unforeseen impacts on local wildlife have occurred and to assess the effectiveness of any biodiversity enhancements implemented.

Conclusion

The ecological survey at 2 West Haye Cottages, St. Peters Road, Hayling Island, has confirmed that no bats or other protected species are using the part of the house where development is to take place. The proposed development is unlikely to have a significant negative impact on local wildlife, and with the recommended precautions and enhancements, it can proceed responsibly.

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