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**Mrs Percival
22 Frogmore Lane
Lovedean
Hampshire
PO8 9QL**

Dear Mrs Percival,

22 Frogmore Lane, Lovedean, Hampshire, Phase I bat survey of trees

As requested I can now confirm that the required Phase I bat survey with respect to the trees to be removed at the above referenced property, has been carried out. Please find below our survey results to inform the relevant planning application.

Background

A Phase I tree survey with respect to bats was carried out on the 3rd August 2012 by a suitably experienced ecologist from Ecosupport Ltd. This was required to inform the relevant planning authority about the possibility of bats roosting in the trees found on site. It is understood that the proposals include the removal of all trees on site, with the exception of four mature Ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*), which have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and two new residential dwellings be built.

Site Description

The site comprises of a garden plot of a bungalow at 22 Frogmore Lane, Lovedean, Hampshire, PO8 9QL (OS grid reference SU 690 124). The main habitats on site are amenity grassland, dense scrub and scattered trees. (**Image 1**). The wider locality is typical of suburban village with the immediate vicinity dominated by buildings, amenity grasslands and scattered trees (**Image 2**). There is an area of woodland located approximately 0.3 km to the west of the site and in the wider landscape further agricultural fields and hedgerows, providing good roosting and commuting opportunities for bats, however as a whole the site is poorly connected to suitable habitats. The Yeoll's Copse Local nature Reserve is located 0.3 km to the north of the site. There is access into Herriott Close along the southern boundary of the site (**Image 1**.)

Image 1. View from rear of garden showing scattered *Malus* spp trees, amenity grassland and dense scrub bounding the edges of the site.



Image 2. Aerial image of the site with the main area of Ash trees located at the eastern boundary. Approximate site boundary is given in red.



Methods

The Phase I tree survey consisted of a methodical examination of all trees due to be felled with 8 x 42 close focus Avian Trekker binoculars. The surveys were carried out to current best practice guidelines for assessing trees as outlined in the Bat Conservation Trusts (2012) Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines 2nd Edition. The features, which were looked for on trees, which may be suitable for roosting bats with signs indicative of usage, are given in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Features of trees commonly used by bats for roosting and shelter and field signs that may indicate use of trees by bats (Taken from BCT, 2012)

Features of trees used as bat roosts	Signs indicating possible use by bats
Natural holes. Woodpecker holes. Cracks/splits in major limbs. Loose bark. Hollows/cavities. Dense epicormic growth (bats may roost within it). Bird and bat boxes.	Tiny scratches around entry point. Staining around entry point. Bat droppings in, around or below entrance. Audible squeaking at dusk or in warm weather. Flies around entry point. Distinctive smell of bats. Smoothing of surfaces around cavity.

All trees were then classified according to the BCT (2012) guidelines as either Category 1* (trees with multiple highly suitable features capable of supporting larger roosts), Category 1 (trees with definite bat potential or trees with potential for use by a single bat), Category 2 (trees with no obvious potential, although the tree is of a size and age that elevated surveys may result in cracks or crevices being found: or the tree supports some features which may have limited potential to support bats) or Category 3 (trees with no potential to support bats).

Legislation

All UK bat species are strictly protected under UK law through being listed on Annex IV of the Habitat Regulations (1994) and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). This makes it an offence to deliberately or recklessly:

- Capture, injure or kill a bat;
- Disturb a bat in a way that would affect its ability to survive, breed or rear young or affect the local distribution and abundance of the species;
- Damage or destroy a roost.

If a proposed development would contravene any of the above points, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence would be required before further works could take place.

Survey Results

The trees to be removed and their categorisation for potential to support roosting bats is given in table 2.

Table 2. Trees to be felled as part of proposals and their awarded category for likelihood to support roosting or resting bats according to the BCT (2012) guidelines.

Tree species	Location	Category	Further actions necessary prior to felling
Leyland Cypress (<i>Cupressus x leylandii</i>)	Along northern boundary	3	No further action
Ash	Two along northern boundary and 7 in wooded area in eastern boundary at end of garden	Predominantly 3 with the exception of two given as category 2 (however these may have TPOs)	Sensitive felling supervised by a licensed ecologist (i.e. trees with light ivy coverage)
Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)	Two pollards near access to Herriott Close and three within wooded area at end of garden	3	No further action
Apple (<i>Malus</i> spp.)	Three located in amenity grassland area	3	No further action
Laurel (<i>Laurus</i> spp.)	At edge of access to Herriott Close	3	No further action
Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>)	Located amongst dense scrub on both southern and northern boundary scrub areas	3	No further action

All trees on site are largely of negligible potential to support roosting or resting bats and devoid of the features which bats may use. The only potential features noted was light Ivy (*Hedera helix*) coverage on some of the mature Ash trees located in the wooded area in the eastern extent of the site. However, it was not considered that the Ivy coverage was sufficient or dense enough to provide suitable cracks and cervices in which bats could use to roost within. The Ash trees all appeared to have no loose bark, splits or suitable holes (**Image 3.** & 4) after careful examination, whilst the same assessment can be made for Leyland Cypress and Sycamore. The areas of Hazel and Laurel were more shrubby however were included in the assessment for completeness.

Image 3. Ash tree due for felling as part of the proposals. This tree has a very light Ivy coverage and hence is classified as category 2.



Image 4. Ash trees along the northern site boundary next to the Leyland Cypress. These trees were classified as Category 2 and 3.



Limitations

The assessment of the trees was relatively unconstrained with most parts of the trees observable. However, as the BCT (2012) guidelines note, some trees may have features, which are not visible from the ground and would only be revealed once a tree climber is in situ. Consequently any trees with even light Ivy coverage have been put into Category 2 in recognition of the inherent limitations in making ground based visual assessments. Summer leaf growth also acted as a slight limitation in obscuring the view of areas of the trees however this was not an issue for the Ash trees.

Conclusions

Based on the initial assessment of the trees it is considered unlikely that any bats or bat roosts would be harmed or disturb should the relevant trees be felled as part of the proposals to build 2 new residential dwellings in the garden of 22 Frogmore Lane. Notwithstanding this, as collections of mature trees are somewhat sparse in the immediate vicinity this area (in the eastern extent of the site) is likely used as a foraging area by bats in the area.

Recommendations

As the features identified on the trees were considered to be of negligible potential to support roosting or resting bats no emergence surveys are considered necessary. However in light of the limitations in assessing trees and the light Ivy coverage it is recommend that sensitive felling techniques be employed (inspection and lowering of branches with features) and a licenced/suitably experienced ecologist be present on site during this process in the event of any bats being found. Furthermore any external lighting proposed for the new developments should be hooded and directional to the ground to avoid any potential disturbances to commuting for foraging bats.

An additional recommendation is to avoid removing the trees and scrubby areas during the bird-nesting season (March – August inclusive). If this is not possible then any removal should be preceded by a check for nests by a suitably qualified ecologist. If any active nests are found then a 3m buffer should be maintained around the nest and the chicks allowed to fledge before removal of the nest.

If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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