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Ref: P4814 78 Havant Road, Emsworth – Potential Roost Feature (Tree Climbing) Inspection

Dear Mr Bennet,

This letter serves to confirm that a Potential Roost Feature (PRF) inspection (tree climbing) survey of a single horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastenum* tree was conducted at 78 Havant Road, Emsworth by The Ecology Co-op. The tree in question was previously assessed as having 'high' bat roosting potential following a Ground Level Tree Assessment undertaken by Ecosupport in February 2022¹

On the 13th April 2022, Dr Ryan Walker MCIEEM, CEnv and Owen Crawshaw MCIEEM made a site visit to undertake the PRF inspection survey. Both Dr Walker and Mr Crawshaw are Natural England Level 2 bat survey class licence holders, and both are qualified to access trees using ropes and harnesses through a City and Guilds qualification. The tree was accessed using ropes and harnesses and all identified PRFs were inspected using a high power torch and an endoscope. The surveyors looked for evidence of roosting bats and assessed each PRF for its suitability to support roosting bats.

A rot hole exists within the north-western aspect of the stem, approximately 5m above ground level. The entrance hole measures approximately 3cm x 6cm and leads into a shelf cavity which extends into the stem approximately 10cm. The cavity is cone shaped with a sloping roof and does not extend upwards or downwards into the stem. The entrance hole shows signs of squirrel damage to the bark and a dray was observed on a limb 1m above the PRF. The tree was categorised as having 'low' potential to support roosting bats in accordance with best practice²; whilst the feature is considered largely unsuitable for roosting bats (especially given the presence of competitors i.e. squirrels), the feature is potentially large enough to shelter an individual bat on occasion.

¹ Ecosupport (2022). *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – 78 Havant Road, Emsworth*.

² Collins, J.(ed.). (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

A pruning wound exists on the stem's eastern aspect approximately 7m above ground level. The wound has healed completely and does not create any sheltered crevices or cavities for roosting bats. The PRF was assessed as having 'negligible' bat roosting potential.

All suitable features on the chestnut tree were inspected for evidence of bats and were fully assessed in terms of their suitability to support roosting bats (see Figure 2 and 3). No direct evidence of bats or features suitable for roosting bats were identified.

The overall potential of the tree was assessed according to its most suitable PRF, therefore the chestnut is considered to have 'low' bat roosting potential. No further surveys of the tree are recommended. As a precautionary measure, the tree should be climbed by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately prior to its felling, so the ecologists can confirm the absence of bats from within the rot hole. In the unlikely event that a bat roost is identified, the works would need to be delayed until a mitigation licence has been secured from Natural England.

I trust that the above information is sufficient for your records.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Owen Crawshaw.

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Figure 1. The chestnut tree, located at the western boundary of 78 Havant Road, which was the subject of the PRF inspection survey.



Figure 2. The locations and descriptions of the PRFs identified on/within the tree.



Figure 3a (left) & 3b (right). Left – a rot hole within the stem assessed as having 'low' bat roosting potential. Right – a pruning wound on the stem assessed as having 'negligible' roosting potential.