

MR & MRS HILL

MOOSE HALL, CASTLE STREET, NEATH

BUILDING INSPECTION REPORT (PROTECTED SPECIES)

JANUARY 2022



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Other Site Features

- 3.15 Other buildings, roads and hard standing are the predominant features in the immediate surroundings. A single semi-mature Silver Birch *Betula pendula* is located immediately outside the western boundary wall with a mature Cypress tree present immediately to the north within the Castle Gardens (see Appendix II). Neither of these trees supported features that could be used by roosting bats and were of Negligible potential. Both trees, and the ornamental scrub within the Castle Grounds (immediately adjacent to the north) could be used by nesting birds during the breeding season (typically March – August).

Invasive Weeds

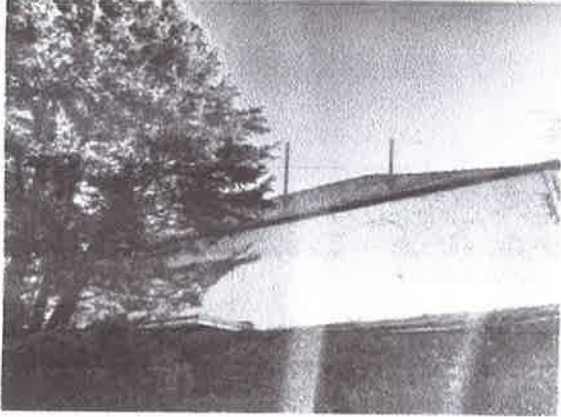
- 3.16 No invasive weeds – i.e. species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) – were identified within or adjacent to the boundaries of the site.

4.0 LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND PLANS

- 4.1 The following legislation relating to bats and nesting birds is considered of relevance to the building and the proposed refurbishment works at the site.

Legislation Pertaining to the Protection of Bats

- 4.2 Under Annex II of the *Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora* (EC Habitats Directive) some bat species are listed as of Community Interest, the conservation of which requires designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); Under Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive all bat species are listed as of Community Interest, in need of strict protection. In England and Wales, the EC Habitats Directive has been transposed into law in 1994 and, following recent amendments is set out in the *Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulation 2017* to give bats, their breeding sites and resting places a high level of strict protection making it an offence (subject to certain specific exceptions) to deliberately capture or kill/injure a bat, to damage or destroy a place used for shelter or protection or to deliberately disturb a bat in such a place. Case Law has placed an onus on local planning authorities to satisfy 'three tests' under the Habitats Directive when determining applications that could affect European Protected Species. Essentially, these three tests are: i) that there is no satisfactory alternative; ii) that the proposed development is in the over-riding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature) and iii) the proposed development would not adversely affect the Favourable Conservation Status of the species locally

Target Note	Description/comment
	(March – Aug). 
Northern elevation	Viewed from adjacent Castle Gardens (with binoculars) and includes the flat roof and sloping metal sheet roof associated with rooms 0/07 – 0/09. Fascia is generally sound with very few gaps and dense ivy once covered this elevation – some dead stems remain around downpipe. Roof and ridge also generally sound although several raised slates to south west above eaves and raised ridge tile to north west corner.   Cypress tree alongside boundary wall with no obvious bat potential (Negligible). Likely