Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Wildlife Consultants.

QUEENSGATE, HUDDERSFIELD.

BAT SURVEY.

Ref No:- **131219.**

Date: **21st December 2013.**

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. A planning application is to be submitted for the development of a site at Queensgate, Huddersfield. The proposal is to demolish all existing buildings and to construct a row of town houses facing onto Chapel Street and a five storey block of flats facing onto Queensgate. A bat survey is required in support of that planning application.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd was therefore commissioned to carry out a bat survey of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. This survey was carried out on 19th December 2013 and this report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.4. Appendix I of this report provides back ground information with respect to bats and the legal protection afforded to them.

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2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. The buildings were thoroughly checked internally and externally for potential bat roosting sites in line with L Hundt (2012). *Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines* by looking for the following signs:-

* Holes, cracks or crevices.
* Bat droppings.
* Prey remains.
* Staining on external walls.

2.2. Unless otherwise stated, all lofts were accessed and inspected using a high powered torch and where necessary an endoscope.

2.3. A thorough external inspection was carried out from ground level for any gaps or openings in the roof and ridge tiles, behind soffits and fascias and in the walls of the structure for suitable roost access points and field signs to indicate possible use by bats.

2.4. All window cills, walls and the ground around the structure were checked for signs of bat droppings or staining to indicate possible use by bats. Where necessary, ladders were utilised to gain access within the limits of health and safety.
Any access constraints encountered are outlined within the following report.

2.5. All survey work was carried out in line with the Bat Conservation Trust, Good Practice Guidelines

2.6. This was not followed by a dusk emergence survey as bats are in hibernation at this time of year.

2.7. The survey was undertaken by Derek Whitcher who has over twenty years' experience of surveying for wildlife and has run his own wildlife consultancy since 1998. He has extensive experience of a wide variety of survey techniques for a variety of species of protected wildlife supplemented by attendance on a wide range of training courses through CIEEM, FSC and BCT. As a member of CIEEM he is committed to continuous professional development, a continual process of learning and career development, a condition of CIEEM membership. He holds current Natural

England survey licences for barn owl, bat, great crested newt and white clawed crayfish.

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3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

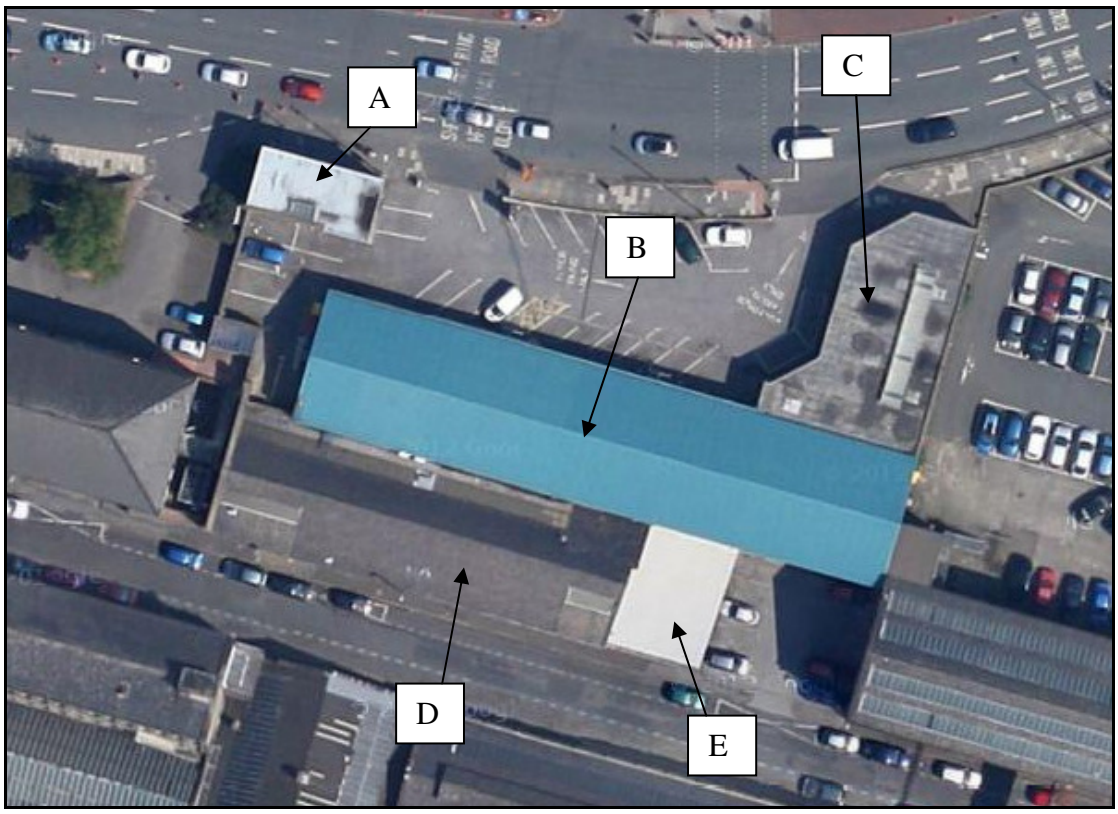
3.1.1. A data search request was submitted to West Yorkshire Bat Group for existing records of bat roosts in the area around the site.

3.1.2. The results include a number of Pipistrelle roosts in the surrounding area but none close to the site.

3.1.3. The full results are shown in Appendix II of this report.

3.2. Site Description.

3.2.1. The site is shown on the aerial photograph below with each of the buildings labelled.



3.2.2. The site is in a busy area of Huddersfield with commercial, industrial units and busy roads on all sides.

3.2.3. The buildings on site are all in use as retail outlets on the northern side overlooking the Ring Road and as a gymnasium and a Martial Arts Centre at the rear.

3.3. Survey Results.

3.3.1. Building A.

3.3.1.1. Building A is a two storey shop unit constructed with brick cavity walls and a flat felt roof, as shown below.

3.3.1.2. The walls are in good condition with no cracks or crevices, the window and door frames are tight fitting and the flat roof unsuitable for roosting bats.

3.3.1.3. There is no internal loft space present in this building.

3.3.1.4. No bat field signs were present around this building

3.3.1.5. The building is assessed as having no potential for roosting bats.

3.3.2. Building B.

3.3.2.1. This is a long building, single story on the northern frontage and two storeys at the rear. The walls are constructed from brick although the front walls are all concealed behind decorative shop fascias. The pitched roof is covered with tin sheeting that appears to be fairly new.

3.3.2.2. To the rear, the brick cavity walls are exposed, as shown below. The walls are in good condition with no visible cracks or crevices, the windows are all tight fitting and the eaves well sealed.

3.3.2.3. The retail outlets along the front of this building all have false ceilings with no access into the loft void above. This is not considered to be a constraint to the survey as the tin sheet roof above is not suitable for roosting bats.

3.3.2.4. No bat field signs were identified around this building and the building is assessed to have no potential for roosting bats.

3.3.3. Building C.

3.3.3.1. Building C is a flat roofed extension of Building B with the single frontage used as a retail outlet. The western end wall is exposed and is rendered throughout, as shown in the photograph below.

3.3.3.2. To the rear, this building abuts Building B.

3.3.3.3. No bat field signs were identified around this building and the building is assessed to have no potential for roosting bats.

3.3.4. Building D.

3.3.4.1. Building D is a single storey building with walls of cut and coursed stone except for the eastern gable end wall and that is built with brick. The roof is a pitched roof, part covered with Welsh slate, part skylights and part corrugated sheets.

3.3.4.2. The walls are well pointed with no cracks or crevices to provide opportunities for roosting bats. There is a timber fascia board along the southern elevation that is close fitting and there are well pointed coping stones on top of both gable walls.

3.3.4.3. The south elevation of the roof is covered with Welsh slates throughout. These are generally in good condition although there are some slipped and missing slates. The ridge tiles are all in place and generally well pointed although there are a couple of small areas of missing pointing.

3.3.4.4. The northern elevation of the roof is covered with Welsh slate with a strip of corrugated plastic sheeting below that and then a strip covered with felt along the bottom, as shown in the photograph below. There are a few missing and slipped slates but otherwise the roof is generally in good condition.

3.3.4.5. Internally this building is used as a gymnasium and is open to the underside of the roof. The roof is supported on a metal frame and is underdrawn with timber. The timber is intact but there are signs of damp along many of the joints.

3.3.4.6. No bat field signs were found in or around this building and the building is assessed to have a very low potential for roosting bats, confined to the opportunity for a small number of crevice dwelling bats beneath the slipped roof slates.

3.3.5. Building E.

3.3.5.1. Building E is a lean-to, single storey extension on the eastern end of Building D. The building has brick walls with coping stones along the southern end of the gable and is joined to Building B at its northern end.

3.3.5.2. The walls are all in good condition with no cracks or crevices and the eaves are well sealed.

3.3.5.3. The roof is sloping and covered with metal sheets.

3.3.5.4. The loft space is clean and well-sealed with no bat field signs present.

3.3.5.5. No bat field signs were identified and this building has no potential for roosting bats.

3.3.6. Surrounding Foraging Habitat.

The area around the site is heavily developed, is well lit and busy with the main Huddersfield Ring Road immediately north of the site. The surrounding area is almost devoid of any vegetation and is therefore assessed as very low bat foraging value habitat

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4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. The buildings present on the site are all used for commercial purposes, retail shops to the north and a gymnasium and Martial Arts Centre to the rear.

4.2. While the buildings are quite old, they have been renovated and maintained in quite good condition but the result is a combination of old and new.

4.3. The site location is in a busy town centre with minimal vegetation in the surrounding area and this is assessed to be low value bat foraging habitat.

4.4. Buildings A, B, C and E all have no potential for roosting bats and no field signs were found during this survey. The loft space of Building B was not accessible but this is not considered to be a significant constraint to the survey. The roof of this building appears to have been recently re-covered with close fitting tin sheets, assessed to be unsuitable for roosting bats.

4.5. Building D is assessed to have a very low potential for roosting bats, confined to the potential for individual crevice dwelling bats like Pipistrelles to seek temporary shelter beneath the small number of slipped and missing Welsh slates.

4.6. The demolition of the buildings would have an impact on any bats that may roost in Building D.

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5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. As the potential for roosting bats on this site is low and confined to the potential for individual bats to seek shelter in the roof of only one of the buildings present, it is recommended that this report is sufficient to be submitted with the planning application.

5.2. As a precautionary measure, it is recommended that a further dusk emergence survey be carried out to determine whether there are bats roosting in the roof of Building D before demolition works commence on this building. The survey should be carried out between May and August.

5.3. If bats are found to be roosting in Building D, a Natural England licence application would need to be obtained before works commence on this building. The application for that licence would need to contain full details of the timings of the works and the way in which bats would be maintained at their existing conservation status. This would include the provision of replacement roost opportunities in the new buildings.

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Prepared by:	
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Checked by:	
Jenny Roebuck. MCIEEM.	Date: 23rd December 2013.

Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.

It is necessary to understand a little about bats, their basic nature, ecology and legal protection in order to evaluate the findings of this report.

Over 15 species of bat have been recorded in Britain. These fall into two families, the horseshoe bats and the 'ordinary bats'. They are extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

All appear to be diminishing in numbers, probably due to shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet, and habitat change.

As their diet consists solely of insects, bats hibernate during the winter when their food source is at its most scarce. They will spend the winter in hollow trees, caves, mines and the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly the pipistrelle (the commonest and most widespread British bat) can quickly adapt to man made structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, The Habitats Regulations 1994 and the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000.

It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture or disturb bats or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter or protection.

A breeding or resting site of any bat is known as a bat roost. A bat roost is therefore any structure a bat uses for shelter or protection. Because bats tend to use the same roosts each year, legal opinion is that the roost site is protected whether or not the bats are present at that time.

Bat roosts can be identified by looking for:-

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices.
- Bat droppings.
- Prey remains.
- By carrying out night observations using a bat detector.

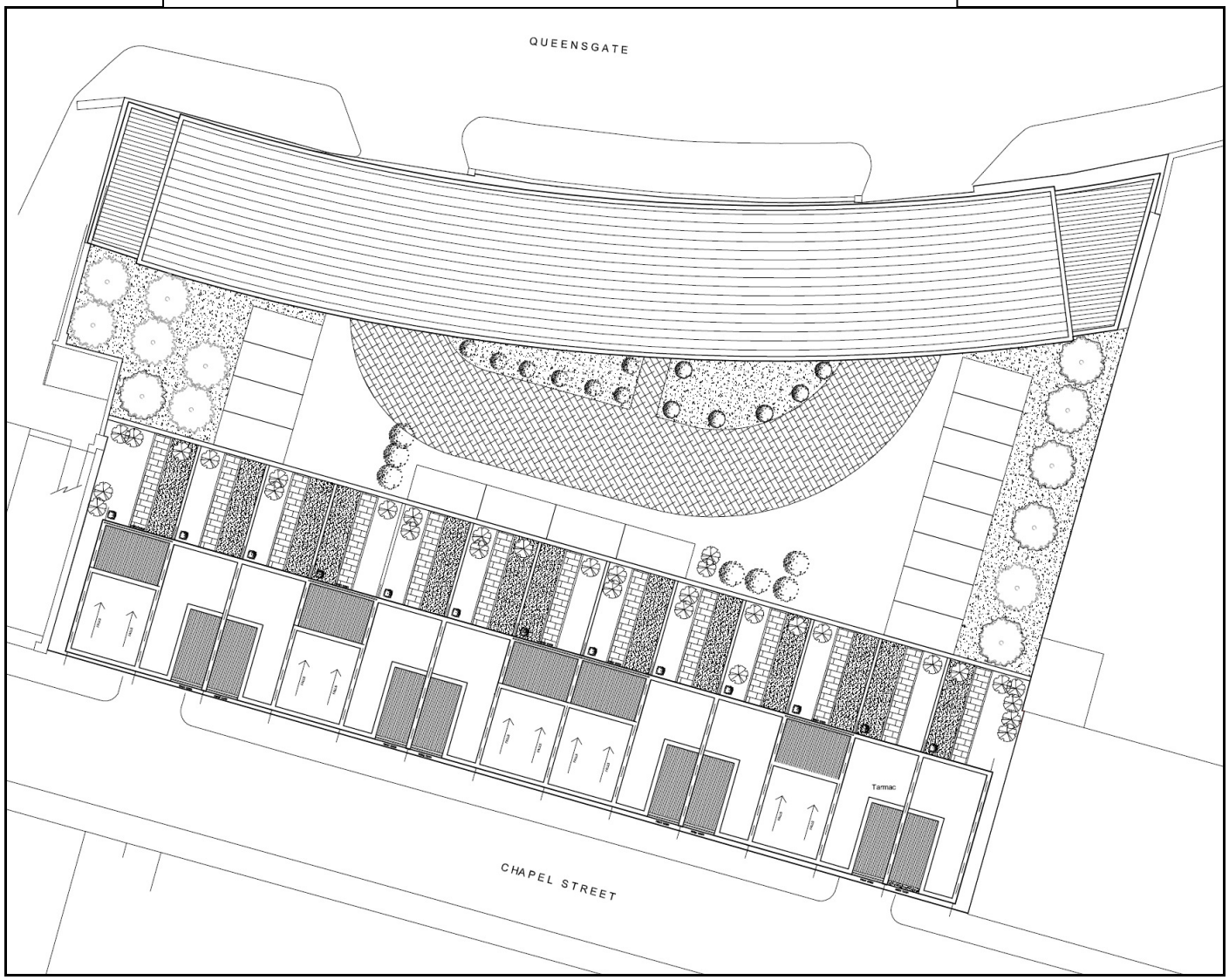
Where development proposals are likely to affect a bat roost site, a licence is required from Natural England.

The person applying for that licence has to be suitably qualified and experienced in bat matters. That person is then responsible for ensuring that the measures contained in the licence are carried out.

Appendix II. DATA SEARCH RESULTS.

Grid Ref	Location Name	Date	Common Name	Abundance	Record Type
SE149160	17 King's Mill La, Longley, HD1 3AW	20/09/1996	Pipistrelle Bat species	51-100 Count of Adult	Roost (maternity)
SE14361655	Imperial Arcade, Off New Street, Huddersfield, K	03/10/2005	Pipistrelle Bat species	1 Count of Adult	in building
SE142160	Land at "Sellers" off Chapel Hill, Huddersfiled	02/08/2010	Common Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus pipistrellus	aural bat detector
SE151157	Longley Park Golf Course	25/08/1924	Brown Long-eared Bat	1 Count of Adult	field record
SE1405616841	The Nursery, Huddersfield Tech College, North R	29/11/2005	Vesper Bat species	Vespertilionidae	Roost
SE1477916933	Huddersfield Sports Centre, Southgate, Huddersf	25/01/2006	Vesper Bat species	1 Count of Adult	Roost
SE1487015814	4 Manor Rise, Primrose Hill, Huddersfield	17/07/2007	Vesper Bat species	Vespertilionidae	Roost

Appendix III. DEVELOPMENT SITE PLANS.



TOWN HOUSE ELEVATIONS.

FLATS REAR ELEVATION.