Brooks Ecological
Grounded advice

Bat Emergence Survey
Land at Flockton Working Men's Club

Report reference: R-2517-02
June 2016

Report Title:	Bat Emergence Survey Land at Flockton Working Men's Club
Report Reference:	R-2517-02
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Summary Statement

Emergence surveys indicate likely absence of roosting bats with very low bat activity recorded on Site. The proposals can therefore proceed with minimal risk of impacts on bats or their roosts.

Introduction

1. Subsequent to the recommendations made in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (R-2517-01), a detailed bat survey was commissioned at land at Flockton Working Men's Club, Barnsley Road, Grid Ref: SE241150.

2. Information relating to local and legal status is provided in report R-2517-01 and is not repeated here; these two reports should be read in conjunction for full context.

Method

3. Brooks Ecological specialise in bat surveys ranging from individual buildings through to complex sites requiring numerous visits with large teams. In terms of the survey effort, number of personnel required and number of visits required to be able to properly evaluate the building(s) use by bats we refer to the Bat Conservation Trust, Survey Good Practice Guidelines (2016). However, these guidelines are not prescriptive and we approach each site individually as required using our professional judgement and significant experience base.

4. In this case, two visits with a team of three surveyors, was deemed necessary to fully evaluate the potential use of the Site for roosting. The surveys were carried out on the 9th May and 1st June 2016 with surveyors positioned around the building to cover all aspects where bats could potentially emerge, and to establish activity levels around the Site. Conditions and dates are summarised in table 1.

5. The surveyors, using heterodyne detectors, were in place at least half an hour before dusk and left once all species of bat would be expected to have left a roost and patterns of activity within the Site had been appraised.

6. Further to this, a walked transect of the site was undertaken. The objectives of this survey are to characterise how local bat populations currently make use of the site, so that an accurate assessment of the potential impacts of development on the site could be made. Surveys therefore set out to collect the following data (BCT survey guidelines 2012):

    - The assemblage of bat species using the site;
    - The relative frequency with which the site is used by different species;
    - The nature of activity for different bat species, for example foraging, commuting and roosting.

7. The transect began immediately after the emergence surveys and continued for up to an hour after when all bats were thought to have emerged, and thus were actively foraging and commuting. Only 1 transect was deemed necessary, and was carried out following the May emergence survey. This was walked by two surveyors, equipped with a heterodyne detector.

Table 1: Survey summary

Date of Survey	Temperature Start/End	Weather	Invertebrate activity
09.05.16	12˚C / 11˚C	20% cloud, dry, no breeze	Low
01.06.16	9˚C / 7˚C	100% cloud, light breeze, dry	Low

8. Surveys were directed by Laura Turnock BSc (Hons) MRes MCIEEM. Laura has five years' experience of carrying out bat surveys in a professional capacity and is registered to use the new Class Survey Licence WML CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2). She is a member of the West Yorkshire Bat Group and the Bat Conservation Trust.

Results

Bat Emergence survey 1 – 9th May 2016, Sunset: 20:53

9. The first bat recorded was a common pipistrelle at 21:14, 21 minutes after sunset, and was clearly seen approaching from the east, then commuting along the southern elevation of the building. This activity was repeated by a second common pipistrelle at 21:23, which after arriving onsite, commuted due south.

10. At 21:30, a pipistrelle bat was observed commuting across the site, appearing from the neighbouring garden to the west. Following this, bats were heard foraging in the grassland to the north of the building or offsite in the south.

11. At no point during the survey were any bats seen to or suspected to have emerged from the survey building.

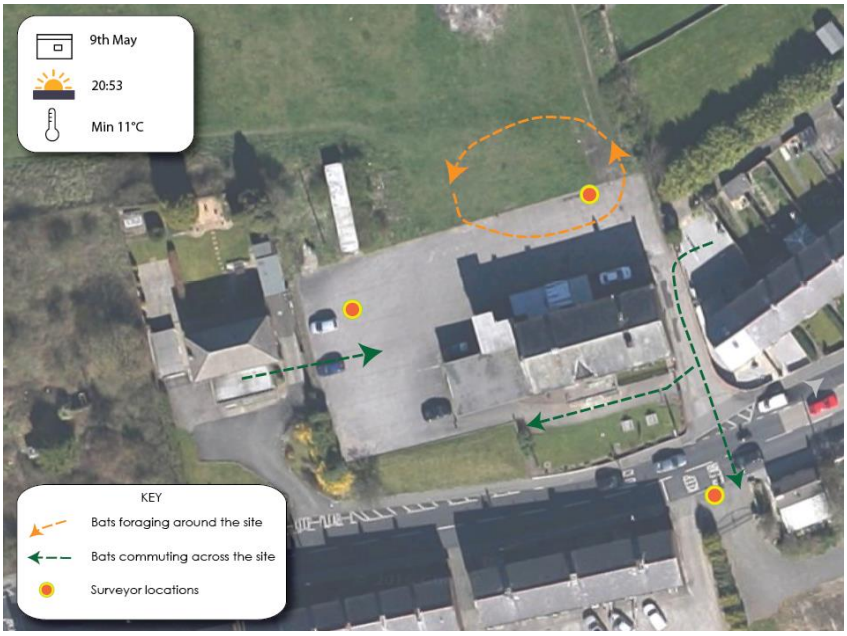

Figure 1

Bat emergence drawing- 9th May 2016

Transect survey 1– 9th May 2016

12. The transect began from the south western corner of the Site, and walked west to follow the site periphery. The route subsequently took in as much of the Site's interior as possible by walking across in a north to south and east to west direction.

13. Only one bat was recorded throughout the transect. This was a common pipistrelle bat at 22:00, recorded to the west of the site. The bat was noted to be foraging and continued to do so for a few minutes before flying west, offsite.

Bat emergence survey 2 – 1st June 2016, Sunset: 21:27

14. As before, no bats were seen to or were suspected to have emerged from the surveyed building.

15. Bat activity was notably reduced when compared to that of the previous survey. The first bat seen was a common pipistrelle at 21:57, 30 minutes after sunset, observed foraging in the grassland to the north of the building.

16. The second and final bat seen was another common pipistrelle at 21:25, foraging to the north west of the building. Bats were then heard infrequently for the rest of the survey foraging offsite in close proximity.

Figure 2 Bat emergence drawing- 1st June 2016



Evaluation and recommendations

17. Following emergence survey work it is concluded that the building is very unlikely to support roosting bats and that further survey effort is not required in support of this conclusion.

18. Land to north of the building has been found to support only very low levels of bat activity, with only a single common pipistrelle observed foraging at any one time. This land can be seen as having limited value for foraging bats.

19. Based on the above, the proposed works can proceed with little risk of significant impacts on the local bat population.

General advice

20. Even where surveys have been carried out which demonstrate absence of roosting, site workers should always be aware that bats can move into buildings previously found not to support them. On this basis work should proceed with care and if a bat is found during the proposed works, works should stop immediately and a professional ecologist and/or the bat helpline (on 0845 1300 228 Bat Conservation Trust) should be contacted. The local office of Natural England should also be contacted to seek advice.

21. The UK government's latest guidance on nature conservation in relation to development (NPPF) makes it clear that opportunities should be sought through their planning system to use development as an opportunity to enhance sites for wildlife where possible. Proposals could incorporate areas that could be attractive to roosting bats, such as adapted roof tiles and ridges which can be cheaply and easily incorporated into new buildings.

References

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