

**Bat Roost Potential Survey
The New Wharf, Huddersfield**

Report reference: R-1574-01
August 2013

Report Title:	Bat Roost Potential Survey The New Wharf, Huddersfield
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Date	15.08.13



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Summary Statement

The building has been assessed to have limited bat roost potential and emergence surveys will be required during May to September in order to prove absence of roosting prior to works commencing.

Introduction

1. Brooks Ecological was commissioned to carry out a bat survey of the New Wharf, 52 Wakefield Road, Huddersfield (SE 150 164).
2. The application site is a former public house which occupies a corner plot on a main road close to the edge of Huddersfield town centre.

Proposals

3. The current proposals are to demolish the building to make way for new development.

Figure 1 Site location



Box 1 Legal background

Bats are afforded full protection under The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) plus amendments, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Under these Acts it is an offence among others, to recklessly kill, injure or disturb bats. It is also an offence to destroy or obstruct a roost even if bats are not in occupancy at the time of the action.

There are no defences against contravention of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which means that it is important for detailed and well designed bat surveys to be carried out, prior to carrying out activities that may impact upon bat roosts such as demolition of buildings or removal of trees.

Where bats are found within a potential development site, a license from Natural England may need to be secured if works that could otherwise contravene legislation are to be carried out. These licences are only issued where Natural England is satisfied that works are unavoidable and would not have a negative impact on the favourable conservation status of bats. A Natural England license requires that the potential development site has full planning permission and that bats were a material consideration of the planning permission.

Box 2 Bat roosts

Bats roost in buildings and trees in different locations depending upon time of year and environmental factors such as position of the sun, proximity to heat sources and feeding grounds. The following types are commonly referred to:

Transitional roosts:

Bats frequently gather early in the season (March to April) before dispersing to summer roosts. Bats can be found in high numbers in these roosts for a very short period. Transitional roosts can also be found shortly before hibernation in August to October when bats (depending upon species) can gather in roosts not used earlier in the season.

Maternity roosts:

These are among the most important roosts and are normally occupied from May to August. Depending on the species involved, some maternity roosts can contain a very significant proportion of the local population.

Summer (non-breeding) roosts

Small groups of non-breeding female and male bats can gather in these roosts or bats from a local population may choose to roost individually. There are normally a large number of suitable locations for summer non-breeding roosts and these may be routinely used or used only on an occasional basis. Irregularly used summer roosts can be very hard to find without unreasonable survey effort.

Mating roosts

Around September bats will gather in roost to mate; these are often in different locations than summer or breeding roosts.

Hibernation roosts

As bats in hibernation roosts are highly vulnerable to disturbance and bats can be present in large numbers these are considered to be among the most important bat roosts. Many species of bats roost in large and nationally important hibernation roosts associated with underground sites, many of which are well known and protected. However, the most common bat in the UK (the common pipistrelle) is largely unaccounted for in winter but thought to disperse and roost individually or in small groups in thermally stable cracks and crevices in thick walls or trees.

Local Status

4. The application site is within the natural range of species of bats listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Bat species recorded within 100km of the application site

Species	National status
Pipistrelles (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> and <i>P. pygmaeus</i>)	widespread/common
Nathusius' Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>)	Widespread/rare
Noctule (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)	widespread/frequent
Leisler's (<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>)	widespread/rare
Brown long-eared (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)	widespread/common
Natterer's (<i>Myotis nattereri</i>)	widespread/frequent
Daubenton's (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>)	widespread/common
Whiskered/Brandt's (<i>Myotis mystacinus</i> and <i>M. brandtii</i>)	widespread/scarce
Alcathoe's (<i>Myotis alcathoe</i>)	Local/unknown

Method

5. A thorough daytime inspection of the site was made in May 2013 in order to look for evidence of bats and assess bat roosting potential. Evidence of bats may take the form of droppings, feeding remains, live bats, dead bats, stains on masonry or timber from the oils in bats' fur and claw marks made by bats regularly roosting in the same location.
6. Bat roosting potential of the building was classified according to the following criteria set out in Table 2, developed with reference to the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2004), Bat Workers Manual (2004) and the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines (2012).

Table 2: Bat roosting potential in buildings

Roosting potential	Criteria
Good	Buildings that have many areas suitable for roosting with a large number of potential access points. These are normally in sheltered locations, subject to low variation in temperature. Buildings with good potential could be used for a whole range of roosts including maternity roosts.
Moderate	Buildings with a smaller number of areas suitable for roosting, but still supporting features that could be attractive to bats and potentially support maternity roosts.
Limited	Buildings with limited roosting opportunities. These may be in locations that are subject to wide temperature fluctuations and drafts. They could be used as occasional or transient roosts, but are unsuitable for maternity roosts. Buildings that would otherwise be moderate to good potential but have reduced value due to other factors such as exposed location, separation from nearby foraging, or presence of strong lighting.
Very Limited	Buildings that have no obvious places for bats to roost, but could be used on a sporadic or occasional basis for feeding or solitary day roosting.
None	Buildings which appear unsuitable for roosting bats due to clear lack of roosting spaces such as voids etc and/or absence of suitable access points.

7. Survey and assessment was carried out by Anne Proud BA (Hons) MSc, ACIEEM. Anne has over 5 years experience of carrying out bat surveys in a professional capacity and holds a Natural England scientific license in

respect of bats for all counties of England (20122159) and is a member of the West Yorkshire Bat Group.

Results

8. The application site is located on a main road, surrounded by built environment. Although the immediate area seems to provide little in terms of suitable bat habitat, the site is located between the Huddersfield Broad Canal (60m to the west) and the River Colne (120m east) both of which would provide good foraging for bats and link the site with additional habitat such as the wooded areas of Ashley Hirst Plantation some 240m to the south east.
9. The building has two storeys, occupying a corner plot and is attached to retail units on the north western elevation.

Figure 2 General view of the site viewed from the east.



10. The wall are constructed from brick and lined with local stone, being in the most part in a sound condition, although there are a few gaps where pointing is missing creating gaps that could give bats access to potential roosting space within the walls. These features are largely limited to areas around the stone lintels at the south and eastern elevations of the building. A search was made for any droppings which would suggest roosting, but none were found.

Figure 3

Gaps around stone frames of windows on the south eastern wall.



11. The hipped roof features a small parapet wall which runs along the pitched sections of the building, effectively sealing the eaves and providing no access points for bats.



Figure 4

View of parapet wall which adjoins all pitched roof sections.

12. A number of flat roofed areas are found to the rear of the building facing south: these have well sealed bitumen roofs with a small coping stone along the edges and offer very little in terms of roosting potential.



Figure 5

Rear of the building showing arrangements of flat roofed sections.

13. The slate roof is in a variable state of repair and although the ridge appears well sealed, there are a number of slipped or missing slates which have created gaps visible on the south and eastern elevations. It was difficult to gain a clear view of other elevations due to adjoining buildings. These gaps could offer roosting spaces for a small number of bats or potentially give access to the roof void.



Figure 6

Missing slates along south eastern section of roof.

14. An internal inspection of the loft revealed sound timbers, well sealed wall tops and an unlined roof, while the space was unlit with some limited draughts from small gaps within the slates. A detailed inspection was made of most of the southern section of the loft although it was not possible to gain safe access to all areas. No droppings were found within the viewed sections, though the floor was covered with a thick layer of dirt and mortar from the roof, so small amounts of droppings would have been difficult to detect.



Figure 7

Internal view of loft space showing unlined slates.

15. The cellar presented no visible roosting features and was well sealed externally by metal doors.

Table 3: Bat Roosting Potential checklist

Feature	Notes
Walls	Potential access to cavity around several window frames
Roof slates	Several missing or lifted
Ridge tiles	Intact cemented
Eaves	Sealed by parapet wall
Flashing	Sealed
Basements/cellars	No features present
Trees	None affected

Evaluation and recommendations

16. Despite the lack of evidence of roosting, this building does contain a number of features that could support bats and is assessed as having limited bat roost potential. Although a lack of droppings within the roof void and close to the gaps within the wall suggests that bats are unlikely to use the building in significant numbers, bats could use these features as more solitary roosts. In addition, they could potentially have access to the small area of loft space which was inaccessible for inspection, while small numbers of bats could roost beneath raised slates.
17. The building occupies an area likely to be attractive to bats and this will increase the possibility of its use as a roost.
18. Emergence surveys will need to be carried out during bat's active period (May to September) by a suitably qualified ecologist to prove the absence of roosting prior to works commencing on the building.

References

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