

333 Drub Lane,
Cleckheaton, BD19 4BX

Bat Scoping Survey

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1 Introduction

This report presents the results of a bat scoping survey undertaken at 333 Drub Lane, Cleckheaton, BD19 4BX. The survey has been completed to provide supporting information for a planning application for the proposed erection of a detached dwelling at the site. The development will involve the demolition of the existing house on the site.

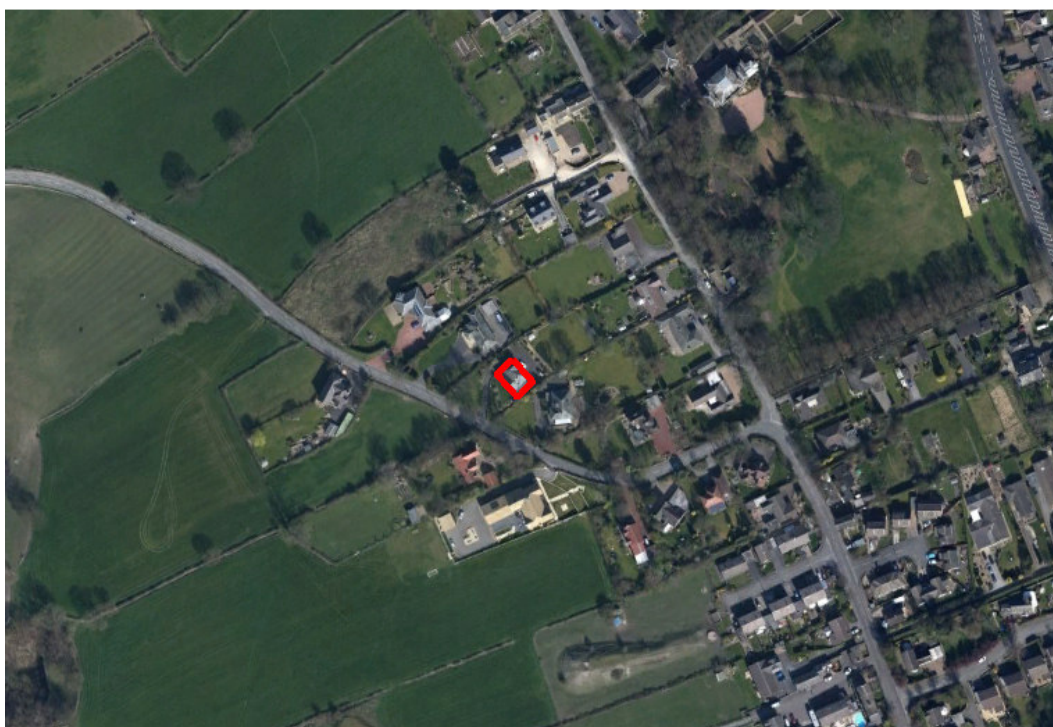
The site is located at OS grid reference SE 2030 2675 on the north-western edge of the residential area of Gomersal. The site is approximately 2 km north-west of Cleckheaton town centre and 550 metres south of the M62 motorway. The site is approximately 150 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and currently comprises a recently empty detached dwelling and gardens.

The site is bordered to all sides by large detached dwellings with mature gardens. Pasture is located approximately 30 metres south of the site beyond Drub Lane and also approximately 100 metres north of the site beyond adjacent gardens.

The primary aim of the survey was to determine the potential for bats to roost at the site and to provide recommendations for mitigation and/or further work required. The survey also identified the habitats present on the site.

A daytime bat scoping survey was undertaken on 3rd February 2016 by Toby Fisher CEnv MCIEEM (Natural England Class Licence Registration No. 2015-10756-CLS-CLS – CL18 Survey Level 2). This involved assessing the building at the site in terms of its potential to be used by bats via external inspections. The results have been used to classify the building in terms of its potential to support bats.

Figure 1: 333 Drub Lane, Cleckheaton – House Location (aerial imagery dated 2011)



2 Methodology

The bat survey followed the approach and methods described in the current best practice guidelines for bat surveys^{1 2}.

2.1 *Desk Study*

West Yorkshire Bat Group (WYBG) was contacted for a search of bat records within a 2 km radius of the site.

2.2 *Personnel*

The daytime bat scoping survey (3rd February 2016) was undertaken by Toby Fisher CEnv MCIEEM (Natural England Class Licence Registration No. 2015-10756-CLS-CLS – CL18 Survey Level 2).

2.3 *Bat Scoping Survey*

The building within the site was searched for bats and evidence of bats and was also assessed in terms of its bat roost potential on 3rd February 2016 by Toby Fisher CEnv MCIEEM. This involved searching the exterior of the building for signs of bats such as droppings and for potential bat roost locations. The survey involved the use of a high-powered LED torch, ladders and close-focussing binoculars. Each part of the building was assessed in terms of its potential to support bat roosts using the following categories:

- Negligible potential.
- Low potential.
- Moderate potential.
- High potential.
- Confirmed roost.

2.4 *Limitations*

The survey was undertaken outside the main season for bat surveys and habitat surveys (May to September inclusive). External evidence of bat activity outside the main survey season can be difficult to detect because bats are less active and evidence such as droppings are more readily removed by wind and rain etc.

The house was not accessible internally as keys were not available. All parts of the exterior of the house were fully visible for survey through close-focussing binoculars and ladders.

Overall, the following constraints must be considered when interpreting the findings of this report:

- The survey was conducted in February which is outside the optimal survey period for bats.
- The building was not accessible internally.

¹ Collins, J. (ed.) 2016 Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-13 978-1-872745-96-1.

² West Yorkshire Ecology. Minimum Standards for Bat Surveys in West Yorkshire (Version 5). West Yorkshire Ecology Advisory Group – 19/07/2012.

3 Results

3.1 Desk Study

West Yorkshire Bat Group (WYBG) provided ten records of bats within 2 km of the site (see Table 1). The species previously recorded in the area are: Pipistrelle species, Common Pipistrelle and Vesper species. Of the supplied records, the following two are located within 500 metres of 333 Drub Lane:

- Field record of 4 adult *Pipistrellus* bats approximately 260 metres north-east of the site at 305 Oxford Road, Gomersal, BD19 4LA dated 03/04/2011.
- Aural bat detector record of *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* approximately 400 metres south-south-east of the site at Methodist Church Sunday School, Latham Lane, Gomersal dated 10/05/2010.

Table 1. Bat Records within 2 km as supplied by West Yorkshire Bat Group

Grid Ref	Location Name	Date	Species	Notes
SE2098426722	47 Summerbridge Crescent	25/06/1998	Pipistrellus	21-50 Count of Adult. Roost (maternity)
SE2054226875	305 Oxford Road Gomersal Cleckheaton BD19 4LA	03/04/2011	Pipistrellus	4 Count of Adult. Field record
SE2023026204	190 Cliffe Lane, Gomersal	12/06/2003	Common Pipistrelle	86 Count of Adult. Roost
SE205264	Methodist Church Sunday School, Latham Lane, Gomersal	10/05/2010	Pipistrellus pipistrellus	Aural bat detector
SE2092927400	21 Birksland Moor, Birkinshaw, Bradford	05/07/2006	Pipistrelle Bat species	Roost
SE2089626865	6 Summerdale, Gomersal, Cleckheaton, BD19 4AH	06/07/2004	Vesper Bat species	>30 Count of Adult. Roost
SE20402608	10 Beech Grove, Gomersal, Kirklees	26/05/2005	Vesper Bat species	1 Count of Adult. Grounded
SE2055227430	16 Swincliffe Crescent, Gomersal, Cleckheaton.	14/07/2005	Vesper Bat species	35 Count of Adult. Roost
SE2010726005	38 Woodlands Crescent, Gomersal, Cleckheaton.	23/08/2005	Vesper Bat species	Roost
SE210261	Gomersal Middle School, Gomersal	07/09/2007	Vesper Bat species	1 Count of Adult. Grounded

3.2 Bat Roost Potential Assessment and Daytime Bat Inspection

3.2.1 Summary of Bat Evidence and Roost Potential

No bats or signs of bats such as droppings or feeding remains were found at the site.

In summary, the house at 333 Drub Lane is assessed as having low bat roost potential.

3.2.2 Building Description

See photos at Appendix 2. The house on the site is recently disused but appears to be in a generally very good state of repair. It appears to be constructed of brick with stone facing and is part rendered. A date stone on the south elevation reads 'Fairfield House 1927'. The house comprises a two-storey section with a hipped-gable roof covered in Welsh-style slates and a large flat-roof single-storey section.

The walls, windows, doorways, roof verges and chimneys are all in apparently good condition with no potential bat access points noted in any of these areas. Painted fixed window shutters were inspected

but were found to be unsuitable for roosting bats because their exposed nature does not provide suitable crevice roosting opportunities for bats. There are no areas of hanging tiles or bat bricks/boxes.

The eaves boards on the flat roofed section of the building are in good condition and are flush with the walls and do not provide any suitable access points for bats.

On the two-storey section of the building, the eaves also appear to be in very good condition and are flush with the walls. No suitable access points for bats were noted here.

The roof of the two-storey section of the building is in generally good condition. However, potential bat access points were noted at the following locations:

1. Raised ridge tile on east side of roof (see Photo 6, Appendix 2).
2. Raised ridge tile on south side of roof (see Photo 6, Appendix 2).

Both of the above listed raised ridge tiles provide potentially suitable bat access points.

3.2.3 *Overview of Surrounding Habitats*

The site is located at approximately 150 metres above sea level on the north-western edge of the residential area of Gomersal. The site is approximately 2 km north-west of Cleckheaton town centre and 550 metres south of the M62 motorway.

The site is bordered to all sides by large detached dwellings with mature gardens. Pasture is located approximately 30 metres south of the site beyond Drub Lane and also approximately 100 metres north of the site beyond adjacent gardens. A minor road, Drub Lane lies approximately 20 metres south of the house.

In the immediate vicinity, gardens and pasture fields bordered by trimmed hedgerows with scattered trees provide potential bat foraging and commuting habitats. Woodland is scattered in the wider area; a woodland extending to approximately 5 hectares is present approximately 280 metres south-west of the site. There are a number of busy roads in the vicinity which are predicted to represent significant barriers to dispersal for bats, e.g. the M60 motorway approximately 500 metres north of the site.

In summary, the immediate and wider area provides areas of low-moderate good value for bat foraging and commuting along with some areas of likely high value for bats such as woodlands and mature gardens.

3.2.4 *Nesting Birds*

No bird nests were noted during the survey. Based on the very limited potential access points in the building and the absence of nesting material at the eaves etc., it is concluded that there is low potential for birds to nest within the surveyed building. Elsewhere within the site, a variety of common birds are likely to nest in trees and shrubs.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations presented below are based on the results of the survey as described in this report. If site conditions change or if a period of more than 12 months elapses from the time of the most recent survey, it may be necessary to conduct an update survey.

4.1 **Bats**

4.1.1 *Conclusions*

No signs of bats were found during the scoping survey and it is considered that the building has low bat roost potential. The only identified features with potential to support bat roosts were two gaps beneath ridge tiles as shown on Photo 6 (Appendix 2). However, as described under Limitations in Section 2.4, it is noted that the survey was conducted outside the optimal season for bat surveys and the interior of the building was not accessible.

4.1.2 *Recommendations*

In accordance with current West Yorkshire guidance, due to the survey limitations and the presence of two gaps beneath ridge tiles on the surveyed building, it is recommended that further work is required, as described below. Two options could be progressed:

1. If full internal access to the loft spaces can be obtained, the loft spaces should be surveyed (this can be undertaken at any time of the year). If no signs of bats are recorded during the internal inspection, it will be recommended that the demolition works can proceed under a precautionary method statement (i.e. ecological supervision of removal of the ridge tiles).
2. If full internal access to the loft spaces cannot be obtained, it will be necessary to undertake a minimum of one bat activity survey during May-August. Due to the position of the potential roost sites, one surveyor will be sufficient to survey the house adequately.

If bat roosts are found to be present, it will be necessary to provide alternative bat roosting opportunities to compensate for any adverse effects on existing roosting sites. If bat roosts are found to be present and will be affected by the development, mitigation measures will also be required, e.g. ecological supervision of demolition and potentially seasonal restrictions.

Any work which will involve damage/destruction or disturbance of bats or their roosts or resting places would require a Natural England European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence. Natural England will normally only assess licence applications once planning permission is in place. Before issuing a licence, Natural England will need to be satisfied that the following '3 tests' are met:

1. That the action is for the purpose of preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature;
2. that there is no satisfactory alternative; and
3. that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

4.2 **Nesting Birds**

4.2.1 *Conclusions*

No bird nests were noted during the survey and there is low potential for birds to nest within the surveyed building. Birds are likely to nest in trees and shrubs elsewhere within the site.

4.2.2 *Recommendations*

It is recommended that any work affecting potential bird nesting areas (i.e. trees, shrubs and dense ground vegetation) is undertaken outside of March-August if possible. If this is not possible, such activities during the main bird nesting period of March to August inclusive should be preceded by a check for active nests by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist. The supervising ecologist should advise all site personnel of the potential presence of nesting birds, their legal protection and the need to minimise disturbance of nesting birds. The supervising ecologist should check for active bird nests

prior to any works during March-August. If active nests are present, these should be retained in situ undisturbed by the works until the nests are no longer active.

Appendix 1: Legislation and Conservation Context

Bats

All British bat species are fully protected through The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 as European Protected Species (EPS). They also receive some protection through inclusion in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

It is an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat. It is an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat. It is an offence to deliberately disturb a bat; in particular any disturbance which is likely (a) to impair their ability - (i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or (ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or (b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is also an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or obstruct access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection.

The 'appropriate authority' (Natural England in England) has powers to issue licences for various purposes including - (a) scientific or educational purposes... and (e) preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment. The appropriate authority shall not grant a licence under this regulation unless they are satisfied - (a) that there is no satisfactory alternative, and (b) that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. It is an offence for any person authorised by virtue of a licence to which this paragraph applies to contravene or fail to comply with any condition which the licence requires him to comply with.

Several species of bat including brown long-eared and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* are identified as UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species.

Nesting Birds

All wild birds in the UK are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or its eggs.

Appendix 2. Photographs

Photo 1. 333 Drub Lane viewed from south-west (front)



Photo 2. North-west elevation of house viewed from west



Photo 3. Detail on south-west elevation showing flush soffits and roof verges



Photo 4. Rear (north-east) and side elevations of house viewed from north



Photo 5. Rear elevation of house viewed from east



Photo 6. South-east facing hipped-gable viewed from east



Photo 7. South-east elevation of house showing eaves boards in good condition and flush with wall providing no potential bat access points

