

5 Two Gates, Slaithwaite

Bat Survey Report

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1. Summary

- 1.1.1 The bat survey was commissioned by the client and owner of the site Paul Ryan Wood on 24th July 2019.
- 1.1.2 The survey has been commissioned to inform a planning application for renovation and conversion of the building.
- 1.1.3 The preliminary roost assessment survey was conducted on the 30th July 2019 followed by two nocturnal surveys undertaken on 2nd and 19th August 2019.
- 1.1.1 The building displays a moderate number and diversity of potential bat roosting features. Consequently, the building is considered to display moderate bat roost potential.
- 1.1.2 One common pipistrelle day roost was recorded in association with the surveyed building. The roost is of low conservation value. No evidence of the structure being used by maternity roosting bats was recorded. The building is not considered to display any particular potential for use by hibernating bats.
- 1.1.3 It is concluded that the site will either need to be registered on the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (following an additional nocturnal survey) or a European Protected Species Licence will be required, prior to any re-roofing works taking place. Neither option is possible until full planning consent has been granted and any outstanding planning conditions that may have a bearing on the mitigation scheme have been discharged.
- 1.1.4 A bat mitigation plan to inform licensing has been detailed. This would include the use of Type 1F underfelt only during re-roofing and the retention of bat access points at the roof verge.

2. Introduction

- 2.1.1 The bat survey was commissioned by the client and owner of the site Paul Ryan Wood on 24th July 2019. The survey has been commissioned to inform a planning application for renovation and conversion of the building.
- 2.1.2 The site comprises a three-storey detached stone building. Middleton Bell Ecology were contracted initially to conduct a baseline assessment to determine the likely presence or absence of roosting bats and to identify roost locations, access points, species present, level of use and the importance of nearby landscape features.
- 2.1.3 The building is sited in a somewhat rural location at the western edge of Slaithwaite in the Colne Valley 7km west-southwest of Huddersfield.

3. Habitat Assessment

- 3.1.1 The surrounding area comprises a variety of habitats including permanent grassland, clough woodland and reservoirs. Consequently, the bat population in the area is likely to support many, if not all, of the locally occurring species (see Figure 1).
- 3.1.2 Table 1 summarises the habitats present, adjacent to and further afield of the surveyed dwelling.

Table 1. Location and habitat table

5 Two Gates, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield HD7 5UG			
OS Grid Ref. SE 07234 14049		Altitude.187	
Local Planning Authority: Kirklees Council			
Features on site and adjacent to site			
Feature	On site	Adjacent	Comments
Buildings	✓	✓	Residential
River bordered by trees			River Colne 390m south-southwest
Standing water		✓	Reservoir 70m north
Bridges tunnels and culverts			Associated with River Colne and Huddersfield Canal
Trees	✓	✓	In residential gardens and boundary of adjacent school
Woodland			Linear clough woodland 230m northwest
Grassland		✓	Extensive permanent grassland in the area

Figure 1. Site location, as indicated by red circle



3.2 Aims

3.2.1 The survey was conducted to help determine the following:

- The presence/absence of roosting bats.
- Potential roosting areas and access/egress points into the structure.
- Determine the level of bat roost potential associated with the structure.
- Identify further survey work or mitigation requirements.

4. Methodology

4.1 Data Consultation

4.1.1 Bat records were requested from West Yorkshire Bat Group (WYBG) for locations within a 2km radius of the site. A search of the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was undertaken to identify historic European Protected Species (EPS) licences obtained for locations within 2km of the site.

4.2 Field Survey

4.2.1 The following personnel conducted the survey on 30th July 2019:

- Peter Middleton (MCIEEM; Class license WML-A34-Level 4, 2017-27977-CLS-CLS)

4.2.2 The following activities were carried out during the surveys in compliance with relevant Bat Survey Guidelines (Collins 2016):

- A brief inspection and assessment of the site and habitats present to within 300m.

- An extensive examination of all parts of the building both inside and out to record structural features and condition and to record features that may be suitable for roosting bats. Particular attention was paid to any crevices or gaps in walls, lintels, gaps between beams and joists and to the possibility of finding droppings stuck to walls, floors or other surfaces, or insect remains below beams, among a number of other factors. All signs indicative of a bat roost presence including live or dead bats, droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and staining were recorded.
- An assessment of the building's bat roost potential (negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed roost).

4.2.3 The following equipment was used or at hand during the survey:

- Clulight
- Binoculars
- Endoscope
- Ladders
- Camera

Nocturnal surveys

4.2.4 A first two-person dusk emergence survey was undertaken by Peter Middleton (PM) and Carl Dixon (CD) on 2nd August 2019 beginning 15 minutes before sunset and finishing 90 minutes after sunset. This was followed by a dawn return survey undertaken by PM and Dr Amanda Murphy (AM) on 19th August 2019 beginning 90 minutes before sunrise and finishing 15 minutes after this time. The surveyors were positioned to cover all elevations of the building and were equipped with Wildlife Acoustic EM Touch full spectrum bat detectors.

4.3 Survey Limitations

4.3.1 The weather during the dawn return survey on 19th August was less than favourable with Beaufort Scale Force 4 westerly winds, also, there was a shower prior to starting. In spite of this, much bat activity was recorded during the survey and a significant proportion of the local bat population appears to have remained active through the night.

5. Results

5.1 Data Consultation

5.1.1 A data consultation undertaken with West Yorkshire Bat Group in July 2019, resulted in the supply of 17 bat records for locations within 2km of the site. Bat species positively identified in the data consultation comprised common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, with the closest roost to site comprising a common pipistrelle maternity roost, recorded in 1989 from a location 440m east of the site.

5.1.2 Two historical bat European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licences have been issued for locations within 2km of the surveyed building. The nearest licence was issued in 2014 to permit the destruction of a soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and common pipistrelle resting place 850m east of the application site.

5.2 Field Survey

- 5.2.1 The building displays a moderate number and diversity of potential bat roosting features. Consequently, the building is considered to display moderate bat roost potential. The building is described in detail below.

Description

- 5.2.2 The site comprises an old three-storey detached stone-built building beneath a pitched stone slate roof. Adjoining the northwest corner of the building is a small two-storey section with both pitched and mono pitched stone slate roofs (see Plate 1). The building is access through a doorway of the small building section that leads to the ground floor of the main building. There are stone mullion windows mainly on the east elevation which have had the glazing removed (see Plates 1, 2 & 3).

Plate 1. West elevation



Plate 2. North facing gable and small two-storey section



External inspection

- 5.2.3 The east elevation of the building had recently been pointed and the remainder has been well maintained in the past. Consequently, the walls afford little potential to accommodate bats. There is a large hole where the mortar has fallen out at the roof verge of the two-storey section above the north gable, however, all other bat roost potential is associated with the roof. There is access to the wall plate under the eaves and the roof slates offer an abundance of potential roosting location between the slates and membrane and at the verges above the gables (see Plates 1, 2, & 3).

Plate 3. South facing gable



Internal inspection

- 5.2.4 Renovation of the building had already begun and consequently, the inside of the main building has been completely removed prior to the construction of two new floors. The ceiling of the upper floor has also been removed and the upper floor-space is open to the underside of the Type 1F felt beneath the slates (see Plate 4). No signs of bats were found.

Plate 4. Inside (top floor)



- 5.2.5 **Dusk survey, 2nd Aug 2019** – (Sunset 21:03) – The temperature at the beginning of monitoring was 17°C, with a Beaufort Scale Force 1 easterly wind and a clear sky. The cloud cover increased to 30% shortly after the start and the temperature dropped slightly to 16°C by the end of monitoring.
- 5.2.6 At 21:29 a common pipistrelle emerged from beneath the slates on the roof verge of the south facing gable before flying south (see Plate 5). A single common pipistrelle foraged intermittently thereafter, together with a brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* on Two Gates (road) at 21:48 and a brief *Myotis* species pass on the south side of the building at 21:55.

Plate 5. Location of emergence, as indicated by red circle



- 5.2.7 **Dawn survey, 19th Aug 2019** – (Sunrise 05:53) – The temperature at the beginning of monitoring was 13°C, with a Beaufort Scale Force 4 westerly wind and 80% cloud. The conditions remained largely the same throughout monitoring.
- 5.2.8 A foraging common pipistrelle was heard foraging intermittently from a location south of the building from the beginning of monitoring until 05:29. A probable whiskered/brandt's *Myotis mystacinus/brandtii* bat was heard near the south gable at 04:35 & 04:45 and a Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri* bat foraged intermittently above the surveyed building between 05:15 and 05:24. No bats were seen to return to roost in the surveyed building.

6. Assessment

6.1 Summary and Evaluation of Findings

- 6.1.1 No bats were found roosting in the building during the preliminary daytime assessment and there were no signs of bat occupation recorded from the building during this inspection. The building in its present condition is considered to offer an overall moderate level of bat roost potential.
- 6.1.2 Nocturnal survey showed that the building supports a common pipistrelle day roost used by a maximum count of one bat. The roost is of low conservation value. No evidence of the structure being used by maternity roosting bats was recorded and the building is not considered to display any particular potential for use by hibernating bats.

6.2 Legislation and Policy Guidance

6.2.1 Bats receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

6.2.2 It is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection or obstruct access to any such place.
- Damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat.
- Possess a bat (live or dead), or any part of a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
- Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (dead or alive), or parts of parts.

6.2.3 The Convention on Biological Diversity, signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, requires member states to develop national strategies and to undertake a range of actions aimed at maintaining or restoring biodiversity. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the Convention.

6.2.4 In England & Wales, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, “to have due regard, as far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”. It notes that “conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat”. Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein’s *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and soprano pipistrelle bats are included as priority species within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. At a more local level there are Local Biodiversity Action Plans for smaller geographical areas which may cover a greater or lesser range of bat species.

6.2.5 Where it is proposed to carry out works which will have an adverse impact on roosting bats, the site must either be registered on the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) or a European Protected Species (EPS) license must first be obtained from Natural England. This requirement applies even if no bats are expected to be present when the work is carried out.

6.2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework for England was revised in 2019. This document states that plans should ‘promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity’.

6.3 Recommendations/enhancements/further survey

6.4 Mitigation/enhancements/further survey

6.4.1 The site must either be registered on the BMCL (following an additional nocturnal survey) or an EPS mitigation licence must be obtained prior to commencement of works. This will need to include measures to prevent killing or injuring bats during the development and the retention of roosting opportunities.

6.4.2 It will be necessary to implement detailed mitigation proposals for the building in order to inform either the BLICL site registration or the EPS Licence. These mitigation measures would include

- Bats to be captured and moved from the building at the start of re-roofing works. This work should be undertaken by a licensed bat surveyor following the delivery of a Toolbox Talk to contractors.
- Any bats that are removed during a potential roof-strip to be placed within a release box to be installed on a site tree. If the works are to be undertaken during the winter period, then this box will comprise an insulated bat box with suitability for bat hibernation. Any injured bats will be taken into care, pending future release on the site.
- Use of Type 1F roofing felt only must be used during any re-roofing. Modern Breathable Roof Membranes (BRM) should not be used, as bats have been shown to become entangled within the component filaments of BRMs.
- Long-term bat roost retention will need to be provided in order to offset impacts to the local bat populations caused by the potential loss of existing bat roosts during any re-roofing works. It is advised that the existing bat roost and any other gaps sufficient to accommodate crevice dwelling at eaves level (wall top) be retained.
- There are not considered to be any timing restrictions to the proposed works and no post development monitoring survey is considered necessary as roosts are of low conservation value.

6.5 Conclusion

6.5.1 The surveyed building supports a common pipistrelle day roost used by a maximum count of one bat. Works may not proceed until the site is either registered on the BMCL or an EPS mitigation licence has been obtained. Neither option is possible until full planning consent has been granted and any outstanding planning conditions that may have a bearing on the mitigation scheme have been discharged.

6.5.2 The proposed development will provide a new dwelling which will help meet the local housing need. Through appropriate mitigation, as detailed in this report, the Favourable Conservation Status of local bat populations can be maintained. It is considered that the Three Tests of EPS mitigation licensing can be met by the development.

7. References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. The Bat Conservation Trust.

Appendix 1. Bat Records

In accordance with best practice and the requirements of bat licensing, bat records collected during surveys are supplied to the relevant biological record centres and bat groups. The records to be supplied in accordance with this survey are shown below. House names/numbers are not given out by record holding organisations except under very particular circumstances. Please let us know if you object to the distribution of these records.

Date	Species	Site Address	OS Grid Reference	Notes
02.08.19	Common pipistrelle	5 Two Gates, Slaithwaite	SE 07234 14049	Roost
02.08.19	<i>Myotis</i> species	5 Two Gates, Slaithwaite	SE 07234 14049	Foraging
02.08.19	Brown long-eared bat	5 Two Gates, Slaithwaite	SE 07234 14049	Foraging
19.08.19	<i>Myotis</i> species	5 Two Gates, Slaithwaite	SE 07234 14049	Foraging
19.08.19	Leisler's bat	5 Two Gates, Slaithwaite	SE 07234 14049	Foraging