Brooks Ecological
Grounded advice

Bat Survey Report

Jagger Lane, Kirkheaton

O D Contractors Ltd

Report Reference: ER-5736-01

18/10/2021

Report Title:	Bat Survey Report Jagger Lane, Kirkheaton
Report Reference:	ER-5736-01
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Date:	18/10/2021

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Summary Statement

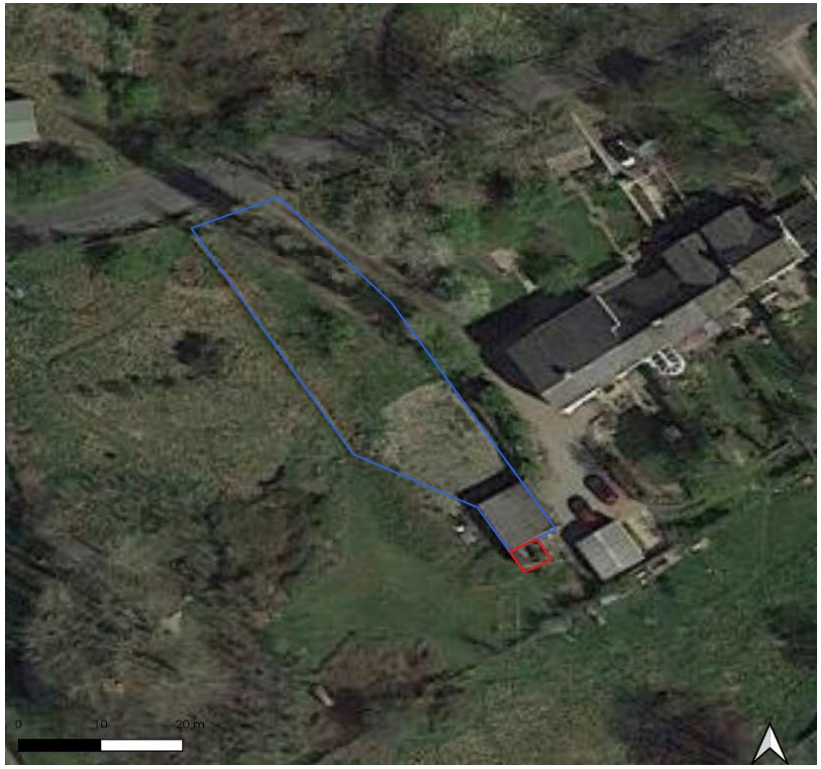
Survey has demonstrated a likely absence of roosting bats from all on-site buildings; the proposed demolition works therefore present little risk of impacting bats or their roosts.

Introduction

1. Subsequent to recommendations set out following day time inspection by a third party Ecological Consultant, Brooks Ecological was commissioned to carry out a detailed Bat Emergence Survey of a building off Jagger Lane, Kirkheaton (SE 17217 17896).

2. The Site includes two adjoining buildings. The larger, more modern of the two was assessed as providing features of Negligible Bat Roost Suitability and thus required no further survey. The smaller, adjoining drystone wall building was assessed as offering features of Moderate Bat Roost Suitability and thus, inline with best practice guidelines, requires two evening emergence or dawn re-entry surveys to fully assess the status of roosting bats at the Site.

Figure 1 The approximate Site boundary (blue) with surveyed building (red)



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 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 two surveyors was deemed necessary to fully evaluate the potential use of the Site for roosting.

5. Survey was slightly constrained by land ownership boundaries affecting where surveyors could be positioned, however, due to the limited scale of the survey building it was still possible to fully assess all elevations where bats could potentially emerge or return, and to establish activity levels around the Site.

6. The surveyors, using heterodyne detectors, were in place at least 15 minutes before sunset 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. Conditions and dates are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Survey conditions.

Date	Survey Type	Temp. Start/End	Weather
17.08.2021	Emergence	17°C/16°C	90% light cloud. Light breeze (B2). Humidity 81%. Very light drizzle from 20:48
13.09.2021	Emergence	16°C/15°C	Dry. 40% very light cloud. Light breeze (B2). Humidity 75%

7. Survey and assessment was directed by Sam Kitching BSc (Hons) MCIEEM. Sam has over 10 years' experience of carrying out bat surveys in a professional capacity and is registered to use the Class Survey Licence WML CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2).

Box 1 *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.

Box 2 *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 Habitats 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.

Survey Results

Survey 1

Emergence – 17th August 2021 (sunset 20:32)

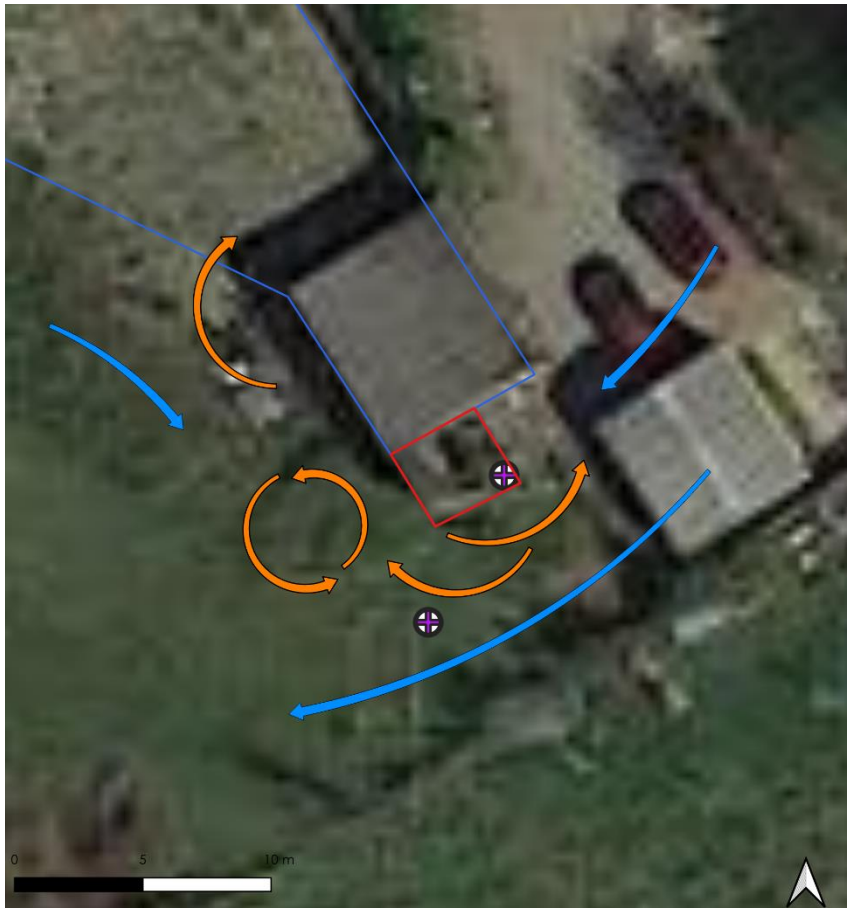
8. Bat activity was considered to be low, but relatively consistent throughout the survey.
9. The first contact was logged at 20:51 when a common pipistrelle arrived on Site from the east. This bat foraged around the survey building, and the wider Site and surrounding gardens until 21:15.
10. Other than this, only a very brief period of foraging by a single common pipistrelle was observed at 21:27. This bat arrived onsite from the south.
11. No roosts were identified, or suspected, within any of the surveyed buildings. Light drizzle from 20:48 clearly did not impact bats activity at the Site with foraging constant from shortly after this time, until 21:15.
12. Close inspection of the wall surfaces and crevices of the building was undertaken prior to the start of the survey – no evidence of current occupation by bats could be found.

Survey 2

Emergence – 13th September 2021 (Sunset 19:28)

13. Activity was similar to that observed during first survey with regular foraging by a single common pipistrelle commencing from 28 minutes after sunset. On this occasion the bat was first seen arriving on Site from the north west. Regular foraging passes by a single bat were recorded around the surveyed building until 20:11.
14. Activity by two myotid bats was recorded over the course of this survey, the first being heard but not seen at 20:04, followed by a myotid bat seen commuting passed the southern elevation of the surveyed building from east to west at 20:05.
15. No roosts were identified, or suspected, within any of the surveyed buildings.

Figure 2 Summary of bat activity observed during emergence surveys.



Evaluation & Conclusion

16. Survey has demonstrated a likely absence of roosting within on-Site buildings and as such, the proposed demolition works present little risk of impacting upon bats or their roosts.

17. The NPPF puts emphasis on development delivering biodiversity enhancement, above and beyond mitigating or compensating for any impacts. To this end, the replacement building on Site should include integral bat roost features to offer suitable habitat in the long term.

Standard precaution

18. Although no evidence or roosting has been found and likely absence of roosting has been concluded, it must be noted that bats frequently move between roost sites, can be very casual in their choice of roosting location and can turn up unexpectedly at any time. On this basis the developer should always be mindful of bats as a potential constraint and have a protocol in place should any bats be seen or suspected during works: works should stop, a suitably licensed ecologist consulted, and their advice followed.

References

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