FUTURESECOLOGY

Yorkshire Choice Homes

115 Westfield Lane, Wyke

ADDENDUM BAT REPORT

Report Reference Number: FE257/BTR01

June, 2023

Please note that the report is likely to be valid for a period of 12 months[1]. Where specific protected species surveys are undertaken the validation period of these surveys differs and must be considered carefully when utilising the data present within this report. For example, bat nocturnal emergency surveys are likely to be valid for a period of two seasons (a season being May – September) to support a planning application though to apply for a European Protected Species Licence surveys must be up to date and should be conducted in the current or most recent optimal survey season.

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REV	Issue Status	Author or Reviewer	Name & Qualifications	Position	Date
-	Draft 1	Author	A. Eales BSc (Hons)	Principal Ecologist	01/06/23
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[1] https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report has been produced to provide details of update nocturnal bat surveys undertaken to support a Reserved Matters application in relation to outline planning application (ref: 2020/60/90436/E).

1.2 As the structure had previously been classified as having moderate bat roost potential in 2019 two nocturnal surveys were undertaken in May 2020 and confirmed that no bat roost is likely to be present. Given that it is three years since these surveys were undertaken two update nocturnal surveys were carried out between May and June 2023 with a third survey recommended and undertaken at the end of June 2023.

1.3 During the surveys a common pipistrelle bat roost was confirmed present on two separate occasions. The roost was classified as a summer day roost (non-maternity) used by a single or small number of individual bats.

1.4 A Bat Mitigation Class Licence registration from Natural England is recommended to legitimise the destruction of a low status roost. Mitigation, compensation and enhancements will ensure the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of the bat population and maintained in the long term.

1.5 A range of biodiversity enhancement measures have been recommended in the earlier submitted EcIA (Futures Ecology, 2023) to ensure both national and local planning policy compliance.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The following report has been prepared by Futures Ecology Ltd. on behalf of Yorkshire Choice Properties. It provides the results of nocturnal bat surveys undertaken as part of a Reserved Matters application for a proposed residential development and should read in conjunction with the following reports.

- Ecological Impact Assessment EcIA, Futures Ecology March 2023.

2.2 The purpose of this report is to provide updated nocturnal bat surveys for the discharge of Condition 14 in relation to outline planning application (ref: 2020/60/90436/E).

14. If in the event that an application for Reserved Matters is not made within 2 years of the date of the survey undertaken to determine the presence or likely absence of roosting bats, (as submitted in support of the outline application and dated 26th May, 2020, the following shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. Either,

a) evidence that no buildings on site have greater than negligible potential to support roosting bats: or

b) a report detailing the results of nocturnal survey for bats, sufficient to determine presence or likely absence of bat roosts, commensurate with potential of the features on site to support roosting bats. All surveys and reporting shall be undertaken in accordance with relevant national good practice guidelines.

SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

2.3 The site is located off Westfield Lane, Wyke in West Yorkshire (central grid reference SE16018 26234) and is approximately 0.69ha in extent. The site comprised buildings, poor semi-improved grassland, recently cleared areas of vegetation and scattered broadleaved trees associated with an existing residential property and garden.

2.4 The landscape beyond the site is predominantly residential to the north, east and south-east with open countryside to the west and south-west.

BACKGROUND

2.5 An initial Phase 1 Habitat Assessment and Preliminary Protected Species Survey was undertaken by Futures Ecology on 11th October 2019, with a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) Report produced in February 2020.

2.6 Nocturnal bat surveys of building B1 and building B2 were conducted by Arbtech on the 7th (dusk) and 25th (dawn) of May 2020. These surveys confirmed the likely absence of roosting bats within the property at that time.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

NOCTURNAL ASSESSMENTS

3.1 During the visual assessment undertaken in October 2019 building B1 was classified as having moderate bat roosting potential with the remaining ancillary units classified as negligible. On the second nocturnal bat survey of the 2023 update surveys, a single common pipistrelle bat was observed emerging from a timber soffit box on the western elevation. As such an additional nocturnal survey was undertaken to classify the roost status.

3.2 The surveys were undertaken at dusk (emergence survey) and in accordance with the guidance detailed above. Surveyors were positioned around the buildings to ensure all aspects of the buildings could be observed. Wildlife Acoustics Inc. Echo Meter Touch ® bat detectors in conjunction with the Echo Meter Touch® app for the Apple Inc iPad and Android devices were used during the surveys.

3.3 In addition to bat detectors, four infra-red enabled cameras (Canon XA11) were used all aspects that had the most visibility of the roof from ground level to enable visualisation of bat activity after dark.

3.4 Dusk emergence surveys were undertaken approximately 15 minutes prior to sunset and for a duration of between 90 and 120 minutes. A total of three surveyors were used to adequately cover all aspects of the buildings on all survey occasions.

Survey Conditions, Dates and Personnel

3.5 The surveys were undertaken during suitable weather conditions, when the ambient air temperature exceeded 10°C and there was little or no rain or wind (Beaufort 3 or 5m/s). Surveyors used were a combination of either one or two licensed ecologists with the remaining personnel made up of assistant ecologists.

Table 1 – Bat Survey Conditions and Personnel Summary

Survey Date	Target Buildings	Personnel	Sunset / Sunrise	Start Temp (°C)	Wind (BF)	Rain	Cloud Cover
03/05/2023	B1	Kate Haymes (Lic. Ref 2020-46132-CLS-CLS) Rebecca Hill-Harmsworth (Lic. Ref 2015-119005-CLS-CLS) Steve Collis Assistant Ecologist Mike Jones Assistant Ecologist	20:21	11	2	0	20%

Survey Date	Target Buildings	Personnel	Sunset / Sunrise	Start Temp (°C)	Wind (BF)	Rain	Cloud Cover
01/06/2023	B1	Rebecca Hill-Harmsworth (Lic. Ref 2015-119005-CLS-CLS) Luke Scott Assistant Ecologist Claire Harwood Assistant Ecologist James Harries Assistant Ecologist	21:26	11	1	0	100
22/06/2023	B1	Kate Haymes (Lic. Ref 2020-46132-CLS-CLS) Claire Harwood Assistant Ecologist James Harries Assistant Ecologist Sam Harries Assistant Ecologist	21:42	19	0	0	5

Survey Limitations

3.6 The nocturnal surveys were undertaken during the appropriate time of year and during suitable conditions. As such no survey limitations are anticipated.

4.0 RESULTS

NOCTURNAL ASSESSMENTS

4.1 A summary of the survey results are provided below. Refer to Figure 2 for information regarding surveyor positions.

3rd May, 2023, Dusk Emergence Survey

4.2 The first bat contact was recorded at 20:45, twenty-four minutes following sunset (20:21) and comprised a noctule bat *Nyctalus noctula* commuting close to site. The contact was not visually confirmed and was faint suggesting the bat was some distance away from the surveyor.

4.3 Between 20:52 and 21:28 a small number of contacts were recorded likely attributable to one or two individual common pipistrelle bats *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* that were foraging close to the eastern boundary.

4.4 No further bat activity was recorded during the survey occasion. No bats were observed emerging or entering the building.

1st June, 2023, Dusk Emergence Survey

4.5 The first bat contact was recorded at 20.49, twenty-three minutes following sunset (21.26) and comprised a common pipistrelle call. The contact was not visually confirmed and was faint suggesting the bat was some distance away from the surveyor.

4.6 At 21:52 a bat was observed emerging from a gap between the wall and soffit board. The bat, confirmed as a common pipistrelle, emerged and began foraging in the garden. The emergence was later confirmed by infra-red camera.

4.7 There was a general increase in activity recorded since the previous survey occasion. Up to twenty contacts were recorded between 21:49 and 23:23 from a small number of common pipistrelle bats foraging and commuting across the site. The majority of the activity was associated with the eastern extent amongst the mature trees along the boundary and residential gardens beyond.

4.8 No further bat activity was recorded during the survey occasion.

22nd June, 2023, Dusk Emergence Survey

4.9 The first bat contact was at 22:03, twenty-one minutes following sunset (21:42) and comprised a common pipistrelle bat. The call was faint and not visually confirmed suggesting the call came from a bat beyond the site boundary.

4.10 A single common pipistrelle bat was observed emerging at 22:33 from the same location as the previous survey occasion. Again, the emergence was visually confirmed on the infra-red camera stationed close by.. The bat emerged and began to forage close to the eastern boundary before disappearing from view.

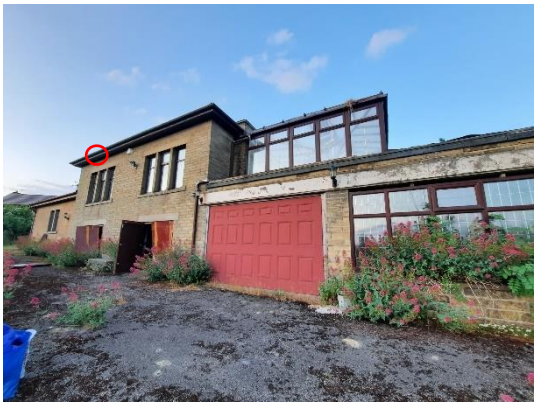
4.11 Bat activity was again predominantly associated with the eastern boundary with a small number of individuals foraging for much of the survey occasion. At 22:52 a noctule bat was commuting close by, the call was faint and the bat not visually confirmed so was likely a bat offsite in the vicinity of the application site.

4.12 No further bat activity was recorded during the survey occasion.

Survey Summary

4.13 A single common pipistrelle bat was recorded emerging on two occasions from the same location. The bat roost is thought to be within a timber soffit box on the western elevation with access provided by a gap between the wall and soffit board. Given that the roost was only recorded on two occasions and used by one individual bat, in accordance with survey guidance (Collins, 2016)[2] this roost is likely to be a day roost. A place where individual bats, or small groups of males, rest or shelter in the day but are rarely found by night in summer.

[2] Collins, J (ed) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.



Photograph 1 – Emergence point on the western elevation, recorded on two separate occasions

5.0 DISCUSSION

PROPOSALS

5.1 As part of the proposed residential scheme the existing structure is to be demolished. These nocturnal surveys were undertaken to support the discharge of conditions in relation to condition 14 on an outline planning application to provide update survey information in relation to bats.

LEGISLATION

5.2 All species of bats and their roosts are listed on the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) making it illegal to deliberately disturb any such animal or damage or destroy a breeding site or roosting place of any such animal. Bats are also afforded full legal protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is illegal to recklessly or intentionally kill, injure or take a species of bat or recklessly or intentionally damage or obstruct access to or destroy any place of shelter or protection or disturb any animal whilst they are occupying such a place of shelter or protection.

SURVEY SUMMARY

5.3 The structure had previously been classified as having moderate bat roosting potential and as such two nocturnal surveys were recommended. Very little activity was recorded during the first survey occasion. However, on the second survey occasion a single common pipistrelle bat was observed emerging from a gap in association with the soffit box on the western elevation. During the third survey a single common pipistrelle bat was again observed emerging from the same location. Foraging and commuting activity attributable to a small number of individual common pipistrelle bats was observed in association with the mature trees along the eastern elevation.

5.4 In conclusion the roost identified within B1 is classified as a common pipistrelle day roost a low status roost for individual / small numbers of a common species. Furthermore, the roost is likely to form a small part of a much wider resource of similar roosts in the local area. As such it is considered to have low conservation significance.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.5 The demolition of B1 could result in the following impacts in the absence of mitigation:

- Killing / injury of individual bats if present during the demolition operations;
- Disturbance of bats present during demolition operations; and
- Destruction of a bat roost.

MITIGATION STRATEGY

5.6 A Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) would be required to legitimise works by permitting derogation from the relevant offences under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017 (as amended).

5.7 As part of BMCL registration, it is anticipated that minimal mitigation and compensation would be required to satisfy Natural England licensing.

5.8 As the roost is classified as a low status roost the following mitigation and compensation strategy will be used in line with current guidance (Mitchell-Jones, 2004)[3] , which states:

"*Provision of new roost facilities where possible. Need not be exactly like-for-like, but should be suitable, based on species' requirements. Minimal timing constraints or monitoring requirements".*

5.9 Based on the guidance, the proposed mitigation and compensation strategy subject to consultation with Natural England will comprise one or more of the following:

- Obtaining a BMCL registration prior to the start of works affecting the roost,
- Erection of one bat box upon a suitable mature tree within the application site prior to the start of works. Suitable boxes include: 1 Chillon Woodstone Bat Box (or similar),
- Delivery of Toolbox talk to contractors by the licence named ecologist / accredited agent prior to work commencing,
- Pre-commencement nocturnal surveys and/or inspection of cavities by endoscope immediately prior to works,
- Destructive search by soft demolition of confirmed likely roosting habitat - removal of any suitable bat roosting features by hand under supervision of the licence named ecologist or accredited ecologist.
- Any bats discovered during pre-commencement inspections of soft demolition to be removed by gloved hand by a licence named ecologist or accredited ecologist.

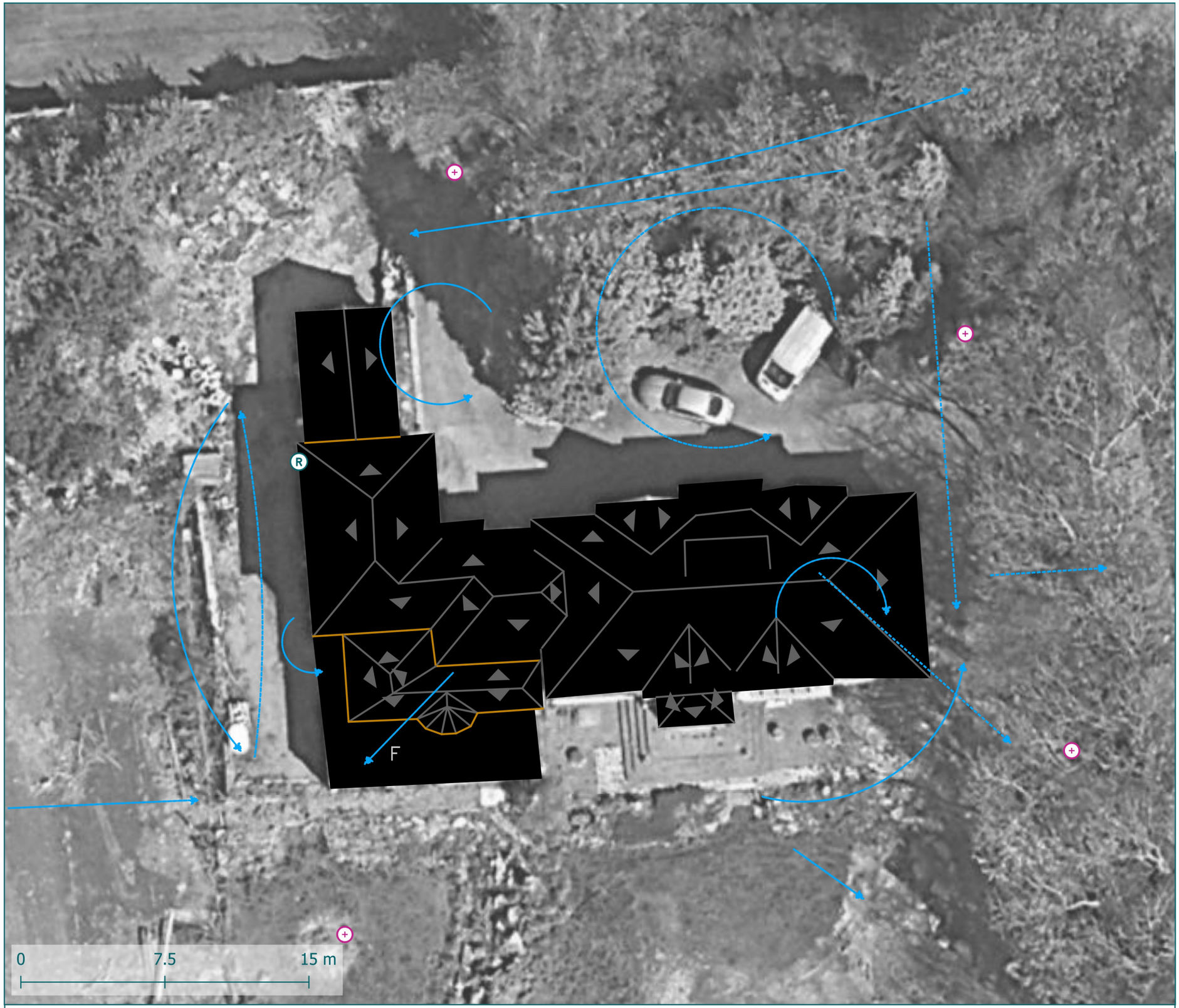
3 Mitchell-Jones A.J (2004) Bat Mitigation Guidelines. England Nature

5.10 Further strategies to reduce post development impacts are discussed in the earlier submitted EcIA (Futures Ecology, 2023).

5.11 The mitigation and compensation strategy outlined above along with the enhancements outlined in the previously issued EcIA (Futures Ecology, March 2023) will ensure that the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of the local common pipistrelle population is maintained in the long-term.

BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS

5.12 In line with current national and local planning policy there should be an over net gain for biodiversity. A range of biodiversity enhancements have been proposed, details of which are provided in the earlier submitted EcIA (Futures Ecology, March 2023).



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Key

Bat contacts

- (R) Roost
- Flight lines
- Flight lines 03.05

Emergence/Re-entry

Surveyor locations

- Surveyor
- Roof direction

Client:	Yorkshire Choice Homes	Plan Reference:	FE257_01	Author:	JH
Project:	117 Westfield Lane, Wyke	Project Reference:	FE257	Date:	2/6/2023
Title:	Figure 1 - Bat Nocturnal Survey Summary Plan	Report Reference:	BTR01	Scale:	1:200

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