

Bat Scoping Survey to

Waverley Church

Waverley Road

Huddersfield

HD1 5NA

25th May 2024



John Gardner

Wildlife Photographer | Bat Ecologist

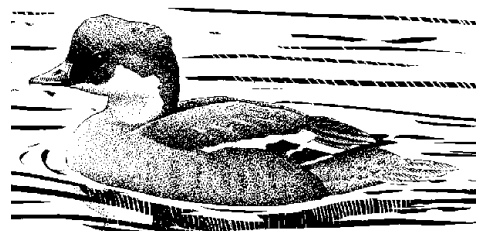
32 Nostell Lane, Ryhill, Wakefield,

West Yorkshire WF4 2DJ.

01924 229800 mobile 07887 627005

www.wildscenes.com

e: john@wildscenes.com



1. Summary

- 1.1 A bat scoping and emergence survey has been carried out to Waverley Church, Huddersfield to determine if there are features that have any potential to be used by roosting bats and whether bats are present or likely to be present. The survey is required as part of the planning application process and was undertaken at the optimal time for bat occupancy, and therefore aimed to establish the presence or absence of bats in the building. The application seeks to change of use to residential.
- 1.2 The site was subject to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) in January 2024 (JCA 2024) which assessed the building to be of moderate bat roost potential and recommended two emergence surveys be undertaken during the optimal survey period. (May to September). This survey is a follow up to the original PEA survey and details the finds of an up-to-date scoping and two activity survey carried out in May 2024.
- 1.3 The site consists of a large, double height but single storey former church constructed of stone with large blue slates to the roof and is located in an urban area with access to moderate foraging, Bats are known from the area but likely limited to the commoner species. The proposal is to convert to residential though most of the works are internal except for adding Velux windows along the roof of the nave which will cause localised disturbance.
- 1.4 The PEA determined that the building is sound and in good condition but noted potential roosting features (PRFs) such as missing tiles, sections of failed mortar along window joints and also gaps to sections of the eaves. The overall assessment was that the church is of moderate interest to bats and prescribed two emergence surveys be carried out.
- 1.5 Two emergence surveys have now been undertaken during the optimal period for bat occupancy and have established that bats are not present in the building but are present in the area and are roosting in a dwelling close to the site. It is unlikely that the proposed works will impact roosts in the vicinity as they are local to the site. Although there are potential roosting features present, the site is not considered to be essential to species survival. Recommendations for retaining some potential roosting features have been made along with suggestions for adding roosting features to the south elevation.
- 1.6 There are no statutory constraints to the project from the presence of bats. There are no requirements for further bat survey work.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 A bat scoping and two emergence surveys have been carried out to Waverley Church, Waverley Road, Huddersfield HD1 5NA (NGR SE139170) to determine whether bats have or are using the building as a roost site. The site was also checked for the presence of nesting birds.
- 2.2 The current proposal seeks planning permission for change of use to residential and will include adding Velux style roof windows along the main section of roof.
- 2.3 The survey took place at a time considered to be the optimal period for bat occupancy aimed to establish the following:
- The presence or absence of bats using the buildings by undertaking a scoping survey.
 - Identify any potential roosting features (PRFs).
 - Identify any evidence of bats (droppings, staining, dead bats).
 - Determine if activity surveys are required.
 - Provide an impact assessment of the development on bats.
 - Define mitigation proposals where required.
 - Assess the requirement for a protected species licence.
 - Assess the building for use by nesting birds.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 The site was surveyed in accordance with BCT best practice guidelines and surveyor experience by John Gardner, a surveyor with 44yrs field experience in searching for bats and is registered to use the Class Survey Licence WML CL20 (Level 4). The licence number is 2015-15656-CLS-CLS.
- 3.2 The building was inspected during daylight using torches, binoculars, a Ziess DTI 3/35 Gen 2 thermal scope and an endoscope where possible. All normal signs of bats were looked for including bats, dead baby bats, bat droppings, prey remains, scratching and staining of entry and exit holes.
- 3.3 The building was assessed for its degree of potential to support roosting bats including assessing the building design, construction, materials, and condition. This combined with an assessment of the location of the site and the surrounding habitat in terms of bat suitability allows an assessment to be made as to the potential of the building to support bats. Factors such as the proximity of good foraging areas (woodland, water bodies) and features that link the site to the wider surrounds such as linear features (hedgerows etc) were also considered.
- 3.4 This report sets out the findings of a daytime scoping and evening activity survey carried out to the above site on Wednesday 8th May 2024 with a second survey undertaken on 18th May 2024. The report highlights the ecological constraints and opportunities associated with the proposed works and appraises the potential impacts. Appropriate actions to ensure the protection of bats are identified and mitigation measures detailed where appropriate.

4. Survey constraints

- 4.1 There were no constraints to the survey.

5. Site Description

5.1 The site consists of a large stone, former church and is double height but single storey with large blue slates to the roof. The site is located in an urban area with moderate foraging areas close by and the site is connected to the wider landscape by a series of linear features. There are residential dwellings close by all of which provide greater roosting opportunities..

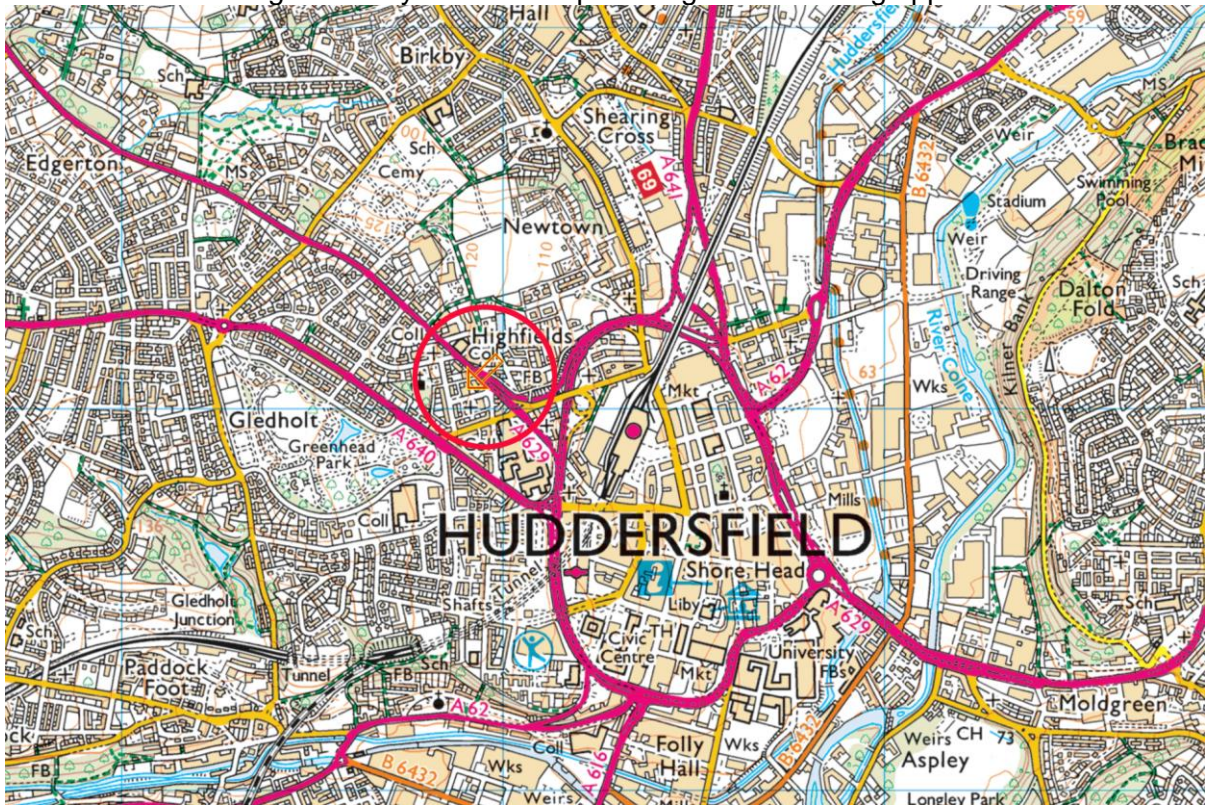


Figure 1. Site location plan



Figure 2 Aerial view of the site, surrounds and specific buildings surveyed.

6. Desk Study

Desk studies were extensively carried out by JCA (2024) and it is extremely unlikely that there have been any changes in the data since then and no new records that would relate to the site. Therefore, no new data searches are required at this time.

7. Activity surveys

7.1 Two emergence surveys were recommended in the PEA (JCA 2024) and were carried out as part of this survey. The surveys were conducted during the optimal survey period and in perfect conditions with temperatures above 15°C and no wind.

8. Survey results

Scoping survey

This scoping survey briefly looked at the building and its structure and confirmed that there were suitable roosting features as identified by JCA (2024). These included small gaps at the wall tops beneath the overhanging eaves, missing pointing around window openings and two missing slates on the west slope of the roof. The PEA clearly identifies the potential roosting features and describes the building, therefore, a full description of the building has not been replicated here. Refer to the PEA (JCA 2024) for full description. The scoping survey undertaken as part of the current survey, assesses the buildings as being of moderate roosting potential and concurs that two activity surveys are required. The gaps beneath the eaves at the wall tops were all inspected for signs of use by bats (droppings adhered to walls being the most obvious) but no evidence was found. The eaves are deep enough such that droppings stuck to the walls would remain for some time had they been present.

Activity survey

As per the PEA, two evening emergence surveys were conducted during the optimal survey period and during a spell of warm weather when bats were noted as being very active at this and other sites surveyed at the time.

The first survey was undertaken on Wednesday 8th May 2024 and commenced 30 minutes prior to sunset until 90mins after sunset (recorded at 21:07). The weather was excellent with high cloud, a gentle breeze and a temperature of 17.5°C. Two surveyors were positioned at opposite corners of the building to cover the majority of the building clearly and having line of sight to the features identified as being of potential to roosting bats. The first bat was recorded at 21:25 and was detected flying into the site from the SW corner. Given the time the bat was on the wing, this bat had emerged from a very local roost. A second bat was detected foraging along the sycamore trees on the west boundary of the site and other bats were recorded foraging to the SW of the site. In all cases, the bats recorded were common pipistrelle. No bats were recorded emerging from the survey building and bat activity ceased around 45 minutes after sunset with only sporadic passes thereafter.

The second emergence survey was carried out on 19th May 2024 and again during warm conditions that had persisted since the previous survey. The emergence was quite consistent with the previous survey with the first bat on the wing at 21:30 and was recorded flying up and down along Back Fitzwilliam Street. At 21:35 a single common pipistrelle was clearly observed entering the SW of the site and hunted along the sycamores and around the west side of the site before leaving to the NW. Good numbers of common pipistrelle were observed against the sky to the west of Back Fitzwilliam Street along Back Wentworth Street. As before, no bats were seen to emerge from the survey site. Bat numbers around the site were much the same as

previously with singletons passing through the site and feeding briefly before moving on to other foraging sites.



Figure 3. Flight pattern and main areas of bat activity

9. Interpretation and analysis

The building has moderate potential to support roosting bats, mainly along the wall tops just beneath the eaves, particularly on the west elevation. Two emergence surveys were undertaken and recorded good bat activity locally, though no bats emerged from the survey building. The bats were all recorded as common pipistrelle and numbers and emergence time (20 minutes after sunset) suggest there is a nursery roost of this species within close proximity of the survey site, most likely in the vicinity Back Wentworth Street.

The alterations to the survey building are mainly internal alterations with some localised disturbance to the roof to add Velux windows. However, the roof is not being stripped in its entirety and therefore, gaps that currently exist along the wall tops beneath the eaves will remain post development. There will be some minor loss of potential roost features, mainly around windows where mortar has fallen away, though without close inspection its difficult to determine the depth of the cracks and whether they would support bats. The two missing tiles on the east slope of the roof will also be replaced.

The survey site has limited foraging potential provided mainly by sycamores along the east boundary. If these trees remain standing, there will be no loss of foraging or fragmentation of habitat.

10. Impact assessment

No bats were recorded emerging from the survey site and, although the nearest roost is probably very close by, the alterations proposed are localised and mainly internal and therefore, the development will have no effect on other roosts in the area. Some of the potential roosting features will remain post development.

11. Mitigation and Compensation

The building offers moderate roosting potential though no bats were seen to emerge from the building. Consequently, there is no requirement for a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) and the better potential roosting features will be retained post development but the addition of specific roosting features on the south elevation will maintain the site's current levels of support for biodiversity.

Timings

- There are no constraints with regards to bats.

Compensation

- Permanent roosting features should be included on the south elevation.

12. Conclusion

Following a PEA of the site (JCA 2024) which assessed the building as being of moderate importance to bats and prescribing two activity surveys, an updated scoping survey and two emergence surveys was carried out on 8th and 19th May 2024. The survey established that the building has moderate potential to support bats but no bats were recorded using the building though common pipistrelle are present in the area. It is likely that there is a nursery roost of common pipistrelle close by on Back Wentworth Street but the proposed alterations to Waverley Church are unlikely to have any impact on other bat roosts. The buildings are not considered essential to species survival and no further survey effort is required.