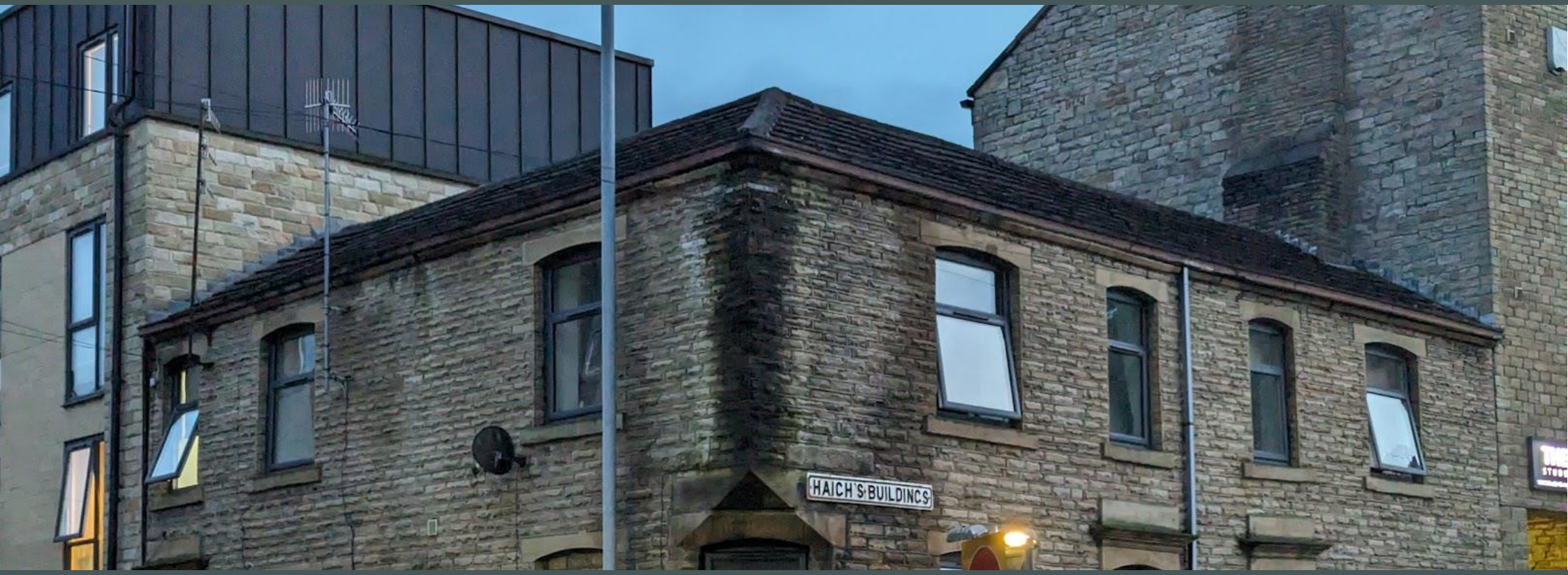
Haich's Buildings, Firth Street, Huddersfield



Bat Emergence Survey Report

Shound Properties Ltd

16/05/2024

ER-7104-02

Report reference	**ER-7104-02 - Bat Emergence Survey Report**
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Date	16/05/2024
Report duration	In accordance with CIEEM (2019), unless otherwise stated the findings of this report remain valid for a period of 18 months. After this period advice should be sought on the scope of any updating work required.

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Summary Statement

Survey has confirmed the likely absence of roosting at Haich's Buildings, Firth Street, Huddersfield.

The proposals are unlikely to impact on bats or their roosts.

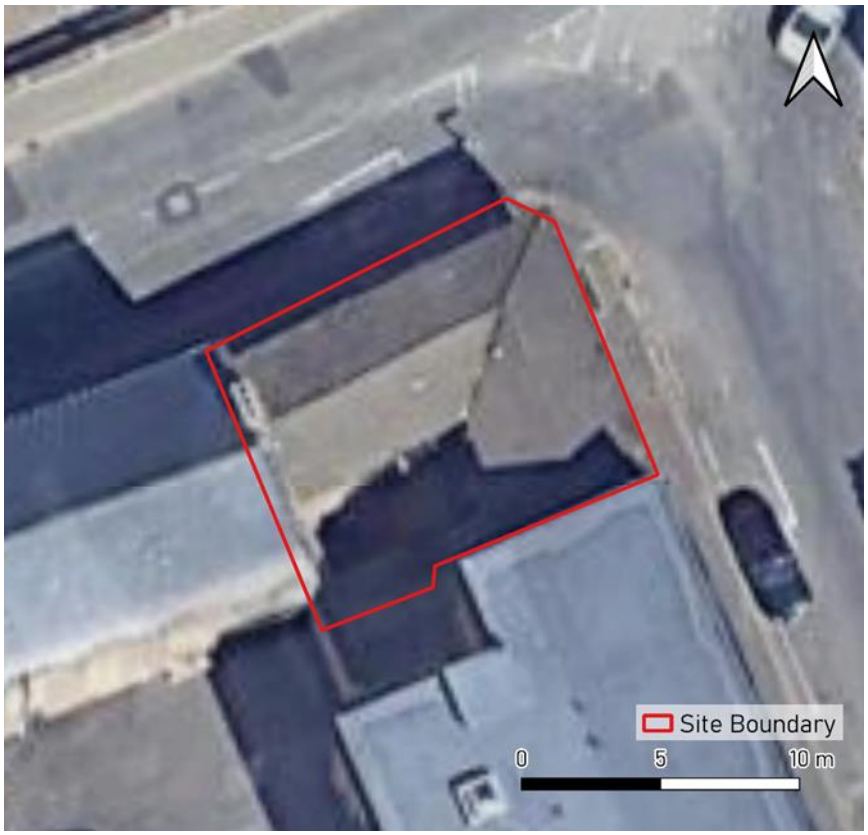
No further survey is recommended.

Introduction

1. Subsequent to recommendations set out in Brooks Ecological's Bat Roost Suitability report (ER-7104-01, November 2023), Brooks Ecological was commissioned to carry out a Bat Emergence Survey at Haich's Buildings, Firth Street, Huddersfield HD1 3BA.

2. Survey was required of a single building, which was assessed as providing features with low bat roost suitability. In accordance with current best practice guidelines, buildings of low suitability need a single evening emergence or dawn re-entry survey in order to confirm the presence or likely absence of roosting bats.

Figure 1 The surveyed building – red line.



Method

3. Brooks Ecological specialises 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 (2023). 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, a single visit with a team of two surveyors was deemed necessary to fully evaluate the potential use of the Site for roosting.

5. Survey was carried out with surveyors positioned around the building to cover all aspects where bats could potentially emerge or return, and to establish activity levels around the Site.

6. The surveyors, using a heterodyne detector, an automated Anabat Scout bat detector, and a T2Pro thermal monocular, 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
02/05/2024	Emergence	12/11°C	Dry. 70% humidity. 100% thin cloud cover. Light air (B1).

7. Survey was directed by Sam Kitching BSc (Hons) MCIEEM. Sam has over 10 years' experience undertaking bat surveys in a professional capacity and is registered to use the Bat Survey Class Licence (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

Emergence – 2nd May 2024 (sunset 20:40)

8. Surveyors were positioned so as to cover all features with bat roost suitability.
9. Overall, bat activity was considered to be very low, with only two observations being made of solitary common pipistrelles.
10. The first, at 20:11, was a common pipistrelle observed commuting east to west. This was not heard, but seen on thermal imaging (Figure 2).
11. The second and final was at 21:13, when a common pipistrelle was observed commuting west to east.
12. No further observations of bats were made throughout the remainder of the survey.
13. No roosts were identified, or suspected, within the surveyed building.

Figure 2 Commuting bat (orange circle).

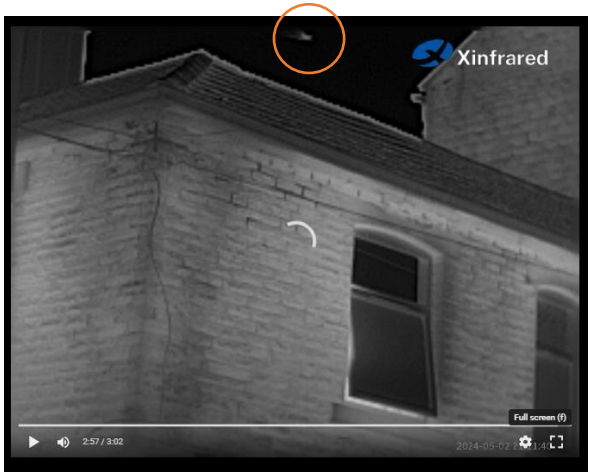
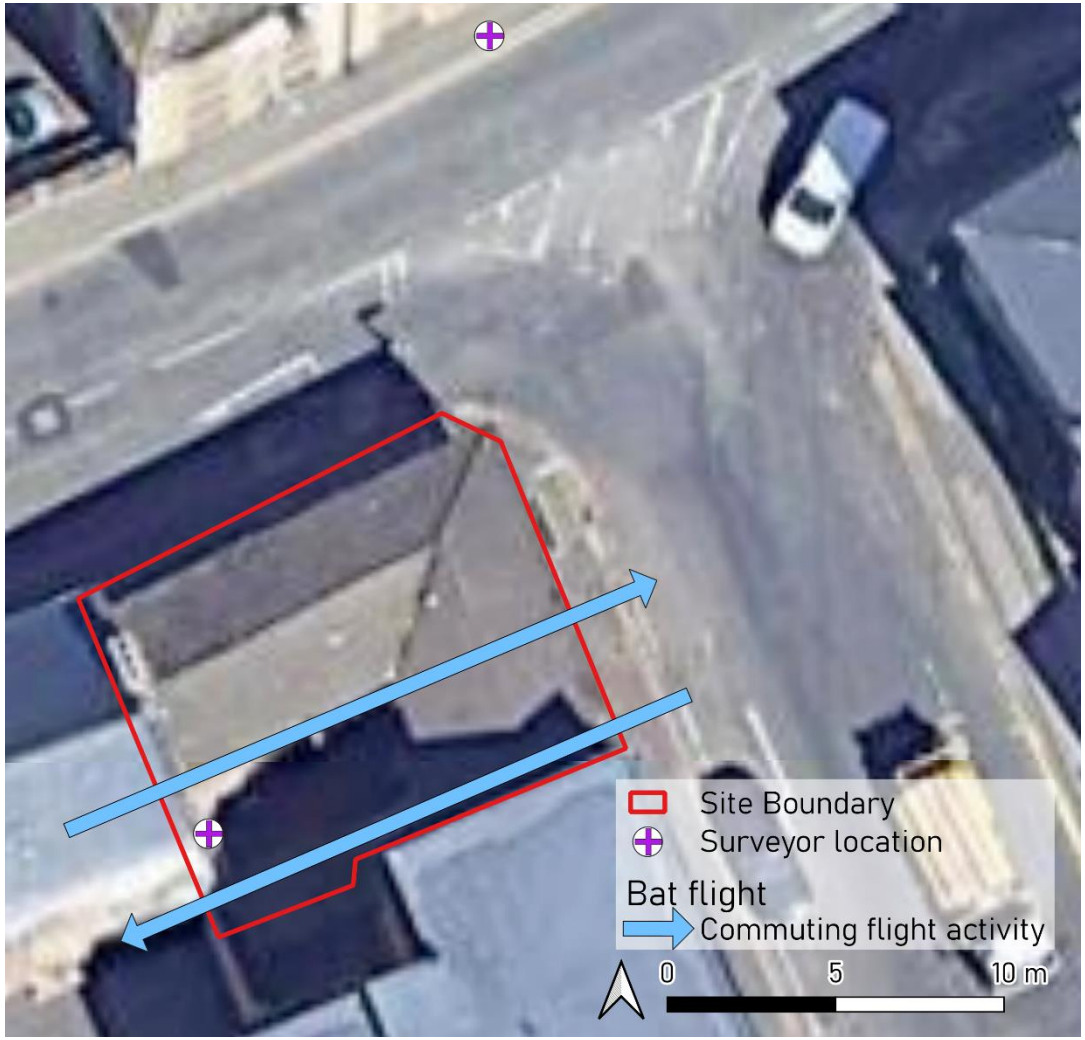


Figure 3 Summary of bat activity observed during emergence survey.



Evaluation & Conclusion

14. Survey has demonstrated the likely absence of roosting within the surveyed building and as such, the proposed works present little risk of impacting upon bats or their roosts.

Standard Precaution

15. Although no evidence of roosting has been found and the 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.

16. 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 licenced ecologist consulted, and their advice followed.

Enhancement

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

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