

Sycamore Grange,
Golcar, HD3 4ST

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

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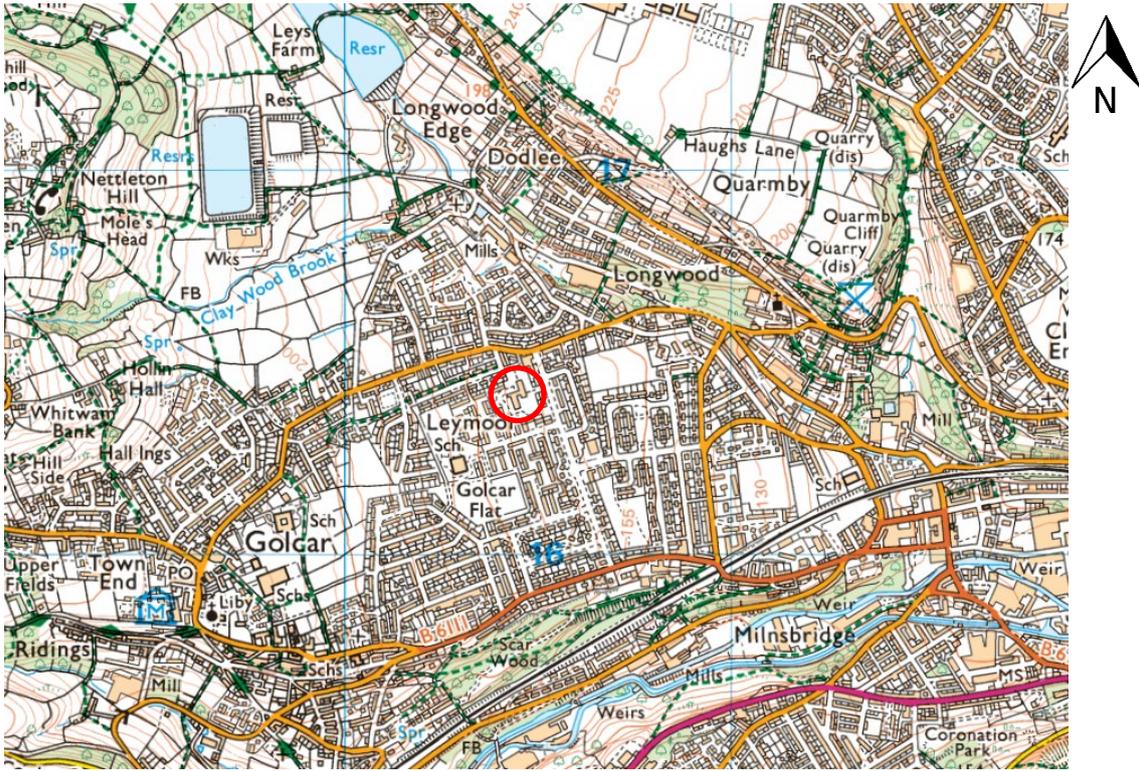
1 Introduction

- 1.1.1.0 This report presents the results of an Ecology and Bat Scoping Survey undertaken at Sycamore Grange, Golcar, Huddersfield, HD3 4ST. The survey has been completed to provide ecology and protected species information in relation to planned works at the building.
- 1.1.1.1 The surveyed property is located at OS grid reference SE 1045 1642 and comprises a two-storey building. The site is located in the centre of Golcar; approximately 3.7 km west of the town centre of Huddersfield, and approximately 800 metre north of the River Colne.
- 1.1.1.2 The aim of the survey was to determine the ecological status of the site including bats and nesting birds and to provide recommendations for mitigation and/or further work if required in relation to planned works at the building.
- 1.1.1.3 An Ecology and Bat Scoping Survey was undertaken on 22nd January 2024 by Morgane Accault ACIEEM (Natural England Class Licence Registration No. 2022-11070- CL17 Survey Level 1) and Alice Rowe. This involved assessing the building in terms of its potential to be used by bats and nesting birds via an external inspection. The building was subject to searches for bats and evidence of bats and nesting birds. The results of the daytime survey have been used to classify the building in terms of its potential to support bats and nesting birds.

Figure 1. Site Location (aerial imagery dated 2021)



Figure 2. Site Location



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2 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1.1 West Yorkshire Bat Group (WYBG) was contacted for searches of previous bat records within a 2 km radius of the site centre.

2.1.1.2 In addition, the following data sources were searched for European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licences and habitat features of relevance to the assessment such as nearby woodland:

- Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC).
- Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 mapping.
- Aerial imagery (dated 2021).

2.2 Personnel

2.2.1.1 The Bat Scoping Survey was undertaken by Morgane Accault¹ ACIEEM and Alice Rowe.

2.3 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

2.3.1.1 The building was subject to a detailed external inspection for signs of bats and nesting birds on 22nd January 2024. This involved searching the exterior of the building for signs of bats and nesting birds such as droppings and for potential bat roost locations and bird nest sites. The building was assessed in terms of its potential to support bat roosts using the following categories:

- Negligible potential.
- Low potential.
- Moderate potential.
- High potential.
- Confirmed roost.

2.4 Survey Comments

2.4.1.1 The survey was undertaken outside the main bat survey season of May to August/September inclusive; at this time of year evidence of bats such as droppings may be removed from external areas by the actions of wind and precipitation. Externally, all parts of the building were accessed at ground level. Due to health & safety considerations (related to asbestos), it was not possible to undertake any internal inspections of the building. Given that there are no enclosed loft spaces, the lack of internal inspection is not considered to be a significant constraint.

¹ Natural England Class Licence Registration No. 2022-11070- CL17 Survey Level 1.

3 Results

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1.1 WYBG provided 17 previous bat records within the search area (see Appendix 3) comprising the following species: Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Pipistrelle Bat species (*Pipistrellus*), Natterer's Bat (*Myotis nattereri*) and Vesper Bat species (*Vespertilionidae*).

3.1.1.2 There are two records within 600 metres of the site:

- One record of a grounded Vesper bat at 42 Leymoor Road, Longwood, Huddersfield, Kirklees (grid ref. SE10681661) approximately 295 metres north-east of the site, dated 30/06/2005.
- One record of a possible roost of Vesper bats at Broomfield House, Broomroyd, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield (grid ref. SE108165) approximately 350 metres east of the site, dated 03/12/1998.

3.2 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Survey

3.2.1 Summary of Bat Evidence

3.2.1.1 No evidence of bats was observed during the survey.

3.2.2 Overview of Surrounding Habitats

3.2.2.1 The site is located at approximately 174 metres above sea level, in the centre of Golcar; approximately 3.7 km west of the town centre of Huddersfield, and approximately 800 metres north of the River Colne.

3.2.2.2 The site is located within a residential area. The site is bordered by grounds of mown amenity grassland with residential properties and small gardens to all sides. Extensive areas of woodland railway and main watercourses lie >500 metres south of the site.

3.2.2.3 Background disturbance levels appear to be low to moderate in the area; the site is surrounded by residential properties and away from main roads. The River Colne and woodlands further south of the site present some potential habitat connectivity features for bats. Overall, the immediate surrounding area provides low to moderate quality habitat for bats and low to moderate levels of background disturbance.

3.2.3 Building Description

3.2.3.1 See photos at Appendix 2. The surveyed building is a two-storey building from the 1970s. The building is of brick construction and the roof flat. The building extends to approximately 75 metres long at its longest axis. The building comprises two main parts each extending to approximately 44 x 15 metres and connecting via a third part extending to approximately 10 x 9 metres.

3.2.3.2 The external brickwork appears to be in good condition with no potential bat roost features noted within the brickwork.

3.2.3.3 The roof is flat with roofing material overlapping the top part of the brick walls. All along the building several gaps between the roofing material and walls are present, providing potential bat roost features. Aside from the roof verges, no other potential bat roost features were identified.

3.2.3.4 In conclusion, potential bat roost features were identified at multiple locations around the building. Due to the surrounding habitat of low to moderate quality for bats and the low to moderate levels of disturbance together with the nature of the potential bat roost features, it is concluded that the building has low bat roost potential.

3.3 ***Nesting Birds***

- 3.3.1.0 No bird nests were observed during the survey. Based on the nature of the building and its location, it is considered that there is low potential for birds to nest at the building, e.g. on the flat roof and/or in the gaps between roof verges and walls. Birds could also nest in shrubs within the site.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 *Bats*

4.1.1.1 No evidence of bats was observed during the survey and the WYBG data search did not identify any bat records within 250 metres of the site. Based on the low to moderate background disturbance levels, low to moderate quality habitat for bats and the presence of several potential bat roost features behind the roof verge throughout the building, it is concluded that the building has low bat roost potential.

Recommendations

4.1.1.2 Due to the potential presence of bat roosts, prior to any works affecting the building at Sycamore Grange, it is recommended that a minimum of one dusk emergence bat survey should be undertaken during the optimal survey period of May-August. If a bat roost is found to be present, it may be necessary to undertake further survey work and to provide mitigation measures.

4.1.1.3 Depending on the results of the recommended surveys, it may be necessary to provide mitigation measures for bats (potentially including permanent provision of a 'bat loft' amongst other measures) and to obtain a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence before development works commence.

4.1.1.4 An EPSM licence is required to allow an activity to occur that would otherwise be classed as unlawful i.e., damage/destruction and/or disturbance of a bat roost. Natural England can issue bat EPSM licences for this purpose on application and presentation of evidence-based mitigation. Before issuing a licence, Natural England will need to be satisfied that the following '3 tests' are met (this will include measures to minimise impacts on bats through design / mitigation / timings etc.):

- That the action is for the purpose of preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature;
- That there is no satisfactory alternative; and
- That the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

4.2 *Nesting Birds*

4.2.1.1 No bird nests were observed during the survey. Based on the nature of the building and its location, it is considered that there is low potential for birds to nest at the building, e.g. on the flat roof and/or in the gaps between roof verges and walls. Birds could also nest in shrubs within the site.

Recommendations

4.2.1.2 Any work affecting potential bird nesting sites (e.g. roof stripping / demolition) during the main bird nesting period of 1st March to 31st August must be mindful of the potential presence of active bird nests (all bird species). In the event that an active bird nest is found during the work, it must be retained in situ undisturbed until the nest is no longer in active use. A nest is classed as active when it contains eggs or chicks and when it is being built.

Appendix 1. Legislation and Conservation Context

Bats

Bats are fully protected through The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 as European Protected Species (EPS). They also receive some protection through inclusion in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

It is an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat. It is an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat. It is an offence to deliberately disturb a bat; in particular any disturbance which is likely (a) to impair their ability - (i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or (ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or (b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is also an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or obstruct access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection.

The 'appropriate authority' (Natural England in England) has powers to issue licences for various purposes including - (a) scientific or educational purposes... and (e) preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment. The appropriate authority shall not grant a licence under this regulation unless they are satisfied - (a) that there is no satisfactory alternative, and (b) that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. It is an offence for any person authorised by virtue of a licence to which this paragraph applies to contravene or fail to comply with any condition which the licence requires him to comply with.

Nesting Birds

All wild birds in the UK are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or its eggs. Bird species listed in Schedule 1 of the 1981 Act, e.g. barn owl, receive further protection which makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb these species while building a nest or in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or to disturb dependent young of such a bird.

Appendix 2. Photographs

Photo 1. Looking south-east towards the building



Photo 2. Looking north-east towards the building



Photo 3. Looking south towards the building



Photo 4. Looking east towards the northern part of the building



Photo 5. Looking south towards the north elevation



Photo 6. Looking south-west from north-east corner of the building



Photo 7. Looking north-west



Photo 8. Eastern entrance to the building



Photo 9. Close-up example of gaps between roofing material and walls, above the eastern entrance



Photo 10. Looking north from the yard on the south-eastern end of the building



Photo 11. Close-up example of gaps between roofing materials and walls, on the south-western end of the building

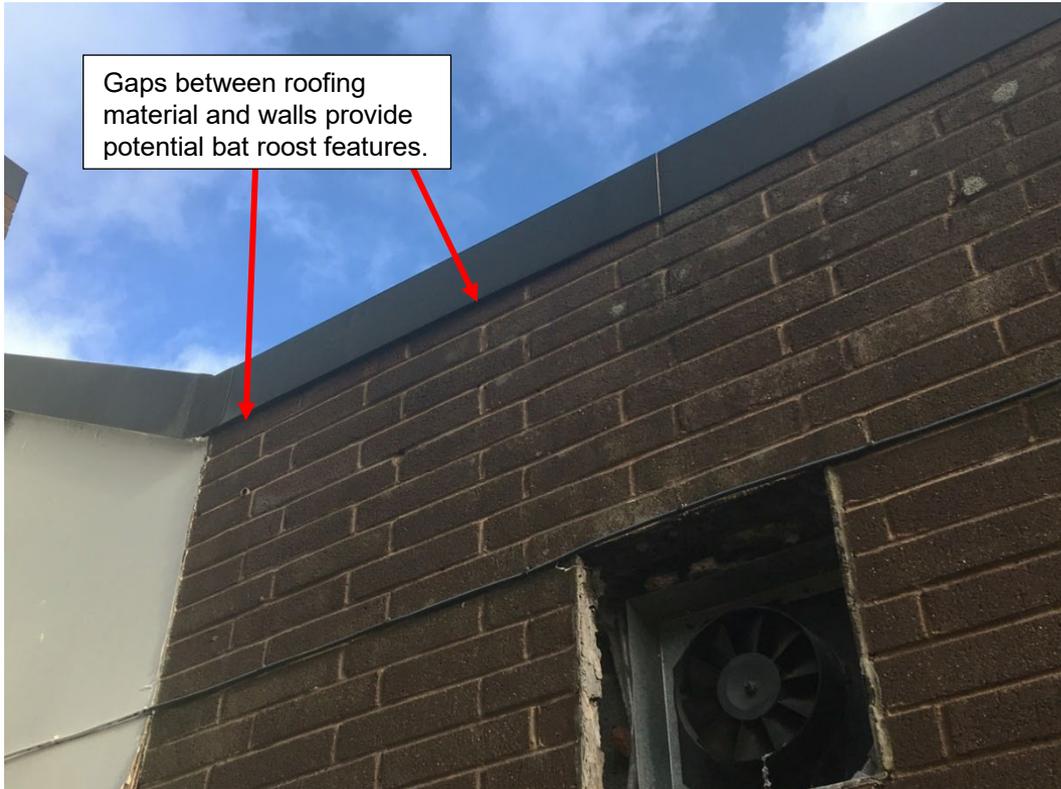


Photo 12. Looking north from south-west end of the building



Appendix 3. Information provided by WYBG

Common Name	Site	Grid Ref	Abundance	Comment
Natterer's Bat	Birch Park	SE108156	1 Count of Adult	field record
Pipistrellus	99 Lamb Hall Rd, Longwood, HD3 3TH	SE0985717729	21-50 Count of Adult	Roost (maternity)
Pipistrellus	Kirklees, 70 Lamb Hall Road, Longwood, Huddersfield HD3 3TG	SE1015917459		Roost
Common Pipistrelle	Lowestwood Lane	SE095147	51-100 Count of Adult	Roost (maternity)
Common Pipistrelle	Lamb Hall Road	SE104172	21-50 Count of Adult	Roost (maternity)
Common Pipistrelle	8 Oak Drive	SE0958015074	unknown Count of Adult	Roost (possible)
Common Pipistrelle	Hoyle Ing Dyeworks, Linthwaite, Huddersfield	SE097145	1 Count of Adult	aural bat detector
Pipistrelle Bat species	67 Warneford Road, Cowlersley, Huddersfield	SE1120615322		Roost (excluded)
Pipistrelle Bat species	Reinwood Junior School, Oakes, Huddersfield	SE1185917097	1 Count of Adult	Casualty
Vesper Bat species	82 Lamb Hall Rd, Longwood, HD3 3TJ	SE1003117597		Roost (possible)
Vesper Bat species	101 Lowestwood La, Golcar	SE0959115118	Not Recorded Range	Roost (possible)
Vesper Bat species	39 Kirkwood Dr, Lindley, HD3 3WH	SE1163017910		Roost (possible)
Vesper Bat species	Broomfield House, Broomroyd, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield	SE108165		Roost (possible)
Vesper Bat species	British Legion, Golcar	SE1037015800	Abundance not record Count	Roost (maternity)
Vesper Bat species	15 Kirkwood Green, Lindley, Kirklees	SE1164817846	1 Count of Adult	Roost
Vesper Bat species	42 Leymoor Road, Longwood, Huddersfield, Kirklees	SE10681661	1 Count of Juvenile	Grounded
Vesper Bat species	70 Lamb Hall Road, Longwood, Huddersfield	SE1015917458		Roost (excluded)