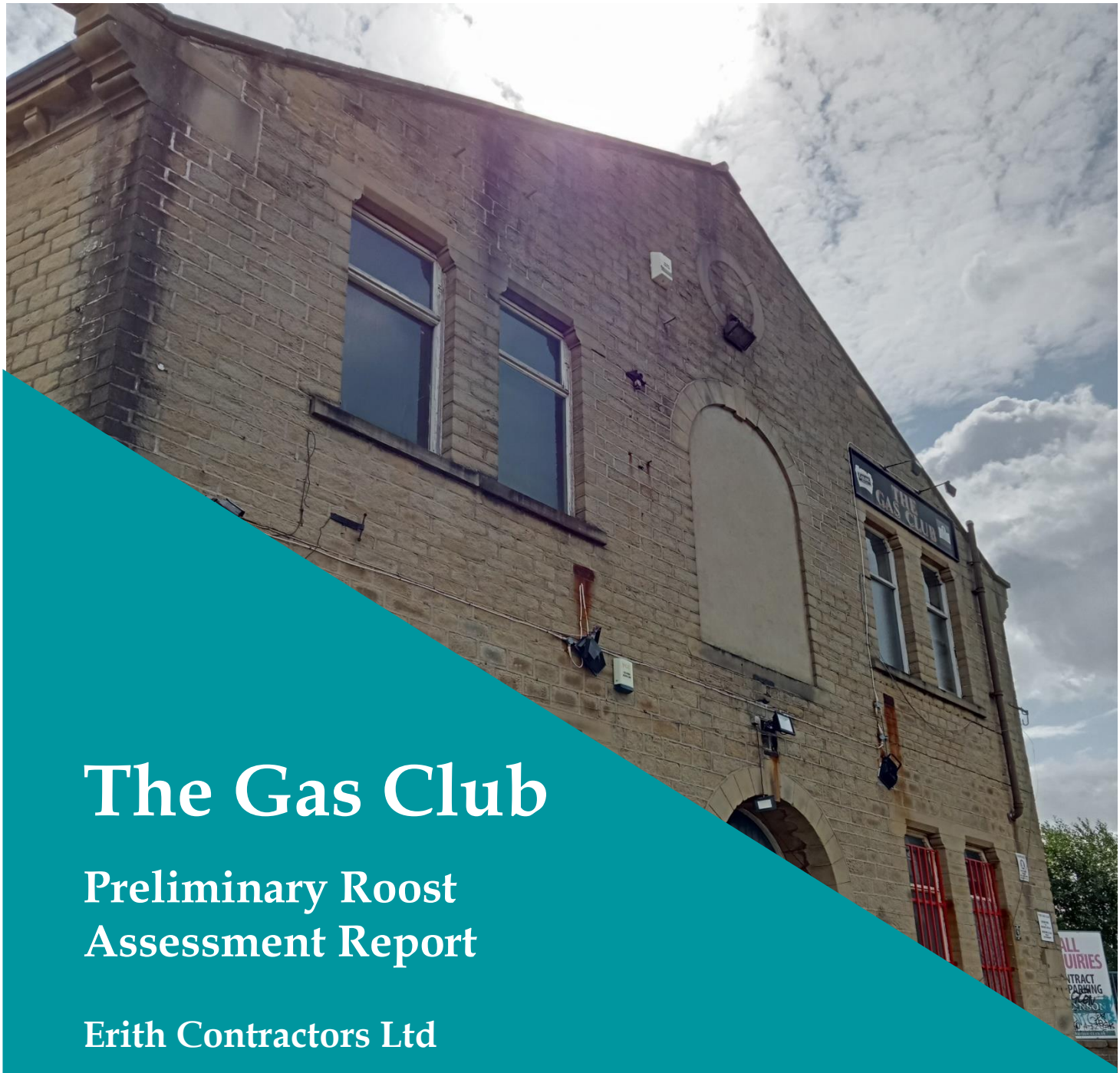

The Gas Club

Preliminary Roost Assessment Report

Erith Contractors Ltd

17th July 2023

Seeker Ecology Ltd written on behalf of Iceni Ecology Ltd

Project	Author	Status	Date
The Gas Club 23 0035	Steph Cooling-Green BSc (Hons) ACIEEM Bat Licence: 2016-23330-CLS-CLS & 2016-23331-CLS-CLS (Level 3 & 4). Dormouse Licence: 2015-13809-CLS-CLS. Great Crested Newt Licence: 2020-50074-CLS-CLS (Level 2). Smooth snake and sand lizard: 2020 – 50085-SCI-SCI	Final V1.0	July 2023
	Reviewer		**Date**
	Drusilla Hall BSc (Hons) MCIEEM CEnv Bat Licence: 2015-10742-CLS-CLS (Level 2). Dormouse Licence: 2016-20740-CLS-CLS. Great Crested Newt Licence: 2015-18908-CLS-CLS (Level 2).		July 2023

Introduction

1.2 Background

Seeker Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Iceni Ecology Ltd on behalf of Erith to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of a disused pub/working club, known as 'The Gas Club' (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'), located along Gasworks Street, Hillhouse, Huddersfield, approximate central Ordinance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR): SE 14946 17270.

1.3 Scope of Works

It is understood that the building 'The Gas Club' situated within the Site, is due for demolition and as such requires a Preliminary Roost Assessment, to establish the suitability of the building for roosting bat species.

This report has been prepared in accordance with industry standard practice[1] and best practice guidelines for bats[2].

2. Relevant Ecological Legislation

Table 1 *Summary of Wildlife Legislation*

Species	Legislation	Offences
Bats European protected species	Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	Deliberately[3] capture, injure or kill a bat; deliberate disturbance[4] of bats; or damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by a bat. [The protection of bat roosts is considered to apply regardless of whether bats are present.]
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.9	Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection or disturb[5] a bat in such a place.

1 IEA (1995). Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment. E & F Spon, London

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

3 Deliberate capture or killing is taken to include "accepting the possibility" of such capture or killing

4 Deliberate disturbance of animals includes 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 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.

5 Lower levels of disturbance not covered by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 remain an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 although a defence is available where such actions are the incidental result of a lawful activity that could not reasonably be avoided.

3. Methodology

3.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the building was conducted on the 13th of July 2023 undertaken by experienced ecologists from Seeker Ecology Ltd who hold a Natural England Bat Class License WML CL19 & 20 (Bat Survey Level 3 & 4) to determine its potential to support suitable features for roosting bat species, these features are hereafter referred to as "Potential Roosting Features (PRF)". The field survey was conducted in line with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) survey guidelines**Error! Bookmark not defined.**.

The building was examined from the ground using close focusing binoculars, and high-powered torches, to identify potential access/egress points and features with potential to support roosting bat species, these PRF's include features such as lifted tiles, missing mortar, open windows/grills and open soffits etc. The building was also checked for any signs of bats such as droppings, scratch marks, staining and feeding remains by an internal inspection of all rooms, basements and converted loft spaces.

Based on this internal and external inspection, the building was classified using the following the classification of; negligible, low, moderate, high potential to support roosting bats, based upon the current Guidelines (Collins 2016)[2].

3.3 Limitations

There were no limitations to the survey and all available spaces were inspected and accessible at the time of the survey.

4. Results

4.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment

Table 2 *Summary Preliminary Roost Assessment*

Structure number	Structure Type/Description	Photos	Bat Suitability
The Gas Club	A large two-story stone building with a pitched slate tiled roof, wooden window frames and wooden fascia's, with an adjoining large single-story building, a basement level is present across the entire building. The building supports features suitable to support roosting bats such as; lifted and missing tiles, open grilled windows, gaps behind boarded windows, broken windows and missing mortar within the brickwork please see Appendix A for full details.	 	**Moderate**

4.2 Hibernation Suitability

The building has suitability to support hibernating bat species between the lifted tiles and the timber roof boarding and within the basement where access is permitted through the broken windows.

5. Discussion and Recommendations

The Gas Club has been identified to support **Moderate** suitability to support roosting bats.

Following best practice guidelines [2] it is recommended that buildings/structures, with moderate suitability which could be directly and/or indirectly impacted (lost/disturbed etc.) by proposed development, a series of presence/absence surveys should be conducted, to determine if roosting bats are occupying the features, and if so what type of roost is present.

Table 3 *Summary of the Survey Guidelines*

Building	Suitability	Survey visits	Survey period/season
The Gas Club	Moderate	Two separate survey visits. One dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey*	May to September with at least one of the surveys between May and August
*unless appropriate infra-red or thermal visual aids are utilised on all survey visits.			

If roosting bats are encountered, further surveys such as Roost Characterisation Surveys and Hibernation surveys may be required, to determine the species, size and type of roost. This information would be needed for planning and subsequently, should planning be granted, an application for a European Protected Species Mitigation License (EPSML) from Natural England to permit the destruction/modification of a roost in advance of the proposed demolition works.

Appendix A Preliminary Suitability Assessment

Facing	Feature Description	Photos	Bat Suitability
All sides	Lifted roof tiles and missing slate tiles across all faces of the building		**Moderate**
	Gaps in chimney coping stones		
Eastern	Open wooden grills on the eastern side of the building leading to internal access of single-story building section		
	Gap in mortar along the eastern gable end approx. 20cm in length possible cavity.		
	Circular window providing access into two story building.		
	Missing gable coping edging stones		
North	Gaps behind steel and wooden boards fitted over the windows on the ground floor		
	2.5cm gap under window stone sill above the doorway		
	Smashed windows leading into the basement		
Western	Gaps under the window lintels approx. 2cm		
	Gap between the western gable coping edging		
	Gap in the mortar		
Southern	Open grill in window		
	Boarded wooden windows with cavities behind and around edges		
	Smashed lower window		
	Shallow 3cm gap in masonry coping stone		

Facing	Feature Description	Photos	Bat Suitability
Single story internal	Gap between window and brickwork on ground floor Wattle and daub visible with suitable ledges and cavities on the elevated platforms Shallow cavities within the breeze block with missing mortar Partial wooden panelled and roof lining with cavities present and slipped boards. Building has not been used in some time, no evidence encountered, large open room with elevated platforms with wattle and daub panelling in dis-repair, access into the building from the grilled wooden windows.		
Basement internal	Broken lower-level windows leading to the interior of the building. Building temperature stable but damp, interior has not been used in some time, no evidence encountered.		