Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment	
For:	Healey Islamic Trust
Site:	Building Complex, Healey Lane Mills, Healey Lane, Batley, WF17 7SH
Report Date:	11th May 2023
Report Reference:	SQ-1040

Surveying Ecologists:
Sam Toon BSc (hons)
Natural England Bat Licence: 2018-35446-CLS-CLS

Client:	Healey Islamic Trust
Site Name:	Building Complex, Healey Lane Mills, Healey Lane, Batley, WF17 7SH
Grid Reference:	SE 23325 24038
Report:	Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment
Date of survey:	12th April 2023
Surveyed by:	Sam Toon BSc (hons) Natural England Bat Licence Bat Survey Class: 2018-35446-CLS-CLS

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2	n/a	FINAL	11th May 2023	Sam Toon BSc (hons), Estrada Ecology Ltd	Natasha Estrada BSc(hons), MRes, MCIEEM, Estrada Ecology Ltd

The contents of this report have been produced with due consideration of current best practice guidance, and in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct and the Bat Conservation Trust Bat, Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd Edition).

This report should not be submitted as part of a planning application without any accompanying species-specific reports which may have been recommended herein.

Data within this report is valid for a maximum of eighteen months from the date of the survey. After this period, an updated site visit will be required to determine a new ecological baseline.

Summary

The survey was commissioned to assess the Building Complex, Healey Lane Mills, Healey Lane, Batley, WF17 7SH for its potential to support features which could be utilised by bats for roosting, and / or as a place of shelter. Furthermore, a survey for evidence of use of the structure by breeding birds was undertaken.

During the daytime inspection, no field sign evidence synonymous with bats was recorded. The site recorded limited suitable features which bats could utilise for roosting or as a place of shelter.

For the purposes of assessment when surveyed by a licensed bat ecologist with due consideration to Collins 2016, the building has been categorised as containing low roost suitability. Further survey effort is recommended at this juncture in the form of a single bat activity survey, to ascertain presence/ likely absence.

No evidence of breeding birds was recorded at the time of survey.

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1 Introduction and Background to the Site

1.1 A preliminary bat roost assessment is required for the site to inform the proposed renovation of the Building Complex, Healey Lane Mills, Healey Lane, Batley, WF17 7SH. The survey was commissioned to assess the structure for its ecological value, and to identify any features which bats could utilise as a potential roost, or place of shelter. Furthermore, an assessment of the buildings suitability to support breeding birds was undertaken.

1.2 The complex is located within the area of Batley, West Yorkshire. The central OS grid reference being recorded as SE 23325 24038.

1.3 The site comprises of industrial units and residential flats. The buildings are housed on an immediate plot of hardstanding offering no intrinsic ecological value. The site contains timed security lighting to illuminate the area for security purposes. A small section of bramble scrub is also present to the north of the site.

1.4 The immediate landscape is dominated by buildings and road networks with high levels of artificial light. Urban green space is limited to small compartments of deciduous woodland and amenity grassland, the closest of which is one sixty-five metres southeast.

1.5 Under current proposals, it is understood that the existing site is to be redeveloped, subject to the necessary consents.

1.6 An assessment for historical signs of breeding birds was undertaken along with an assessment of the building's capability of supporting breeding birds.

Figure 1: The survey site within its wider location.

Google Earth

2 Protected Species Legislation

2.1 All species of bat and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are protected under Regulation 41 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence for anyone intentionally: to kill, injure or handle a bat; to possess a bat (whether live or dead); to disturb a roosting bat; or sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not.

2.2 Relevant legislation includes the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which states that all birds, their nests, and eggs are protected by law. Special considerations of Schedule 1 birds and European protected species should be made. Relevant legislation includes the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Species Amendment (EU Exit) Regulations which came into force on 31 December 2020.

2.3 Under the National Planning Policy Framework 2019, the presence of any protected species is a material planning consideration. The Framework states that impacts arising from development proposals must be avoided where

possible or adequately mitigated / compensated for, and that opportunities for ecological enhancement should be sought.

2.4 Under certain circumstances a licence may be granted by Natural England to permit activities that would otherwise constitute an offence. In relation to development, a scheme must have full planning permission before a licence application can be made.

3 Survey and Site Assessment

3.1 Existing information on bats, *(all species)* at the survey site

3.1.1 Bat records from West Yorkshire Ecological Services were commissioned for a 2 km radius from grid.

3.1.2 Consultation with Magic Map (www.magic.defra.gov.uk) was undertaken to ascertain any European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSML) granted in respect of bats within a 1 km radius from grid. No granted licences were returned within a 1km radius from central grid.

3.1.3 Further inspection, using colour 1:25,000 OS base maps (www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk), MAGIC (www.magic.defra.gov.uk), aerial photographs from Google Earth (www.maps.google.co.uk), was also undertaken to provide additional context and identify any features of potential importance for nature conservation in the wider countryside.

3.2 Assessment of site and surrounding habitats

3.2.1 The site is located within the town of Batley, West Yorkshire. Residential and commercial properties dominate the wider landscape. Green space is limited to occasional small compartments of deciduous woodland and grassland within the wider landscape.

3.2.2 The site and the wider landscape, synonymous with its town centre location is subject to high levels of artificial lighting.

3.3 **The Survey Site:** Healey Lane Building Complex

3.3.1 The site at Healey Lane comprises of a building complex, which facilitates small industrial and commercial businesses as well as several residential flats. The buildings comprise of red brick walls with the majority of the buildings recording slate and asbestos roofing material. A small section of the complex

has recently undergone maintenance on the roof and recorded metal roofing.

3.3.2 The walls recorded multiple cracks within the brickwork and missing mortar, however, the majority of the damage was deemed to be superficial, providing no suitability for bats to utilise. Suitable features were present, within the lintels and within the missing mortar to the eave of the roof in which bats could utilise.

3.3.3 The roof of the single storey section of the complex to the north, recorded slate tiles. The tiles were considered to be in a poor condition, with multiple tiles recorded as lifted and cracked in which, bats could potentially access for roosting purposes.

3.3.4 The windows on the eastern elevation to the complex, were mostly recorded as broken or missing. All windows had been boarded up to prevent access into the internals of the complex.

3.3.5 The northern elevation of the complex, recorded a parapet with flat concrete slabs running horizontally. A small section of the slabs were recorded as lifted, which were deemed suitable to provide roosting opportunities for bats to utilise.

3.3.6 The internals to the complex were surveyed and recorded no field sign evidence of bats within any section. The roof void was visible with sections which presented possible breathable membrane on the inside to the roof, which would be a limiting factor for bat species due to their potentially lethal nature as bats are known to get tangled within the membrane.

3.3.7 For the purpose of this report, when assessed by a licenced bat ecologist, the building complex at Healey Lane was categorised as having low potential in relation to roosting bats. Further survey effort is therefore required to ascertain presence/ likely absence of use by bats.

3.3.8 No evidence of active of historical nesting was recorded within the internals or around the external features of the complex.

Figure 2: Building Complex, Healey Lane

4 Survey Methodology

4.1 Daytime survey (all structures)

4.1.1 An external examination was conducted to identify potential roost sites and access points and any signs of actual occupation such as scratch marks, droppings, smudge marks, discarded moth/butterfly wings and urine staining etc.

Table 1: Weather conditions throughout the survey

Date of Survey	Temperature °C	Weather Conditions
12th April 2023	8	Wind speed 8 MPH N. Visibility very good. Light rain

4.1.2 Buildings and the quality of on-site habitats were categorised based on the classification criteria in 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists' (Collins, 2016). Classification criteria is presented below:

- **Negligible:** a structure or tree with features unlikely to be used by roosting bats. Habitats on site unlikely to be used by foraging or commuting bats.
- **Low:** a structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that may be utilised by opportunistic bats but are not suitable for use on a regular basis or by a large number of bats. Habitat could be used by a small number of foraging or commuting bats.
- **Moderate:** a structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that may be utilised on a regular basis but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status. Continuous habitat that provides good connectivity within the wider landscape and offers foraging opportunities.
- **High:** a structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites suitable for use by a larger number of bats on a regular basis and for longer periods of time. Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected within the wider landscape and offers high-quality foraging habitat. The site is close to and connected to known roosts.

4.2 Personnel

4.2.1 The survey was led by bat ecologist Sam Toon (Natural England Bat Licence 2018-35446-CLS-CLS): Qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (GradCIEEM); a licenced bat ecologist for over four years and experienced in protected species surveying for eight years.

4.3 Limitations

4.3.1 The survey was conducted on 12th April 2023. This is a viable period to conduct preliminary roost assessments of buildings of this type but outside of the recognised bat activity season.

4.3.2 An absence of species records from within the data search results, or an absence of field signs of fauna during the habitat survey, does not provide confirmation that a species is absent from within the site or the search area.

5 Survey Results

5.1 Desktop study

5.1.1 Biological records returned from West Yorkshire Ecological Services returned no bat records for a 2Km radius from grid. No site-specific records were returned.

5.1.2 Consultation with Magic Map (www.magic.defra.gov.uk) recorded one granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSML) in respect of bats within a 2 km radius from grid.

Table 2: Granted Mitigation Licenses in respect of bats within a 2km radius.

Date	Licence reference	Species	Purpose	Distance and orientation from grid
2011-2012	EPSM2011-3454	Common Pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	1.14km south

5.2 Inspection survey

5.2.1 No field sign evidence synonymous with bats was recorded during the survey. No evidence of breeding birds was recorded at the time of survey.

5.2.2 The building was recorded as being in good structural condition however, multiple features were present within the structure, varying from superficial to suitable in relation to bats.

5.2.3 Based on guidance outlined in Collins et al 2016, the building has been classified as having low roost suitability. Further survey effort is therefore deemed to be required to ascertain presence likely absence, in the form of a single activity survey.

5.2.4 No evidence of current or historical breeding birds was recorded during the survey and no impacts are predicted at this juncture.

6 Interpretation and Evaluation

6.1 An inspection survey, conducted during April 2023, recorded no field sign evidence synonymous with bats.

6.2 Several potential roosting features which bats could utilise for roosting or as a place of shelter were recorded during the survey on different elevations of the complex.

6.3 The building was recorded in an area of high levels of artificial light, some of which splay directly onto the building. No impacts are predicted via the encroachment or disturbance to commuting lines or foraging grounds.

6.4 No evidence of breeding birds, historical or current was recorded at the time of survey.

7 Ecological Constraints

7.1 No ecological constraints impeded the survey.

8 Assessment of Potential Impacts

8.1 Impacts on bats and their roosts

8.1.1 Based on the surrounding habitat and building features identified during the daytime initial inspection survey, the property has been categorised (using Bat Conservation Trust Bat, Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd Edition) to determine the likely absence / presence of bats as having low roost suitability (Table 3).

8.1.2 Therefore, further survey effort is considered to be required in this instance.

Table 3: Roost suitability further survey effort

Roost characterisation / potential	Number of activity surveys	Healey Lane Building Complex
Negligible	0	-
Low	1	√
Moderate	2	-
High / Confirmed/ Displacement issues	3	-

8.2 Impacts on habitat

8.2.1 Under current proposals no encroachment on habitat suitable for use by bats is predicted and thus no impacts on potential major commuting lines or foraging grounds. The building sits on a plot of predominantly hardstanding containing no intrinsic ecological value.

8.2.2 Optimum commuting lines and foraging habitat is located outside the development boundary, within a 2 km radius and outside of the proposals for the site. However, given existing levels of artificial lighting within the immediate vicinity, no impacts are predicted in respect of the proposals elevating light levels to above existing conditions.

9 Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 The building complex at Healey Lane was assessed as having low roost suitability due to the presence of potential roost features. Therefore, further survey effort is recommended to ascertain presence/ likely absence of bat use in the form of a single bat activity survey.

9.2 Bat activity surveys should be undertaken in line with BCT guidelines and conducted during suitable weather conditions, with no rain, no heavy winds and suitable temperatures.

9.3 No current or historical evidence of breeding birds was recorded at the time of survey. No impacts on breeding birds are predicted under current proposals.

9.4 Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this report and its contents, in view of potential ecological constraints to development or the

likely presence or absence of species, it must only be viewed as a snapshot in time and therefore not be viewed as definitive.

9.5 Due to external factors such as seasonality, weather etc., having the potential to affect survey results. No liability can be assumed for omissions or changes that may or may not occur after the date this report was produced.

References

Collins, J. (2016). Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition.

Estrada Ecology ltd
Unit 1 Flexspace Dinnington
Nobel Way
Dinnington
Sheffield S25 3QB
Tel: 01909 807177
Mob: 07958 340877
Web: www.estradaecology.co.uk
Email: enquiries@estradaecology.co.uk