Brindle &Green

Bat Presence and Absence Surveys

York House, Denby Dale, Huddersfield

Report Reference: BG24.262

July 2024

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Grid reference: SK 231408049

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1 Summary

1.1.1 Brindle and Green Ltd were commissioned by Techwill Ltd to undertake a bat dusk emergence survey on Building 2 at York House, Denby Dale, Huddersfield. The survey was undertaken on the 19th June 2024.

1.1.2 A Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken on the 23rd May 2018 by Brindle and Green Ltd (BG18.212, May 2018), which concluded that Buildings 2 and 3 offered potential roosting features with a low suitability, and Building 1 offered 'Negligible' suitability to support roosting bats. Report BG18.212 should be reviewed in conjunction with this report.

1.1.3 The site is the subject of an outline application for site clearance and demolition of B1 and B2 to facilitate the development of three detached residential dwellings. Design proposals for the site are presented in Appendix 4 of this report. Previous proposals for the application boundary suggested that B3 was subject to be removed, however, under current proposals this is not set to be renovated or removed.

1.1.4 Building 2 was subjected to a single dusk emergence survey on the 19th July 2024. Bat activity within the application site was low, with activity pertaining to two commuting passes of individual common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), with two faint passes of foraging noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), and a single *myotis* sp. HNS also recorded.

1.1.5 The survey did not reveal any evidence of bats roosting within B2. As a result, this report does not set out recommendations relating to mitigation or the need for an EPS development licence prior to the buildings redevelopment.

1.1.6 The following recommendations are provided to ensure the client works within the law and that any impacts to protected species are minimised.

1.1.7 Bats are highly mobile and can change roost sites throughout the year and from season to season. If the development does not begin within twelve months of this initial survey it will be necessary to conduct a re-survey to determine if bats are roosting within the buildings on site.

1.1.8 Should any evidence of roosting bats be uncovered during construction works then works should cease and the advice of an ecologist sought.

1.1.9 Post construction enhancements should include integrated bat boxes as described within Chapter 7.

2 Introduction

2.1.1 Brindle & Green were commissioned by Techwill Ltd to undertake a bat dusk emergence survey on Building 2 at York House, Denby Dale, Huddersfield.

2.1.2 The purpose of this survey was to establish whether bats were roosting within the potential features within B2 identified during the Preliminary Roost Assessment (BG18.212, May 2018) and to provide details on solutions for mitigation if required. Within the current proposals, B3 is set to be untouched, and as such has not been subject to presence/absence surveys. If this building is set to be removed or renovated, then it should be subject to presence/absence surveys.

2.1.3 The red line boundary is approximately 0.2ha in extent and is positioned approximately 0.6km south-east of the town of Denby Dale, adjacent to Barnsley Road. The site comprises a single-storey office/warehouse building (B1) and a converted stable block used for storage (B2). The site is positioned within a residential area, with detached properties and gardens recorded to the north and west of the redline boundary. The area wider landscape is rural, extending to agricultural fields and pockets of woodland to the north, east, and west.

2.1.4 The site is the subject of a conditional outline application for site clearance and demolition of B1 and B2 to facilitate the development of three detached residential dwellings, and to discharge condition 14 for the application (2022/60/91024/E). Design plans are presented within Appendix 4.

2.1.5 The legislation relevant to bats within the United Kingdom is summarised within Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

2.1.6 Results and recommendations contained within this report have been prepared by an experienced ecologist and are therefore the view of Brindle & Green Limited. The survey is based on information provided by our client, the development proposals, and the results of our survey of the site. This report pertains to this information only.

3 Methodology

3.1.1 Building 2 was subjected to a single bat dusk emergence survey on the 19th June 2024, to confidently assess presence or likely absence of bats within the roosting features identified by Brindle and Green Ltd during 23rd May 2018.

3.1.2 Bat surveys were conducted according to methodologies outlined within Natural England's Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, 2023) and the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines (Colins, 2023). The dusk survey began 15 minutes before sunset and lasted for an hour and a half following sunset. Where methodology has deviated from good practice, it has been recorded and justified within the limitations section of the report.

3.1.3 On the survey, surveyors operated an Echo Meter Touch detector connected to an iPad. Where possible, species were identified using information from visual and audio cues, all sonograms were recorded on to the iPad and were analysed using Analook software to confirm species identification.

3.1.4 All bat passes, including time and species, were recorded on to field maps, noting direction of flight and emergence. Where possible, the number of individuals observed and behaviour of the bat was also recorded, including foraging, commuting and social calling behaviours.

3.2 Surveyors

3.2.1 The survey was carried out by Sarah Jennison BSc (Hons), Assistant Ecologist, and Tom Norman, Assistant Ecologist. The survey was overseen by Lucinda Sweet PhD, MCIEEM, Natural England Bat Licence Class 2 (2019-39122-CLS-CLS), Great Crested Newt licence (2016-22852-CLS-CLS), Director

3.3 Survey Conditions

3.3.1 The surveys were undertaken in weather conditions considered conducive to bat activity. The weather conditions for each survey are summarised within Section 5: Results.

3.4 Limitations

3.4.1 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment. The protected and notable species assessment provides

a preliminary view of the likelihood of these species occurring on site, based upon the suitability of the habitats and known distribution of the species in the local area.

3.4.2 Following the previous Preliminary Roost Assessment (BG19.212), the survey was undertaken on B2. Plans since the previous report have changed, leading to B3 not being surveyed due to its retention. B2 looked to be recently repointed at the time of the survey, however previous preliminary roost features all pertained to lifted roof sheeting to the north of the building, which appeared unchanged at the time of the survey. As such, this is not considered a limitation within this report.

3.5 Report Lifespan

3.5.1 Given the transient nature of the subject we would consider the survey results contained to be accurate for 12 months.

4 Site Context

4.1 Site Description

4.1.1 The application site can be found at SK 231408049. The site is located within the outskirts of Denby Dale, West Yorkshire, immediately adjacent to the south of the A635 (Barnsley Road). The surrounding landscape is dominated by arable land to the south and east with residential developments to the north and west. Several pockets of woodland are recorded within close proximity to the application site, including Tanner Wood 50m to the northeast, and Ash Well Shrogg 185m to the southwest. Linear features such as mature hedgerows, treelines and a railway embankment approximately 100m to the south provide connectivity to optimal foraging habitat to the wider area.

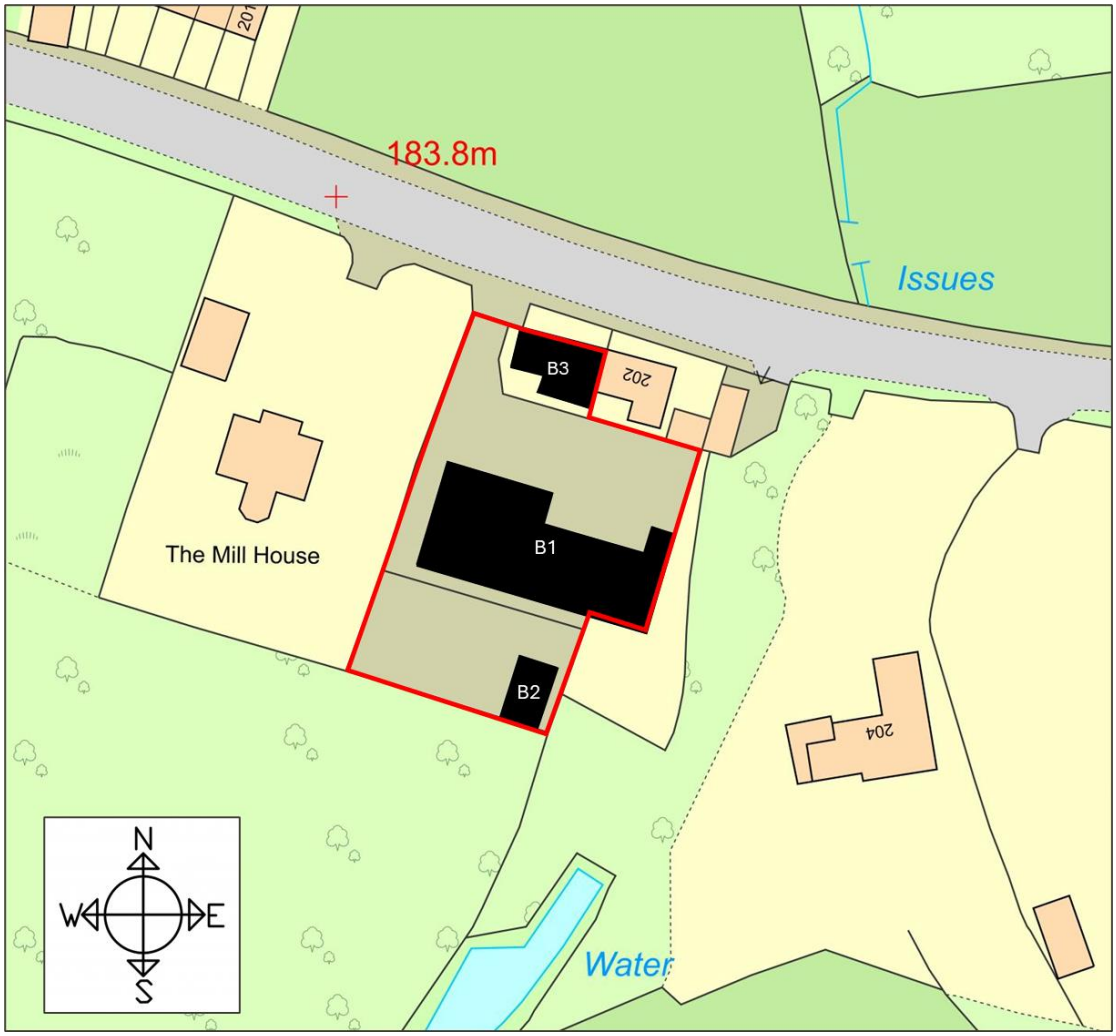

Figure 1: OS Map of the project site and surrounding area, the redline depicts the application site, areas marked in black depict buildings.

4.1.2 Building 2 was a single storey stable block converted to a storage building, with low roost suitability features pertaining to lifted roof sheeting on the northern elevation leading to a roof cavity. The building was in a good state of repair, with all mortar seeming to have been recently repointed. The site also supported an office/warehouse (Building 1) with a flat felt roof which was well sealed and did not contain any preliminary roost features.

4.2 Zone of Influence

4.2.1 The zone of Influence is used to describe the geographic extent of potential impacts of a proposed development in relation to the target species, in this case bats. Due to the scale and nature of the proposals, it is not considered that the impacts of the proposed works would extend beyond the scheme footprint and its immediate surroundings.

5 Results

5.1.1 A summary of bat activity per survey is provided in the tables below. Raw data sheets are available upon request from the head office. A diagrammatic representation of the bat activity recorded during surveys can be seen within Figure 2.

5.2 Bat Dusk Emergence Survey – 19/06/2024

5.2.1 Survey effort was focused on determining the presence of bats within Building 2 and establishing the location of access / egress points id bats were present. Assessments of how bats were using the area of vegetation and open space adjacent to the survey building were also undertaken.

Table 1: Weather conditions recorded during survey.

Sunset Time:	21:40	Cloud Cover:	1/8	Wind Speed:	BF0
Start Time:	21:25	Start Temp:	13°C	Start Humidity:	78%
Finish Time:	23:10	End Temp:	11°C	End Humidity:	85%

Table 2: Summary of Bat activity on dusk emergence survey 19/06/2024.

Time Period	Summary of bat activity recorded
21:40 – 22:30	No activity
22:30 – 23:00	22:32 a single CP commuted east to south around B1 22:50 a single SP HNS call was recorded 22:53 a single CP commuted east to south around B1 22:53 a single MYO HNS call was recorded 22:55 a single NOC HNS call was recorded
23:00 – 23:10	23:09 a single NOC HNC call was recorded

Key: Noc – Common noctule, Myo – *Myotis* sp, CP – Common Pipistrelle, SP – Soprano Pipistrelle, HNS – Heard not Seen

5.2.2 No bats were recorded emerging or re-entering the building during the survey. The first bat onsite was recorded at 22:32 approximately 50 minutes after sunset, which was a commuting pass of common pipistrelle.

5.2.3 Activity was low during the survey with less than five bat passes per species recorded. The majority of activity recorded was related to foraging bats outside of the application boundary.

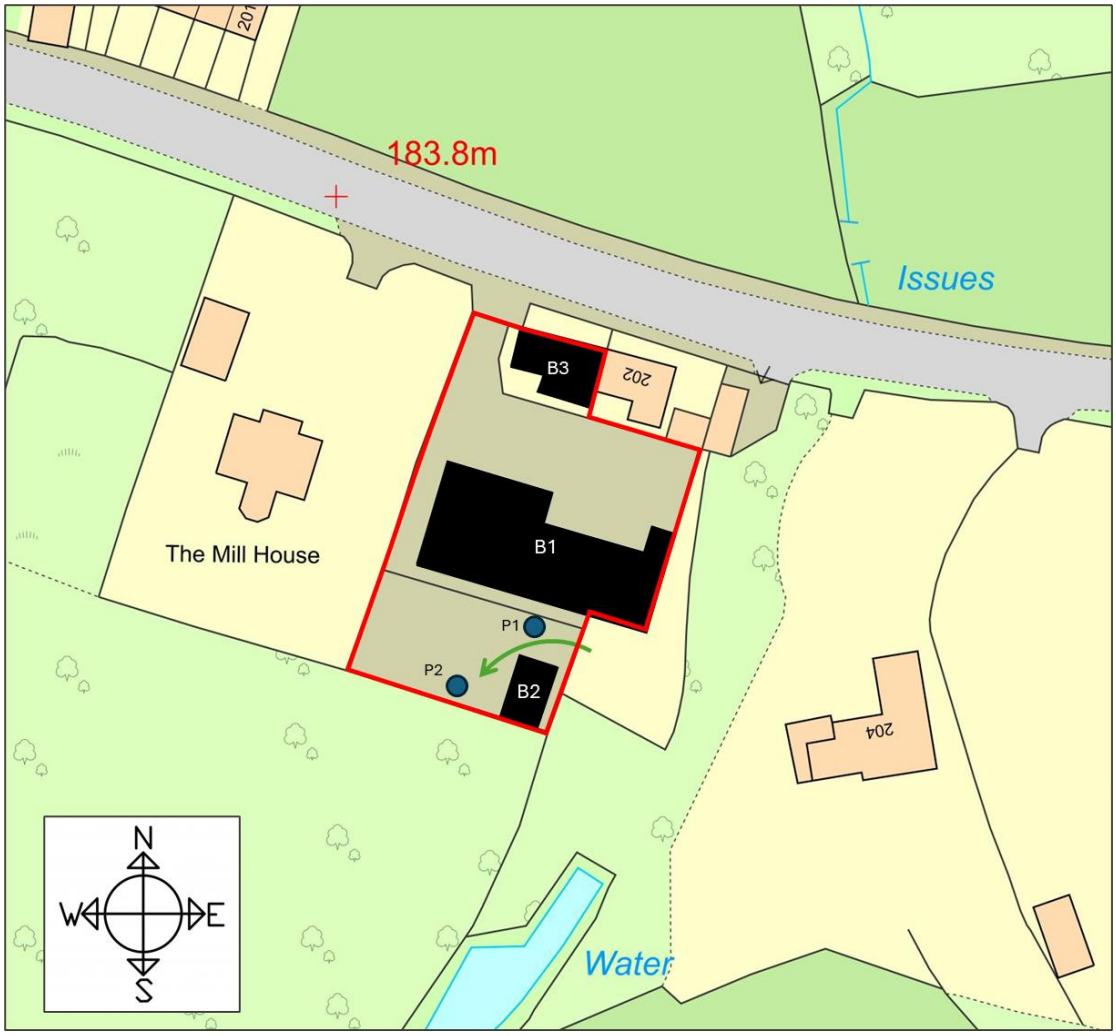

Figure 2: Summary of Bat Activity during the survey undertaken 19/06/2024.

Key					
Surveyor Location		Commuting Lines		Notable Foraging areas	

6 Evaluation

6.1.1 The dusk survey did not reveal any evidence of bats roosting within Building 2. As a result, this report does not set out recommendations relating to mitigation or the need for an EPS development licence prior to the onset of the proposed redevelopment works.

6.1.2 Bat activity was considered to be low pertaining to intermittent activity of four locally frequent species. The majority of activity was related to foraging and commuting common pipistrelle, with a two passes recorded within the application boundary. Due to the presence of bats in the local area post construction lighting should be a consideration to prevent disturbance to existing commuting lines used by the local bat population.

6.1.3 Of the bat species recorded it is considered that common noctule, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, and Myotis are common in the county. Building 2 has been assessed to hold 'Site' value for roosting bats as no individuals were found roosting, although suitable features were recorded on site.

7 Recommendations

7.1.1 The dusk emergence bat activity survey did not reveal any evidence of bats roosting within the building. An EPS development licence is not required in order to proceed with the development works. The following recommendations are set out to ensure the client works within the law and that any impacts to protected species are minimised:

7.1.2 Bats are highly mobile and can change roost sites throughout the year and from season to season. If bats are found on site after works have commenced all works must cease and the advice of a suitably qualified ecologist be sought.

7.1.3 If the development of the site does not begin within twelve months of this initial survey it will be necessary to conduct an additional survey to determine if bats are roosting within the buildings on site.

7.1.4 The following enhancement recommendations should also be considered:

7.1.5 During and post construction, a sensitive lighting scheme should be implemented to prevent disturbance to commuting and foraging bats in the local area. Lighting should be directed away from vegetative features to the eastern elevation, and light overspill of over 1lux should be avoided within these vegetated areas.

7.1.6 An integrated bat box such as a Habibat 001, or similar approved should be installed within the fabric of each building during construction. The boxes should be positioned on a southern, western or eastern elevation, over a height of 5 metres, ideally close to the eaves of the new build. The flight line to the box should be unobstructed by vegetation or other structures.

7.1.7 Under the current proposals, B3 is set to be retained. If this is to change, then the building will require further survey works in order to determine the presence/likely absence of roosting bats.

Appendix 1. General References

Bat Conservation Trust (2014) Artificial lighting and wildlife Interim Guidance: Recommendations to help minimise the impact artificial lighting. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Bell, S. McGillivary, D. (2006) Environmental Law. 6th ed. Oxford University Press.

Butterfly Conservation trust (2014) Nectar Plants, http://mothscount.org/text/64/nectar_plants.html

CIEEM (2017) Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, (4th edition). Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-978-1-7395126-0-6

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Version 1.1.* Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

Mitchell-Jones A.J. McLeish, A.P. (2004) Bat Workers Manual (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Wray S. Wells D. Long E. Mitchell-Jones T (2010) Valuing Bats in Ecological Impact Assessment. CIEEM In Practice December 2010.

Appendix 2. Legislation and Guidance Sources

Articles of British wildlife and countryside legislation, policy guidance and both Local and National Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) are referred to. The articles of legislation are:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- Department for Communities and Local Government. National Planning Policy Framework. (2023)
- EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 79/409/EEC
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Including National and Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP / HPI))
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997
- The Environment Act 2021

Appendix 3. Relevant Ecology and Legislation

(Please note that this is for information purposes only. Clients should seek further legal advice where necessary).

There are 17 species of bats that occur in Britain. Dramatic declines in population numbers initiated the introduction of European and UK legislative protection. British bats and their roosts are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Additional protection is offered under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Buildings and structures which offer roosting potential to bats can be impacted by development and this can result in disturbance to potential roost sites. Bats occupy different roost sites during the year depending on species-specific summer roost and hibernation roost requirements. Bats usually re-use the same roosts, therefore the legal opinion is that the roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time.

In the case of development work, activities involving the capture, disturbance and/or relocation of bats are subject to a licence from Natural England. Such licences are only granted:

"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 and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment, to allow people to carry out activities which would otherwise be illegal."

Under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), licences can only be issued if Natural England are satisfied that:

- there is no satisfactory alternative; and
- the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

Undertaking work to a bat roost without following appropriate recommendations from Natural England and/or DEFRA could lead to prosecution resulting in imprisonment, fines and confiscation of vehicles/equipment used.

Appendix 4. Proposed Plans