



**Bat Emergence Survey
Land off Halifax Road, Thurgoland**

Report reference: R-3112-02
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Report Title:	Bat Emergence Survey Land off Halifax Road, Thurgoland
Report Reference:	R-3112-02
Written by:	Victoria Baker BSc (Hons) MSc Ecologist
Technical review:	Rob Weston BSc MSc MCIEEM Technical Director
QA review:	Olivia Benson BSc (Hons) Graduate Ecologist
Approved for issue:	Rob Weston BSc MSc MCIEEM Technical Director
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Summary Statement

Emergence survey has confirmed the presence of a small roost used by a single common pipistrelle bat within one of the buildings.

Renovation works to the roost building will require derogation by a Natural England License. A rationale and method is presented for registration of the site under the Bats Low Impact Class Licence.



Unit A, 1 Station Road, Guiseley, Leeds, LS20 8BX
Phone: **01943 884451**
Email: admin@brooks-ecological.co.uk
www.brooks-ecological.co.uk
Registered in England Number 5351418



Introduction

1. Subsequent to the recommendations made in Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (R-3112-02), detailed bat survey was commissioned at land off Halifax Road, Thurgoland, South Yorkshire (SE 29120 01120).
2. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and this report should be read in conjunction for full context. Information regarding legal status of bats and their roosts is provided as an appendix.

Method

3. Brooks Ecological specialise 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 required 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 (2016). 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, 2 visits with a team of 5 surveyors were deemed necessary to fully evaluate the potential use of the site for roosting. Surveys were carried out with surveyors positioned around the building to cover all aspects where bats could potentially emerge and to establish activity levels around the site.
5. The surveyors, using heterodyne detectors, were in place at least half an hour before dusk 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 summary

Date	Sunset	Temp. Start/End	Weather	Invertebrate activity
09.07.18	21:34	20°C - 18°C	Overcast, humid, light breeze B1, dry	Moderate
24.07.18	21:26	21°C - 19°C	Clear skies, light breeze B1, dry	Moderate

6. Surveys were directed by Rob Weston BSc (Hons) MSc MIEEM. Rob is a Registered Consultant (RC065) under the Bats Low Impact Class License and is registered to use the Class Survey Licence WML CL18 (Level 2).

Results

Survey 1 – 9th July 2018

7. The first bat of the survey was a common pipistrelle at 21:49, 15 minutes after sunset. This individual was observed arriving from off-Site to the south and continued northeast over the buildings.
8. At 21:53 a single common pipistrelle was seen to emerge from the eaves of the Farmhouse's south-western elevation. This bat left the Site to the north-east.
9. Following this, activity was low but regular with common pipistrelle bats observed either foraging around the Site or commuting over. Only two bats were seen on the Site at any one time.
10. No other bats were observed to emerge from the Farmhouse, with none observed leaving the Barn.

Survey 2 – 22nd June 2013

11. Bat activity was slightly greater than that of the previous survey. The first bat recorded was a noctule heard but not seen by the surveyor to the south at 21:38.
12. At 21:46, a common pipistrelle emerged from the same feature as previously identified on the Farmhouse and left the Site to the west.
13. At 21:47, two brown long-eared bats entered the Site from the south and left to the north.
14. Other activity included low numbers of pipistrelles entering the Site to forage around scrub habitats or commuting over the site.
15. No other emergence activity was noted.

Figure 1 Bat Survey summary - existing / surveyed buildings highlighted in white



Figure 2

Roost location – the roost is accessed at the wall tops behind the guttering.

Evaluation and recommendations

16. Following emergence survey work it is concluded that the Site supports one small roost within the Farmhouse and is used by a single common pipistrelle bat. The presence of other or larger or more important roosts elsewhere on site is not suspected.
17. Survey shows the roost to be used by an individual of a common species of bat, and although legally protected, this roost structure is assessed as being of low conservation significance. The offence relating to its loss (and potentially the disturbance of the bat using it) can be derogated either under the Bats Low Impact Class License (BLICL) or use of a standard mitigation license. Works to this building cannot take place until this provision is in place.
18. In proceeding to use, or apply for use of either license, it will be important that certain conditions are met. These are discussed below in relation to the application site:

Has sufficient survey been carried out - is sufficient information known about the roost and its use?

19. Yes - the site has been surveyed on two occasions during the most recent active season and by experienced / licensed surveyors using suitable teams of assistants.
20. The roost is simple in structure and use - a clear conclusion has been drawn.

Has detailed planning permission been granted for the site and have all conditions relating to wildlife been discharged?

21. Not currently – this report will be submitted in support of full planning permission. A licence application cannot be made until permission is in place, and all relevant conditions relating to wildlife have been discharged. It will be important that any proposed conditions of detailed permission relating to wildlife are reviewed and addressed.

Can the project satisfy the three licensing tests?

(i) FCS Test (Regulation 53(9)(b) - Can the favourable conservation status of bats be protected?

22. Yes - the roost is of low conservation significance, its loss will not impact on bat populations significantly.

(ii) Purpose Test (Regulation 53(2)(e) - Is the purpose of the proposed activity one which is licensable and demonstrable?

23. Yes - the project would be able to apply under the purpose of 'Imperative Reasons of Over-riding Public Interest' (IROPI), meaning that proof of its economic and social imperative would be required. In presenting the application the ecologist would need to be provided with access to the project's planning consultant and relevant documents.

(iii) The No Satisfactory Alternative Test (Regulation 53(9)(a) - Have alternatives to the proposed activity been considered and ruled out?

24. Yes – The property as it stands is not fit for habitation and renovation of the building is required to make it fit for use. This will necessarily impact on the roost in its current location.

Mitigation

25. Natural England will not require specific mitigation for the licensed (BLICL) loss of this roost, however a single Schwegler 2F bat box should be installed, which can be opened to introduce any bats, should its rescue be required. This should be installed on the building.
26. In terms of renovation to the building, the following method should be agreed under license, but should not be the subject of any condition of planning.
- Prior to any works at the site the ecologist will conduct a site meeting and tool box talk with contractors. This will make clear the licensed method and the principle that should any additional roosts be encountered during the works, that this will stop immediately whilst the ecologist's advice is sought.
 - A new bat box will be committed to in the site layout and installed prior to any works to the building.
 - Once, and only once, a license is in place will any works to the identified roost building (figure 2) commence.
 - During any works to the walls tops on the south-western elevation, an ecologist will be present. Safe access will be provided to the roof structure by the developer, or their contractors. The ecologist will confirm the absence of bats, or effect the removal of up to 3 bats to the bat box mounted on the property.

References

Bat Conservation Trust (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines

English Nature (2004) Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.

JNCC (2004) The Bat Workers Manual. 3rd Edition.

ODPM circular 06/05 (2005) Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/circularbiodiversity>

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents/made>

Appendix 1

Box 1 *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 Conservation of Habitats and Species 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.

Box 2 *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.