

WILSONS PARK, NEWTON HEATH

Nocturnal Bat Survey Report

May 2022



Report Control Sheet

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	4
1.1.	SCOPE & PURPOSE	4
1.2.	LOCATION	4
1.3.	OBJECTIVES	4
2	METHODOLOGY	5
2.1.	NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY	5
2.2.	SURVEY LIMITATIONS	5
3	SURVEY RESULTS	6
3.1.	DUSK SURVEY (04/05/22)	6
3.2.	DAWN RE-ENTRY (20/05/22)	6
3.3.	ASSESSMENT	6
4	RECOMMENDATIONS AND MITIGATION	8
4.1.	IMPACT ASSESSMENT	8
4.2.	BAT LICENCE	8
4.3.	THREE TESTS	8
	<i>Test 1</i>	8
	<i>Test 2</i>	8
	<i>Test 3</i>	8
4.4.	WORKING METHODS	9
4.5.	ROOST PROVISION	9
4.6.	LIGHTING MITIGATION	10
4.7.	SUMMARY	10
5	BIBLIOGRAPHY	11

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. SCOPE & PURPOSE

- 1.1.1. Collington Winter Environmental Ltd was commissioned by Biz Space Ltd. to undertake Nocturnal Bat Survey of the site at Wilsons Park, Monsall Road, Manchester. This report has been produced to inform a planning application at the site.
- 1.1.2. The author of this report is Samuel Penrhyn-Lowe MZool, BSc (Hons), Assistant Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd. The project has been managed and overseen by Olivia Collington BSc (Hons), MEnvSc, CEnv. Director and Principal Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental.
- 1.1.3. A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was undertaken of the site in March 2022 (Collington Winter, 2022) which found Building 4 and the Gatehouse to provide low bat roosting potential, whilst Building 5 provided moderate bat roosting potential. Therefore, further nocturnal emergence surveys were recommended, the results of which are detailed in this report.

1.2. LOCATION

- 1.2.1. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for the site location. The site is located within the urbanised area of Monsall, Manchester. Train tracks border the site directly to the south and residential housing surrounds the site in all directions. Monston Vale lies approximately 200m north of the site and provides a relief from the housing with an open field and small patches of woodland. Another patch of woodland lies 200m to the southwest along the railway line.

Figure 1.1 Site Location



1.3. OBJECTIVES

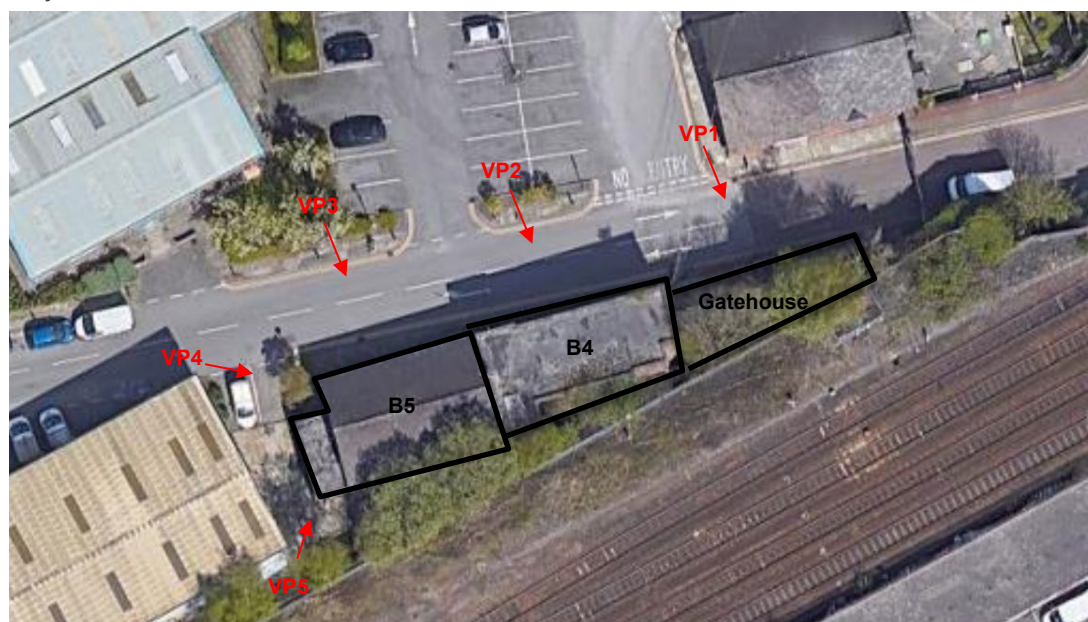
- 1.3.1. The objectives of the Nocturnal Bat Survey are as follows:
- Identify any bats roosting within the buildings.
 - Assess the value of the buildings for roosting bats.
 - Identify the species assemblage of bats using the site.
 - Provide recommendations on any further surveys or mitigation required for bats.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1. NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY

2.1.1. The first nocturnal survey was undertaken as a dusk survey on 4th of May 2022. The second survey comprised a dawn re-entry survey undertaken on 20th of May 2022. Please refer to Figure 2.1 for locations of vantage points used during both surveys.

Figure 2.1 Surveyor Locations



2.1.2. The surveys were undertaken in line with guidance as set out in Collins (2016). Surveyors used heterodyne handheld bat detectors. All surveyors were suitably experienced undertaking bat emergence surveys. Please refer to Table 2.1 below for details of surveyors. A bat was identified re-entering the Gatehouse on the first survey, as such, the second survey included VP1 to provide an additional survey to what was recommended as part of the PRA.

Table 2.1 Survey Details

Date	Sunset/ Sunrise Time	Start	Finish	Surveyors	Weather Conditions
04/05/2022	20:44	20:29	22:14	Allegra Lindsay (VP1) Andrew Bridge (VP2) Darnell Shaw (VP3) Samuel Penrhyn-Lowe (VP4) Lucy Gradwell (VP5)	Temp at start/end: 11 Celsius Cloud start: 4 Cloud finish: 2 Wind: 1 max (Beaufort scale)
20/05/2022	05:01	03:31	05:16	Will Higgins (VP1) Samuel Penrhyn-Lowe (VP4) Ben Miles (VP5)	Temp at start/end: 10 Celsius Cloud start: 3 Cloud finish: 3 Wind: 0

2.2. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

2.2.1. Due to the surveys being conducted by observation during low light conditions, this may cause constraints of visual assessments. No surveyors were visually constrained during the survey, other than that of low light conditions, and all potential roosting features were observed throughout the survey time period.

3 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1. DUSK SURVEY (04/05/22)

- 3.1.1. Bat activity was only recorded from VP1 during the survey, with the first bat observed at 21:29 and the last bat observed at 22:04. Both observed bats were common pipistrelles, with a peak count of 1 bat (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*).
- 3.1.2. The second bat recorded at 22:04 was observed re-entering into The Gatehouse (demonstrated on Figure 3.1) and was heard inside. Please refer to Figure 3.1 for the location of the roost.

Figure 3.1 Approximate Location of Bat Roost



3.2. DAWN RE-ENTRY (20/05/22)

- 3.2.1. During the dawn re-entry survey limited bat activity was observed with two bat passes recorded. Only VP5 recorded any activity which was faintly picked up on the bat detector, suggesting it came from the railway line to the east of the site. Both bats' recordings were identified as common pipistrelles, the first at 03:31 and the second at 03:37. No bats were recorded or observed from VP1.
- 3.2.2. No bat activity was recorded in relation to the building or any of the potential roosting features surveyed.

3.3. ASSESSMENT

- 3.3.1. The Gatehouse showed signs of providing a roost for a single common pipistrelle and is anticipated to be relate to where the low number of bat droppings were observed during the PRA.
- 3.3.2. The single bat recorded during the nocturnal survey and low number of bat droppings, indicates it comprises a non-breeding summer roost for low numbers of common and widespread bat species.

3.3.3. Bat droppings were also observed in relation to Building 5 during the PRA, however no bats were observed emerging or re-entering building during the surveys indicating the building is currently not used for roosting purposes.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND MITIGATION

4.1. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1.1. During surveys, one non-breeding summer roost of common pipistrelle was identified. Bat activity was recorded, with only common and widespread species identified during the nocturnal surveys. Foraging and commuting were recorded mainly in association with the adjacent railway line.
- 4.1.2. The proposed development works will include the demolition of all buildings. There is considered to be a high probability of injuring and/or killing bats and destruction of a known bat roost as a result of the proposed works, without mitigation. As such, Natural England European Protected Species License (EPSL) is required and is to be obtained prior to any works being completed on the building.
- 4.1.3. Development should not result in overall loss of bat roost sites and therefore a replacement roost site will need to be provided for each of the species affected. The Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, 2004) state that avoiding damage or loss of existing roosts is the preferred option in all cases and wherever possible, replacement roost habitat should be on a “like for like” basis to replicate the existing conditions selected by the bats.

4.2. BAT LICENCE

- 4.2.1. A Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) is to be used for the site which is applicable for the destruction of up to three “low conservation status roosts” which include feeding, day, night and transitional roosts. The site will be registered under a BMCL of a suitably qualified ecologist. The following Working Methods will be followed under the supervision of a licenced bat ecologist to reduce the risk of killing/ injuring bats.
- 4.2.2. Alternatively, a standard Mitigation Licence can be completed for the site, which requires similar requirements to the BMCL. A Reasoned Statement is not required under the BMCL.
- 4.2.3. The roosts located on the building will be demolished under the supervision of the registered licenced bat ecologist under the Natural England BMCL. Please refer to Appendix 4 for the Bat Method Statement.

4.3. THREE TESTS

- 4.3.1. A licence to derogate from the statutory protection afforded to bats can be granted for a number of specified reasons or purposes as set out in Regulation 53 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). These reasons are often referred to as the ‘three tests’. Consideration of the three tests is to be used to demonstrate that it is reasonable to assume that a Natural England licence will be granted in this case.

Test 1

- 4.3.2. Regulation 53(2)(e) states: a licence can be granted for the purposes 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”, typically referred to as the ‘Overriding Public Importance Test’.

Test 2

- 4.3.3. Regulation 53(9)(a) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that there is no satisfactory alternative”, typically referred to as the ‘No Satisfactory Alternative’ test.

Test 3

- 4.3.4. Regulation 53(9)(b) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “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”, typically referred to as the ‘Favourable Conservation Status’ test.

4.4. WORKING METHODS

- 4.4.1. Demolition of The Gatehouse and Building 5, causes an offence to be committed by the way of disturbance or damage to bats or their roosts under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (As amended) (refer to Appendix 1).
- 4.4.2. Therefore, demolition of the buildings on the site, which was assessed to support roosts for common pipistrelle should be undertaken under a Natural England BMCL. In addition, the following Precautionary Working Methods (PWMs) are to be undertaken under the supervision of a licenced bat ecologist to reduce the risk of killing or injuring any bats.
- 4.4.3. Pre-commencement works are as follows:
- Before demolition works can start, two general purpose bat boxes (will be fixed to a suitable location).
 - Boxes are to be affixed onto retained trees/buildings located within the landowners land. Boxes must be positioned on a south-west or south-east-facing aspect, at a minimum of 4m from the ground, and must remain in situ for a minimum of 5 years.
 - The licenced ecologist will undertake a daylight inspection to assess the status of the site for bats prior to works commencing on site. The Registered Consultant will check for fresh droppings and accurately assess the levels of bat activity.
 - The licenced ecologist will attend site on the day of the scheduled demolition works to undertake a search for bats in the identified roost locations prior to the works commencing. Any bats found will be relocated into the roost provisions, already installed on site. The initial stages of the works will occur under the supervision of the licenced ecologist.
 - All contractors working on the site will be briefed with a Toolbox Talk by the licenced ecologist, on the legal protection afforded to bats and their roosts, and on how to proceed if a bat is discovered during the course of the work.
 - If bats are encountered during works, the licenced ecologist will capture them, whilst wearing thin gloves. Any bats found that do not need to be taken into care will then be placed in one of the two bat boxes, which will act as receptor sites during demolition works.
- 4.4.4. Once the selected features have been removed under supervision, works can proceed in the absence of the licenced ecologist, at their discretion. If a bat is discovered at any unsupervised time, work must cease immediately, and a licenced bat handler must be called for advice. This advice will include leaving the bat to disperse of its own accord or wait for the licenced ecologist to move the bat. Builders and contractors are explicitly forbidden from handling bats except in the case of finding a trapped or injured bat. In which case the bat may be moved into a safe and secure place (e.g. a box) and the registered ecologist must be contacted immediately.

4.5. ROOST PROVISION

- 4.5.1. The demolition of the buildings should not result in the overall loss of bat roosts. Therefore, a replacement roost site will need to be provided for each of the roost affected. In this case, the one roost identified in the Gatehouse and the inactive roost identified during the PRA in Building 5. The Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, 2004) state that avoiding damage or loss of roosts is the preferred option. However, the works require the full demolition of the building, and this is not possible. As such, replacement roost provisions should be on a “like-for-like” basis to replace the existing conditions that will be lost.
- 4.5.2. To mitigate for the loss of bat roosts, a minimum of two multipurpose bat boxes will be installed prior to the demolition of the building. The bat box is aimed at crevice-dwelling bats, such as common pipistrelle found to be roosting in the building. Box types such as Greenwood's Ecohabitats – Two Crevice Bat Box would be suitable.
- 4.5.3. These boxes will act as receptor site should any live bats be found during the supervised destruction of the roosts. The box is to be installed onto a retained mature tree or mounted on a building within the business park, under the same site ownership (ideally at a minimum height of 4m from the ground level). This will minimise the risk of them being damaged by vandalization or the bats being targeted by predators such as domestic cats. This box must remain in-situ for a minimum of five years post-

development. Please refer to Figure 4.1 for suggested locations.

Figure 4.1 Approximate Location of Replacement Bat Roosts



4.6. LIGHTING MITIGATION

4.6.1. All bats have some degree of sensitivity to artificial, night-time lighting. Introducing artificial lighting to areas that are not currently illuminated may sever important bat flight lines and discourage bats from using roost provisions. The following recommendations are to be considered within the scheme to minimise impacts of lighting. The recommendations are as follows:

- Keep site lighting to minimum levels.
- Luminaries should lack UV elements and preferably LED lighting with a warm white light should be used over cool white light (ideally <2700Kelvin).
- Lighting should feature peak wavelengths greater than 550nm.
- Internal lighting should be positioned away from windows to minimise light spill.
- Light placement should be downward facing to prevent excess horizontal or vertical light spill.
- The use of integrated fittings such as cowls, shields, louvres and hoods, that effectively contain light spill from unintended areas.
- Avoid illuminating the railway line and the bat box locations.
- Use of timed security lights should be set on motion-sensors and using short, 1-minute timers, to minimise light use.
- Column heights of lighting can be considered to minimise light spill.

4.7. SUMMARY

4.7.1. The building was found to support one non-breeding summer transitional roosts for common pipistrelle. The demolition of the building will cause the destruction of the roost and breach of legislation under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) should no mitigation be applied. As a result, the demolition works require a BMCL or a standard Mitigation Licence to be undertaken lawfully and minimise the risk of impacting roosting bats.

4.7.2. Compensatory roost provisions will be implemented before any demolition works take place to provide compensatory habitat for the loss of the roosts. Compensatory roost provisions must be positioned within the site for a minimum of five years.

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