

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report

**Whalley Old Grammar School,
Station Road,
Whalley,
BB7 9RH**

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Summary

In November 2020 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of Whalley Old Grammar School, Station Road, Whalley, BB7 9RH to assess the potential for use by bats and breeding birds.

A daytime survey was carried out on 18th November 2020 to support development plans to replace an existing single storey extension and carry out internal works.

No evidence was recorded to suggest bats were roosting within the building.

No bats were observed or recorded using the building for roosting.

The single storey extension is considered to be of negligible potential for roosting bats.

The surveyor considers survey effort to be reasonable to assess the roost potential of the building and no further survey work is deemed appropriate.

The surveyor does not consider the proposed development and change of use is likely to result in a breach of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) therefore the proposed development does not require an EPS Licence (EPSL) to proceed lawfully.

Introduction

In November 2020 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of Whalley Old Grammar School, Station Road, Whalley, BB7 9RH to assess the potential for use by bats and breeding birds.

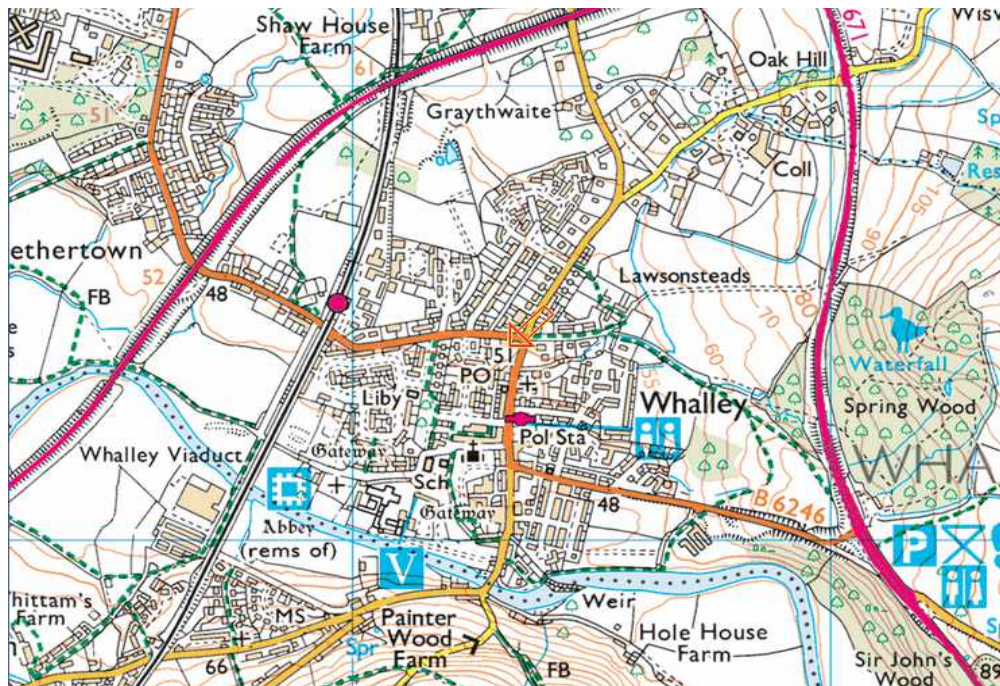
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Survey and Site Assessment

Objectives of the survey

The survey was carried out to determine roost potential of the building, current usage by bats, and other protected species, of the site and to establish status of the bat species using the site prior to development work being carried out.

Survey site location



A central grid reference for the site is SD7332436423

Site/Habitat description

The property consists of a stone built former grammar school building with a multi pitched stone slate roof. External walls are well pointed with no obvious cracks, gaps or crevices present. Roof slates are generally close fitting with some slipped, lifted or missing tiles present, lead flashing where present is close fitting. Ridge tiles are pointed and well sealed. The main property has a roof void, with insulation present and roof slates lined with a bituminous roofing felt.

A single storey brick built lean-to extension with a single skin corrugated fibreboard roof and close fitting fascia boarding is present on the western facade and can be considered to offer negligible roosting bat potential.



Pre Existing data on local bat species

A search of the MAGIC (www.magic.gov.uk) website revealed no bat EPS licence applications within a 1km radius.

The surveyor holds records of foraging brown long eared, daubenton's, noctule, soprano and common pipistrelle bats within 1km of the site.

From personal experience of surveying for and researching bats in Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cumbria, the following species were considered.

Common Pipistrelle – known to roost on sites where suitable foraging habitat is available.

Soprano Pipistrelle – known to roost on sites where suitable foraging habitat is available.

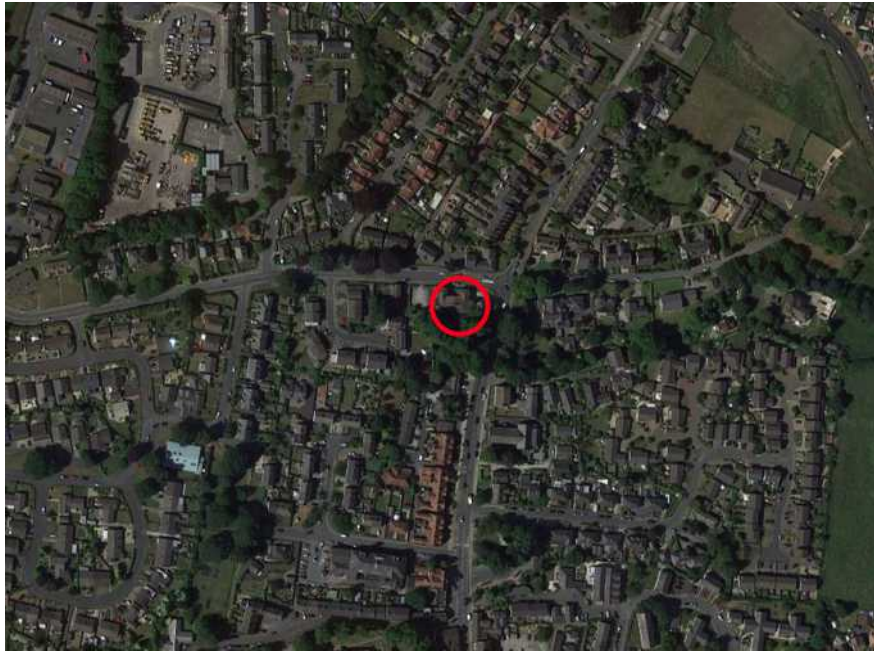
Whiskered/Brandt's – species often found roosting in buildings close to woodland.

Natterer's – a typical upland bat with foraging bats being recorded high on heather moorland. Often roosting in barns.

Daubenton's – a species commonly associated with aquatic habitats.

Long Eared bat – a woodland species which has been recorded foraging over in bye meadows and rough grassland sites. Often roosting in barns.

Habitat



The property is located in an urban position with surrounding habitat dominated by a mosaic of mature domestic gardens, amenity grassland and mature deciduous tree cover providing some connectivity to ancient and semi natural woodland to the east of the site.

Bat foraging potential is low to moderate.

Field Survey Methodology

Visual inspection

An inspection was carried out to search for and identify potential feeding perches, roosting opportunities and signs of bat use both internally and externally. The visual inspection focussed on searching for feeding remains and bat droppings both within the building and on external walls. Crevices and other potential roost sites were investigated for smear/grease marks, lack of cobwebs, urine staining.

Equipment used included:

- ! Lupine Pico LED torch
- ! SeeSnake CA 300 video endoscope
- ! Opticron close focusing binoculars

Personnel

All surveys were conducted by Dave Anderson MSc, Natural England Science, Education and Conservation bat licence holder (2015-15784-CLS-CLS) a bat surveyor and ecologist with over 20 years experience.

Survey Summary

Survey	Date	Timings
Visual	18.11.2020	1 Hour

Survey constraints

Access to all areas of the exterior of the building was possible and good visual inspection at ground level was possible. Evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings or staining on external walls and surfaces is frequently removed by the action of wind and rain; apparent absence of evidence is therefore evaluated with caution.

In many situations it is not possible to inspect every locations where bats are present therefore it should be assumed that an absence of bat evidence does not necessarily equate to evidence that bats are absent.

Some species such as pipistrelle sp bats are opportunistic and it is possible for individuals to be found during works, even where surveys have had negative results during preliminary and activity surveys.

Survey Results

Visual Inspection - Bats

The property is well maintained, generally well sealed, but with some lifted and slipped roof slates offering roosting potential within the main building.

No physical evidence of bats, grease marks or urine splashing was recorded on or within the building despite suitable horizontal surfaces being present and undisturbed. No evidence of roosting bats was observed within or on the exterior of the main building.

The single storey extension on the western facade was observed to offer no potential roost features.

Visual Inspection – Nesting birds

No evidence of nesting birds was observed.

Evaluation of the results

No evidence of use by bats was recorded during the survey and the single storey extension was assessed as offering negligible roosting potential due to a lack of potential roosting features.

Whilst potential roost features were observed on the main building roof in the form of lifted and slipped roof slates, no works are proposed to the main roof and no evidence of bat use was recorded within loft spaces. It is not considered that the proposed works are likely to result in disturbance to the main building.

Given the localised nature of proposed development works and the lack of roosting potential in affected areas it is considered that the development proposals do not risk negative impacts on roosting bats.

Conclusion

No evidence was recorded to suggest bats were roosting within the building.

No bats were observed or recorded using the building for roosting.

The extension is considered to be of negligible potential for roosting bats.

The surveyor considers survey effort to be reasonable to assess the roost potential of the building and no further survey work is deemed appropriate.

The surveyor does not consider the proposed development and change of use is likely to result in a breach of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) therefore the proposed development does not require an EPS Licence (EPSL) to proceed lawfully.

Proposed Biodiversity Net Gain

The installation of one Greenwoods Ecohabitats Two Chamber Bat Box or Kent Bat Box on trees within the garden would provide roosting potential for the local bat population.

Accidental exposure of bats - EMERGENCY ADVICE

In the unlikely event of bats or their roosts being exposed or vulnerable to harm, suspend further work in that area. Cover the exposed bats to reduce any further risk of harm and seek advice immediately.

Call Dave Anderson (Batworker) on 07894 338290 (mobile); a site visit will be arranged to assess the situation and recover any bats / safely remove them from site.

E Bibliography

Barn Owls and Rural Planning Applications	Barn Owl Trust 2009
Barn Owl Survey Methodology and Techniques for use in Ecological Assessments	Shawyer, C. August 2011
Bat Mitigation Guidelines	Natural England 2006
Bat Survey Guidelines 3rd Edition	Bat Conservation Trust 2016
Bat Workers Manual 3 rd Edition	JNCC 2004

Bats and the Law

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, principally those relating to powers and penalties, have been amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). The CRoW Act only applies to England and Wales.

Section 9(1)

It is an offence for any person to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bat.

Section 9(4)(a)

It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly* damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection.

(*Added by the CRoW Act in England and Wales only)

This is taken to mean all bat roosts whether bats are present or not.

Section 9(4)(b)

It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly* disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.

(*Added by the CRoW Act in England and Wales only)

The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994

Section 39(1)

It is an offence

(a) deliberately to capture or kill any bat

(b) deliberately to disturb any bat

(d) to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any bat.

The difference between this legislation and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the use of the word 'deliberately' rather than 'intentionally'. Also disturbance of bats can be anywhere, not just at a roost. Damage or destruction of a bat roost does not require the offence to be intentional or deliberate.

Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act (2000)

Part III Nature conservation and wildlife protection

74 Conservation of biological diversity

(1) It is the duty of (a) any Minister of the Crown (within the meaning of the Ministers of the [1975 c. 26.] Crown Act 1975), (b) any Government department, and (c) the National Assembly for Wales, in carrying out his or its functions, to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biological diversity in accordance with the Convention.

SCHEDULE 12 AMENDMENTS RELATING TO PART I OF WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

1. In section 1(5) of the 1981 Act (offence of intentional disturbance of wild birds) after "intentionally" there is inserted "or recklessly".

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

PART 3, (40): Duty to conserve biodiversity

(1) Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

(3) Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.