

Old Row, Barrow



Bat Emergence Survey Report

17/08/2023

THT and L&Q Developments LLP

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Summary Statement

Survey has confirmed the likely absence of roosting bats within the surveyed building at Old Row, Barrow, Clitheroe.

Introduction

- 1. Subsequent to recommendations set out in Brooks Ecological’s Preliminary Ecological Assessment (ER-6446-01) carried out in September 2022, Brooks Ecological was commissioned to carry out a Bat Emergence Survey at the proposed development Site at Old Row, Whalley Road, Barrow, Clitheroe.
- 2. Survey was required of the buildings comprising a disused pub, terraced house and outbuildings which had been identified as having a feature with low bat roost suitability.
- 3. The buildings had previously been subject to a survey by Brooks Ecological in September 2022, which did not find any roosts as reported in Brooks Ecological’s report ER-6446-02. However, an additional survey was requested by the LPA during consultation, thus undertaking a second survey detailed here.
- 4. In accordance with current best practice guidelines, buildings of low suitability need a single evening emergence or dawn re-entry survey to confirm the presence or likely absence of roosting bats.

Figure 1 The surveyed buildings (red line).



Method

- 5. Brooks Ecological specialises 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, 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.
- 6. In this case, a single visit with a team of four surveyors was deemed necessary to fully evaluate the potential use of the Site for roosting.
- 7. Survey was carried out with surveyors positioned around the building to cover all aspects where bats could potentially emerge or return, and to establish activity levels around the Site.
- 8. The surveyors, using heterodyne detectors, echo meter touches and a thermal camera, were in place at least 15 minutes before sunset 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 conditions.

Date	Survey Type	Temp. Start/End	Weather
10/08/2023	Emergence	22/21°C	Dry with some high level cloud. Beaufort 1.

- 9. Survey directed by Joshua Birchall BSc (Hons) ACIEEM. Josh has over 9 years of professional bat survey experience, is a member of the South Lancashire Bat Group, and is also registered to use the Class Survey Licence WML CL17 (Level 1).

Box 1 *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.

Box 2 *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 Habitats 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.

Survey Results

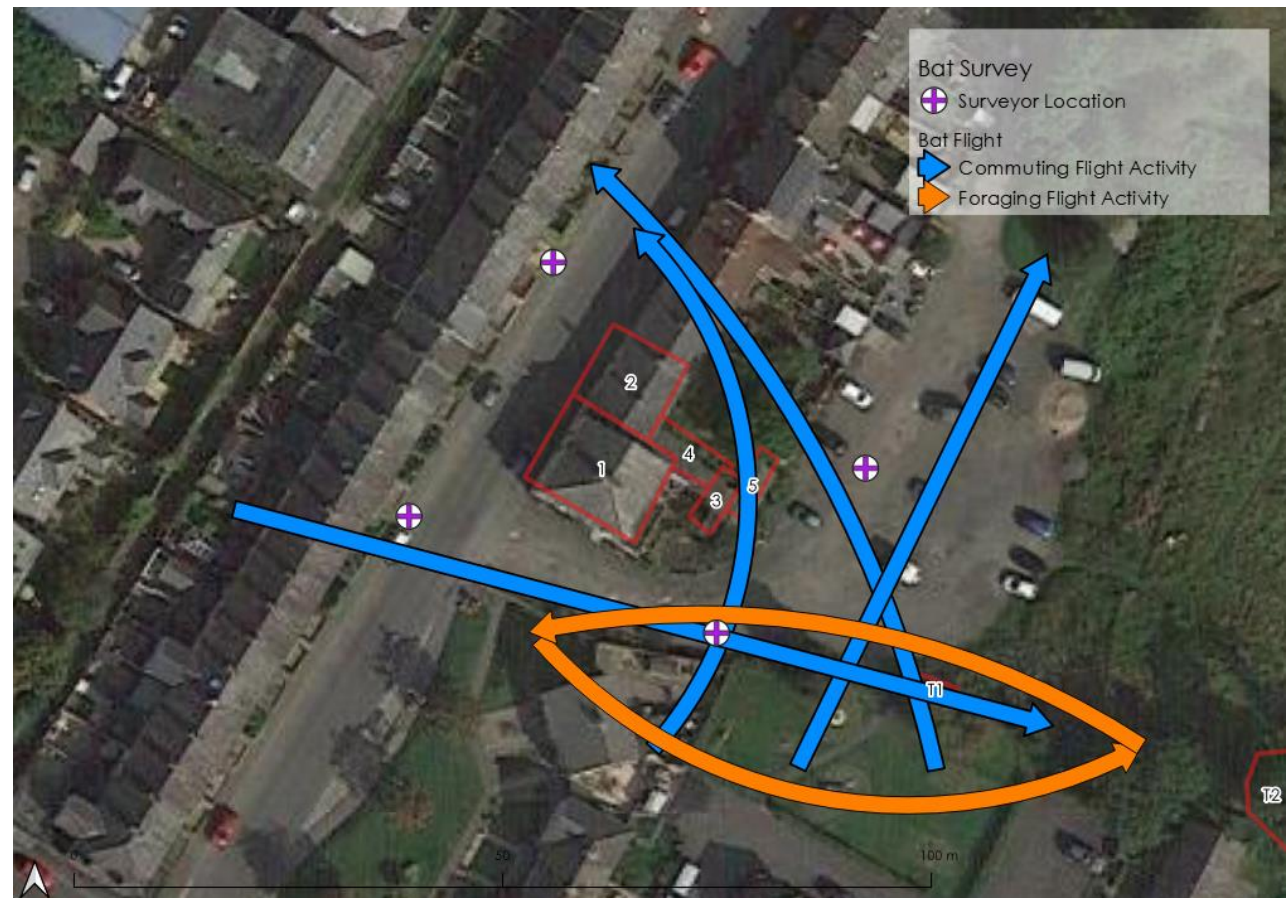
Survey 1 – 10th August 2023 (Sunset: 20:50)

10. Surveyors were positioned to cover all features with bat roost suitability, as shown in Figure 3.
11. The first bat activity noted was a noctule commuting high from west to east over the Site at 20:56.
12. At 21:09 and 21:13 individual common pipistrelle were observed commuting north-west across the Site, after entering off the southern boundary. At 21:19 another common pipistrelle commuted north, just east outside the survey area.
13. From 21:25 a single common pipistrelle was noted foraging in a park off the southern boundary, a soprano pipistrelle was also heard foraging in the same area at 21:35. This constituted the final bat activity observed during the survey.
14. At no point were any bats seen or suspected to have merged from the building.

Figure 2 Thermal image taken during the survey showing the northeastern elevation, viewed from the east



Figure 3 Summary of bat activity observed during emergence survey.



Evaluation & Conclusion

15. Survey has demonstrated a likely absence of roosting within the survey buildings at Old Row, Barrow, Clitheroe and as such, the proposed works present little risk of impacting upon bats or their roosts.

Standard Precaution

16. Although no evidence of roosting has been found and the likely absence of roosting has been concluded, it must be noted that bats frequently move between roost sites, can be very casual in their choice of roosting location, and can turn up unexpectedly at any time.
17. On this basis the developer should always be mindful of bats as a potential constraint and have a protocol in place should any bats be seen or suspected during works: works should stop, a suitably licenced ecologist consulted, and their advice followed.

Enhancement

18. The NPPF puts emphasis on development delivering biodiversity enhancement above and beyond mitigating or compensating for any impacts. To this end the new development could include integral bat roost features to offer suitable habitat in the long term.

References

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