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Dusk Survey Results

June 2024

Ferngrove House
1 Ferngrove
Ferngrove East
Bury
BL9 7LS

National Grid Ref: SD82151145



Ferngrove House, 1 Ferngrove, Ferngrove East, Bury, BL9 7LS
Dusk Survey Results in Relation to Bats

Document Title	Dusk Survey Results
Prepared for	Mr. B. Pond
Prepared by	Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd

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Executive Summary

As part of a proposed planning application at Ferngrove House, Bury, Tyrer Ecological Consultants conducted a daytime assessment in relation to bats & breeding birds in December 2023, followed by a further two dusk emergence surveys in May and June 2024.

Bats:

The site, Ferngrove House, was categorised as pertaining to Moderate bat roost suitability in line with current Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (2023), and therefore two dusk emergence surveys were undertaken at the site in May and June 2024.

From the dusk survey results, it can be concluded that whilst using best practice survey methodology, emergence of bats was absent at Ferngrove House, and activity was limited to foraging and commuting of up to two Common pipistrelles. There are no further recommendations in relation to bats for Ferngrove House.

Breeding Birds:

The daytime report identified that breeding birds could potentially use B2 for nesting purposes, therefore prior to the dusk emergence surveys being undertaken observations were further made in relation to any bird activity. However, on both occasions any activity by this species was absent and it can be concluded that breeding birds are currently absent from the site.

Survey Validity:

Bat emergence/re-entry surveys are typically **valid for a period of 12-18 months**; Ideally, the survey data should be from the most recent optimal survey season before a planning or licence application is submitted, however this is at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority and/or Natural England. Should your planning application not achieve consent, or a licence application (where required) not be applied for within this time period, updated surveys may be required.

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1.0 Background and Introduction

- 1.1 As part of a proposed planning application at Ferngrove House, Bury, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd conducted a daytime assessment in relation to bats & breeding birds during December 2023. As part of this survey a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was carried out, which concluded the following:

*“Based upon the findings of the survey, covered through sections 6.0 – 7.0 of the report and supported by **Appendix I**, the building **B1** is duly categorised as pertaining to ‘**Moderate**’ bat roost suitability, in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023). It is recommended that **two dusk emergence surveys** are conducted at **B1** within the season of bats (May – August, extending into September in some cases).”*

- 1.2 It is understood that current proposals involve the demolition of an existing garage structure and the subsequent erection of a full height extension to the western elevation of an existing building.
- 1.3 Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd were therefore re-commissioned by Mr. B. Pond to undertake the further bat surveys recommended in the Preliminary Survey; the surveys (two dusk emergence surveys) were carried out in May and June 2024 in accordance with current Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Guidelines during the active season of bats (see **Figure 1.1**).

Table 7.2. Recommended minimum number of survey visits for presence/absence surveys to give confidence in a negative result for structures (also recommended for trees but unlikely to give confidence in a negative result).		
Low roost suitability or PRF-I	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability or PRF-M
One survey visit. One dusk emergence survey ^a (structures). No further surveys required (trees).	Two separate dusk emergence survey visits ^b .	Three separate dusk emergence survey visits ^b .

Figure 1.1 - Extract from *Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023)*

- 1.4 The results, conclusions and recommendations following the survey, including any indicative mitigation to inform an application to Natural England for a European protected species mitigation licence (EPSML), where necessary, will be supplied within this report.
- 1.5 This report should be read, understood and presented to the local authority as an additional document to Appendix I (see Contents page).
- 1.6 In accordance with *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development* (CIEEM *et al*, 2019), measures have been recommended proportionate to anticipated impacts to ensure that the proposed development results in a biodiversity net gain.

2.0 Bats - Legislation & Policy

2.1 All British bats and their ****roosts**¹ are afforded protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and are listed in Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/579). When dealing with cases where a European Protected Species (EPS) (all UK bats) may be affected, a planning authority is a competent authority within the meaning of the Regulation 7 of the Regulations, that has a statutory duty as the local authority to have due regard to the provisions of the Regulations in the exercise of its functions.

2.2 Use of Buildings by Bats

- a) Summer breeding roost (May-August)
- b) Hibernation roost (October-March)
- c) Transitional or temporary roost (Mainly spring/summer months)

Roost selection is often closely correlated to suitable foraging habitat within a reasonable commuting distance from the roost and different sites are used depending upon insect densities and abundance, climatic conditions can also affect their ability to successfully forage. All British bats are insectivorous.

2.3 Up to nine bat species have been recorded in Greater Manchester to date, most of which use built structures notably residential properties for roosting. The most frequently encountered bat species is the Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and its abundant status in Greater Manchester is reflected throughout the UK.

Policy

2.4 Paragraph 180 of the National Policy Planning Framework (as revised in July 2021) states:

180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁶³ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and,

¹ ******The term roost is generically referred to as a place that bat/s use for the any of the above reasons, however it should be noted that under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2019) (EU Exit) (Regulation 43 (d) the term roost is not used but refers to “a *breeding site or resting place of such an animal*” and is afforded legal protection. The roost, breeding site or resting place of bats, which ever terminology is used is legally protected whether or not bats are in occupation.

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

2.5 Bury Council's Planning Policy, reflects the above in Policy EN6:

"The Council will retain, protect and enhance the natural environment of the Borough, particularly in relation to areas of ecological, wildlife and geological importance...

Planning permission will not be granted for development in or in the vicinity of a designated or proposed site of national or county/regional importance (Site of Special Scientific Interest or National Nature Reserve or Site of Biological Importance which has been identified as of national or county/regional importance i.e. Grade A) which would destroy or adversely affect, either directly or indirectly, the nature conservation interest of the site, unless it can be demonstrated that other material considerations outweigh the special interest of the site."

3.0 Survey Methods

- 3.1 Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023) edition states:-

“The guidelines do not aim to either override or replace knowledge and experience. It is accepted that departures from the guidelines (e.g. either decreasing or increasing the number of surveys carried out or using alternative methods) are often appropriate... The guidance should be interpreted and adapted on a case-by-case basis according to site-specific factors and the professional judgement of an experienced ecologist. Where examples are used in the guidelines, they are descriptive rather than prescriptive.”

Relative to the above the survey protocol has been determined using the collective and long standing experience of Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd and knowledge of the specific nature of the site.

Survey Protocol

- 3.2 The timing of the surveys took place in May and June thus within the main active period of bats, at a time when maternity colonies have formed / returned to summer roosts and bats are in a highly active and social stage.

In accordance with Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023), it is specified that:

“The bat active period is generally considered to be between April and October inclusive”, though the period of May - August is considered the most optimal owing to the likelihood of detecting a greater range of roost types namely Maternity and Summer roosts; typically only surveys within this period are accepted by licensing authorities as the results of these surveys are used to inform an EPS licence application or a non-licensable Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS).

In this case the bat roost potential that exists at Ferngrove House presents no problems for dusk observations; if a building is complex, or observations were restricted, or species that are difficult to detect at dusk are suspected then dawn surveys would be conducted where appropriate. At Ferngrove House there are no visual constraints and to date there is no evidence to suggest the presence of such species.

Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th ed. (2023), it is specified that:

“Roost re-entry visits prior to dawn are no longer routinely recommended for presence/absence surveys due to the risk of bats returning early and being missed ... As return times appear to be far more variable (Andrews & Pearson, 2022).”

Survey protocol should not be determined by parties who are 1) not familiar with the site 2) do not have a sufficient level of experience in relation to the undertaking of dusk/dawn bat surveys.

- 3.3 The number of surveys and surveyors was adequate relative to the roost potential that was identified on attendance of the site i.e. ‘Moderate’ and requiring one surveyor to accurately monitor potential roost features (PRF’s) on the buildings at any one time.

- 3.4 Surveyors were strategically positioned so that all elevations with bat roost potential, as described in the daytime report, could be observed without limitation. The surveyors were aided with Anabat SD2, Batlogger M & M2, Echometer EM2, Peersonic RPA3, or equivalent electronic bat detectors that enable the locating and recording of the high frequency calls that are emitted by bats; echolocation calls were analysed the next day using Analook, Kaleidoscope, BatExplorer or equivalent computer software to verify field observations. Where deemed appropriate by the attending ecologists, elevations were also surveyed via the use of a Night Visual Aid (NVA) Camera (Panasonic HC-VXF990) or Nightfox Whisker Night Vision Binoculars – recordings would be subject to review the following day to identify emergences / flight lines and species / abundance.

4.0 Results

4.1 Bats

Two dusk emergence surveys were undertaken on 7th May 2024 and the 10th June by one surveyor on each occasion; surveyor credentials have been given within **Table 4.1**. **Tables 4.2-4.3** alongside **Figure 4.1-4.2** document the results of the dusk survey.

Table 4.1 - Surveyor Credentials

Surveyor(s)	Experience	Surveyor Credentials
Mr. H. Mulligan	2 years	Junior Ecologist with a range of training and experience. MBiolSci in Biological Sciences (Zoology), Qualifying CIEEM Accredited agent on the Class 2 Natural England bat licence of Mrs. K. Wilding (CLS-14227)
Mr. J. Hark <i>Qualifying CIEEM</i>	5 years	Five years professional consultant experience and training in species ecology. Relevant Degree: MSc Wildlife Conservation Accredited agent on the Class 2 Natural England bat license of Mrs K Wilding (CLS-14227)

Table 4.2 – Survey date, times and weather conditions

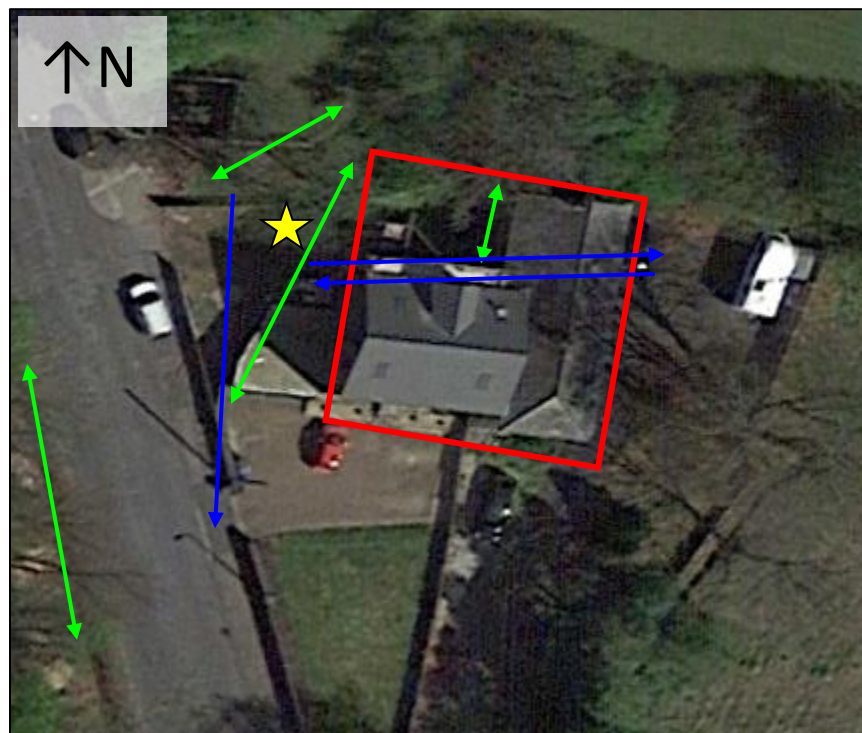
Times of Survey	Date	Weather Conditions
Dusk survey 2030-2220	7 th May 2024	Sunset: 2050: Clear, 5% cloud cover Start temp: 16 ° C End temp: 14 ° C
Dusk survey 2118-2310	10 th June 2024	Sunset: 2138: Cool, breezy, 90% cloud cover Start temp: 13 ° C End temp: 11 ° C

Table 4.3 – Dusk Survey Results

Dusk Survey	Time	Activity
07/05/2024	2030-2220	Summary: No bat emergence for the duration of the survey. 2108-2110 hrs: Common pipistrelle (CP) seen foraging in trees behind surveyor. 2112-2114 hrs: Two CP seen foraging between the trees to the west and north.

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		2116 hrs: CP seen foraging in trees behind surveyor. 2119-2123 hrs: CP seen foraging high along the tree line in the west. 2124-2125 hrs: CP seen commuting over the building from west to east before foraging in courtyard. 2127-2132 hrs: Two CP seen foraging along same route as listed above. 2131 hrs: CP seen commuting from north to south along western facing elevation. General activity consisted of commuting and foraging of up to two Common pipistrelle.
10/06/2024	2118-2310	Summary: No bat emergence for the duration of the survey. 2120 hrs: Common pipistrelle (CP) heard not seen commuting as a very quick pass nearby. 2131 hrs: CP seen continuously foraging over west facing gable. 2150 hrs: CP seen continuously foraging within the general area of the site from south to north. General activity consisted of foraging of one Common pipistrelle.



Dusk Survey – 07/05/2024

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Key			
	Site Boundary		Foraging activity
	Surveyor Positions		Commuting activity
	Directional compass		

Figure 4.1 - Visual Aid - Dusk Survey Results with Key



Dusk survey – 10/06/2024

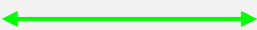
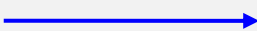
Key			
	Site Boundary		Foraging activity
	Surveyor Positions		Commuting activity
	Directional compass		

Figure 4.2 - Visual Aid - Dusk Survey Results with Key

4.2 Breeding Birds

The daytime report identified that breeding birds could potentially use B2 for nesting purposes, furthermore, the local planning authority stated - *"the building may also provide opportunities for nesting birds. As part of the bat surveys any evidence of nesting birds should also be recorded"*

Therefore prior to and during the dusk emergence survey observations were further made in relation to any bird activity. However, on both occasions any activity by this species was absent to suggest nesting and it can be concluded that breeding birds are currently absent from the site.

5.0 Survey Conclusions & Recommendations

5.1 From the dusk survey results, it can be concluded that whilst using best practice survey methodology, emergence of bats was absent at Ferngrove House, and activity was limited to foraging and commuting of up to two Common pipistrelles.

5.2 As bats are highly transient species and can use buildings that offer potential roost features at any time of the year, it should be stated that if bats, or evidence of bats (see Figure 5.1), is found at any stage during the works then as a legal requirement the work at the site should immediately cease and a bat ecologist contacted for further advice.



Figure 5.1 - Bat droppings (left) and pipistrelle bat (right)

5.3 If bat(s) or their roost will be affected then a Natural England Mitigation licence will be required to legally continue with the work. Notwithstanding the granting of a licence works that would affect a roost cannot take place if a maternity colony is in occupation.

5.4 Notwithstanding absence of roost behaviour observed, the proposed development scheme might consider enhancement for bats as part of its biodiversity net-gain goals, in accordance with local and national planning policy.

See Figures overleaf for indicative ideas which could be integrated during the proposed new development at Ferngrove House.

Enhancing a development site for Bats

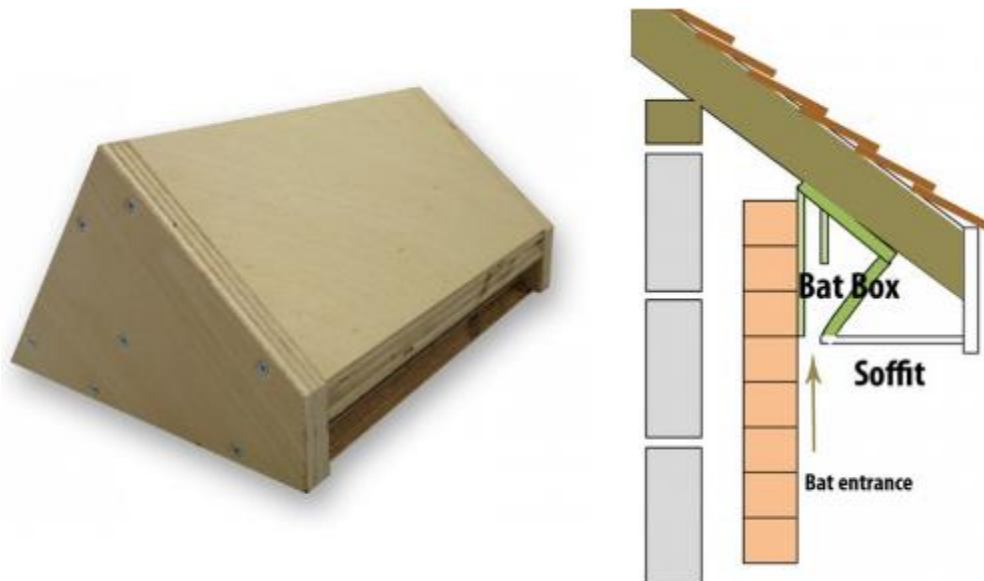
Integrated bat box

The Habibat Bat Box is a solid box made of insulating concrete with internal roosting space. The box blends seamlessly into brick-built properties and may be incorporated into the fabric of buildings, being best placed on gable elevations.



Soffit access

Where soffits are instated at gable elevations, roost provision may be instated in the form of a soffit bat box with internal roosting space.



Externally fitted boxes

A large number of externally fitted box models for bats exist for buildings and trees. Suitable models for both buildings and trees may include the Eco Kent Bat Box.

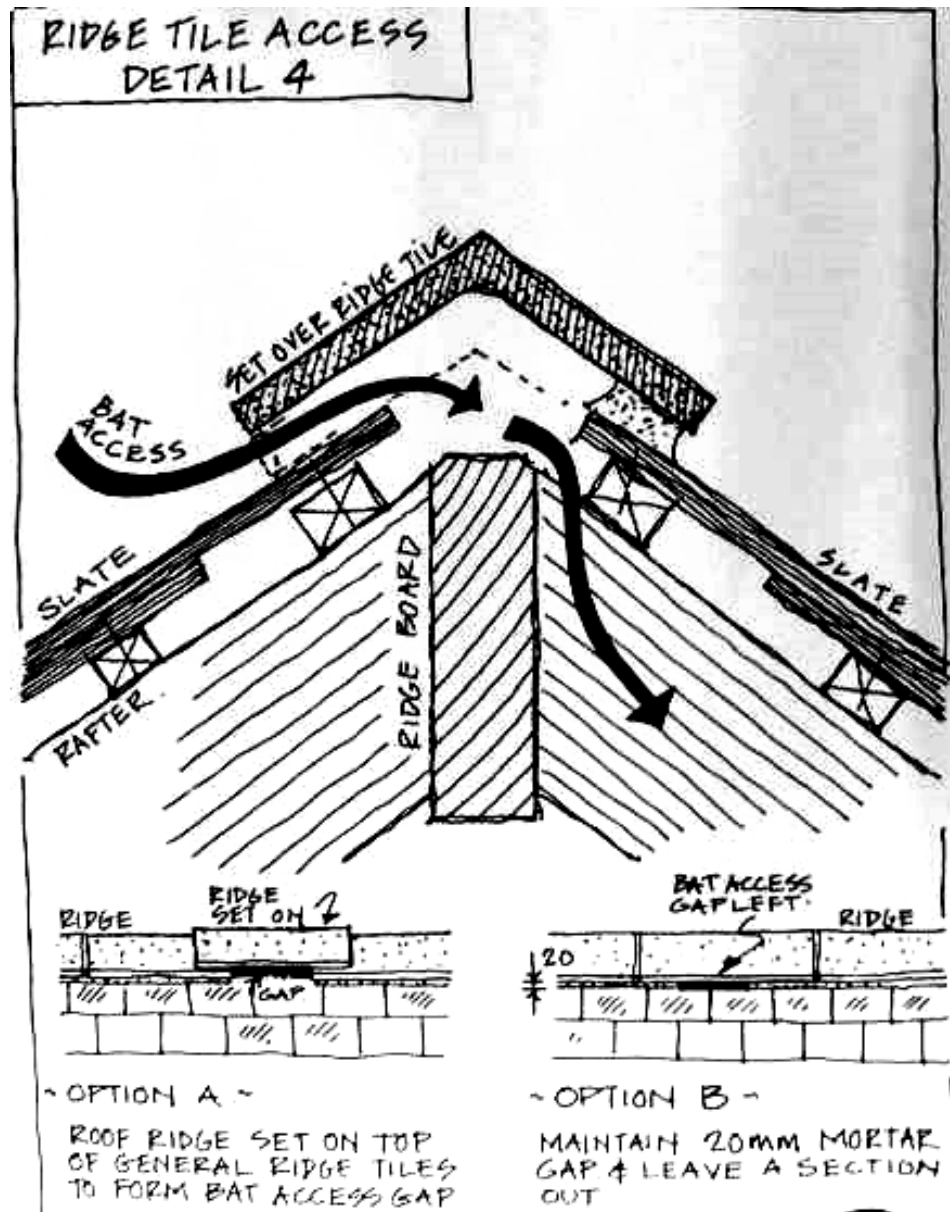


Ridge access

Where appropriated, ridge tile access should be made with the incorporation of traditional Bitumen 1F underfelt immediately beneath ridge tiles. Breathable BRM membrane can cause significant problems where bats are in contact with it, whereby their fine claws become entangled within the fibres of the membrane, entrapping and killing bats.

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6.0 References

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Appendix I: *Inspection & Assessment in Relation to Bats & Breeding Birds* (Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, February 2024)