

2 Cliff Avenue, Summerseat
Dusk Bat Emergence Surveys
2023



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Client Eden Planning

Project Title 2 Cliff Avenue, Summerseat

Project Reference RHE.3934

Project Leader Simon Holden

Contact Details simon@rachelhackingecology.co.uk

	Name	Position	Date
Author	Austin Rigby	Junior Ecologist	04/10/2023
Reviewer	Simon Holden	Associate Ecologist	04/10/2023
Revision			



**RACHEL
HACKING
ECOLOGY**

The Stables
Paradise Wharf
Ducie Street
Manchester
M1 2JN

0161 465 8971

www.rachelhackingecology.co.uk

mail@rachelhackingecology.co.uk



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Executive Summary

Development Details

The client is proposing residential development at 2 Cliff Avenue, Summerseat, Bury hereafter referred to as the 'site'.

This report describes the status of roosting bats at the site and assesses the potential impacts of the development on bats. Recommendations are provided so that the development is compliant with biodiversity policy and legislation.

Ecological Interest

No evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the survey.

Outcomes

The proposed development of 2 Cliff Avenue, Summerseat is unlikely to result in any impacts to bats or their roosts and no further survey or mitigation are required. The proposed development offers an opportunity to enhance the site for bats by installing bat boxes in the new buildings.



1. Introduction

1.1 Project Brief

- 1.1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2023 by Eden Planning to carry out a Dusk Bat Emergence Survey at 2 Cliff Avenue, Summerseat hereafter referred to as the 'site'. The site is a residential property with a garden in a suburban area. The site is located at O.S. grid reference: SD 79610 14971 (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Map showing the location of the site

- 1.1.2 The site is bordered by steep slope down to the River Irwell to the north separated by a footpath. All other sides are bordered with residential housing.

Description of Development

- 1.1.3 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the demolition of existing dwelling and construction of a replacement dwelling and four infill dwellings, together with car parking, landscaping and associated works.

Relevant Planning History

- 1.1.4 During a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal¹ the building was assessed as offering moderate potential to support roosting bats due to the gaps in the walls, soffits and verges.

1.2 Scope of Work

- 1.2.1 The Client commissioned Rachel Hacking Ecology to carry out two dusk emergence bat surveys of the property.

1.3 Aims of the Survey

- 1.3.1 The aims of the survey were to establish the status of roosting bats and inform mitigation requirements.

¹ Indigo Surveys Ltd. (2023) 2 Cliff Avenue, Summerseat: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA).



2. Methods

2.1 Dusk Emergence Surveys

- 2.1.1 Two dusk emergence surveys were undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (2016). Three surveyors and two infra-red cameras monitored the building, to ensure complete coverage for any emerging bats. The emergence surveys began 15 minutes before dusk and continued for 90 minutes after dusk (the second survey was cut short due to rain). The surveyors used an Echometer Touch 2 Pro bat detectors to record the echolocations of bats.

2.2 Assessment Criteria

- 2.2.1 Interpretation of survey findings and assessment of roosting potential was undertaken using professional judgement and criteria described in published guidance^{2,3}.

2.3 Site Visit Information

Survey Details

- 2.3.1 The first survey was led by Matthew Bottomley (Ecologist). Matthew has 2 years' professional experience of undertaking similar surveys and was assisted by assistant ecologists; Brady Locke-King, Marco Dobson, Verity Carr and Joe Samuels.
- 2.3.2 The second survey was led by Simon Holden (Associate Ecologist). Simon has 18 years' professional experience of undertaking similar surveys and holds a level 2 class survey licence (Reference 2019-42937-CLS-CLS). Simon was assisted by Megan Johnson (Junior Ecologist) and Steve Smith (Assistant Ecologist).

Site Conditions

- 2.3.3 The weather at the time of the first survey was cloudy with an average temperature of 16°C. The weather at the time of the second survey was dry and overcast with an average temperature of 13°C (rain from 19:45). The site conditions were appropriate for a full assessment to be undertaken.

² Collins, J. (Ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists-good practice guidelines*. 4th edn. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

³ Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield..

2.4 Surveyor Positions

2.4.1 Figure 2 shows the locations of the surveyors and cameras during the surveys.



Figure 2: Surveyor locations (white stars); infra-red camera locations (red stars)

3. Results

- 3.1.1 No bats were recorded emerging from the building during the surveys. Some sporadic Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and Noctule *Nyctalus noctula* activity was recorded (foraging and commuting) .



4. Assessment

4.1 Limitations

- 4.1.1 September is a suitable time of year for bat surveys, as no potential for a maternity roost was identified.
- 4.1.2 The second survey was undertaken during early-October. While outside the standard survey window, bat activity was recorded and the timing of this survey is not considered to be a limitation.
- 4.1.3 The second survey was ended an hour after sunset due to the onset of rain. Bat activity was recorded during the survey and Pipistrelles generally emerge within 30 minutes of sunset. The survey was deemed to be valid and a high degree of confidence is placed on the results.

4.2 Interpretation of Results

- 4.2.1 No evidence of roosting bats was identified during the dusk emergence survey. It is concluded that the site does not support roosting bats. The proposed development is unlikely to result in any impacts to bats or their roosts.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1.1 No further surveys or mitigation are required.
- 5.1.2 Bats can roost in suitable features opportunistically. In the unlikely event that a bat is encountered at any time, work should stop in that area and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted to attend site and advise how to proceed.
- 5.1.3 The proposed development offers an opportunity to enhance the site for bats by installing bat boxes within new buildings. These could either be integral boxes built into the brickwork, or externally mounted boxes. Bat boxes should be installed at eaves height, facing southeast to southwest, but not directly above windows or doorways.
- 5.1.4 This report is considered to be valid for 18 months. After this, an update assessment is recommended.



Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) describes the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. Within this framework, the requirements in relation to biodiversity are included within several policies. The two most relevant to individual planning decisions are Paragraphs 174 and 180, shown below:

- 174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a. protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b. recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c. maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d. minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; etc...
- 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 reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- 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

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty on every public authority to have regard to conserving biodiversity. Section 41 of the same Act requires that the Secretary of State must publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitats that are of 'Principal Importance' for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The Secretary of State must take steps, as appear reasonably practicable, to further the conservation of those living organisms and habitats in any list published under this section. The list of species and habitats of principal importance currently includes 943 species and 56 habitats.

Legislation

All bat species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit), which make it an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat;
- Deliberately disturb bats;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

Proposed development works that are likely to disturb or destroy bats or their roosts will need to obtain a licence from the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (e.g., Natural England) prior to work commencing.



Appendix 2: Survey Data

Table 2. Results from the first dusk emergence survey				
Survey Type	Date	Average Temp (°C)	Sunset/ Sunrise	Weather
Dusk emergence	14.09.2023	16	19:29	Cloudy, Dry
19:31: Noctule pass, heard not seen				
19:36: Common Pipistrelle pass				
19:49: Common Pipistrelle pass				
20:08: Common Pipistrelle pass				
20:35: Noctule pass, heard not seen				
20:46: Common Pipistrelle pass, heard not seen				

Table 3. Results from the second dusk emergence survey				
Survey Type	Date	Average Temp (°C)	Sunset/ Sunrise	Weather
Dusk emergence	03.10.2023	13	18:42	Overcast, dry, light wind (BS3-4)
Results				
18:48: Common Pipistrelle foraging around trees in the east of the site for one minute.				
19:01: Common Pipistrelle commuting south to north.				
19:06: Common Pipistrelle pass, heard not seen.				
Survey terminated at 19:45 due to rain.				