

Fletchers Fold, Bury

Technical Note: Aerial Tree Survey for Bats

Project	Fletchers Fold	Purpose	Aerial Tree Survey of PRFs for Bat Roosting Potential to discharge condtions		
Location	Bury				
Client	RP Tyson Construction Ltd				
Doc Ref	Version	Authored	Checked	Approved	
10920.004	1.0	PJB	JC	JC/PJB	

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1

The Environment Partnership (TEP) was originally commissioned in October 2023 to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) to support of a planning application for residential development at Fletcher Fold Road, Bury.
- 1.2

The Site (0.9ha) is located 2km south of Bury (approximate central grid reference: SD 80627 08682). The Site is bound by Goshen Lane and Manor House Gardens to the north, residential development associated with Meadway and the River Roch to the east, a lake to the south and Manchester Road (A56) to the west.

Planning

- 1.3

A full planning application was submitted to Bury Council in May 2024 (planning application reference: 70805) for the erection of four bungalows and a block of thirty-nine apartments for the over 55s including communal facilities, landscaping and car parking provision at Land off Fletcher Fold.The application was subsequently granted permission, subject to various planning conditions, including Condition 4 (trees with bat potential).
- 1.4

To discharge condition 4, two trees (T2 and T8) have been identified as being removed due to development. Both trees were identified as having potential roost features for bats and would need further assessment prior to removal, which included the following;

 - T2 - Semi-mature holm oak with a split in trunk creating small crevice at 5m on the northernaspect. Categoricalised as PRF-I

- T8 - Mature willow with snapped branch overhanging into site could provide potential PRF. Categorised as PRF-M

1.5 All trees were originally categorised in accordance with the criteria for roost habitat assessments identified in the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) 2023 Good Practice Guidelines (Collins)¹. Bat roost habitat suitability categorisation details are described in Table 1. Roost habitat suitability categorisation takes into consideration parameters such as location, habitat connectivity, materials, condition and aspect of structures and trees.

Table 1: Categorisation of suitability of tree PRFs for roosting bats (Collins J, 2023)

Tree PRF Suitability	Further Requirements
None	No survey requirements.
PRF-I (PRF is only suitable for individual bats, or very small numbers of bats, either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitat)	No further surveys required. Appropriate compensation required for each PRF-I, prior to impacts. Supervision of works and a precautionary inspection of the PRFs to be completed by a bat licenced consultant.
PRF-M (PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.)	Three aerial PRF inspections of the PRF-M features to be undertaken within May – September, spaced three weeks apart. Where access is not possible for aerial inspection either by ladder or MEWP, or features are too extensive to survey thoroughly, three dusk emergence surveys will be carried out, supported with night vision camera aids.

¹ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

2.0 PRF Aerial Inspection Surveys - Trees

Methods

- 2.1
- The aim of an aerial bat survey is to re-examine the PRFs and determine the presence/absence of bats at the time of the survey and the need for further survey and/or mitigation.
- 2.2
- The survey involved a NE bat licensed tree climber undertaking an inspecting PRFs by eye using torches and endoscopes to look for roosting bats or signs of roosting bats such as bat droppings, staining, markings and feeding remains. In addition, the inspection of each PRF would evaluate its overall suitability to support roosting bats. This considers the size, shape and orientation of the PRF in addition to presence of competitor species and external factors such as prevailing weather conditions and artificial light sources

Results

- 2.3
- The surveys were undertaken on 18th February 2025. The results of the aerial bat tree survey are given in Table 2, with tree data given in Annex A, however in summary
 - T2 remains PRF-I
 - T8 is re-categorised as Negligible
- 2.4
- Within T2, an old tear out has left behind jagged, raised heartwood forming a small, flat cavity that extends upwards and could accommodate a small number of bats (figure 1)
- 2.5
- With regards to T8 the two overhanging branches were entirely detached from the tree, loose and unstable and hanging in the air caught between the remaining tree and fence. The limbs were lowered onto the site side during the survey. Neither had any PRFs in. There's a limb with a crack in it on the main tree identified as PRF-I, however as it is outside of the application boundary, no further action is required (figure 2).

Table 2: Results of the Aerial Tree Survey

Tree ID:	Original PRF Categorisation:	Post Survey PRF Categorisation:	Further Requirements:
T2	PRF-I	PRF-I	Soft felling of tree under supervision of bat licensed ecologist
T8	PRF-M.	Negligible	No further action to be taken



Figure 1: T2 Holm Oak (PRF-I)



Figure 2: T8 Mature willow (Negligable)

Annex A:

Aerial Survey Tree Data

Surveyor: Lee Bagnall
 Date: 18/02/2025
 Site: Fletcher Fold Road
 Weather: Dry, partly cloudy, Beaufort 2, 4C

PRF						Entrance		Internal dimensions			Internal conditions					Roosting Evidence					Comment ID	Reviewed roost potential
Tree ID/Ref	Stem/limb	Type	Facing	Height (m)	DPH (cm)	Height (cm)	Width (cm)	Height (cm)	Width (cm)	Depth (cm)	Smell	Substrate	Apex shape	Humidity	Competitors	Droppings	Bat species	Number of bats	Position	Distance from entrance		
T2	stem	Old tearout	N	3	30	25	12	10	10	0	None	Rough	Flat	Dry	Woodlice	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	PRF-I
T8	limb	Crack from transverse	W	4.5	20	60	3	0	20	0	None	Smooth	Flat	Dry	None	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	B	PRF-I

Comment ID	Comment
A	T2. Holm oak. Old tearout has left behind jagged,raised heartwood forming a small, flat cavity that extends upwards slightly and could accommodate a small number of bats.
B	T8. Willow offsite. Two snapped branches were overhanging the site. Neither branch was attached to the tree, they were entirely severed and suspended on the remaining tree and pallisade fence. There were no PRFs within the detached branches, these were lowered to the ground for safety purposes. Below where one of the limbs had snapped, a crack has formed. It is open along its length and exposed, it has low potential to be used by individual bats but please note the remaining limb where this feature is located is outside of the site and doesn't hang over into the site.

Annex B:

Legislation

All bat species and their roosts are legally protected in the UK. All bats are listed as European Protected Species (EPS) in the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as the Habitats Directive². Annex II of the Habitats Directive lists bat species of community interest requiring designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Annex IV of the Habitats Directive lists all bats as species of community interest in need of strict protection.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017³ and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019⁴ (England and Wales), The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)⁵ (Scotland) and The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended)⁶, transpose elements of the Habitats Directive into national law and are referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations'. There is also protection for bats and roosts in England and Wales under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)⁷. Under UK legislation it is a criminal offence if any persons:

- Intentionally kill, injure, or take any bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection by a bat (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time);
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat whilst it occupies a place used for shelter or protection; and
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat.

² Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Eur-Lex. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A01992L0043-20130701>

³ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/1012). Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/>

⁴ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/579). Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/579/>

⁵ The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) No. 2716. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1994/2716/contents/made>

⁶ The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) No. 380. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/1995/380/contents/made>

⁷ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) c. 69. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/>

Section 41 (S41) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) (England)⁸, Section 7 (S7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016⁹, Section 2(4) (S2) of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004¹⁰ and Section 3(1) (S3) of the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011¹¹ also identify bat species regarded by Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations (SNCOs) as being of 'principal importance' for the purposes of conserving biodiversity. Species of principal importance (SPI) are drawn from earlier lists of United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Species and Habitats.

Local authorities also identify bat species of importance within Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP) for the purposes of conserving biodiversity.

⁸ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 c. 16. UK Public General Acts. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/>

⁹ Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (anaw 3) Part 1 Section 7. Acts of the National Assembly for Wales. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/section/7>

¹⁰ Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 asp 6 Part 1 Section 2. Acts of the Scottish Parliament. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/6/section/2>

¹¹ Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, C. 15. Acts of the Northern Ireland Assembly: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2011/15/contents>