

JD DANCE CLUB, ROCHDALE

Nocturnal Bat Survey Report

August 2023



Report Control Sheet

Project Name: JD Dance Club, Rochdale
Project Reference: CW20-889
Report Title: Nocturnal Bat Survey Report
Report Reference: CW20-889 RPT 002
Printing Instructions: Print at A4 Portrait, Double Sided.

<i>Rev</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Prepared</i>	<i>Reviewed</i>	<i>Approved</i>
<i>I</i>	15/08/2023	Draft report sent to Client for comment.	CO	OC	OC
<i>II</i>	21/08/2023	Final report sent to client	AT	OC	OC

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. SCOPE & PURPOSE

- 1.1.1. Collington Winter Environmental Ltd was commissioned by Dawn Jackson to undertake a nocturnal bat survey at the site at JD Dance Club, 180 Whitehall Street, Rochdale, OL12 0RZ. This report has been produced to inform planning permission for a conversion from commercial to residential property at the site.
- 1.1.2. The author of this report is Caitlin O'Connor, Assistant Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd. The project has been managed and overseen by Katie Bird MEnvSci, ACIEEM Principal Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd. Katie is highly experienced managing schemes and has produced many ecological reports to inform planning management plans.
- 1.1.3. A Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken of the site in June 2023 by Collington Winter Environmental which found the building to provide low bat roosting potential. Therefore, a minimum of one nocturnal emergence survey was recommended, the results of which are detailed in this report. Due to roosting behaviour being identified during the first survey, in accordance with guidance (Collins, 2016) a further nocturnal survey was recommended which is also detailed within this report.

1.2. LOCATION

- 1.2.1. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for the approximate site location. The site is in Rochdale, a town in Greater Manchester.

Figure 1.1 Site Location



1.3. OBJECTIVES

- 1.3.1. The objectives of the Nocturnal Bat Survey are as follows:
- Identify any bats roosting within the buildings.
 - Assess the value of the buildings for roosting bats.
 - Identify the species assemblage of bats using the site.
 - Provide recommendations on any further surveys or mitigation required for bats.

2 METHODOLOGY

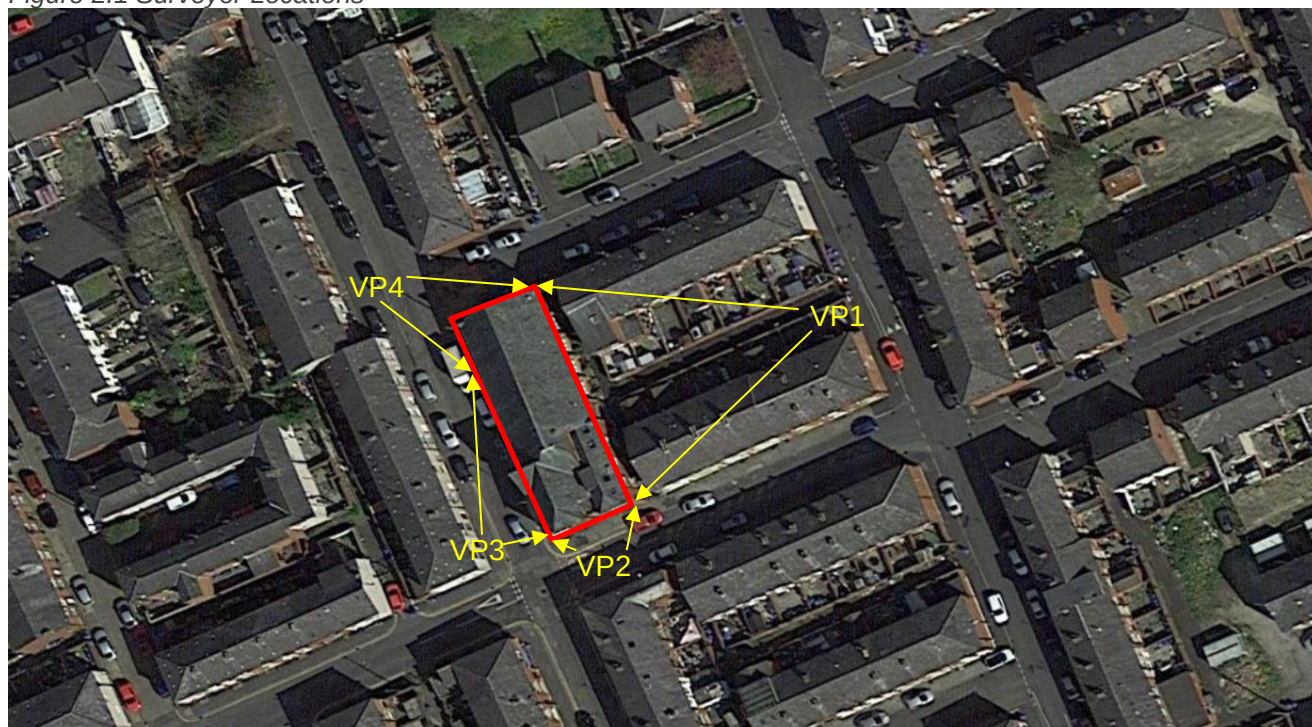
2.1. NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY

2.1.1. The nocturnal surveys were undertaken as a dusk survey on 13th July 2023 and as a dusk survey on 10th August 2023 by four suitably experienced surveyors.

2.1.2. During the dusk on the 13th July, a bat was observed unknown to have emerged from a roost. Therefore, an update to that survey was undertaken on 19th July to focus on the feature and determine if a bat emerged.

2.1.3. Please refer to Figure 2.1 for locations of vantage points (VPs) used during the survey.

Figure 2.1 Surveyor Locations



2.1.4. The surveys were undertaken in line with guidance as set out in Collins (2016). Surveyors used heterodyne handheld bat detectors. All surveyors were suitably experienced undertaking bat emergence surveys. Please refer to Table 2.1 below for details of surveyors.

Date	Sunset/ Sunrise Time	Start	Finish	Surveyors	Weather Conditions
13/07/2023	21:33	21:18	23:03	VP1 – Joshua Dixon VP2 – Samuel Penrhyn-Lowe VP3 – Jess Davies VP4 – Darnell Shaw	Temp at start/end: 16 Celsius Cloud cover: 1 Wind: 0 max (Beaufort scale) Precipitation: None
19/07/2023	21:26	21:11	22:56	VP1 – Darnell Shaw VP3 – Samuel Penrhyn-Lowe	Temp at start/end: 15 Celsius Cloud cover: 1 Wind: 0 max (Beaufort scale) Precipitation: None
10/08/2023	20:48	20:33	22:18	VP1 – Ben Miles VP2 – Samuel Penrhyn-Lowe VP3 – Emma	Temp at start/end: 23 Celsius Cloud cover: 2 Wind: 0 max (Beaufort scale) Precipitation: None

				Anderson VP4 – Darnell Shaw	
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2.2. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

2.2.1. No limitations were observed during the surveys.

3 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1. DUSK SURVEY (13/07/23)

3.1.1. Bat activity was recorded throughout the survey, with only common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) observed foraging or commuting in proximity of all vantage points.

3.1.2. The first bat was recorded at 21:55 (approximately 22 minutes after sunset) by VP1 and was common pipistrelle. This bat emerged from the roof tiles of the building and was then observed foraging in proximity to the building. A single common pipistrelle was recorded at 22:10. This bat was observed by all VPs foraging in proximity of the building and utilising the road for commuting activity was continuous until 22:39. A single common pipistrelle was observed at 22:50 by VP3 and Vp4. This bat was heard but not seen.

3.1.3. **One roost location was observed during the survey.** A single common pipistrelle was observed by VP1 at 21:55. This bat emerged from the roof ridge tiles at the top of the eastern aspect of the building. Please refer to Figure 3.1 for the approximate emergence location.

3.2. DUSK SURVEY (19/07/23)

3.2.1. Limited bat activity was recorded throughout the survey, with only common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) observed foraging or commuting in proximity of all vantage points.

3.2.2. The first bat was recorded at 21:57 (approximately 31 minutes after sunset) by VP1 and was common pipistrelle. This bat emerged from the roof tiles of the building and was then observed foraging in proximity to the building this activity continued until 22:22. VP1 also recorded activity at 22:29. A single common pipistrelle was observed commuting east away from the building and to the treeline. VP3 recorded no activity throughout the survey.

3.2.3. **One roost location was observed during the survey.** A single common pipistrelle was observed by VP1 at 21:57. This bat emerged from the roof ridge tiles at the top of the eastern aspect of the building in the same location as observed during the previous survey. Please refer to Figure 3.1 for the approximate emergence location.

Figure 3.1 – Emergence Location



3.3. DUSK SURVEY (10/08/23)

- 3.3.1. Limited bat activity was recorded throughout the survey, with only common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) observed foraging or commuting in proximity of all vantage points.
- 3.3.2. The first bat was recorded at 21:16 by VP3. A single soprano pipistrelle was observed as heard but not seen. VP3 also recorded a common pipistrelle as heard but not seen at 21:24 and a soprano pipistrelle as heard but not seen at 21:58. VP1 recorded a common pipistrelle at 21:45. This bat was observed as heard but not seen. The final bat was recorded at 22:14 by all VPs. This was a common pipistrelle recorded as heard but not seen.
- 3.3.3. **No roost locations were observed throughout the survey.**

3.4. ASSESSMENT

- 3.4.1. Bat activity was recorded throughout both surveys with only common and widespread species being identified within the local area. Foraging and commuting activity was recorded throughout the survey.
- 3.4.2. During the surveys on 13th July and 19th July 2023 a single non-breeding summer roost for common pipistrelle was observed on the eastern aspect of the building in relation to the roof ridge tiles. The low numbers of bats (i.e. peak count of one bat per roost) recorded using the roost during the survey, indicates that the roost is non-breeding summer roost for low numbers of common and widespread species of bat.
- 3.4.3. Bat roost categorisation was possible as surveys were completed during maternity roost season. As stated in the best practice guidelines (Collins, 2016) to determine the presence of a maternity roost surveys are to be carried out in the months of May to August. A single bat was observed during the first survey, indicating it is a non-breeding, transitional roost.

Figure 3.3 – Roost location



4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND MITIGATION

4.1. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1.1. During surveys, one non-breeding summer roost of common pipistrelle was identified within the building. Bat activity was recorded, with only common and widespread species identified during the nocturnal surveys. Foraging and commuting were recorded mainly in association with the surrounding treelines.
- 4.1.2. The proposed development works will include a conversion from commercial to residential property at the site. There is considered to be a risk of injuring and/or killing bats or disturbing/destroying a known bat roost as a result of the proposed works. As such, a Natural England European Licence is required to be obtained prior to any works being completed on the building.
- 4.1.3. Development should not result in overall loss of bat roost sites and therefore a replacement roost site will need to be provided for the species affected. The Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, 2004) state that avoiding damage or loss of existing roosts is the preferred option in all cases and wherever possible, replacement roost habitat should be on a “like for like” basis to replicate the existing conditions selected by the bats.

4.2. BAT LICENCE

- 4.2.1. A Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) is to be used for the site which is applicable for the destruction of up to three “low conservation status roosts” which include feeding, day, night and transitional roosts. The site will be registered under a BMCL of a suitably qualified ecologist. The following Working Methods will be followed under the supervision of a licenced bat ecologist to reduce the risk of killing/ injuring bats (see Section 4.4).
- 4.2.2. The roosts located on the building will be demolished under the supervision of the registered licenced bat ecologist under the Natural England BMCL.

4.3. THREE TESTS

- 4.3.1. A licence to derogate from the statutory protection afforded to bats can be granted for a number of specified reasons or purposes as set out in Regulation 53 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). These reasons are often referred to as the ‘three tests’. Consideration of the three tests is to be used to demonstrate that it is reasonable to assume that a Natural England licence will be granted in this case.

Test 1

- 4.3.2. Regulation 53(2)(e) states: a licence can be granted for the purposes of “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”, typically referred to as the ‘Overriding Public Importance Test’.

Test 2

- 4.3.3. Regulation 53(9)(a) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that there is no satisfactory alternative”, typically referred to as the ‘No Satisfactory Alternative’ test.

Test 3

- 4.3.4. Regulation 53(9)(b) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range”, typically referred to as the ‘Favourable Conservation Status’ test.

4.4. WORKING METHODS

- 4.4.1. Proposed works to the building will cause an offence to be committed by the way of disturbance or damage to bats or their roosts under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (As amended).
- 4.4.2. Therefore, works to the building, which was assessed to support a roost for common pipistrelle should be undertaken under a Natural England BMCL. In addition, the following Precautionary Working Methods (PWMs)

are to be undertaken under the supervision of a licenced bat ecologist to reduce the risk of killing or injuring any bats.

4.4.3. Pre-commencement works are as follows:

- Before works can start, two general purpose bat boxes will be fixed to a suitable location.
- Boxes are to be affixed within the landowners land. Boxes must be positioned on a south-west or south-east-facing aspect, at a minimum of 4m from the ground, and must remain in situ for a minimum of 5 years.
- The licenced ecologist will undertake a daylight inspection to assess the status of the site for bats prior to works commencing on site. The ecologist will check for fresh droppings and accurately assess the levels of bat activity.
- The ecologist will attend site on the day of the scheduled works to undertake a search for bats in the identified roost locations prior to the works commencing (i.e. supervise removal of hanging tiles at emergence location). Any bats found will be relocated into the roost provisions, already installed on site. The initial stages of the works will occur under the supervision of the ecologist.
- All contractors working on the site will be briefed with a Toolbox Talk by the licenced ecologist, on the legal protection afforded to bats and their roosts, and on how to proceed if a bat is discovered during the course of the work.
- If bats are encountered during works, the licenced ecologist will capture them, whilst wearing thin gloves. Any bats found that do not need to be taken into care will then be placed in one of the two bat boxes, which will act as receptor sites during re-cladding works.

4.4.4. Once the selected features have been removed under supervision (i.e. roofing tiles at emergence point), works can proceed in the absence of the licenced ecologist, at their discretion. If a bat is discovered at any unsupervised time, work must cease immediately, and a licenced bat handler must be called for advice. This advice will include leaving the bat to disperse of its own accord or wait for the licenced ecologist to move the bat. Builders and contractors are explicitly forbidden from handling bats except in the case of finding a trapped or injured bat. In which case the bat may be moved into a safe and secure place (e.g. a box) and the ecologist must be contacted immediately.

4.5. ROOST PROVISION

4.5.1. The proposed works to the building should not result in the overall loss of bat roosts. Therefore, a replacement roost site will need to be provided. In this case, the one roost was identified. The Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, 2004) state that avoiding damage or loss of roosts is the preferred option. However, the works require re-cladding of the full extent of the building and this is not possible. As such, replacement roost provisions should be on a "like-for-like" basis to replace the existing conditions that will be lost.

4.5.2. To mitigate for the loss of bat roosts, a minimum of one multipurpose bat boxes will be installed prior to the works to the building. The bat box is aimed at crevice-dwelling bats, such as common pipistrelle found to be roosting in the building. Box types such as Greenwood's Ecohabitats – One Crevice Bat Box would be suitable.

4.5.3. This box will act as receptor site should any live bats be found during the supervised destruction of the roosts. The box is to be installed onto a retained mature tree under the same site ownership (ideally at a minimum height of 4m from the ground level). This will minimise the risk of them being damaged by vandalism or the bats being targeted by predators such as domestic cats. This box must remain in-situ for a minimum of five years post-development.

4.6. LIGHTING MITIGATION

4.6.1. All bats have some degree of sensitivity to artificial, night-time lighting. Introducing artificial lighting to areas that are not currently illuminated may sever important bat flight lines and discourage bats from using roost provisions. Any proposed lighting should not be directed towards the bat box, and surrounding treelines.

4.7. SUMMARY

- 4.7.1. The building was found to support one non-breeding summer transitional roost for common pipistrelle. The proposed works to the building will cause the destruction of the roost and breach of legislation under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) should no mitigation be applied. As a result, the works to the building require a BMCL or a standard Mitigation Licence to be undertaken lawfully and minimise the risk of impacting roosting bats.
- 4.7.2. Compensatory roost provisions will be implemented before any works take place to provide compensatory habitat for the loss of the roosts. Compensatory roost provisions must be positioned within the site for a minimum of five years.

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