

Nocturnal Bat Survey Report

Sheepbank Farm, Littleborough

Reference: 82-065-R3

Date: June 25





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Report reference	82-065-R3
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REV REF:	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR	CHECKED	AUTHORISED	DATE
R3-1	First issue	BH	HM	CK	05/06/25

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Site Address	Sheepbank Farm, Littleborough, OL15 0LH
Coordinates	E 394874, N 415324
Site Area	Approximately 0.1 ha
Current Site Use	The site comprised a farmhouse, comprising a two-storey main building with two one-storey annexes adjoined (B1), and a hardstanding track leading to the property.
Proposed Development	Development proposals include the development of an extension to the two-storey main building and one of the one-storey annexes.
Results	Low levels of common pipistrelle and myotis species activity were recorded across the site. No bats were observed emerging from the building, and no bats were observed within proximity to any potential roost features.
Conclusions and Recommendations	No further surveys or a Natural England Bat Licence are required for the proposed works to proceed. In the unlikely instance that any bats are located within the building during the works, works should cease, and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted.



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

E3P has been instructed by Rushtons Developments Limited to undertake Nocturnal Bat Surveys at Sheepbank Farm, Littleborough, hereafter referred to as “the site”.

The report was produced by Consultant Ecologist, Benjamin Hartley, BSc (Hons), MSc, who has experience in completing Preliminary Roost Assessments (PRAs) and Nocturnal Bat Surveys at many sites across the UK.

1.2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals include the development of an extension to the two-storey main building and one of the one-storey annexes.

1.3. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located southeast of Littleborough and northeast of Rochdale. The site is accessed by a track which joins Syke Road approximately 235 m south of the site. A barn building is located adjacent to the south of the site boundary, in proximity to the on-site farmhouse. The site is surrounded on all aspects by arable land, which also comprises the broader landscape. Brearley Brook is located approximately 6 m west of the site boundary. Please refer to Figure 1 for the approximate site location.

Figure 1 **Approximate Site Location**





1.4. PREVIOUS SURVEYS

E3P completed a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) on the site in December 2024 (Report reference: 82-065-R1). The site comprised a vacant farmhouse, consisting of a two-storey main building and two one-storey annexes (B1). The on-site building was assessed for its suitability to support roosting bats, following guidance set out in Collins (2023). Table 1 details the findings of the PRA. As such, further surveys were recommended on B1.

Table 1 **Details of Bat Roost Potential**

BUILDING REFERENCE	BAT ROOST POTENTIAL	POTENTIAL ROOST FEATURES (PRFS)
B1	Moderate	There were gaps between the soffit and south west facing wall, lifted tiles on the south east facing roof, and a gap above the window on the south west facing wall allowing internal access.

Bat Hibernation Surveys were also undertaken on B1 by E3P in March 2025 (Report reference: 82-065-R2). No bats were observed hibernating in the farmhouse during the crevice inspections, and no evidence of bats was recorded. In addition, no bats were recorded during the static detector surveys.

1.5. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Nocturnal Bat Surveys were to identify:

- Any existing roosts within the site.
- Potential impacts of the proposed development on bats.
- The need for mitigation.

The survey findings are detailed in this report, along with any recommendations.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. NOCTURNAL SURVEYS

Bat emergence surveys were undertaken following guidance set out in Collins (2023). The surveys were conducted using Canon XA60 4K Camcorders, Magenta Bat 5 bat detectors, and Echo Meter Touch 2s, and were undertaken by competent and suitably trained bat surveyors. See Table 2 and Table 3 for details of the survey.

Table 2 Emergence Survey Details

SURVEY	DATE	SUNSET	SURVEY TIMINGS	WEATHER CONDITIONS
DUSK SURVEY 1	01/05/2025	20:39	20:24 – 22:09	Dry, 13°C, 10% cloud cover, light breeze
DUSK SURVEY 2	22/05/2025	21:14	20:59 - 22:44	Dry, 10°C, 60% cloud cover, light breeze

Table 3 Survey Vantage Point Details

VANTAGE POINT	DATE	DETECTOR	SURVEYOR
V1	01/05/2025	Echo Meter Touch 2	Noah Salt
	22/05/2025	Magenta Bat 5	Hannah Brodie
V2	01/05/2025	Magenta Bat 5	Luke Shaw
	22/05/2025	Echo Meter Touch 2	Mia Forte

Two camcorders were positioned around the building to observe the areas of bat-roosting potential during the nocturnal surveys (see Appendix II for the vantage point fields of view during the darkest time of the survey). The camcorders were monitored by suitably qualified bat surveyors.

Please refer to Figure 2 for the approximate location of the surveyors.



Figure 2 **Approximate Vantage Point Locations**



2.2. DATA ANALYSIS

All vantage points were occupied by a surveyor, and the timings of any passes were noted. Footage from the camcorders was reviewed for any bats interacting with any roosting features following the survey. Recordings from the Echo Meter Touch 2s were reviewed during the survey to establish species.

2.3. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

Nocturnal Bat Surveys are completed following guidance set out in Collins (2023) and are carried out by competent and trained surveyors. However, due to the surveys being conducted by observation during low-light conditions, this may cause constraints on visual assessments. No surveyors were visually constrained during the survey, other than of low light conditions, and all potential roosting features were observed throughout the survey time period.



3. SURVEY RESULTS

The following subsections provide a summary of bat activity noted on the dusk emergence surveys. Please refer to Appendix I for the full survey forms.

3.1. DUSK EMERGENCE SURVEY 01ST MAY

During the dusk emergence survey, low levels of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) activity were recorded at V1, whilst low levels of myotis species (*Myotis sp.*) activity were recorded by V2. The first bats observed were common pipistrelle, which were heard but not seen at 21:31 by V1, approximately 52 minutes after sunset, and a myotis species commuting from north west to south east at 21:31. The final bat recorded was a common pipistrelle at 22:07 by V1, approximately 88 minutes after sunset.

No bats were observed emerging from B1.

3.2. DUSK EMERGENCE SURVEY 22ND MAY

During the dusk emergence survey, no bat species were observed foraging or commuting near Building 1 (B1) during the survey.

No bats were observed emerging from B1.



4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. CONCLUSIONS

During the first dusk emergence survey, low common pipistrelle and myotis species activity was observed, whilst during the second survey, no bat activity was observed. The earliest activity was a common pipistrelle by V1 and a myotis species by V2 recorded at 21:31, approximately 52 minutes after sunset. The timing indicates that common pipistrelle or myotis species are unlikely to be roosting near to site. Furthermore, no emergences from the surveyed building were observed during the surveys.

Two survey visits, spaced three weeks apart, were undertaken in May 2025. It is therefore considered that a sufficient amount of data has been gathered. Therefore, it can be concluded that no bats are roosting within the building, and no further assessment, mitigation, or Natural England Bat licensing is required for works to proceed.

4.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the unlikely event that a bat is found during works, all works is to cease immediately. Following this, a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted, and further advice sought from Natural England.



5. REFERENCES

-  Bat Conservation Trust (2023). Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night Guidance Note 8.
-  Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edition. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
-  E3P (2025). Bat Hibernation Survey Report – Sheepbank Farm, Littleborough (Report Reference: 82-065-R2).
-  E3P (2024) Preliminary Roost Assessment – Sheepbank Farm, Littleborough (Report Reference: 82-065-R1).

END OF REPORT

APPENDIX I

SURVEY FORMS





SURVEY FORMS

01ST MAY 2025

Date: 01/05/2025
Sunset: 20:39
Start time: 20:24
End time: 22:09

Weather conditions: Dry, 13°C, 10% cloud cover, light breeze.

Surveyor: Noah Salt (V1)

TIME	SPECIES	ACTIVITY
21:31	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen
21:39	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen
21:41	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen
21:47	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen
21:51	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen
21:57	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen
21:58	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen
22:02	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen
22:06	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen
22:07	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen

Surveyor: Luke Shaw (V2)

TIME	SPECIES	ACTIVITY
21:31	Myotis species	Commuting from north west to south east
21:47	Myotis species	Heard not seen



22ND MAY 2025

Date: 22/05/2025
Sunset: 21:14
Start time: 20:59
End time: 22:44

Weather conditions: Dry, 10°C, 60% cloud cover, light breeze.

Surveyor: Hannah Brodie (V1)

TIME	SPECIES	ACTIVITY
No Bat Recorded		

Surveyor: Mia Forte (V2)

TIME	SPECIES	ACTIVITY
No Bats Recorded		

APPENDIX II

VANTAGE POINT FIELDS OF VIEW





VANTAGE POINT FIELDS OF VIEW

01ST MAY 2025

Vantage Point 1 (V1)



Vantage Point 2 (V2)





22ND MAY 2025

Vantage Point 1 (V1)



Vantage Point 2 (V2)

