

LEOPOLD COURT, ROCHDALE

Bat Survey Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. SCOPE & PURPOSE

- 1.1.1. Collington Winter Environmental (CWE) Ltd was commissioned by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council to undertake bat surveys at Leopold Court, Leopold Street, Rochdale, OL11 5HA, hereinafter referred to as the 'site' or 'survey building'. This report has been prepared to inform a planning application for the reconfiguration and refurbishment of the existing building, including extensions to the property.
- 1.1.2. The author of this report is Olivia Leversedge BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist at CWE. The production of this report has been overseen by Jonathan Hayter, Principal Ecologist and Technical Bat Lead at CWE. Jon holds a Class 2 Natural England Bat Licence (Ref: CL18-2019-39842-CLS-CLS) and has extensive experience in managing bat-related schemes and preparing European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs).
- 1.1.3. A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the site was undertaken by Olivia Leversedge BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist at CWE on the 26th August 2025, with a revisit on the 2nd of September 2025 to inspect additional loft spaces. Based on the results of the PRA, the building was assessed as having **moderate bat roosting potential** due to the presence of multiple Potential Roosting Features (PRFs), including gaps under lead flashing, shallow voids beneath roof tiles, and localised gaps in brickwork and mortar, as well as the suitability of the surrounding habitat for foraging and commuting bats. Consequently, two dusk emergence surveys were recommended to be carried out within the active season for bats (typically May to September, in suitable weather conditions, with at least one survey between May and August), in line with best practice guidance (Collins, 2023; Bat Conservation Trust Professional Guidelines for Ecologists).
- 1.1.4. This report provides an evidence-based assessment of potential impacts on bats, based on the available data and professional ecological judgement. The subsequent sections describe the survey effort undertaken, any limitations associated with that effort, and the precautionary measures and mitigation proposed to ensure compliance with relevant wildlife legislation.
- 1.1.5. The findings of this report represent the professional opinion of qualified ecologists and do not constitute professional legal advice. The client may wish to seek professional legal interpretation of the relevant wildlife legislation cited within this document.

1.2. LOCATION & SITE CONTEXT

- 1.2.1. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for the site location. The site is accessed via Leopold Street, located north of Bury Road in Rochdale, within the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester. The site lies within the urban residential area surrounding the town.



Figure 1.1. Site location.

1.3. OBJECTIVES

1.3.1. The following surveys were undertaken to assess the presence or likely absence of roosting bats at the site:

- Nocturnal Bat Survey (NBS): A single nocturnal survey to record any bat emergence, re-entry, and activity around the building.
- Endoscope Survey: Inspection of external Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) directly affected by the proposed works to search for evidence of bats, such as droppings, staining, scratch marks, or feeding remains.

1.3.2. The specific objectives of the assessment were to:

- Record evidence of bat use on the site, including emergence, re-entry, and roosting behaviour, and identify any bats roosting within the building, confirming species where possible.
- Assess the importance of the site for local bat populations and classify the type of roost(s) present
- Provide recommendations for any additional surveys, mitigation measures, and licensing requirements.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEYS

- 2.1.1. A single dusk emergence survey was carried out on 22 September 2025 during suitable weather conditions.
- 2.1.2. The survey was undertaken to determine whether bats were roosting within the building and to assess levels of bat activity across the site. The results are intended to inform any necessary mitigation measures. The findings will also establish whether a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) would be required to proceed with the proposed works.
- 2.1.3. Suitable vantage points were established around the building to ensure full coverage of all elevations and to observe identified PRF's, as well as any discrete features not noted during the PRA.
- 2.1.4. The nocturnal survey was conducted by five appropriately qualified CWE ecologists, all experienced in dusk emergence surveys, and familiar with bat species across the country. Surveyors were equipped with full-spectrum Echo Meter Touch 2 detectors to record echolocation calls. Continuous visual and acoustic observations of the building and surrounding habitat were maintained throughout the survey. Any emergences, re-entries, or notable foraging and commuting behaviour were recorded, including details of species where possible, behaviour, and time of observation.
- 2.1.5. The survey was supplemented with eight Night Vision Aids (NVAs), each consisting of a Night Fox Whisker unit with LED torch components providing infrared illumination for low-light observation. Representative screenshots captured at the darkest points of the survey are provided in Appendix I. All footage was reviewed using appropriate media players and tracking software supplied by Wildlife Imaging Systems.
- 2.1.6. A summary of survey details is provided in Table 2.1, and the locations of surveyors and NVAs are illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Table 2.1. Summary of survey details

Date	Sunset Time	Start	Finish	Surveyors	Weather Conditions
22.09.2025	19:06	18:51	20:36	Olivia Leversedge VP2 Shona Bancroft VP3 Jay Atherton VP5 Andrew Taylor VP7 Tina Marshall VP11	11°C (start temperature) 1 (Beaufort scale/wind) 0/8 (Oktas/cloud cover) No precipitation



Figure 2.1. Surveyor and NVA locations.

2.2. ENDOSCOPE SURVEY

- 2.2.1. Targeted endoscopic inspection of the building was undertaken by Caitlin O'Connor and Olivia Leversedge on the 24th of September 2025. Caitlin holds a Class 2 Natural England Bat Licence (Ref: 2025-80228-SCI-CL18), and both surveyors have experience in conducting endoscopic inspection of potential roosting features.
- 2.2.2. The endoscope survey targeted external areas of the building that are likely to be affected by the proposed extension works. Based on the architectural plans provided by Triangle Architects Ltd. (ref. Figure 2.2), the proposed extensions, highlighted in blue, consist of two primary areas, comprising a rectangular addition to the existing single storey lean-to projection, and a smaller extension linking the central northeast projection to the main structure. The northwestern extension incorporates a gable roof finished with double roman tiles, which ties into the adjacent roof projection via a short section of flat roof. The northeastern connecting extension is designed with a flat roof profile.



Figure 2.2. Proposed roof level plan produced by Triangle Architect Ltd.

- 2.2.3. PRFs associated with the locations of the proposed extensions were examined using an endoscope to search for field signs of bats, including droppings, staining, scratch marks, feeding remains or live individuals. Observations were recorded systematically, noting feature type and any evidence of bat use.
- 2.2.4. The endoscopic survey was undertaken to supplement the nocturnal survey effort and provide additional evidence on the status of external PRFs likely to be affected by the proposed development, as only one nocturnal survey could be completed within the 2025 active season. The findings were used to inform the impact assessment and mitigation design, with the approach ensuring that conclusions and recommendations were evidence-based and reflecting the best available data at the time of assessment.

2.3. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

- 2.3.1. The survey was conducted in September, which is considered a suboptimal period for bat activity surveys. Current guidance recommends that, for buildings assessed as having moderate roost suitability, at least one survey should be carried out during the optimum period of May to August. Conducting the survey outside of this window may have reduced the likelihood of detecting bat presence or activity, and while the findings provide a useful indication of the current roosting status, the potential for undetected bat use during the optimal survey period cannot be fully discounted.

2.4. DEPARTURE FROM PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES

- 2.4.1. To date, one nocturnal bat activity survey has been undertaken, and all external PRFs known to be directly affected by the proposed works were inspected using an endoscope to search for evidence of use by bats. In accordance with Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023), the current survey effort falls below the recommended standard for a building of moderate potential.
- 2.4.2. Further nocturnal bat surveys could not be scheduled within the 2025 active season due to seasonal constraints. However, due to the building's current non-compliance and the need to safeguard vulnerable occupants, it was not considered practical to defer the proposed works to the next active bat season, and the client has elected to proceed based on the available evidence. This report therefore presents an assessment informed by the survey findings, supported by professional ecological judgement and prepared in accordance with the CIEEM Code of Professional Conduct (April 2025). Where uncertainties remain due to seasonal limitations, a precautionary approach to mitigation has been applied, as detailed in subsequent sections of this report.

3. RESULTS

3.1. NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY

DUSK SURVEY 22.09.2025

- 3.1.1. Bat activity was recorded at low levels throughout the survey. Most observations involved common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), with a small number of noctules (*Nyctalus noctula*) detected.
- 3.1.2. The first bat recorded was a common pipistrelle detected at 19:26, approximately 20 minutes after sunset. It was observed by the surveyor at VP3 flying over from the line of trees to the south and foraging on site briefly before commuting north. A second common pipistrelle was observed exhibiting the same behaviour two minutes later.
- 3.1.3. Further common pipistrelle commuting and foraging activity was recorded consistently but at low levels by all surveyors from 19:28 until the end of the survey, involving only a small number of individuals. Noctules were recorded acoustically only, in small numbers, primarily by the surveyor at VP2. Their activity appeared transient, with no indication of prolonged foraging within the immediate vicinity of the building.
- 3.1.4. External lighting came on at approximately 19:15, comprising streetlamps in the car park to the east of the site and external wall-mounted lights on the lower elevations of the building. This lighting is likely to have caused some disturbance to bats, particularly around the illuminated areas, and may have reduced the likelihood of bats roosting on or near these locations. Photographs of external lighting taken during the survey is provided in Appendix II.
- 3.1.5. No emergence or re-entry events were observed during the survey, and the review of NVA footage confirmed the absence of any bats emerging or re-entering the building. The survey observations suggest that the building was not actively used as a day roost during the survey period, and that the bat activity recorded primarily reflects transient foraging and commuting behaviour in the surrounding habitat rather than activity relating to roosting within the structure itself.

3.2. ENDOSCOPE SURVEY

- 3.2.1. The endoscope survey focused on external areas of the building containing PRFs that will be directly affected by the proposed extension works. Table 3.1 details the features examined on the north-western elevation, while Table 3.2 presents those assessed in relation to the north-eastern connection extension.

Table 3.1. PRFs associated with north-western extension targeted during the endoscope survey.

Feature	Description	Photographs
Hole in soffit	A small hole was identified in the soffit of the neighbouring projection. Endoscopic inspection of the feature found that it provides ingress into the internal loft space. Endoscopic and visual inspections of the interior found no evidence of bat use, and no staining or wear was observed around the entrance. The feature is assessed as having low suitability for roosting due to the influence of external lighting on the lower elevations.	

Lifted tiles	Three partially lifted roof tiles were identified on the west-facing roof slope. The features create small gaps of sufficient size to permit access for crevice-dwelling bat species. These openings lead only into shallow voids beneath the roof tiles, which are considered too exposed to provide suitable or stable roosting conditions. However, concealed features under the roof tiles may be present. No evidence of bat use was recorded during inspection.	
Ventilation pipe	A ventilation pipe located beneath a roof tile was identified on the west-facing roof slope. The opening provides a direct access route into the internal loft void. The surrounding area is sheltered by overlying tiles, offering some protection from the elements; however, the entrance remains partially exposed and subject to light and temperature fluctuations. Endoscopic inspection of the internal loft space revealed no evidence of bat use.	
Gaps along lead flashing	Approximately ten small gaps were identified along sections of lead flashing which may provide potential crevice roosting opportunities for bats. No evidence of bat use was recorded during inspection and several contained spider webs, indicating no recent usage.	
Vertical gaps in mortar between brickwork	Four gaps in the mortar were identified in the brickwork of the main building above the flashing of the west-facing roof pitch. All crevices lead into a cavity wall, which appeared to contain insulated Styrofoam boarding. These gaps may serve as potential ingress or egress points into internal cavity wall spaces or roof voids. No evidence of bats was observed during the inspection.	

Slipped ridge tile	A slipped ridge tile on the adjacent roof has created a gap of sufficient size to provide potential crevice ingress. The ridge was found to be hollow along its full length and may potentially offer sheltered and warm conditions. No evidence of bat activity was observed in the visible areas accessed via endoscope.	
Under roof tiles	A shallow void beneath roof tiles provides some shelter but is relatively exposed. Horizontal timber joints within the roof structure may create crevices that could offer roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bats, particularly deeper within the structure where visibility was restricted. No evidence of roosting bats was found during inspection.	

Table 3.2. PRFs associated with north-eastern connection extension targeted during the endoscope survey.

Feature	Description	Photographs
Gap under lead flashing	A small gap is present beneath the lead flashing at the roof edge, consistent with flashing elsewhere on the building. The feature could potentially provide roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bats; however, no evidence of bat activity was observed, and intact spider webs suggest the feature has not been recently used.	

- 3.2.2. Endoscopic inspection of features associated with the proposed extensions did not identify any evidence of roosting bats at the time of survey. However, several potential access points and crevice features were recorded that could provide suitable roosting opportunities, particularly for crevice-dwelling species.
- 3.2.3. The most notable potential roosting feature is the hollow ridge on a projection of the neighbouring structure, which would become adjoining once the proposed extension is constructed. This area offers shelter and may provide relatively stable microclimatic conditions. Additional features of note include horizontal timber joints with potential deeper crevices beneath roof tiles, and gaps in mortar providing ingress into cavity walls or internal loft spaces. While no evidence of bats was observed, detailed inspection of such discrete spaces associated with these features was limited.
- 3.2.4. Other features, including partially lifted tiles, small gaps around lead flashing, and the hole in the soffit, are considered to be of low suitability for bats due to their limited size and shelter. If occupied, these features are likely to support only individual bats or small numbers of crevice-dwelling species. External lighting is likely to further reduce the suitability of features at lower elevations.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND MITIGATION

4.1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1.1. During the Nocturnal Bat Survey, common pipistrelle and noctule were recorded foraging and commuting in the vicinity of the building. While these observations indicate use of the surrounding area by bats, no roosts were identified within the building itself.
- 4.1.2. A small number of features within the building could potentially provide suitable roosting opportunities, particularly for crevice-dwelling species. However, no evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the Preliminary Roost Assessment, Nocturnal Bat Survey or endoscopic inspections. The areas of the building affected by the proposed extension are assessed as low risk to bats based on the survey findings.
- 4.1.3. The detectability of small bat species is acknowledged, especially in a complex building that may contain discrete or concealed features not identified during inspection. As not all loft spaces were accessible during the PRA (Collington Winter, 2025) and no emergence or re-entry surveys were undertaken during the main active season, the potential presence of bat roost(s) cannot be entirely discounted. However, the presence of high levels of artificial lighting further reduces the likelihood of the building supporting higher significance roosts, and conditions appear more suitable for occasional day roosting by individual bats.
- 4.1.4. Survey limitations, including restricted access and timing outside the main active season, mean that some uncertainty remains and these conclusions are only relevant to the information and proposals provided at the time of writing this report.
- 4.1.5. Should the proposed works be revised to include more extensive interventions affecting loft spaces such as removal of internal ceilings, roof timbers, or load-bearing walls the conclusions of this assessment would no longer be valid, and the likelihood and levels of disturbance should be reassessed accordingly.
- 4.1.6. Although the likelihood of significant impacts is considered low, it is recommended that precautionary working methods be implemented, as detailed below.

4.2 METHOD STATEMENT

- 4.2.1. This method statement outlines the procedures to ensure that refurbishment works affecting the roof and loft structures are conducted in a manner that minimizes risk to bats and ensures compliance with wildlife legislation.
- 4.2.2. Prior to the commencement of refurbishment works, the licensed ecologist will undertake a daylight inspection of accessible features to identify any recent signs of bat activity, including droppings or staining. Where accessible, an endoscope may be employed to inspect under lifted tiles, roofing felt, timber joints, and other crevices associated with PRFs.
- 4.2.3. All works affecting PRFs will be undertaken under the guidance of a licensed ecologist. Prior to works commencing, all contractors will receive a Toolbox Talk from the ecologist, which will cover:
 - The legal protection afforded to bats and their roosts.
 - The locations of previously identified PRFs.
 - Procedures to follow when stripping roof coverings, undertaking demolition and both minor and major construction work.
 - What to do if a bat is encountered during works.
 - Working hours and artificial lighting considerations.
- 4.2.4. The following procedures are to be followed in the event of a bat encounter:
 - All activity in the immediate area will cease.
 - The feature containing the bat will remain undisturbed.

- The licensed ecologist will provide guidance on subsequent actions.
- Contractors are strictly prohibited from handling bats, except in the case of a trapped or injured bat. In such instances, the bat may be carefully transferred to a secure container and the site ecologist contacted immediately.

4.3 MITIGATION

4.3.1. As bats are known to be utilising the site for foraging and commuting purposes, any additional lighting to the building should be designed and installed to comply with current legislation and to minimize the impact on any bats in the locale, with current lighting retrofitted where possible. Guidance outlined in the Institute for Lighting Engineers document “Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Lighting” (2005) and BCT’s “Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK” (2018) suggests the following:

- Keep site lighting to minimum levels.
- LED lighting with a warm white light to be used over cool white light (<2700Kelvin).
- Lighting feature peak wavelengths greater than 550nm.
- Light placement to be downward facing to prevent excess horizontal or vertical light spill.
- Avoid illuminating habitats of value.
- Use of timed security lights should be set on motion-sensors and using short, 1-minute timers, to minimise light use.

4.3.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the local environment by methods such as “*incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats, and hedgehogs*”. In accordance with this guidance, it is proposed that an integrated bat box be installed on the upper part of the building wall at eave height on a southerly or westerly aspect, in addition to a general-purpose bat box to be installed on a suitable mature tree on a southern or south-east facing aspect, at a minimum height of four metres above ground level.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bat Conservation Trust & Institution of Lighting Professionals. (2018). Bats and artificial lighting in the UK: Guidance Note 08/18. BCT & ILP. cdn.bats.org.uk+1
- Collington Winter Environmental Ltd. (October 2025). Leopold Court, Rochdale: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edition. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Institution of Lighting Engineers. (2005). Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light. ILE.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2025. National Planning Policy Framework.

6. APPENDICES

APPENDIX I – NVA DARK POINT SURVEY PHOTOGRAPHS

DUSK SURVEY 22.09.25

VP1



VP6



VP7



VP9



VP10



VP12



VP13



VP4



APPENDIX II – EXTERNAL LIGHTING

Photograph A: Eastern elevations; photo taken at approximately 20:00.



Photograph B: Projection on north-east section of building; photo taken at approximately 19:30.



Photograph C: Photograph B: Projection on central north section of building; photo taken at approximately 19:30.



Photograph D: South-eastern section of building; photo taken at approximately 20:00.



Photograph E: Western elevations; photo taken at approximately 19:30.



Photograph G: Western elevations; photo taken at approximately 19:30.



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