

# 299 BOARSHAW ROAD, MIDDLETON

## Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report

*December 2025*



## Report Control Sheet

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## CONTENTS

|           |                                       |           |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1.</b> | <b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>              | <b>5</b>  |
| 1.1.      | SCOPE & PURPOSE .....                 | 5         |
| 1.2.      | LOCATION & SITE CONTEXT .....         | 5         |
| 1.3.      | OBJECTIVES .....                      | 6         |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>              | <b>7</b>  |
| 2.1.      | DESK STUDY .....                      | 7         |
| 2.2.      | PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT .....    | 7         |
| 2.3.      | SURVEY LIMITATIONS .....              | 8         |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>SURVEY RESULTS.....</b>            | <b>9</b>  |
| 3.1.      | DESK STUDY .....                      | 9         |
| 3.2.      | PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT .....    | 10        |
|           | <b><i>BUILDING ONE (B1)</i></b> ..... | <b>10</b> |
|           | <i>INTERNAL</i> .....                 | 10        |
|           | <i>EXTERNAL</i> .....                 | 11        |
|           | <i>SUMMARY</i> .....                  | 11        |
|           | <b><i>BUILDING TWO (B2)</i></b> ..... | <b>11</b> |
|           | <i>DESCRIPTION</i> .....              | 11        |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>RECOMENDATIONS .....</b>           | <b>15</b> |
| 4.1.      | FURTHER SURVEYS.....                  | 15        |
| 4.2.      | LIGHTING MITIGATION .....             | 15        |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>SUMMARY .....</b>                  | <b>16</b> |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>             | <b>17</b> |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. SCOPE & PURPOSE

- 1.1.1. Collington Winter Environmental Ltd was commissioned by NW Supported Living to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 299 Boarshaw Road, Middleton, M24 2PF. This report has been produced to inform planning permission at the site.
- 1.1.2. The author of this report is Shona Bancroft, Ecological Project Manager at Collington Winter. The report has been peer-reviewed by Katie Bird, Associate Director, who holds a Level 2 bat license and is experienced managing planning applications and bat mitigation schemes and has produced many ecological reports to inform planning decisions.

### 1.2. LOCATION & SITE CONTEXT

- 1.2.1. The site is located within the town of Middleton, a metropolitan borough of Rochdale. The site comprises an old convent, that has since been closed. The site is surrounded by open green space, tree lines and a small parcel of woodland associated with Middleton cemetery, located 0.049 km southeast of the site.
- 1.2.2. Areas of greenspace relate to the garden and associated tree line that connect the rear of the property to further open grassland and tree lines. The associated grassland and tree lines act as a connecting feature to Boarshaw Clough Nature Reserve, which comprises open grassland, woodland and a lake, all of which are anticipated to provide valuable commuting and foraging features for the local bat population. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal is also located 0.44 km east of the site boundary.
- 1.2.3. The habitat connectivity from the site to more valuable habitats within the local area is assessed as having moderate suitability.. The roads immediately surrounding the site are all minor highways and are not anticipated to act as significant anthropogenic dispersal barriers.



Figure 1.2.1 Site Location and habitat connectivity.

- Red dot indicates site location.
- Yellow lines indicate linear features connecting areas of optimal habitat.
- Blue area indicates optimal habitat indicates ponds/ lakes.
- Orange indicated areas of open grassland.
- Green indicates areas of woodland.
- Pink refers to Rochdale canal.

### **1.3. OBJECTIVES**

1.3.1. The objectives of the PRA are as follows:

- Identify any areas of bat roosting potential within the building
- Assess the value of the building for roosting bats
- Search for signs of bats
- Provide recommendations on any further surveys or mitigation required for bats

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. DESK STUDY

2.1.1. An initial desk-based assessment of the site was undertaken to collate baseline data. The desk study included:

- Review of aerial and OS maps for habitat information.
- Review of potential habitat links on and off site, to determine the potential zone of influence of the proposed development.
- Locations of granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) within 5 km of the site based on consultation with Magic.gov.uk.
- Consultation of local council strategic development plans and other planning considerations.
- Referral to existing historic survey reports and results.

### 2.2. PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

2.2.1. A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA) of the site was undertaken by Andrew Taylor MSc who holds a Level 1 Bat Survey Licence from Natural England (Reference 2025 -80349-SCI-CL17) on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 10am. The weather was dry and clear; temperature was 7 degrees Celsius.

2.2.2. The survey was undertaken following guidance set out in Collins (2023). This includes undertaking a detailed internal and external inspection of any features to compile information on potential and actual bat entry/ exit points, roosting locations and evidence of bats.

2.2.3. The commuting and foraging assessment methodology is based on information contained within the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Collins 2023).

2.2.4. Potential flightpaths and foraging habitats were assessed as per categories listed in Table 4.1 below (Collins 2023).

**Table 4.1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.**

| Potential suitability   | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                         | Roosting habitats in structures                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| None                    | No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Negligible <sup>a</sup> | No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Low                     | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions <sup>b</sup> and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats <sup>c</sup> ). | Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat.<br>Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.                                                                                                       |
| Moderate                | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions <sup>b</sup> and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).                                                                 | Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens.<br>Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| High                    | A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions <sup>b</sup> and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.                                                                                                       | Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge.<br>High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland.<br>Site is close to and connected to known roosts. |

<sup>a</sup> Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).

<sup>b</sup> For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

<sup>c</sup> Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al.*, 2016 and Jansen *et al.*, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.

### 2.3. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

- 2.3.1. Due to the nature of bats being a transient species, this report offers only a snapshot in time. It is therefore only valid for a maximum of 12 months from date of issue, Collington Winter Environmental Ltd cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information contained within it should this report be used outside of this period.

### 3. SURVEY RESULTS

#### 3.1. DESK STUDY

3.1.1. There are a total of three statutory designated sites within a 3 km radius of local and regional importance (Figure 3.1.1):

- Rochdale Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) are located approximately 0.51 km east of the site boundary. The site is designated for its diverse assemblage of aquatic flora, as well as its rich but generally common-place invertebrate assemblage more than 112 species; 13 of these species are of local importance. The site also provides habitat for several waterside birds.
- Hopwood Woodland Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located approximately 0.78 km northwest of the site boundary. The site makes up a number of smaller woodland parcels within the grounds of Hopwood Hall. The woodland supports a variety of bird species and amphibians such as common toad (*Bufo bufo*).
- Alkington Woods LNR is located approximately 1.94 km southwest of the site boundary. The site comprises a variety of habitats including woodland, grassland, marshland and standing water. Due to the variety of habitats, the site supports a number of breeding bird species, amphibians, and terrestrial mammals.

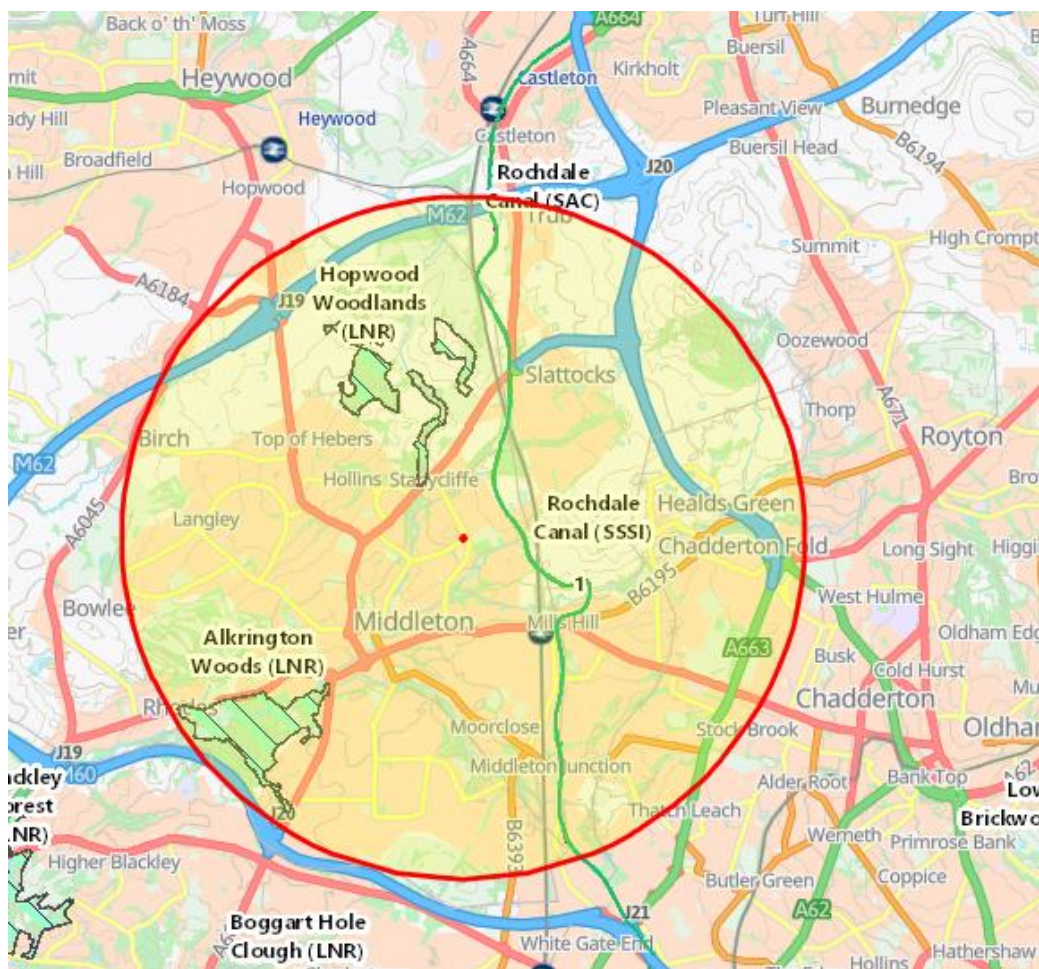


Figure 3.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites within 3 km from the site

3.1.2. The proposed development falls into the impact risk zone of Rochdale Canal located approximately 0.51 km east of the site boundary. Following consultation with Magic.gov.uk, consultation with Natural England is required (see Figure below of screenshot, obtained from Magic.gov.uk, 2025).



## Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest

For local planning authorities to determine if a proposed development is likely to affect a terrestrial Site of Special Scientific Interest and when to consult Natural England.

### You should consult Natural England on the proposed development at this location.

Send your consultation to: [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk)

The Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI IRZs) indicate that at the location selected, there is potential for the proposed development to have a harmful effect on terrestrial Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and those Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites that they underpin.

Therefore, you should consult Natural England for advice on the nature of the potential impacts and how these might be avoided or mitigated.

3.1.3. The following records of EPSLs were located within 3 km of the site based on consultation with Magic.gov.uk (see Table 3.1.1).

Table 3.1.1 Granted European protected species licenses within 3 km.

| Case reference of granted application | Species on the licence* | Distance from site (KM) | Direction from Site | Licence Start Date | Licence End Date | Does the Licence                 |                               |                                 |                                    |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                       |                         |                         |                     |                    |                  | impact on a breeding site        | allow damage of breeding site | allow damage of a resting place | allow destruction of breeding site | allow destruction of a resting place |
| 2015-8774-EPS-MIT                     | C-PIP                   | 0.6                     | SW                  | 13/04/2015         | 01/06/2020       | Y                                | N                             | N                               | Y                                  | Y                                    |
| EPSM2010-2397                         | C-PIP                   | 1.33                    | NW                  | 10/01/2011         | 31/10/2013       | Y                                |                               |                                 | Y                                  | Y                                    |
| 2018-36862-EPS-MIT                    | C-PIP                   | 2.65                    | SE                  | 01/09/2018         | 31/10/2019       | N                                | N                             | N                               | N                                  | Y                                    |
| 2014-2836-EPS-BDX                     | C-PIP                   | 2.72                    | S                   | 25/08/2014         | 25/09/2014       | Y                                | Y                             | N                               | Y                                  | N                                    |
|                                       |                         |                         |                     |                    |                  | Species on the licences locally  |                               |                                 |                                    |                                      |
|                                       |                         |                         |                     |                    |                  | Species name                     |                               |                                 |                                    |                                      |
|                                       |                         |                         |                     |                    |                  | Latin                            |                               |                                 |                                    |                                      |
|                                       |                         |                         |                     |                    |                  | C-PIP                            |                               |                                 |                                    |                                      |
|                                       |                         |                         |                     |                    |                  | Common Pipistrelle bat           |                               |                                 |                                    |                                      |
|                                       |                         |                         |                     |                    |                  | <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> |                               |                                 |                                    |                                      |

## 3.2. PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

3.2.1. The site comprised a total of two buildings consisting of a previous convent and associated detached garage.

### BUILDING ONE (B1)

#### INTERNAL

3.2.2. Internally, the building consisted of a previous residential building historically used as a convent. This had one loft void which ran along the full extent of the building. The loft was found to be an *A frame* which was measured approximately 7m width, 20m long and 2.5m high. The loft space was made up of a timber supporting frame and the roof was covered by black bitumen felt. The felt was found to be in good condition throughout the full length of the loft with no roosting features or access points to the external tiles identified. The floor was mostly made up of insulation with partial boarding allowing for access.

3.2.3. Some small areas of staining were located on the insulation on the western aspect located near the loft hatch. However, due to the age of the stains it's unconfirmed what the cause of this was, there was no confirmed evidence of bats located onsite.

3.2.4. An airbrick was located on the eastern wall located near the apex; this was blocked by an inactive wasp nest limiting this potential access points. A second airbrick was located on the western aspect also at the apex, this was found to consist of small gaps providing potential access point into the loft.

- 3.2.5. A chimney is located to the west of the loft; this was found to be in good condition throughout providing no gaps or crevices for roosting bats.
- 3.2.6. Overall, the loft space was found to be in good condition with the only access points identified including the airbrick located on the western aspect. The timber framing running flush against the roofing felt provides small gaps that could support roosting bats though the roofing felt itself provides no roosting features. There was no confirmed evidence of roosting bats identified within the loft space.

### EXTERNAL

- 3.2.7. Externally, the building was made up of redbrick walls which were in good condition throughout the full extent of the building. The windows and doors were all also found to be in good condition with no access points or roosting features located along these aspects. A section of hanging tiles is located around the front door on the southern aspect of the building, these were all found to be in good condition with no gaps creating PRF's. The roofing tiles and ridge tiles were all found to be in good condition with no PRF's or access points identified along the full extent of the roof.
- 3.2.8. A single-story extension was located on the western aspect of the building. The structure features a pyramid-shaped, low-pitched roof finished with green-coated sheet material (likely metal or a similar waterproof panel system). The roof slopes evenly from all sides toward a central vertical spire or vented pinnacle. There were no gaps or crevices along the roof that could support a roosting bat. Plastic eaves were located on the bottom of the roof along the brick walls which were also in good condition.
- 3.2.9. Overall, there were no external notable potential roosting features suitable to support roosting bats. A total of two potential access points were identified on the eastern and western aspect of the main building leading into the loft space.

### SUMMARY

- 3.2.10. Overall, the building lacked roosting features externally however airbricks were located on the eastern and western aspect providing potential access points into the loft space. Therefore, the building was found to provide **“low” bat roosting potential.**

### BUILDING TWO (B2)

#### DESCRIPTION

- 3.2.11. A single-story pebble dashed garage was located adjacent to B1 with a single layered corrugated metal roof. There were small gaps between the corrugated metal sheets and the walls however they did not lead to any further cracks or crevices that would support a roosting bat. Internally the building was fully exposed with no loft spaces within the building. All windows and doors were well sealed providing no access points or crevices anticipated to be utilised by roosting bats. The building did not provide features suitable to support a roosting bat and there was evidence of bats identified. The building was found to provide **“None” bat roosting potential.**

## 3.3. PHOTOGRAPHS

- 3.3.1. Please refer to Table 3.3.1 below for photographs

Table 3.3.1. PRF Photos

| Reference                                         | Photographs                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| B1                                                |                                                                                      |
| Western Airbrick                                  |    |
| Eastern Airbrick covered by wasp nest.            |   |
| Loft space with staining marks on the insulation. |  |

|                               |                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Main Building</p>          |   |
| <p>Single story extension</p> |  |
| <p><b>B2</b></p>              | <p><b>Photographs</b></p>                                                            |
| <p>Single story garage</p>    |  |



## 4 RECOMENDATIONS

### 4.1. FURTHER SURVEYS

- 4.1.1 B1 was found to provide roosting potential and therefore, in accordance with Best Practice guidance (Collins, 2023) further nocturnal surveys should be undertaken between May-September (inclusive) to determine usage by roosting bats. The building was assessed as providing **Low bat roosting potential**; therefore, a minimum of one further survey is recommended, completed between May-August.
- 4.1.2 The results of the further surveys will determine if any mitigation is required for roosting bats. If roosting bats are located within the building, a Natural England Mitigation Licence may be required for development to proceed. The Licence can only be obtained once planning permission has been granted and all wildlife conditions discharged. However, the bat emergence surveys must be undertaken prior to planning permission being applied for as they are a material consideration.
- 4.1.3 B2 was found to provide “None” bat roosting potential and therefore there are no further surveys recommended on B2 only.

### 4.2. LIGHTING MITIGATION

- 4.2.1 An External Lighting Scheme had not been produced on the writing of this report. As such, the following recommendations are to be considered within the scheme during its condition, to minimise impacts of lighting. The recommendations are as follows:
- Keep site lighting to minimum levels.
  - Luminaries should lack UV elements and preferably LED lighting with a warm white light should be used over cool white light (ideally <2700Kelvin).
  - Lighting should feature peak wavelengths greater than 550nm.
  - Light placement should be downward facing to prevent excess horizontal or vertical light spill.
  - The use of integrated fittings such as cowls, shields, louvres and hoods, that effectively contain light spill from unintended areas.
  - Use of timed security lights should be set on motion-sensors and using short, 1-minute timers, to minimise light use.
  - Column heights of lighting can be considered to minimise light spill.

## 5 SUMMARY

- 5.1.1 Low bat roost suitability was assigned to B1 due to the evidence of potential access points into the loft space during the survey and roosting suitability within the loft. A minimum of one emergence survey is to be completed in order to confirm if a bat roost is present and whether further mitigation is necessary.
- 5.1.2 **It is recommended that no works to the building is completed until the further surveys are carried. If works proceed without the further surveys, there is a risk of breaching relevant legislation.**

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