

Bat Survey Report

Oakwood Cottage, Heywood
On behalf of Unearthed Land

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Executive Summary

- S.1 This report has been prepared by Rebecca Freeman MSc MCIEEM on behalf of Unearthed Land. It sets out the findings of a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Oakwood Cottage, Heywood, OL10 4AG, hereafter referred to as the "Site". The Site is centred on National Grid Reference SD 85268 11799.
- S.2 A full planning application is to be made to convert a freestanding garage into three residential dwellings.
- S.3 The site is not covered by or adjacent to any sites that are the subject of statutory or non-statutory protection and no such sites would be affected.
- S.4 The development proposals include a re-profile and replacement roof, the existing building will be retained and refurbished to accommodate three residential dwellings.
- S.5 The Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) determined the building to have High suitability for roosting bats. As a result, three bat emergence survey will need to be undertaken in the bat survey season (May to September inclusive) to determine likely usage by bats.

1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

- 1.1.1. This report has been prepared by Rebecca Freeman MSc MCIEEM on behalf of Unearthed Land. It sets out the findings of a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Oakwood Cottage, Heywood, OL10 4AG, hereafter referred to as the “Site”. The Site is centred on National Grid Reference SD 85268 11799.
- 1.1.2. All surveyors have the knowledge, skills and experience identified within CIEEM’s “Competencies for Species Survey: Bats” (2013), or were under the supervision of a surveyor with the required competencies.

1.2. Context

- 1.2.1. The Site is located in a semi-urban setting immediately west of Rochdale (see Figure 1, below).
- 1.2.2. The structure in question on site consist of a brick-built garage with a tile roof.
- 1.2.3. A full planning application is to be made to renovate the Site into residential dwellings by converting the existing building.
- 1.2.4. The objective of the PRA survey was to establish the suitability of the building on site to support roosting bats, based on a site specific survey and habitat assessment. The building was searched externally and internally (where accessible) for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidance (2016).
- 1.2.5. This Assessment and the terminology used are consistent with the ‘Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018).



Figure 1 – Location plan of Site

2. Methods

2.1. Data Search

- 2.1.1. The aim of the data search is to collate existing ecological records for the Site and adjacent areas. Obtaining existing records is an important part of the assessment process as it provides information on issues that may not be apparent during a single survey, which by its nature provides only a 'snapshot' of the ecology of a given site.
- 2.1.2. The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was accessed for information on protected or notable species or habitats. The search area comprised a 2 km radius for European Protected Species mitigation licences.

2.2. Surveys

- 2.2.1. The surveys followed standard methodologies set out in published guidance^{1 2 3 4} and comprised
- Building Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) – external and internal building inspection survey to assess potential of buildings on site to support roosting bats;
- 2.2.2. The PRA survey was led by Nathan Rimmer, Natural England Level 2 bat licence holder (License number: 2020-50733-CLS-CLS).
- 2.2.3. A PRA was undertaken on all buildings within the site boundary. The assessment was undertaken on 8th December 2025 by Nathan Rimmer and Rebecca Freeman. The PRA was a daytime inspection and the conditions for all surveys were considered optimal. The location of the building at the site are shown on Plan 1.
- 2.2.4. The onsite building was inspected from the ground using binoculars, high powered torch and digital camera. In relation to buildings, such signs may include bat droppings, urine splashes, staining and features suitable for allowing bats access to roost (e.g. gaps behind soffits / hanging tiles / ridge tiles, lifted slates / flashing). The internal inspection of the building comprised a thorough search for evidence of roosting bats in accessible loft spaces (i.e. droppings, urine stains) and an assessment of the presence of potential roosting features internally.
- 2.2.5. The potential of the buildings to support roosting bats was assessed using the criteria shown in Table 1 below.

¹ Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2025). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Version 1.2. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

² Mitchell-Jones, A.J., & McLeish, A.P. (eds). (2004) *3rd Edition Bat Workers' Manual*, JNCC, Peterborough, ISBN 1 86107 558 8

³ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

⁴ Bat Tree Habitat Key (2018) *Bat Roosts in Trees : A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-Care and Ecology Professionals*. Pelagic Publishing ISBN 9781784271619

Table 2.1. Building / Structure Assessment Criteria

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions 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 or hibernation). A tree of sufficient size and age to contain Potential Roost Features (PRFs) but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited potential.
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only).
High	A structure or tree 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.

2.2.6. Consideration of the structures suitability to be utilised as a hibernation roost was also considered in line with published guidance ^{5 6}.

2.3. Limitations

2.3.1. There were no limitations associated with this survey.

⁵ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

⁶ Middleton, N. (2019) Assessing Sites for Hibernation Potential. A Practical Approach, including a Proposed Method & Supporting Notes. Author: Neil Middleton (BatAbility Courses & Tuition) Version: Draft/V2.2019 Dated: 08.10.2019 [Assessing-Sites-for-Hibernation-Potential-BatAbility-10.2019.pdf](#)

3. Results

3.1. Data Search

- 3.1.1. The Site is not covered by or adjacent to any statutory site of nature conservation interest.
- 3.1.2. There were no priority habitats recorded on or adjacent to the Site.
- 3.1.3. A review of DEFRA's MAGIC website confirms that there are no known license for bat species within 2km of the Site.

3.2. PRA

- 3.2.1. The single on site building is a large, freestanding garage of brick construction, with an unlined tile roof. The roof tiles are in generally good condition, though a small number were lifted and some were missing. Broken, lifted and missing tiles gave access for bats into the loft voids noted in the internal inspection (see para 3.2.2). Lifted ridge tiles were noted in three places along the ridge line, though at both apexes, ridge tiles were well sealed with concrete. The brickwork was well sealed, as were windows and wooden doors. There are multiple windows, all well sealed and appear to be intact. Wooden doors are present on the southern aspect.
- 3.2.2. Internally, the building is split into three main sections with brick partition walls between each section. The outermost sections had insulated ceilings, with no access for people into the loft space created above. The middle section had a wooden ceiling, with an access hatch. The loft void above was open and light due to the presence of windows. No insulated was noted on the external or internal walls, or what was visible of the roof space.
- 3.2.3. No evidence of bats was found during the internal or external searches.
- 3.2.4. Surrounding habitat consists of mature tree belts and open fields, with the River Roch approx. 60m west of the Site. The surrounding buildings are of a similar age and present a number of roost features including lifted and broken roof tiles.
- 3.2.5. Due to the loft voids present at either end of the building, with access for bats via roof and ridge tiles, the single onsite building was given **High** potential for roosting bats.

4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Evaluation of results

- 4.1.1. The onsite building has been assessed as having high potential for roosting bats.
- 4.1.2. Surrounding habitat is suitable for foraging and roosting bats, there are a number of potential roost resources in close proximity to the Site.
- 4.1.3. Due to the requirement for the existing roof to be reprofiled and replaced, there is potential for bats to be impacted by the scheme. Therefore, three bat emergence surveys will be required to establish if the building is in use by bats. These surveys should be undertaken by an appropriately licenced ecologist during the bat survey season, May to September inclusive. At least one of the surveys should be undertaken during the peak bat survey season of May to August inclusive.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site plan

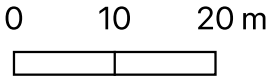


Site Location Plan

Key

 RLB

 Building



Plan Number
PV25026/P01

Appendix 2 – Photographs



Southern aspect



Western aspect



Eastern aspect



Northern aspect



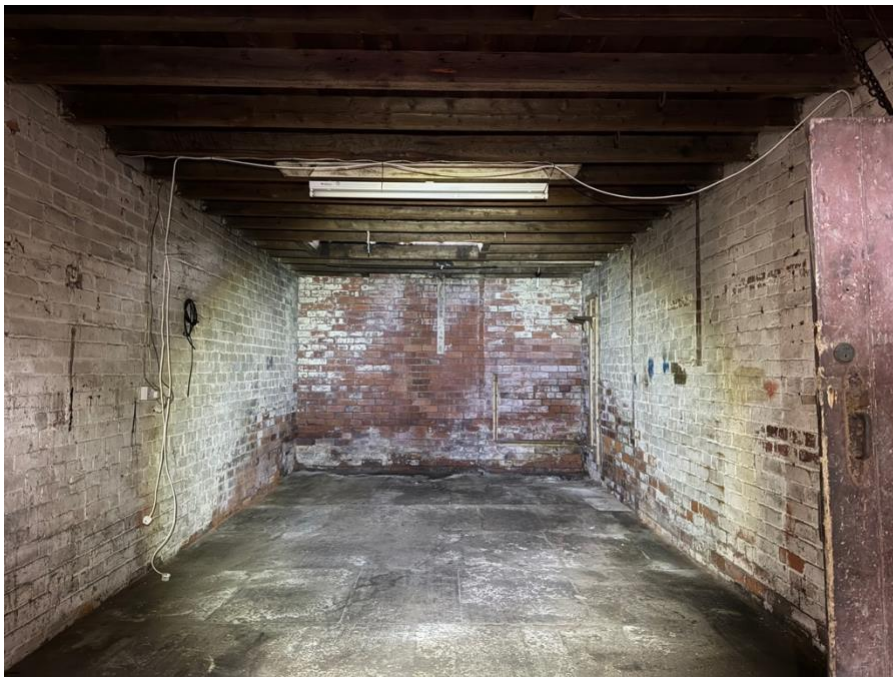
Lifted and missing tiles



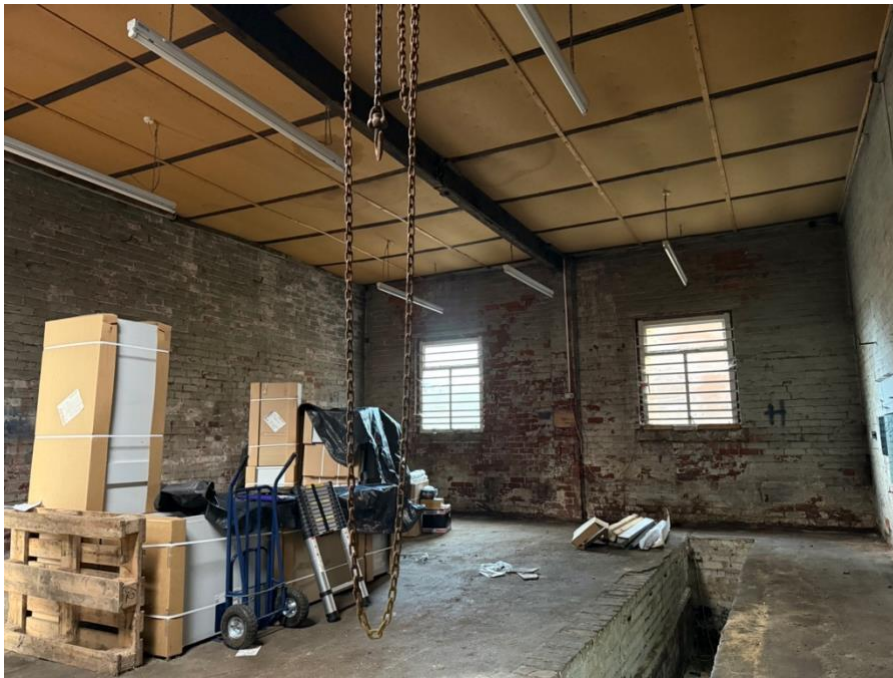
Gaps in ridge tiles



Internal area – eastern section



Internal area – middle section



Internal area – western section



Surrounding area – habitat



Surrounding area – roost resource example