

'NETHERWOOD'

**35 CARBONE HILL
NORTHAW
HERTFORDSHIRE**

BAT ACTIVITY SURVEY



2018

CLIVE HERBERT

Amphibian, Reptile & Mammal Conservation Limited
Species protection and habitat conservation specialists

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Amphibian, Reptile & Mammal Conservation Limited were contracted by Mr. Oktay Yilmaz to undertake a bat activity survey of a vacant property, known as ‘Netherwood’, 35 Carbone Hill, Northaw, Hertfordshire EN6 4PN, and situated at approximately National Grid Reference TL 2944 0390.
- 1.2 A day-time bat Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), completed on 8th November 2017, determined that the property had ‘high potential’ to act as a bat roost site based on the presence of Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*) droppings in the loft void.
- 1.3 The bat activity survey implements a key recommendation in the PRA; namely, to conduct a series of two standard dusk emergence surveys and a dawn re-entry survey during the bats’ peak active season before the end of August in order to confirm the presence / absence of an extant roost in the building.

The surveys were commissioned in order to update the Outline Mitigation Strategy into a final document and to discharge the Condition attached to the planning permission for the extension of the existing property.

- 1.4 A full description of the property, together with site photographs, was provided in the original PRA report and this information is not repeated here.

This bat activity survey report should, therefore, be read in conjunction with that earlier assessment report.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The two dusk emergence surveys were undertaken on 16th May and 19th June 2018, commencing 15 minutes before sunset and concluding approximately 120 minutes after sunset.

The emergence survey visits were carried out in weather conditions that were considered to be suitable for recording bat emergence and foraging activity (see section 4 below).

- 2.2 The dawn re-entry survey was undertaken on 1st June 2018, commencing 120 minutes before sunrise and concluding approximately 15 minutes after sunrise.

The re-entry survey visit was also carried out in weather conditions that were considered to be suitable during the preceding night for bat emergence and foraging activity (see section 4 below).

- 2.3 Standard time expansion ultrasonic detectors were utilised in order to facilitate the finding, identification and recording of any bats emerging from the property.
- 2.4 This work was carried out under *Natural England* Class Survey Licence WML-CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), registration number 2015-13348-CLS-CLS issued to the report's author, a licensed bat ecologist with 30 years' experience working in and around the county.
- 2.5 All survey work was conducted according to the latest 'best practice' standards as published in the 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines' (Bat Conservation Trust, 3rd edition, 2016) and the Standing Advice to LPAs published by *Natural England* in September 2012.

3. Constraints

- 3.1 It is considered that there are no specific constraints operating on the survey results presented in section 4 below.
- 3.2 The absence of a bat roost in any one season can, however, never prove the absence of a roost at another season, such as during the autumn mating period, as bats regularly move their roost locations in response to both environmental conditions and the time of the year.
- 3.3 The results presented in section 4 below remain valid for a period of twelve months after which time they should not be relied upon and further advice should be sought regarding updating the survey.

4. Results

The following survey results were obtained:

4.1 Dusk Emergence Survey

The weather during the course of the two dusk surveys was considered to be optimal for bat emergence, as follows:

Date	Sunset	Temp.	Cloud	Rain	Wind
Visit 1:					
16/05/18	20:47	12°C	1/8	Nil	3
Date	Sunset	Temp.	Cloud	Rain	Wind
Visit 3:					
19/06/18	21:20	19°C	5/8	Nil	1

No bats were observed to emerge from the building during the course of the two dusk emergence surveys despite these optimal conditions for emergence and foraging activity.

4.2 Dawn Re-entry Survey

The weather during the course of the dawn re-entry survey was considered to be optimal for bat activity, as follows:

Date	Sunrise	Temp.	Cloud	Rain	Wind
Visit 2:					
01/06/18	04:50	15°C	8/8	Nil	0

No bats were observed to return to the building during the course of the dawn re-entry survey despite these optimal conditions for foraging activity during the preceding night.

4.3 Foraging Activity

Several Common Pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) were recorded making occasional feeding passes across the front, side and rear garden during all three survey visits.

None of these individuals, however, emerged from the building being surveyed.

5. Summary & Recommendations

- 5.1 The two dusk emergence surveys did not locate a bat roost(s) present in any part of the building.
- 5.2 The dawn re-entry survey also did not locate a bat roost(s) present in any part of the building.
- 5.3 The Outline Mitigation Strategy can now be updated to reflect that there is no evidence of a current Brown Long-eared Bat roost (or any other bat species) present in the property during the survey window.

There is therefore no requirement to obtain a Natural England ‘Development Licence’ in respect of this project.

The only mitigation now required is to ensure that access to the new roof is maintained so that bats may re-use the former roost site if desired at some stage in the future.

It is recommended that this can easily be achieved via the installation of four tiles along the ridge line that have moulded raised access points for bat ingress and by the removal of the roof lining beneath these access points.

- 5.4 With the above basic mitigation in place, it is recommended that further consideration of roosting bats at this site is not required for a period of one year from the date of the survey (see section 3.3 above) and that the relevant planning condition can now be discharged.