Bat Risk Assessment & Method Statement:

Harton Primary School New Hall South Shields South Tyneside

Gale Cottage,
Wolsingham,
Bishop Auckland,
County Durham,
DL13 3LT
Tel: 01388 526978
Fax: 01388 526978
email: info@barrettenvironmental.co.uk
website: www.barrettenvironmental.co.uk

February 2021

Company registered in England No. 5603818

Contents

A Executive summary	2
B Introduction	2
C Survey and site assessment	5
D Impact assessment in absence of mitigation	9
E Mitigation	9
F References	10

A Executive summary

Barrett Environmental Ltd was commissioned to carry out a bat risk assessment for South Tyneside Council for the proposed extension to Harton Primary School which will impact four of the twenty bat roost boxes installed as compensation when the previous building was demolished and the new School building constructed. Bat data was requested from Durham Bat Group to support the survey. The data search had not been received at the time of issuing this report.

The daylight survey of the boxes was carried out in February 2021. No bats or bat field signs were found in any of the four boxes. Apart from the adjacent playing fields very little foraging habitat within 500m and extremely limited commuting routes. The previous school buildings were demolished approximately 9 years ago and the bat surveys prior to that found little bat activity and no roosting bats. Therefore despite the quality of the roost units it is considered unlikely that they are utilised by bats and they have been categorised as a negligible risk. A single pre-dawn survey is planned for early July, when an endoscope survey for bat field signs will also be undertaken, to confirm the categorisation. If bats were discovered roosting in the boxes to be lost during that survey then further surveys and a Natural England mitigation licence will be required but that is considered unlikely. The roost units will be replaced by two boxes built into the extension so that no bat roost opportunities are lost.

B Introduction

B1 Background to development

Barrett Environmental Ltd was commissioned by Scott Roberts of South Tyneside Council to carry out a bat risk assessment report for the proposed extension works to Harton Primary School, South Shields where the proposed extension will lead to the loss of two bat roost boxes and disturbance to a further two. The boxes were installed as part of a compensation scheme for the site where 20 bat roost boxes were installed into the new school building.

Harton Primary School is located in South Tyneside on East Avenue, South Shields at grid reference NZ384647 and lies at an elevation of approximately 42m AOD. Figure 1 shows the site location.



Figure 1: Site location map, OS licence number 100036754

<u>B2 Details of proposed works</u>



Figure 2: Location of the planned extension from the existing School. Plan provided by South Tyneside Council

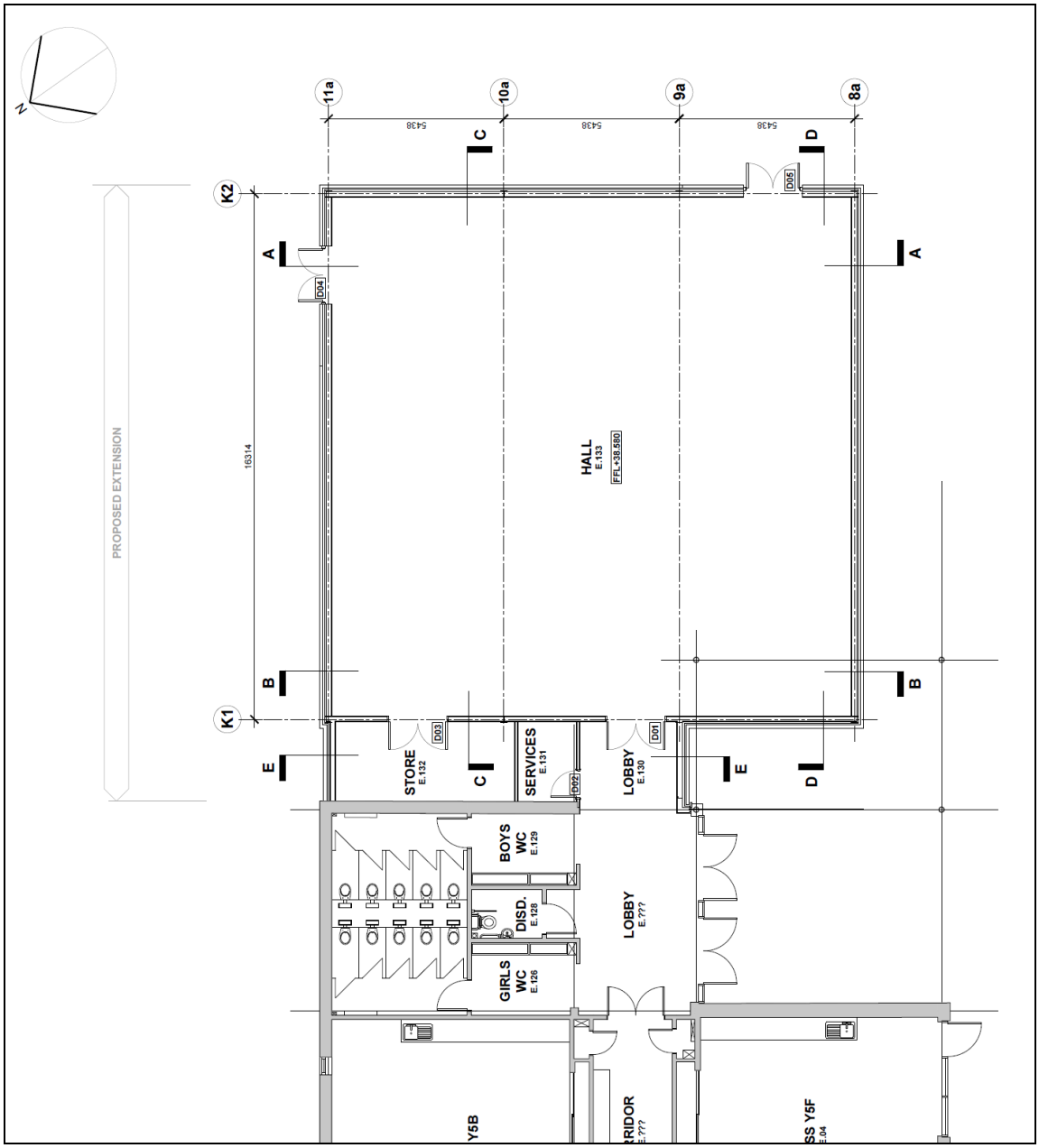


Figure 3: Proposed layout showing the new hall extension.
Taken from South Tyneside Council Project No: 6605, Drawing No: 20-00

C Survey and site assessment

C1 Pre-existing bat information at survey site

Data search from Durham Bat Group (DBG). The findings are shown in Table 1.

Not yet received.

Table 1: DBG bat records

C2 Status of bats

All bat species and their roost sites are partially protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 is currently the main legislation protecting bats. Under this legislation a person commits an offence if they:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill any bat;
- deliberately disturb any species in such a way as to be likely significantly to affect-
  - i) the ability of any significant group of animals of that species to survive, breed or rear or nurture their young
  - ii) the local distribution or abundance of that species;
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place.

All UK bat species are also listed on Appendix III of the Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, 1982) and, except the pipistrelle, are listed in Appendix II. All UK bat species are protected under the Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe (under the Bonn convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals).

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan included seven bat species on the priority species list and had plans for five, including soprano pipistrelle (UK BAP, 2007). The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 adopted the species listed in the UK BAP and these are included as Section 41 Species of Principal Importance in England under the legislation.

18 species of bat are native to the UK and with an estimated population of 1.28 million, the common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) is the most common. The only other species with the status "common" are soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and brown long-eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*). Four species, Daubenton's (*Myotis daubentonii*), Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*) bat, Whiskered (*Myotis mystacinus*) and Brandt's bat (*Myotis brandtii*), with populations between 150,000 - 300,000, are locally common. Five of the remaining species are vulnerable and four, including the grey long-eared bat (*Plecotus austriacus*), with an estimated population of only 1,000, are rare. Alcathoe bat (*Myotis alcathoe*) has recently been discovered as resident although its status and distribution are not yet known.

The Durham Biodiversity Plan (BAP) has a Species Action Plan for bats (URL1) which states that the pipistrelle bat is probably the most abundant and widespread species in the Durham area. In this context, Durham is considered as including County Durham, Darlington, South Tyneside, Gateshead and City of Sunderland. It also states that common pipistrelles are found on modern housing estates and are ubiquitous throughout the whole of the Durham BAP area. Brown long-eared bats are reasonably widespread, but localised.

Eight species are known to breed in the county, and a total of 11 species have been recorded. These are common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, brown long-eared, whiskered, Brandt's, Natterer's, Daubenton's, Nathusius' pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*), serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) and Leisler's (*Nyctalus leisleri*).
The status of bats in Durham is shown in Table 2.

Species	Status
Common pipistrelle	Found on modern housing estates and are ubiquitous throughout the whole of the Durham BAP area
Soprano pipistrelle	Are known to occur on the Tees, Wear and Derwent but are probably more widespread
Noctule	Are localised in the areas' mature woodland, in rural areas
Brown long-eared	Are reasonably widespread but localised. They require large, undisturbed roof spaces within flying distance of suitable woods
Whiskered	Are fairly widespread but localised. Roosts in the Durham area are of national importance
Brandt's	Much rarer and the roosts in the Durham area are of national importance
Natterer's	Roost in trees and large roof spaces where they can warm up before leaving; this is one of Durham's rarer species
Daubenton's	Are widespread along water courses and near water bodies throughout the region
Nathusius pipistrelle	Have been recorded feeding over the Tees at Cotherstone, near Bowes and near Whitworth on the Wear, but no roost sites are known
Serotine	Bat detector records only – probably animals indulging in post-breeding dispersal
Leisler's	Bat detector records in 2000 & 2007 only – nearest known breeding site near Sheffield

Table 2: Status of bat species in Durham (URL1)

C3 Objective of assessment and survey
The bat risk assessment was implemented to determine the risk of the building being used by roosting and / or hibernating bats.

C4 The survey area

The survey was limited to the four bat roost units to be impacted by the proposed works to construct an extension shown in Images 1 and 2 and located in the area shown on Figure 2 in section B2.

C5 Habitat description / Site description

The images in section C5.1 illustrate the description.

The building is a brick-built single storey structure with varying roof lines and a lot of glass. 20 brick covered Habibat bat roost units were built-in when the School was constructed. The School was completed in February 2011.

Nearby foraging areas are quite limited but include:

- Greenspace adjacent to the School which appears to be largely playing fields and so dominated by amenity grassland.
- Cleadon Park is approximately 580m to the south,
- South Shields Golf Course approximately 690m to the south west and
- Harton Cemetery approximately 745m to the north west;
- The Leas is approximately 1.16km to the north / north east.

The area was classified as of low quality for commuting and foraging bats.

C5.1 Images



Image 1: Bat roost units to be lost to the development



Image 2: Bat roost units adjacent to the extension works which will be disturbed by the works

C6 Field survey

C6.1 Methods

The surveys were carried out using a recognised technique. The surveys were supported by a data search.

C6.1.1 Daylight survey

The daylight survey was carried out by an experienced, licensed bat surveyor, examining the four, of the existing 20 bat roost units, which are to be impacted by the construction of the extension, using an endoscope.

C6.2 Personnel

The daylight survey was carried out by Trina Barrett (WML CL18 Bat Survey Level 2 No. 2015-12504-CLS-CLS).

C6.3 Weather and timing

The daylight survey was implemented on the 4th February 2021, on a very cold, overcast, morning with occasional showers.

C7 Survey results

C7.1 Daylight survey

No bats or bat field signs were found in the units.

C8 Interpretation and evaluation
C8.1 Presence/absence
DBG records
No bat field signs or bats were found during the daylight survey.

C8.2 Constraints
None

D Impact assessment in the absence of mitigation

The impact of the works has been categorised as neutral on the conservation status of the local bat populations.

E Mitigation

A mitigation strategy has been drawn up:

- A single pre-dawn survey is planned for early July 2021 to confirm that bats are not using the units. After the survey (presuming no bats return to the units) an endoscope survey of the boxes will be undertaken to check for bat field signs;
- The works to remove the two boxes will be undertaken in the autumn (September / October) of 2021 when bats are neither in hibernation or in maternity roosts which are the worst times of year to disturb them;
- The two boxes to be lost will be re-checked on the morning that they will be removed from use and their removal will be supervised by the project ecologist. If any bats are found a Bat Mitigation Class Licence (Low Impact) would be obtained in a short period of time by a Registered Ecologist under that scheme, enabling works to go ahead;
- Two similar bat roost units will be built into the north-facing elevation of the new hall to replace exactly what has been lost, so no bat roost opportunities are lost.

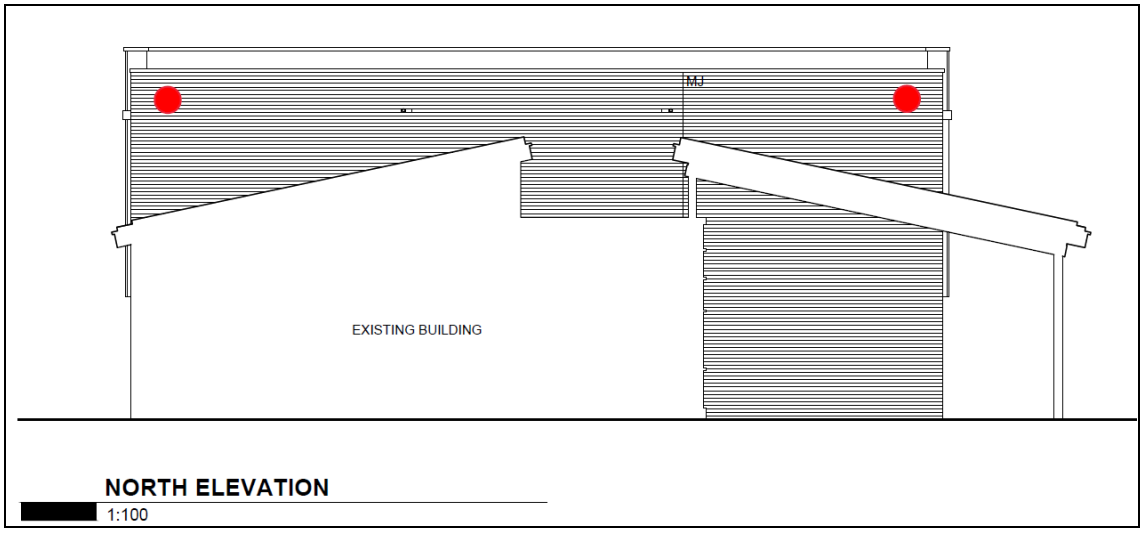


Figure 4: Bat roost units in the new extension. Based on South Tyneside Council Project No: 6605, Drawing No: 20-10A

F References

Collins, J, (ed) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines,* (3rd Edition), Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004), *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*, Peterborough: English Nature.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. & McLeish, A. P. (2004), *Bat Workers' Manual,* 3rd Edition, Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

URL1: http://neenp.org.uk/natural-environment/durham-priority-species/