

Nocturnal Bat Activity Survey of:

Vanbrugh House
Bridle Path
East Boldon
NE36 0PA

Prepared for:

David Fasa
Vanbrugh House
Bridle Path
East Boldon
NE36 0PA

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.0.1 Dendra Consulting Ltd was commissioned by David Fasa to undertake a nocturnal bat activity survey of Vanbrugh House, a residential property in East Boldon, South Tyneside. The survey was carried out in order to accompany a planning application for the construction of an extension to the property.
- 1.0.2 An external/internal inspection survey of the property conducted on 24th June 2021 did not find any evidence of roosting bats at the site, however a limited number of potential bat access points, suitable of supporting crevice-dwelling bats, were noted. In accordance with industry standard survey guidelines (Collins, 2016), the property was assessed as having a low potential risk of supporting roosting bats and therefore one nocturnal activity survey was recommended.
- 1.0.3 A single dawn activity survey was undertaken at the site on 22nd July 2021. During the survey moderate levels of bat activity were observed within the vicinity of the site, but no bats were noted roosting within the property. As such, it is considered highly unlikely that bats roost within the building and therefore no impacts on bats or their roosts are anticipated as a result of the works. This level of survey effort was deemed proportionate to the potential risk. Recommendations are confined to the provision of emergency procedures in the unlikely event that bats are encountered during the works.
- 1.0.4 No significant impacts on roosting bats or wider bat populations are predicted.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose of Report

2.1.1 Dendra Consulting Ltd was commissioned by David Fasa to undertake a nocturnal bat activity survey of Vanbrugh Hose, a residential property in East Boldon, South Tyneside. The survey was carried out in order to accompany a planning application for the construction of an extension to the property.

2.2 Details of Proposals

2.2.1 Detailed plans are still being drawn up, but the proposals will involve;

- Demolition of the existing conservatory on the rear elevation
- Construction of a single storey rear extension

2.3 Legal Status of Bats

2.3.1 All UK species of bat are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019. This law makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat
- Deliberately disturb a bat^[*]
- Damage or destroy a bat roost or resting place

^[*]Disturbance of bats includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to:

- Impair their ability
 - to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - to hibernate or migrate
- Affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

3.0 SURVEY & SITE ASSESSMENT

3.1 Site Location and Surrounding Area

- 3.1.1 The detached property is located in a conservation area, to the west of East Boldon Village in South Tyneside. The OS National Grid reference for the centre of the site is NZ 36024 61343. The approximate altitude is 41m AOD. The property is bounded by lawned gardens with ornamental planting and mature trees to the north, south and west, and a residential property to the east. Immediately beyond the site perimeter is further medium density residential development to all aspects, interspersed with some open green spaces, leading onto areas of mixed use farmland and pockets of plantation woodland surrounding the village. The nearest named watercourse is the River Don, lying approximately 520m north-west of the site. Overall, the site is connected to areas of moderate value foraging habitat capable of supporting a variety of bat species. Figure 1 below shows the site location and surrounding area.

Figure 1 - Site location and surrounding area.



3.2 Pre-Existing Information

3.2.1 Durham Bat Group (DBG) was contacted, and any records held of bat roosts and activity within 2km of the site was requested. The data will be appended to this report upon receipt. Information from previous risk assessment survey work conducted in South Tyneside by Dendra Consulting Ltd, reports that a known Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), maternity roost was recorded in a residential property in 2018, located approximately 650m south-west of the site.

3.3 Status of Species Recorded in the Search Area

3.3.1 Local level

There is insufficient data available to assess the status of bats in the local area. The county/regional status of the species likely to exist in the search area is therefore likely to provide the most reasonable assessment.

3.3.2 County/Regional levels (North East England Nature Partnership)

- Brandt's bat is much rarer and the roosts in the Durham area are of national importance
- Brown long-eared bats are reasonably widespread, but localised. They require large undisturbed roof spaces within flying distance of suitable woods
- Common pipistrelles are found on modern housing estates and are ubiquitous throughout the whole of the DBAP area
- Daubenton's bats are widespread along water courses and near water bodies throughout the region
- Natterer's bats roost in trees and large roof spaces, where they can warm up before leaving; this is one of Durham's rarer species
- Noctule bats are localised in the area's mature woodland, in rural areas
- Soprano pipistrelles are known to occur on the Tees, Wear and Derwent but are probably more widespread
- Whiskered bats are fairly widespread but localised. Roosts in the Durham area are of national importance

3.3.3 National level (Bat Conservation Trust)

- Brandt's bat – Stable (data to be treated with caution)
- Brown long-eared bat – Stable
- Common pipistrelle – Increasing
- Daubenton's bat – Stable
- Natterer's bat – Increasing (data to be treated with caution)

- Noctule – Stable
- Soprano pipistrelle – Stable
- Whiskered bat – Stable (data to be treated with caution)

3.4 Site/Building Inspection

3.4.1 The property consists of a two storey detached dwelling with a multi-pitched slate roof (Photographs 1 & 2). A slate roofed conservatory and a single storey extension with a mono-pitched slate roof are present on the rear (south) elevation. The roof is generally in good condition, with only a small number of loose slates noted. A light covering of moss is present beneath the ridge tiles on the main roof. Two dormer windows with hipped slate roofs and hanging tile side coverings are built into the rear roof, with several small mortar gaps noted under the ridge tiles. Intact lead flashing is present in roof valleys. A wooden fascia board is present at roofline level, with numerous gaps noted on the side (east) and rear elevations, where the boards sit proud of the supporting brickwork. The fascia gaps were inspected with a high powered torch and the walltop was visible in several places, giving potential access into the wall cavity and the roof void (Photographs 3 & 4). The external walls are in good condition, apart from two mortar gaps noted on the rear elevation above the single storey extension (Photograph 5). The doors and windows are wooden framed which are sealed well to the supporting walls.

3.4.2 Internally there is a large void present in the building. The roof slates are supported on timber kingpost framing. The slates are lined with an intact plastic coated mesh membrane. The ridge beam and rafters are cobwebbed (Photograph 6). Daylight was seen to enter the roof void at eaves level.

3.4.3 No evidence of bats, such as droppings, fur-oil staining, scratch marks, feeding remains, squeaking noises, odour or live/dead bats were noted during the external/internal risk assessment survey.

Photograph 1 – Front (north) elevation of the property.



Photograph 2 – Rear (south) elevation of the property.



Photograph 3 – Fascia gaps on the side (east) elevation.



Photograph 4 – Fascia gaps on the rear (south) elevation.



Photograph 5 – Brickwork mortar gaps on the rear elevation.



Photograph 6 – Internal view of the main roof structure.



3.5 Survey Timing, Methodology & Personnel

3.5.1 A building inspection survey was conducted 24th June 2021 by Shaun Morrison, an experienced ecologist holding a Natural England Level 2 Bat Survey Class Licence (WML-CL18). The purpose of the visit was to assess the site's suitability for bats, signs of bats and potential entry/exit points. The survey was conducted in accordance with best practice guidelines (Collins, 2016). The weather on the day of the visit was 17° C, dry and sunny with a Force 1 wind.

3.5.2 As a result of the bat risk assessment outlined above, the property was classified as having a low potential risk to support roosting bats, and therefore a single nocturnal activity survey was recommended and conducted on 22nd July 2021. This level of survey effort was deemed proportionate to the classification of the site (Collins, 2016). The weather conditions during the surveys are summarised in Figure 2.

3.5.3 The nocturnal activity survey was conducted by an experienced surveyor, holding a Natural England Level 2 Class Licence to survey bats of all species for scientific and/or educational purposes (WML-CL18). A list of personnel, together with relevant Natural England Class Licence numbers, and weather conditions during the survey are summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Weather conditions and personnel during surveys.

Date	Weather Conditions					Surveyors and Licence numbers (Lead surveyor in bold)
	Precipitation	Cloud cover (%)	Wind (Beaufort)	Start temp (°C)	End temp (°C)	
22/07/2021	None	0-20	B0	14.9	14.2	Shaun Morrison 2015-12715-CLS-CLS Jodie Morgan

3.6 Survey Results

3.6.1 Desk Study and Building Inspection

During the risk assessment survey no evidence of use by bats was found either internally or externally, however due to the presence of a limited number of potential bat access points, in combination with the quality of the immediate surrounding habitat, the property was assessed as having a low potential risk to support roosting bats (Collins, 2016).

3.6.2 Dawn activity survey – 22nd July 2021

A total of 10 bat passes were recorded within the grounds and immediate vicinity of the property during the survey. Eight of the passes were positively identified as Common pipistrelle bats, with the other 2 passes identified as Pipistrelle species bats (*Pipistrellus sp.*). The first recorded activity was at 03:24 when a bat was briefly heard but not seen commuting over the site. A further heard but not seen pass was recorded commuting over the area at 03:32, and then a bat was observed flying over the eastern boundary wall to forage in the front garden of the property. Further commuting and feeding passes were heard or observed to the front of the site at 03:35 and 03:42, and then a single bat has observed feeding over the main road outside of the northern site boundary at 03:48. Two further commuting/foraging passes were observed to the front of the site at 04:00 and at 04:10 when a single bat then two bats were observed flying together. Activity then ceased for the remaining 47 minutes of the survey. During the survey no bats were seen to emerge from or enter into the building.

3.6.3 The results of the nocturnal bat activity survey is summarised in Figure 3, and a bat flight plan is provided as Appendix 1.

Figure 3 – Table summarising findings of nocturnal surveys

Date	Number of Surveyors	Sunset or Sunrise time	Start time	End time	Species recorded	Emergence/ Re-entry
22/07/2021	2	04:57	03:20	04:57	Common pipistrelle Pipistrelle sp.	None

4.0 INTERPRETATION AND EVALUATION OF SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 Presence/absence

- 4.1.1 No bats were noted emerging from or entering the building during the nocturnal activity survey and therefore it is considered highly unlikely that bats roost within the site.

4.2 Population Assessment

- 4.2.1 No bats were found to be roosting within the building during the nocturnal survey visit and therefore a population assessment is not applicable.

4.3 Site Status Assessment

- 4.3.1 No bats were found to be roosting within the building during the nocturnal survey visit. The building therefore holds very little conservation value for bat species.

4.4 Constraints

- 4.4.1 The risk assessment and nocturnal activity surveys were undertaken by competent surveyors during good weather conditions. No constraints were encountered.

5.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Short Term Impacts: Disturbance

- 5.1.1 No roost has been found at the site and therefore no impacts of this nature are predicted.

5.2 Long-Term Impacts: Roost Modification

- 5.2.1 No roost has been found at the site and therefore no impacts of this nature are predicted.

5.3 Long-Term Impacts: Roost Loss

- 5.3.1 No roost has been found at the site and therefore no impacts of this nature are predicted.

5.4 Long Term Impacts: Fragmentation and Isolation

- 5.4.1 The scale of the proposed works will ensure that there will be no fragmentation of bat habitat and no isolation of bat populations. No impacts of this nature are predicted.

5.5 Post Development Interference Impacts

- 5.5.1 No significant impacts predicted.

5.6 Predicted Scale of Impacts

- 5.6.1 No significant impacts predicted.

6.0 MITIGATION & COMPENSATION

6.1 Summary of Mitigation Strategy

6.1.1 In this instance no significant impacts are predicted and no offence is likely. However, bats are highly mobile creatures capable of utilising many roosting sites throughout the year. Therefore emergency procedures in the event that bats are encountered during works, are provided in section 6.1.2 below.

6.1.2 As a measure of good working practice, the following information should be supplied to contractors undertaking the demolition works:

- In the highly unlikely event that bats are found all works will stop and the consultant will be contacted immediately – Barry Anderson 07900894160/0191 3719636.
- Where the consultant ecologist is unavailable, general advice can be sought from the Bat Conservation Trust National Bat Helpline, on 0345 1300 228.
- If the roost is still intact, or can be repaired, this should be done immediately with bats left *in situ*.
- Any injured bats, and bats which cannot be returned to the roost and may be vulnerable to inclement weather and/or predation, should be collected using gloved hands and placed into a suitable container with breathing holes.
- **Anyone bitten by a bat should seek immediate medical attention** from their GP.
- A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence may be required for the works to continue if bats are found.

6.2 Licensing Requirements

6.2.1 Not applicable.

6.3 Timing and/or Phasing of Works

6.3.1 None required for bats.

6.4 Capture and Exclusion

6.4.1 Not applicable.

6.5 Roost Retention

6.5.1 Not applicable.

6.6 Roost Modification

6.6.1 Not applicable.

6.7 Replacement Roosts

6.7.1 Not applicable.

6.8 Supervision

6.8.1 Not applicable.

6.9 Monitoring

6.9.1 Not applicable.

6.10 Mitigation Site Ownership

6.10.1 Not applicable.

7.0 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust, 2020. *The National Bat Monitoring Programme Annual Report 2019*. Bat Conservation Trust, London. Available at:

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Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn)*. Bat Conservation Trust. London. ISBN-13 978-1-872745-96-1.

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

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf

Viewed 22nd July 2021

North East England Nature Partnership

Available at:

<https://neenp.org.uk/natural-environment/biodiversity-priorities/>

Viewed 22nd July 2021

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2019).

Available at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/579/contents/made>

Viewed 22nd July 2021

8.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Bat activity flight plan for 22/07/2021

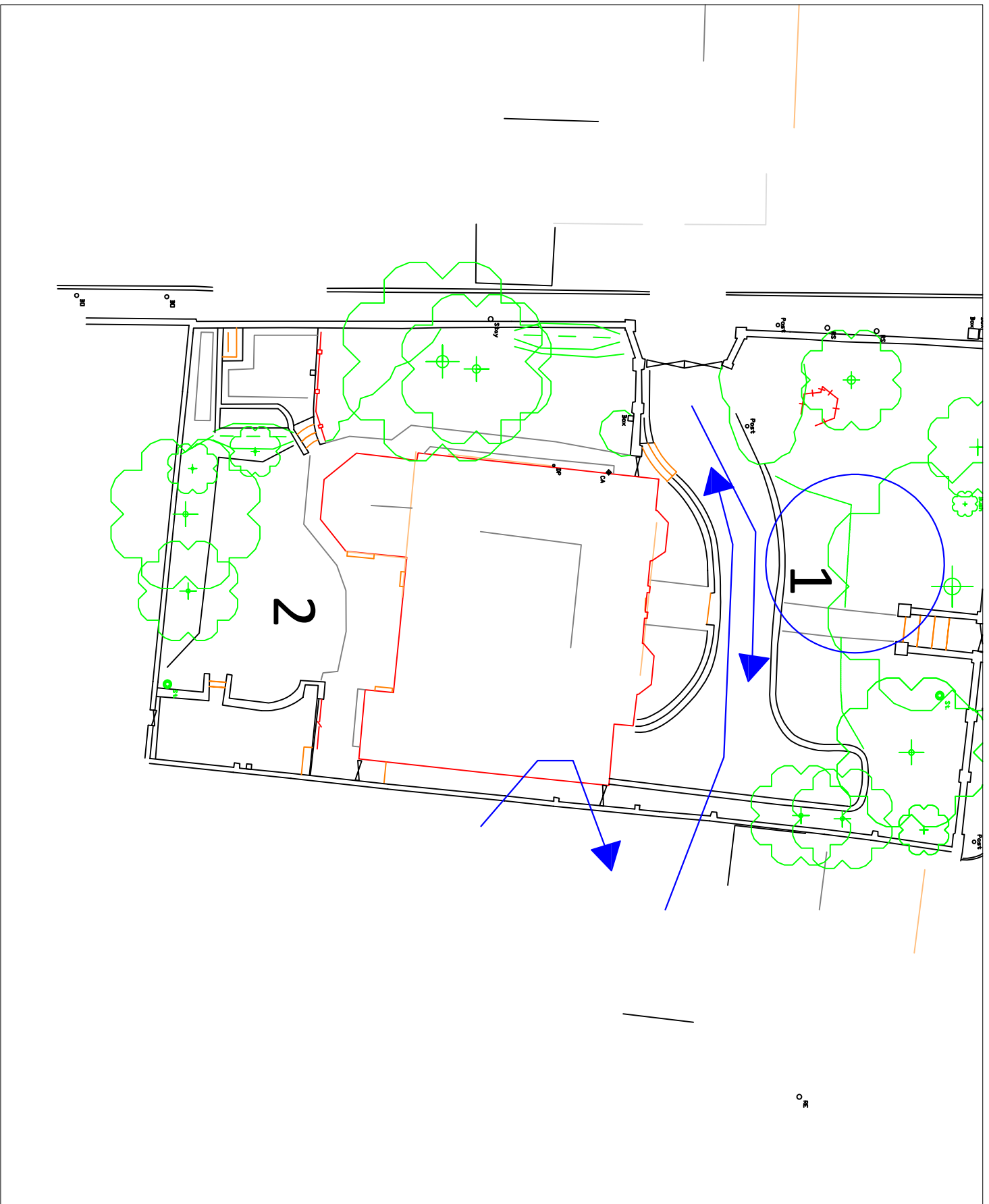
Key

Surveyor location 1

Flight line

Foraging area

Surveyed building



Bat survey:
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Scale: Not to scale