

7.11 BAT ACTIVITY SURVEY

Introduction

7.11.1 A bat survey was undertaken to observe bat activity across the site. The survey method agreed with CCW and NCC involved two evening survey visits spread out during the spring and early summer.

Survey method

7.11.2 The survey involved two surveyors walking all of the main paths through the site, monitoring bat activity visually and by use of frequency division/ time expansion bat detectors. The times and weather conditions during the surveys and are summarised in Table 7.11.1 below.

Table 7.11.1. Bat activity survey dates, times and conditions

Date	Time	Weather
30/4/2013	8:25 – 10:25pm (sunset: 8:30pm)	10% cloud, calm, 12°C
5/6/2013	9:10 – 11:25 (sunset: 9:14pm)	20% cloud, light breeze, 15.5oC, dropping to 14.5°C later.

7.11.3 Bat calls were recorded for later sound analysis using Batsound software. No roost surveys were required because there are no large trees or built structures within the site offering potentially suitable habitat for bats to roost in.

7.11.4 The only place that individual bats might feasibly roost is in the Ivy on the mature trees beside the Sea Cadet Centre, so the first survey commenced at this location, with the surveyors waiting near to the trees for any potentially emerging bats. This was also a good location to observe bats using the site boundary as a post-emergence flight-line from any possible roosts in nearby buildings. The route was reversed for the second survey; starting the observations in the post-industrial area.

7.11.5 The surveyors walked routes that were approximately 50m apart to cover the area more thoroughly. They paused to watch and listen for bat activity at regular intervals, approximately every 200m (roughly equivalent to every 3 minutes slow walking), pausing for 3 minutes of stationary observation.

Survey findings

7.11.6 The bat survey observations are summarised in Figures 7.11.1 and 7.11.2. The approximate survey route is marked as a dashed red line, while the stationary observation points are shown as red circles, numbered 1 to 12. Bat observations are summarised as text labels and purple lines. Common Pipistrelle is abbreviated to CP. Soprano Pipistrelle is abbreviated to SP.

7.11.7 Common Pipistrelle was the most frequently recorded species on both surveys. This bat was generally encountered singly, or occasionally in pairs, commuting and foraging, mainly around scrubby margins. The observation of 2 Common Pipistrelles commuting northwards along the site boundary not long after sunset on the first survey indicates that there must be a roost nearby, probably in a building to the south-east of the site.

7.11.8 Soprano Pipistrelle was recorded on both surveys, but in smaller numbers than Common Pipistrelle. Individuals were mainly observed near the avenue of mature trees north of proposed development site on both occasions, and there was a single pass by this species over the post industrial ruderal habitat on the second survey. Again, this species is probably roosting nearby, but not within site.

Discussion

7.11.9 The Herbert Road site currently has very limited use by bats, mainly due to its exposed nature and limited potential for roosting. The only two species of bats observed were Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle. These were only recorded in small numbers in flight, and they are unlikely to roost within the proposed development area. It is feasible that other bat species might visit the site from time to time, but there is nothing to suggest that they would occur in significant numbers. The habitats most favoured by the foraging and commuting bats were the areas of taller scrub at the eastern margin, and the scrub and avenue of mature trees beyond the northern boundary. Bats were also foraging beside Lottery's Reen during the June survey. No bats were observed feeding over the river or fringing saltmarsh habitats.

Figure 7.11.1. Summary of bat survey observations 30 April 2013



Figure 7.11.2. Summary of bat survey observations 5 June 2013

