St. Pancras Cruising Club New Clubhouse and Visiting Boaters Facilities

Bat Check Report

April 2017

St Pancras Cruising Club
St. Pancras Yacht Basin
Camley Street
London N1C 4PN

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Issue and revision record

Author	Date	Revision
Zoe Trent, MCIEEM	11th December 2016	A
Zoe Trent, MCIEEM	3rd April 2017	B

Contents

Executive Summary

St. Pancras Cruising Club (SPCC) is planning to replace their existing clubhouse. The existing clubhouse, which is a prefabricated structure, was vacated in 2007 and a report by Halcrow concluded that it had come to the end of its useful life and was beyond repair. The building has had its internal walls and ceilings removed but it has been kept water tight.

The planning application for a new clubhouse was received by Camden Council on 1st August 2014 and planning permission was granted on 9th October 2014 (Planning Application Number 2014/4871/P). One of the planning conditions required that a check for bats be carried out prior to the existing clubhouse being demolished.

As required by the planning condition, a check of the development site was carried out by Zoë Trent on 26th November 2016. This inspection was a check to determine if there was any evidence of bats using the existing building. The check found that there was no evidence of bats and so no further survey was deemed necessary.

There, was however, features that could be utilised by bats and so it was recommended (in revision A of this report) that the existing clubhouse be demolished during the winter (before March 2017). This recommendation was because although bats were not using the building for hibernating they could utilise it for transitional and summer roosts. However, as it was not possible to carry out demolition by the end of February and demolition is now planned for mid April. A further survey was therefore carried out on April 1st to April 2nd 2017 which involved a further check of the clubhouse and a dusk and dawn emergence survey.

During this second survey, bats were observed foraging in the boat basin but none were observed emerging from the clubhouse. It is likely that they roost in the brickwork and bridges along the canal.

In the unlikely event that bats are found during demolition of the clubhouse, all work would need to stop and a bat specialist would need to be contacted immediately.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Saint Pancras Cruising Club, which is located in Saint Pancras Basin adjacent to The Regent's Canal, is planning to build a new club house. The existing clubhouse on the site is a single storey prefabricated structure and was vacated in 2007. A report by Halcrow concluded that it had come to the end of its useful life and was beyond repair. The building has, however, been kept water tight. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was carried out in September 2014. This found that there was no evidence that bats were utilising the structure but also recommended a check prior to demolition in case bats moved into the structure.

1.2 Scope

The scope of this report is to identify whether any bat roosts are present in any areas to be affected by the proposed development, in particular, to determine if they are using the existing clubhouse that is due to be demolished. This report also makes recommendations for any licensing requirements, or any non-licensable mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures which may be required.

1.3 Legislative and Planning Context

The construction and operational activities for the proposed works must comply with the European and UK nature conservation legislation and national and local biodiversity policies. The main pieces of UK legislation on nature conservation are the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended); the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2012 and Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

The biodiversity policies which are most relevant are National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and the Greater London Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP).

All bat species are protected under the WCA (as amended) 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012. This means it is illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats;
- Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time);
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat; and
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

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2 Methodology

2.1 Survey Area

The survey area consisted of the existing clubhouse located at National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ2991783585, adjacent to the Regent's Canal in the London Borough of Camden.

2.2 Desk Study

The species which could potentially be encountered were checked using information available from the London Bat Group.

2.3 External Building Assessment

An initial assessment of the clubhouse's potential to support bats was made by conducting an external inspection to search for potential roost features which would give bats access to a suitable roosting cavity or crevice. This involved a visual inspection to search for these features including:

- Damaged roofing tiles;
- Gaps behind cladding/barge boards;
- Holes in soffit boards;
- Gaps behind any flashing or roofing;
- Holes in brickwork which may lead into a cavity wall; and
- Any existing mitigation measures such as bat boxes, bat bricks and bat tiles.

The location of each identified feature is shown on the map in Appendix A and the photographs in Appendix B.

The initial assessment allows a building to be categorised as having negligible/low/moderate/high or confirmed roosting potential (Collins, 2016) (see Table 2.1).

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Table 2.1: Categories of roost inspection

Bat Roost potential	Description
Negligible	An inspected building which is considered to have no features of importance for roosting bats.
Low	From the ground, the building appears to have superficial features (e.g. cracks and crevices) that are sub-optimal for roosting bats but may be used in some circumstances. Surrounding habitat appears to provide little or no foraging potential and/or connectivity to further suitable habitats.
Moderate	A building in which no evidence of bats has been found, but a small number of features have been identified that could support roosting bats (such as cracks, crevices and/or structural features). Surrounding habitat provides good foraging potential and/or connectivity to further suitable habitat.
High	A building in which no evidence of bats has been found, but there are a larger number of features have been identified that could support roosting bats (such as cracks, crevices and/or structural features). Surrounding habitat provides excellent foraging potential and/or connectivity to further suitable habitat.
Confirmed	Bats or evidence of bats recorded within the building, including both current and/or historic roosts.

2.4 Internal Inspection

An internal inspection was carried out in areas that were accessible to determine if bat evidence was present within. This included the main structure as well as the vestibule. It was possible thoroughly inspect all features.

2.5 Emergence/re-entry surveys

Emergence/re-entry surveys are normally undertaken during the bat active period from May to September to determine if potential roost features identified during the building inspection are being utilised by roosting bats. However, in this case the emergence survey was undertaken on 1st April 2017 and the re-entry survey on 2nd April 2017. This is because the clubhouse is now due to be demolished in mid April 2017.
The survey was undertaken in accordance with Collins, 2016. Dusk emergence surveys commenced 15 minutes before sunset (which was at 7:34pm) and finished 1 hour 45 minutes after sunset. Dawn return surveys commenced 2 hours before sunrise (6:33am) and finished 15minutes after sunrise. The survey was carried out by one surveyor (using a bat box duet) which was adequate as the building is small and the relevant potential roost features visible from one location.

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3 Results

3.1 Bat Species known in the vicinity

The following bat species may be present within the vicinity of the development:

Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus sp.*: There are three separate pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus and Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and *Pipistrellus nathusii*) all of which are known to breed in Greater London (London Bat Group, 2016). Pipistrelles are the most common species of bat in Britain and they often roost in houses under eaves and soffit boards. They feed in woodland, over water, along hedgerows and gardens.

Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*: Noctule bats are found in Greater London. However, they roost in woodpecker holes or rot holes in trees and are unlikely to utilise a derelict building.

Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*: Daubenton's bat is recorded along the Grand Union Canal. They roost near water, usually in tunnels and bridges.

3.2 External/Internal Building Inspection

The features which were identified (on November 26th 2016) with suitability for bats are described in Table 3.1. Their locations are shown on the map in Appendix A.

Table 3.1: Features suitable for bats

Building Description	Feature Number	Feature and Location	Feature Details	Evidence	Building Potential
The building is comprised of two sections, the main clubhouse and the vestibule. The building is constructed of steel uprights with pre-cast concrete panels. The roof on the main clubhouse is corrugated coated steel and the roof on the vestibule is roofing felt.	A	SE, Ground level to 2.5m	Gap between main clubhouse and vestibule.	No	The building is in an urban area where there is a high level of disturbance. On the opposite side of the Regents canal there is extensive building work occurring. There is some light spill but the building is not illuminated at night. Bats are known to forage along the adjacent canal and Camley Street Natural Park is nearby. The building thus has **moderate potential** to support roosting bats.
	B	NW, 2.5m	Gaps under soffit boards.	No	
	C	N, 3m	Hole above northern door.	No	
	D	Inside vestibule where join with main clubhouse is.	Missing plasterboard between vestibule and main clubhouse. Cobwebs present indicating bats are not present.	No	
	E	Inside main clubhouse above internal vestibule door.	Gap between wooden structure. Fully visible with no sign of bats.	No	

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The external features were re-inspected on April 1st and an inspection was made for further features. No further features were found and none of the features previously identified had any sign of bats being present. Feature A had extensive cobwebs, indicating bats are not present. It was also brightly lit on the evening of April 1st by a string of multi-coloured lights around the gardens.

3.3 Emergence/re-entry surveys

The surveyor stood at the north-west corner of the clubhouse so that features B and C would be fully visible. The weather was dry and there was little wind.

At 7:58pm the first bat was observed foraging in the boat basin. This was a pipistrelle species. It did not emerge from the clubhouse but appeared to arrive from the north-west where there is extensive brick work and bridges along the Regents Canal. Foraging continued in the basin until 8:42pm. This appeared to be just a small number of pipistrelle bats circling around the basin. None came near to the clubhouse. No further activity was recorded after 8:42pm and no bats were recorded at all during the re-entry survey.

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4 Conclusion and recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

Bats forage in St. Pancras Yacht Basin but although the existing clubhouse has potential for bats no evidence was found that they are present.

4.2 Recommendations

In the unlikely event that bats are found during the demolition, a bat specialist will need to be contacted for advice and all demolition work must stop.

4.3 Habitat enhancement

The existing plans require the installation of bat (and bird) boxes. These should be selected to be appropriate for the species that are most likely to be present in the area (pipistrelles, noctules and Daubenton's). The bat boxes should be positioned well away from any external lighting.

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5 References

Bat Conservation Trust (2012) Bats and Buildings Guidance for built environment professionals, consultants, building owners and managers on the conservation actions to promote and cater for bats in buildings.

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Appendices

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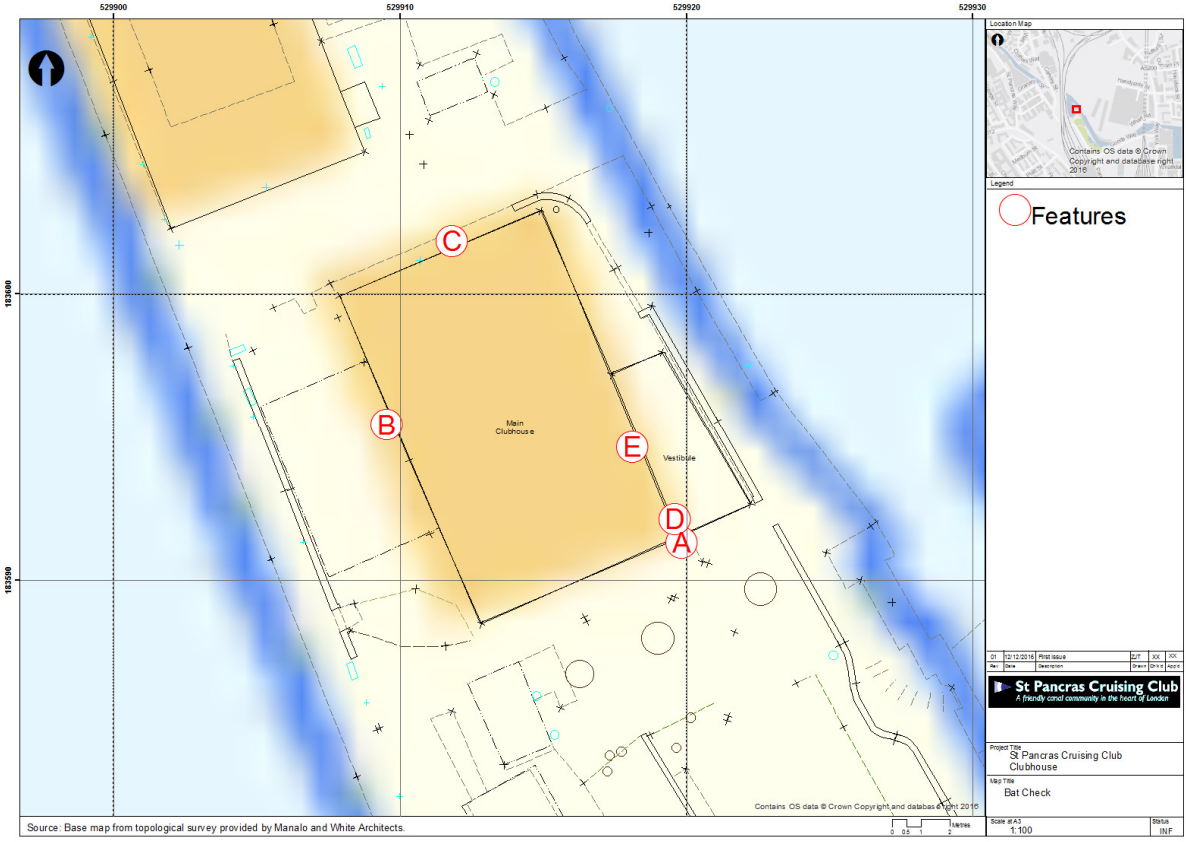
Appendix A. Map showing features



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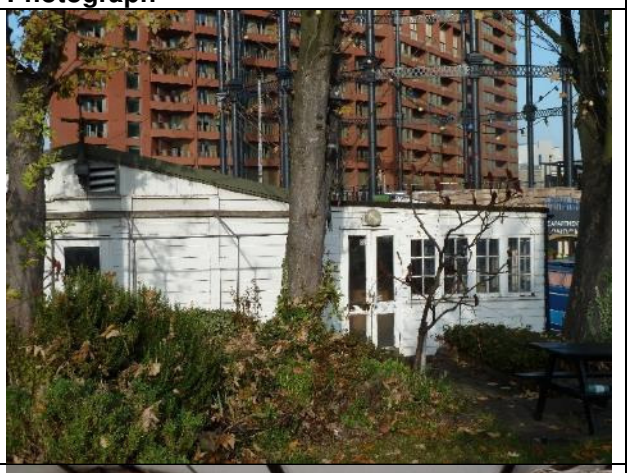
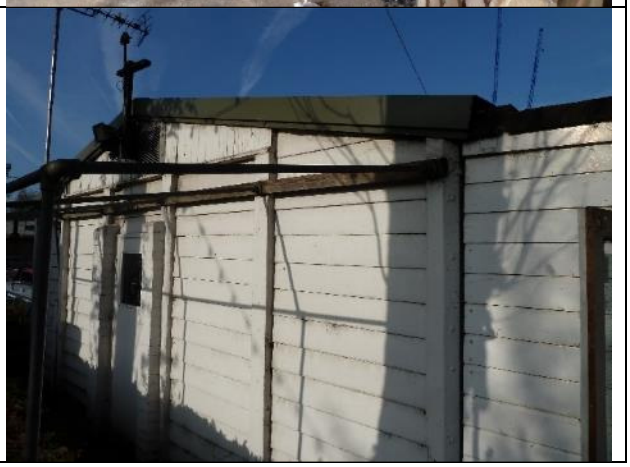
Appendix B. Feature Notes and Photographs

Feature	Description	Photograph
General photo of clubhouse and vestibule	External	
General photo of clubhouse	Internal	
A	Gap between main club house and vestibule.	

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Feature	Description	Photograph
B	Gap under soffit boards.	
C	Hole above northern entrance to main clubhouse.	 
D	Inside vestibule. Broken plaster board revealing concrete panel of main clubhouse.	

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Feature	Description	Photograph
E	Gap above door between vestibule and main clubhouse.	

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