

FORMER BELSIZE PARK FIRE STATION

**36 LANCASTER GROVE
LONDON
NW3**

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 Vulcan Properties Limited, via Nicholas Taylor & Associates, to undertake two dusk emergence / dawn re-entry bat activity surveys at the former Belsize Park Fire Station building (see cover photograph) located at 36 Lancaster Grove, London NW3 4PB and situated at approximately National Grid Reference TQ 272 845.

The surveys were commissioned in order to satisfy a planning condition for the re-development of the site for residential use.

- 1.2 A day-time Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for bats, completed on 18th January 2018, determined that the property had potential to act as a bat roost site based on the condition of the building and the number of obvious potential bat access points including lifted, missing or broken roof tiles, gaps under hanging tiles and in brickwork, and gaps around window frames and air vents, although no direct evidence of bat presence was detected.
- 1.3 The bat activity survey therefore implements a key recommendation in the PRA; namely, to conduct a series of two standard dusk emergence / dawn re-entry surveys in order to confirm the presence / absence of an extant roost in the building.
- 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 / dawn re-entry surveys were undertaken on 22nd/23rd August and 5th/6th September 2018. The dusk surveys commenced 15 minutes before sunset and concluded approximately 120 minutes after sunset. The dawn surveys commenced 120 minutes before sunrise and concluded approximately 15 minutes after sunrise.

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

- 2.2 Both survey visits were completed by the report's author, working with an experienced field assistant to ensure that all sides of the building were visible at all times.

- 2.3 Standard time expansion ultrasonic detectors were utilised in order to facilitate the finding and identification of any bats present and 2-way radios were available to ensure effective communication when required.
- 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 over 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 entirely prove the absence of a roost at another season, such as during the winter hibernation 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 / Dawn Re-entry Surveys

The weather during the course of the two dusk / dawn surveys was considered to be suitable for bat activity, as follows:

Date	Sunset / Sunrise	Temp.	Cloud	Rain	Wind
Visit 1:					
22/08/18	20:07	19°C	4/8	Nil	1
23/08/18	06:00	13°C	0/8	Nil	1

Date	Sunset / Sunrise	Temp.	Cloud	Rain	Wind
Visit 2:					
05/09/18	19:40	17°C	6/8	Nil	1
06/09/18	06:19	11°C	2/8	Nil	1

No bats were observed to emerge from the building during the course of the two dusk emergence / dawn re-entry surveys despite these suitable conditions for emergence and foraging activity.

4.2 Foraging Activity

No bats were recorded foraging or commuting over the grounds of the property during the course of either of the two survey visits.

5. **Summary & Recommendations**

- 5.1 The two dusk emergence / dawn re-entry surveys did not locate a bat roost(s) present in any part of the building.
- 5.2 There is no requirement to obtain a Natural England ‘Development Licence’, in respect of European Protected Species, for this project.
- 5.3 It is therefore now recommended that further consideration of bats roosting at this site is not required for a period of one year from the completion date of the survey (see section 3.3 above) and that any planning condition can accordingly be discharged.