






**Bat Survey,  
Slimma Factory, Leek , Staffordshire  
(September 2009)**

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## **F I G U R E S:**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Peak Ecology Ltd on behalf of Slimma, in relation to their factory buildings in Leek, (Grid-Ref: SK 230 038). It has been produced in order to fulfil the recommendations set out for outline planning permission.
- 1.2 The buildings on site were assessed on the 24<sup>th</sup> August 2009 for their potential in supporting roosting bats. Although the buildings were considered to hold low potential, due to the complex nature of the buildings on site a nocturnal survey was recommended as a precautionary measure.
- 1.3 The Slimma factory lies within the urban setting of Leek, with residential terraced housing and roads surrounding the site. The site comprised a complex series of one, two and three storey buildings and extensions of varying ages and construction. The main original building looked Victorian in construction.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

### Desk Study

- 2.1 Data relating to records of bat species were sought from Staffordshire Ecological Record, for a 1km radius around the site.

### Bats

- 2.2 Bat species and their roosts are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) through inclusion in Schedule 5. All bats are also included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994, which defines 'European Protected Species of animals'. This therefore makes it illegal to intentionally or recklessly:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (or take) bats;
- Deliberately disturb bats (whether in a roost or not);
- Recklessly disturb roosting bats or obstruct access to their roosts;
- Damage or destroy bat roosts.

### Buildings assessment

- 2.3 Buildings were assessed externally from ground level, for potential bat access points. Building features and any potential access points were noted and all buildings were described as having a none, low, medium or high potential to support roosting bats. Evaluation of potential is necessarily subjective and relies on professional judgement. Any building given a medium or high potential would be subject to more detailed

assessment if affected within the development. The following gives a guide to how this evaluation was implemented:

- **None** – Buildings have no features suitable for roosting bats and no physical evidence of bats using the building was found. No constraints to works on the building are considered to be present from roosting bats.
- **Low potential** – Buildings that have limited features suitable for roosting and/or limited potential access points. There is no physical evidence of bats using the building and it is unlikely that they are doing so.
- **Medium potential** – Buildings that have some features and potential access points that look suitable for use by roosting bats. Limited or ambiguous physical evidence *may* have been seen. It is possible that bats may be using the building.
- **High potential** – Buildings with many or better quality features and potential access points that appear suitable for use by roosting bats. Physical evidence may have been seen. It is highly possible or probable that bats may be using the building.

#### Emergence / swarming survey

2.4 Surveys were carried out by suitably experienced ecologists with frequency division detectors, positioned at appropriate location points to ensure that the aspects of the building of interest, and potential access points could be observed. Following the methodologies set out in the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (2007), one dusk and dawn survey was undertaken during the same 24 hour period. The dusk survey began half an hour before sunset and finish 1.5 – 2 hours after. The dawn survey began up to 2 hours before sunrise and finished just after.

### 3.0 RESULTS

3.1 The data search provided the results presented in the table below:

COMMON NAME	STATUS AT SITE	GRID REF	DATE	APPROX DISTANCE FROM SITE
Common Pipistrelle	1 Count of Adult	SJ982562	17/06/2003	350m south east
Natterer's Bat	1 Count of Juvenile Male; 1 Count of dead	SJ971561	19/07/1993	800m east
Natterer's Bat	1 Count of Juvenile Female; 1 Count of dead	SJ971561	06/07/1993	800m east
Natterer's Bat	1 Count of Juvenile Male; 1 Count of possible roost	SJ9756	08/07/1988	800m east
Pipistrelle	1 Count of Male	SJ975567	04/06/1993	500m north west
Pipistrelle	1 Count of Adult; 1 Count of dead	SJ9756	30/01/1992	800m east
Pipistrelle	2 Count of Adult	SJ9856	16/10/1986	300m east
Pipistrelle Bat species	1 Count of Adult	SJ973571	16/07/2006	870m north west
Whiskered Bat	1 Count of Female; 1 Count of roosting	SJ976555	23/09/1994	700m south west

#### External & internal building inspections

3.2 B1 was a one storey red brick built Victorian factory building with a part flat, part pitched roof. B1a, the eastern end of the building had a flat roof covered in roofing felt. The main roof structure of B1 comprised five roof pitches which had glass panels on one side and slate tiles on the other. The roofs were inspected and a few tiles were slipped however none showed potential gaps or access points. Windows on the building had metal frames with metal security grates covering them. The glass panels along the roof all appeared well sealed with no broken panes or holes seen. B1 was considered to hold low potential.

3.3 B2 was a two storey brick built building with a pitched slate tiled roof. Gables and flashing were present. Some slipped and missing tiles were observed from the western aspect. A vent was present coming out of the roof on this western side and missing tiles were noted around it. The disused factory chimney was present on the western aspect of this building. B2a, the boiler room, was a similar smaller building next to B2 again with some slipped tiles on the western aspect. Both B2 & B2a were considered to hold low potential.

3.4 B3 was a three storey warehouse/offices building that was brick built at the lower section with large metal framed windows on the eastern and southern walls, with wooden panelling at top of wall. The building had a pitched roof with corrugated asbestos boarded roof. A wooden fascias on eastern and southern aspects but was tight to wall

creating no gap. No gaps were observed at or around windows, and the wooden panelling was all intact. B3 was considered to hold low potential.

- 3.5 B4 was a brick built flat roofing felted one storey extension connected to B2 & B5. No gaps were observed and the building was considered to hold low potential.
- 3.6 B5, the cutting room, was a new brick built single storey storage room with a pitched metal roof with metal made bargeboards. A metal RSJ was present along the western aspect that had wooden panelling on the outer section. Some panels were missing allowing for access behind to the metal RSJ, but no evidence seen and it was considered unlikely for bats to be utilising this space. B5 was considered to hold low potential.
- 3.7 B6 was a new one storey brick built extension with a flat roofing felted roof. A fascia board was present but was tight to the wall and no gaps were observed. B7 was the bin storage area between B5 & B6, with access from the road through wooden gates with a metal corrugated single skinned roof. There was access under the metal roof into bin storage area but it was light and drafty within and no evidence of bats was observed. B6 was considered to hold low potential.

#### Internal building inspections

- 3.8 B1, the warehouse/storage area, had part glass panelled roofing and therefore no roof void was present and the room was open and well lit. No evidence of bats found.
- 3.9 The canteen on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of B2 had a false ceiling before the roof void. Although the roof void of B2 could be accessed at the northern end of the building, the area of roof void directly above the canteen was not surveyed as access was restricted and there was a possibility of asbestos being in that area. It could be seen however that under-felting was absent from this section. Under-felting was present in the section of the roof that was accessible at the northern end of the building and was all in good condition. The original timber king posts were present. No evidence of bats was seen within this northern section.
- 3.10 B2a was two stories high. The boiler room on the ground floor had open wooden vents at the top of the door. It housed a tank and other pumping equipment. Several large windows meant the room was well lit. No evidence of bats found. The roof void of B2a was accessible and wooden beams and ridge board was present with tightly fitting wooden under-boarding. The roof void was very dusty and full of cobwebs. No evidence of bats was found.
- 3.11 B5 housed fabric and other materials and was open and light. No roof void or under-boarding of the single skinned roof was present.

### Nocturnal surveys

3.12 The surveys were undertaken on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2009, the overnight temperature was 10 Centigrade. The locations of surveyors can be seen on figure 2 building plan. One was situated on top of the one storey flat roofed electricity sub-station building, B4. From here the chimney, back of B2 and side of B2a could be observed. The other surveyor was positioned on Langford Street allowing for the observation of the whole western side of the site.

3.13 The results of the survey are presented in the table below. No bats were seen exiting or entering the buildings observed from this western aspect.

Date	Survey type	Location	Species recorded	Activity / Notes
03/09/09	Emergence	Location A	Common pipistrelle	Heard – faint at 20:30.
03/09/09	Emergence	Location B	Common pipistrelle	Passed north over head along street tree line at 20:28.
04/09/09	Swarming	Location A	No bats recorded	No activity recorded
04/09/09	Swarming	Location B	No bats recorded	No activity recorded

## 4.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Although the building assessment found all the buildings to be of generally low potential for roosting bats, due to the complex nature of the buildings it was thought necessary to undertake a nocturnal survey. Even though the presence of bats was thought to be unlikely, the data search records showed bats to be roosting within 1km of the site therefore a nocturnal survey was undertaken as a precautionary measure to ensure no bats were roosting within the buildings. B2 & B2a had some slipped or missing tiles on the western aspect and some potential for roosting under ridge tiles, therefore this aspect was given consideration during the nocturnal survey.

4.2 No bats were observed exiting or entering from B2 & B2a. It is therefore considered that bats pose no constraints to the re-development of these buildings at this time.

4.3 If the demolition of or redevelopment works proposed for these buildings are not undertaken within 24 months of the above survey date however, it is strongly advised that another buildings assessment and or nocturnal survey is undertaken. Further degradation of the buildings may result in better quality habitat and due to the transient nature of bats it is essential that buildings are re-inspected if left derelict for long periods of time.

4.4 Demolition crews should be instructed to lift ridge tiles carefully and check underneath in case any bats are present.

4.5

If during the demolition/redevelopment works any bats are discovered at any time, works should cease immediately and a suitably qualified bat expert should be contacted for further advice.

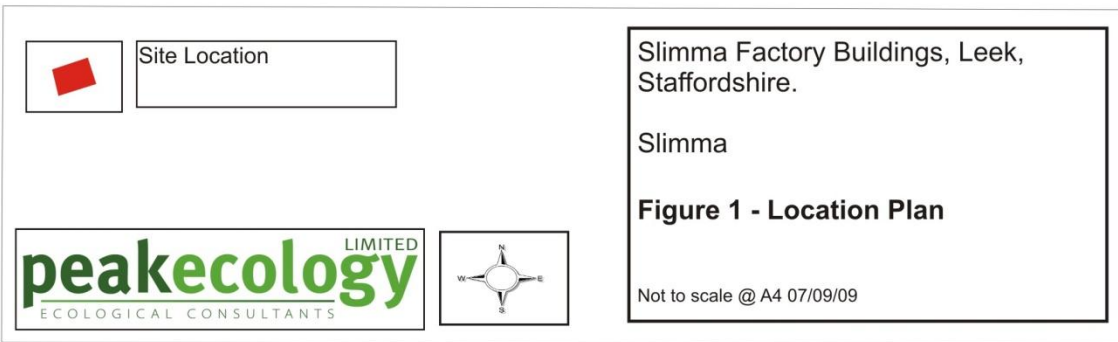
4.6 Where possible, the erection of bat boxes on the new buildings would enhance the immediate roosting habitat for bat species. Furthermore, any new planting within the proposed development scheme should look to use native species sourced from a local provenance. This would help to promote foraging and commuting habitat for bat species within the area.

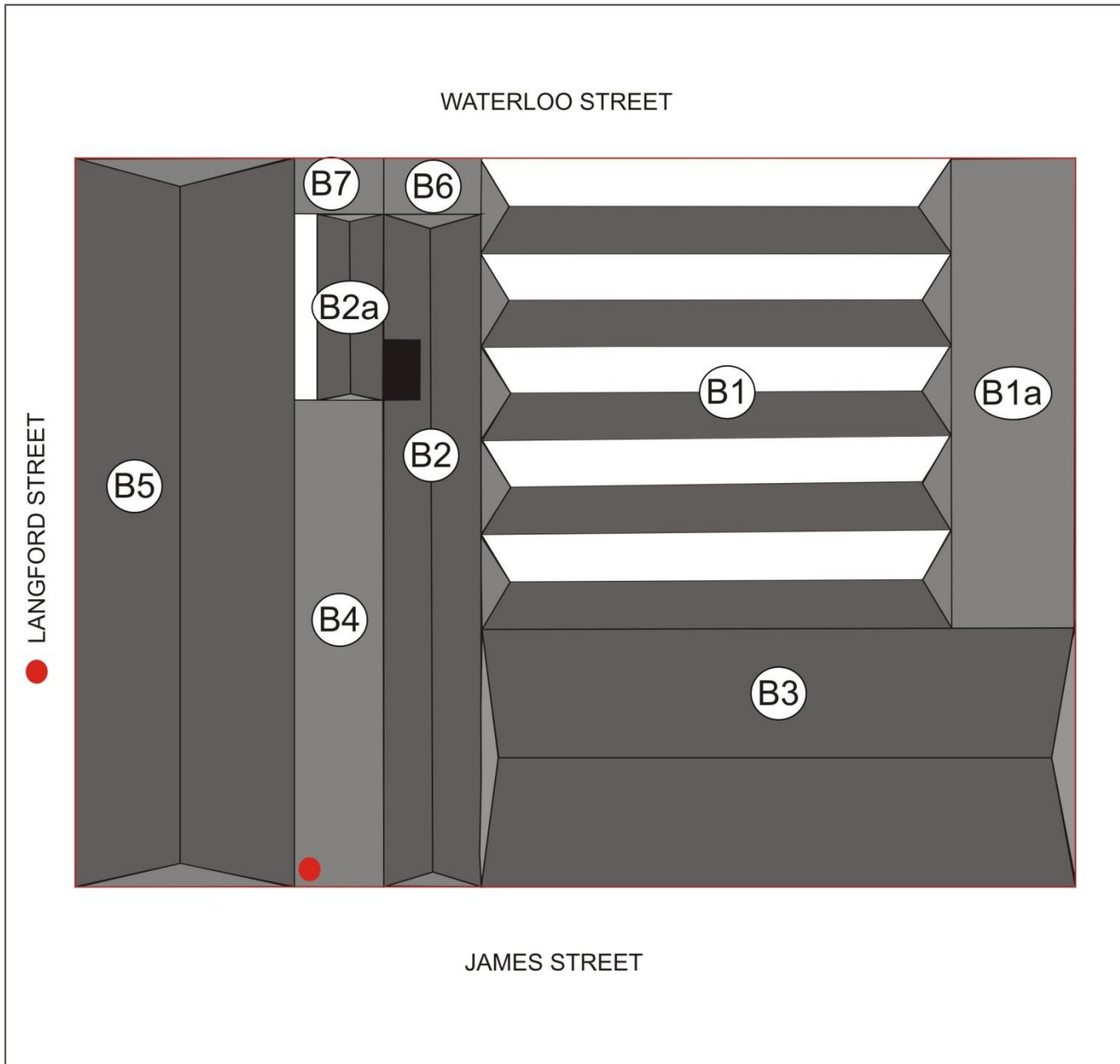
### References





Bat Conservation Trust (2007) *Bat surveys – A Good Practice Guide*. Bat Conservation Trust.



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	Site boundary
	Building with reference
	Chimney
	Position of surveyor during nocturnal survey



Slimma Factory buildings, Leek, Staffordshire

Slimma

**FIGURE 2 - Building Reference Plan**

Not to scale @ A4 04/09/09