



NORTHWOOD COLLEGE

July 2025 Bat Activity Survey Results

Girl's Day School Trust (GDST)

2484985-D02 (00)

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General Notes

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July 2025 Bat Activity Surveys Technical Note

1.1 Introduction

Purpose of this report

1.1.1 RSK Biocensus were commissioned by Nexus Planning Ltd, on behalf of GDST, in 2023 to complete bat activity and emergence surveys, and review lighting plans. The work relates to proposed installation of floodlighting at two multi-use games areas (MUGAS) at Northwood College for Girls, in the London Borough of Hillingdon (OS Grid Reference: TQ088913; Figure 1).

1.1.2 Our assessment and advice is based on the following information:

- At each MUGA, the lighting installation will consist of six LED floodlight projectors mounted on eight metre high collapsible columns, with asymmetric optical control directing the beam downwards from a horizontal mounting position to the playing surface below (dpa lighting consultants, 2023).

The MUGA and floodlights (when required) will be used according to the following schedule:

- Monday to Friday: 09:00 – 21:00;
- Saturdays: 09:00 – 18:00;
- Sundays: 10:00 – 16:00;
- No use on Bank Holidays.

1.1.3 A common pipistrelle roost was confirmed at the school, outside the area of the proposed development.

1.1.4 Activity surveys (RSK, 2023) found that the site was in use by Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Nathusius' Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*), Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), Leisler's bat, Myotis species (*Myotis spp.*), and Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*).

1.1.5 The majority of bat calls recorded were Pipistrelles and other species considered to be, to an extent, tolerant of light. Bat calls from light-intolerant species, comprising *Myotis* species and Brown long-eared bats, accounted for 0.49% of the total recorded, and were recorded no earlier than 21:00 (indicating that these bats were likely roosting a distance from the site).

1.1.6 Due to a delay in submitting the planning application, the validity of these bat surveys has expired. RSK Biocensus has undertaken an additional activity survey in July 2025, with another survey planned for September, in order to determine whether bat activity levels have changed at the site.

Validity of data

1.1.7 According to guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2019), survey data are generally considered valid for a period of 12 to 18 months from the date of the first survey. Between 18 months and 3 years, a professional ecologist will need to undertake a site visit and may also need to update desk study information and review the validity of the survey reports.

1.2 Methods

- 1.2.1 Equipment used consisted of two Wildlife Acoustics SM4 bat detectors, with one at each MUGA, recording from 30 minutes before sunset until 30 minutes after sunrise. SM4s record ultrasonic audio data, which can then be analysed to identify bat species using bat analysis software, in this case the BTO Pipeline.
- 1.2.2 Following identification of each sound file, these data were extracted and tabulated based on species and the time at which they were recorded. Noise files identified manually were then filtered out of the data for further analysis. In situations where a sound file had calls by more than one bat, these were attributed to each species present in the recording.
- 1.2.3 Locations used were the same as the 2023 surveys, with the survey duration being 09 July to 16 July (Figure 2).

1.3 Results

- 1.3.1 At MUGA 1, a total of 132 bat calls were recorded (Table 1). Of these, 1.52% were from light intolerant species, namely 2 *Myotis* passes at 23:49 on 11 July and the rest were from light-tolerant species (pipistrelles and 1 noctule pass).

Table 1. Summary of bat activity in July at MUGA 1.

Species	Number of Registrations	Species % of Total	Genus % of Total
Common Pipistrelle	120	90.91%	97.72%
Soprano Pipistrelle	9	6.81%	
Noctule	1	0.76%	0.76%
Myotis	2	1.52%	1.52%
Total	132		

- 1.3.2 At MUGA 2, a total of 3374 bat calls were recorded (Table 2). Of these, 0.24% were from light intolerant bats, namely *Myotis* sp. and Brown Long-eared bat. The 6 *Myotis* bat registrations occurred across 4 nights, and all of which were recorded between 23:48 and 03:21. The 2 Brown Long-eared Bat passes both occurred on 11 July, at 01:11 and at 02:38.

Table 2. Summary of bat activity in July at MUGA 2.

Species	Number of Registrations	Species % of Total	Genus % of Total
Common Pipistrelle	2776	82.28%	99.41%
Soprano Pipistrelle	578	17.13%	
Noctule	7	0.21%	0.36%
Leisler's bat	5	0.15%	
Myotis	6	0.18%	0.18%
Brown Long-eared	2	0.06%	0.06%
Total	3374		

1.4 Discussion

- 1.4.1 The results of the July 2025 survey are consistent with the July results from the 2023 surveys, offering no evidence to suggest that there have been any significant changes in bat activity onsite since those surveys took place.
- 1.4.2 Throughout the surveys, MUGA 1 had lower levels of bat activity to MUGA 2. This is unchanged from 2023, and is likely from bats using a line of trees on the boundary for foraging and commuting. MUGA 1 is surrounded by buildings, with limited foraging potential, and with a higher existing level of lighting (dpa lighting consultants, 2023a). The majority of the bat activity is by species that are known to be tolerant to light, namely Pipistrelles, Serotine, Noctule, and Leisler's. Less tolerant species, the Myotis and Brown long-eared Bat, account for a small percentage of sound recordings from July 2025, likely representing individuals commuting through the wider landscape. It is worth noting that the recordings for the light sensitive species all occurred at times outside the operational timings for the proposed floodlights.
- 1.4.3 The July 2025 data support the original conclusion that the timing, and low numbers, of registrations by these light-averse species suggest that they primarily use the site for commuting through the landscape. This behaviour could be negatively impacted by the proposed lighting, if these bats were attempting to move through the trees whilst the flood lights are in operation. However, with light-intolerant species using the site infrequently, and later than the proposed pitch-use times, these bats are unlikely to be impacted negatively by the proposed development.
- 1.4.4 Additionally, alternative commuting routes through the landscape exist that would be sheltered from light arising from the proposed development, according to the dpa lighting plans (dpa, 2023a; dpa, 2023b). This would facilitate earlier commutes by light-averse species through the surrounding area in months with earlier sunsets.
- 1.4.5 Analysis of the results of an upcoming deployment in September 2025 will be required before final conclusions are drawn.

2 References

CIEEM (2019), On the Lifespan of Ecological Reports & Surveys, Advice Note, <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>.

Dpa lighting consultants, 2023a. Northwood College, Multi Use Games Areas. MUGA 1 – Lighting Impact Assessment Report.

Dpa lighting consultants, 2023b. Northwood College, Multi Use Games Areas. MUGA 2 – Lighting Impact Assessment Report.

RSK Biocensus, 2023. 2484985 Northwood College Bat Report Rev00.

Figures

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Figure 2: Static Bat Detector Locations







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