



**Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route**


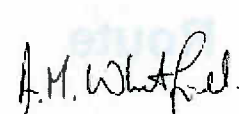
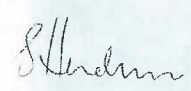
**Aberdeen Western Peripheral  
Route**


**Draft Application for a Licence to  
Destroy a Bat Roost  
International School of Aberdeen,  
Milltimber**



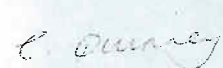
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## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Survey and Site Assessment</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Impact Assessment, Mitigation and Compensation</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Method Statement</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>References</b>	<b>35</b>
	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>38</b>
	<b>List of Tables</b>	
	Table 1 – Dates and Times of Surveys at the School	7
	Table 2– Results of Bat Activity Surveys at the School.	11
	<b>List of Photographs</b>	
	Photograph 1 – Eastern view of the old manor house with location of gaps in eaves, southern roost entrance and area accessible for survey from the attic shown.	15
	Photograph 2 – Northern view of the old manor house showing the area accessible during winter surveys and the location of bat droppings during 2006 surveys on the northern side of the building.	16
	Photograph 3 - the School of Aberdeen, with dropping locations and locations of bat emergence.	17
	Photograph 4 – The School of Aberdeen in Milltimber and surrounding survey area.	17
	<b>List of Figures</b>	
	Figure 1 – Bat Activity Surveys	
	Figure 2 – Landscape and Ecological Mitigations	
	Figure 3 – Mitigation – International School	

## 1 Executive Summary

The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) is a new 46km dual carriageway proposed jointly by the Scottish Government, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire County Council to relieve congestion on city roads.

Following the identification of bat droppings on the walls of two buildings at the School during daytime roost assessment surveys in 2006, further surveys were undertaken in summer 2006, summer 2007, winter 2008 and summer 2008 to identify roost locations, roost type and the species and number of bats present (Jacobs, 2007a, Jacobs 2007b, Jacobs 2007c).

In the most recent surveys small numbers of soprano pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) were recorded using the old manor house for roosting in the summer. In addition previous surveys confirmed the presence of brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) and common pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) roosting at the School, and personal communication with the school caretaker revealed that another building in the School grounds has been used by a roosting bat for a few days. The populations of brown long-eared and pipistrelle bats in Aberdeenshire are considered to be at favourable conservation status and common at present.

The School and all associated buildings are scheduled for demolition to accommodate the proposed AWPR. This would result in the destruction of the roosts and all structures with potential to support roosting bats at the School. This application is to allow the destruction of three buildings used by bats at the School.

The following method statement outlines the measures necessary to prevent, reduce and offset the risk of adverse impacts on the bat roost at the School associated with the construction and operation of the AWPR and maintain these species at a favourable conservation status. The method statement includes descriptions of best practice methods and specific mitigation measures that will be required in order to achieve this, and include the following:

- standard best working practice and the provision of an Ecological Clerk of Works;
- pre-construction survey, roost exclusion and demolition;
- provision of an alternative, purpose-built building with characteristics reflecting current conditions;
- provision of temporary heated and unheated bat roosts;
- provision of replacement foraging and linear habitat; and

- pre-and post-mitigation monitoring.

This document was prepared following guidance notes on providing supporting information published by the Scottish Government (Scottish Government, 2007).

It should be noted that the construction of the scheme is not due to commence until 2010 and this draft bat licence application will be further influenced by the results of monitoring, pre-construction surveys and consultation, which are ongoing. The aim of the replacement roost structure will be partly to offset the cumulative loss of bat roosting habitat throughout the proposed AWPR as well as to offset the loss of the roost at the School. As such, the design specifications of the replacement bat roost have not been finalised at this stage and the details given below are preliminary.

## 2 Introduction

The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) was identified as a key element of an integrated transport system for the North East of Scotland following studies by the regional transport partnership NESTRANS. Overall proposals - the Modern Transport System - were developed in recognition of the unacceptable levels of congestion on existing roads in and around Aberdeen. The Modern Transport System, which includes the AWPR, would remove traffic from the city centre by acting as a bypass.

In the design of the proposed AWPR alternative proposals have been considered for many years including in the 1990s proposals for a Western Peripheral Route connecting Charleston on the A90 south of Aberdeen, with Craibstone on the A96 west of Aberdeen, and in 2002 proposals to connect Craibstone with Blackdog on the A90 north of Aberdeen.

The combined corridor was named the AWPR and adopted by the Scottish Government (formerly known as the Scottish Executive) for promotion as a trunk road in 2003. Between October 2003 and December 2004 the proposals were refined within the corridor, at which time the Scottish Executive requested that consideration be given to alternative corridors for the southern section of the route. In December 2005 following consideration of the alternative corridors and informal public consultation, the Minister for Transport selected the Milltimber Brae option for the proposed route corridor between Charleston and Kingswells with the addition of a link to the A90 at Stonehaven. The corridor between North Kingswells and Blackdog remained unchanged. Various options have been considered in the work outlined. This process has involved the production of a number of reports and papers that set out the environmental, engineering and economic advantages and disadvantages of the options in question.

The final design, proposed jointly by the Scottish Government, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire County Council, is for 46km of new dual carriageway in three sections.

In accordance with the Environmental Impact (Scotland) Regulations (1999), an Environmental Impact Assessment was undertaken in 2006/7; bats were one of the considerations included as part of the resulting Environmental Statement (ES). Information about the ecological receptors (including bat species) that may be affected by the proposed scheme, the identification and assessment of potential environmental impacts and the identification of design features and mitigation measures to prevent, reduce or offset adverse impacts or enhance beneficial impacts were all considered as part of the ES, in addition to an assessment of residual impacts.

The proposed Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) would pass through currently undeveloped land including agricultural land and woodland, and would also involve the demolition of a small number of buildings, which include the International School of Aberdeen (the School) and associated buildings in Milltimber. Prior to this study the School had not previously been surveyed for the presence of bats (Davidson, 2007) and its status as a bat roost was not known.

The purpose of this document is to present measures and strategies to mitigate the destruction of the aforementioned pipistrelle and brown long-eared bat roost and associated buildings at the School to allow for the proposed development to be undertaken for overriding reasons of public interest of a social and economic nature. No other structures, including trees, have been included in this licence application.

## 3 Survey and Site Assessment

### 3.1 Objectives

The survey objectives were as follows:

- to assess the suitability of the School buildings to support roosting bats;
- to identify the species and number of bats using the roost at various different times of the year;
- to identify areas of key bat habitat and assess bat activity within the wider survey area; and
- to assess how bats and bat behaviour may be affected by the proposed construction and operation of the AWPR.

### 3.2 Methods

#### 3.2.1 Survey Methodology

The level of survey effort for the AWPR bat surveys was determined through professional judgement, best practice guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, 2004; Mitchell-Jones and McLeish, 2004, Bat Conservation Trust 2007a) and through consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

Desk studies were undertaken prior to the surveys commencing. These included a data search of maps and aerial photographs and consultation with the Aberdeen Bat Group and research published by Aberdeen University. Additional and pre-existing information is detailed in Section 3.2.7.

A daytime survey was undertaken at the School in July 2006. This involved a slow walk around the property to look for signs of bats including droppings, urine stains, absence of cobwebs and feeding remains (insect parts) and to assess the potential to support roosting bats based on the presence of holes, gaps, cracks and other access points to suitable cavities. A powerful torch, binoculars and endoscope were used where necessary to identify the suitability of holes as potential access points.

A winter survey was undertaken in January 2008 by a licensed bat specialist to check for hibernating bats and to investigate the characteristics of the roof space. This survey was only undertaken in the old manor house part of the School.



