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Activity Survey Report – Bats.

Buildings 3 & 5

West Cumberland Infirmary



Prepared for North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust

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Quality Assurance

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The information, results and observations recorded within this document were accurate at the time of survey. We accept no liability for any errors or activities and changes to the survey area which may have occurred post survey.

S.A.P Ecology & Environmental Ltd will submit any records of protected species to the appropriate biological records centre on an annual basis.

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Summary

S.A.P Ecology & Environmental Ltd were contacted by CCL Solutions, on behalf of North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust. The Trust propose to carry out a number of planned phased demolitions at the West Cumberland Infirmary as part of an improvement project.




S.A.P. Ecology and Environmental Ltd were commissioned to undertake a preliminary building assessment of buildings 3 and 5, to assess their suitability to support roosting bats. The assessment was carried out on Thursday 1st August 2019 (SAP report ref: CCL102/002/001). The assessment recorded multiple features on the external of both buildings 3 and 5 which could provide bats with roosting opportunities. Both buildings were assigned a low level of suitability to support roosting bats. One bird nest was recorded during the external inspection of building 5.

Subsequent activity surveys were commissioned to confirm if bats are indeed using the features recorded in the preliminary assessment. Surveys took the form of one dusk emergence survey on 7th August 2019 and a dawn return to roost survey on 8th August 2019.

The results of the 2019 activity surveys concluded that no bat roosts are present within the buildings. A low level of bat activity was recorded during the survey and comprised of individual bats feeding around building 5 and commuting overhead past buildings 3 and 5. Sound analysis of recordings taken confirm the bat species active in the area to be both Common and Soprano pipistrelles, with the occasional *Nyctalus* sp.

The proposed demolition works will not have an impact on bats, nor will the works have any effect on commuting and feeding opportunities for bats within the surrounding area. Works can proceed at any time in relation to bats.

1.2 Recommendations

-  No bat roosts were recorded within buildings 3 and 5 and therefore the demolition can go ahead at any time in relation to bats;
-  If bats are found during demolition, all works must cease, until an appropriate protected species licence has been attained;
-  If demolition works are to be carried out during the breeding bird season (March – October inclusive), a breeding bird check should be undertaken (no more than two days prior to works). If breeding birds are found, works will need to be postponed until birds have fledged of their own accord.

2. Introduction

2.1 Project background

S.A.P Ecology & Environmental Ltd were contacted by CCL Solutions, on behalf of North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust (hereafter referred to as 'the Trust'). The Trust are in the process of restructuring West Cumberland Hospital, current plans include the demolitions of three buildings (buildings 3, 4 and 5) and the construction of a new waste compound.

As part of the development, S.A.P Ecology & Environmental Ltd were commissioned to undertake preliminary building assessments in relation to bats and breeding birds of the buildings highlighted for demolition. A preliminary building assessment was carried out on Thursday 1st August 2019 (SAP report ref: CCL102/002/001). The assessment recorded gaps in roof boarding, wallheads and soffit boxes of building 3, and gaps at the wallhead and gaps in the soffit boxes of building 5. Internal survey of either building was not possible due to the building construction. Building 3 and 5 were both assigned a low level of suitability for roosting bats. Where suitable, buildings 3 and 5 will be referred to collectively as 'the buildings' in the remainder of this document.






Recommendations were made for one bat activity survey to be carried out during the bat activity season (May – September, inclusive), to determine if bats are using any of the features highlighted during the survey to roost. This report relates to the results of those activity surveys.

Building 3 is located at grid reference NX 98854 15866 and building 5 is located at grid reference NX 98812 15887. Both buildings are located within the grounds of the West Cumberland Infirmary, Hensingham, Whitehaven, directly off Homewood Road and are situated in an urban environment, with several residential buildings in the immediate vicinity. The surrounding area is comprised of amenity grassland, with small areas of broadleaved woodlands. A tributary of the River Keekle is located approximately 1.25km east of buildings 3 and 5. The main River Keekle is located approximately 1.75km east, Bellhouse Gill is located approximately 660 metres south, and four small ponds are located within 1.5km of building 5.

Evidence of nesting birds was recorded on the eastern external aspect of building 5.

2.2 Project brief

S.A.P Ecology & Environmental Ltd were commissioned to carry out activity surveys of the buildings. The brief was to:

-  Carry out one dusk emergence or one dawn re-entry survey of all access points recorded on buildings 3 and 5 at West Cumberland Infirmary;
-  Record all bat activity using recording devices and heterodyne & frequency division bat detectors;
-  Analyse any bat activity recorded to determine species;
-  Produce a detailed report of the activity survey, outlining relevant methodologies, results and discussion;
-  The report to be supported by appropriate digitised mapping.

3. Methodology

3.1 Emergence/re-entry Surveys

Ecologists were situated around the buildings (figure 2) ensuring adequate visual coverage of all access/egress points which were identified during the daytime preliminary building assessment.

Each ecologist was equipped with a Bat Box Duet frequency division detector and recording device. Sound recordings made during the survey were retained for analysis and to aid identification of species.

The dusk survey started 15 minutes before sunset and continued for 1.5 hours after sunset. The dawn survey commenced 90 minutes before dawn and continued for at least 15 minutes after dawn, until all bat activity had ceased. Any visual emergence/re-entries were recorded, including the time and location.

All surveys were conducted in line with good practice guidelines (Collins, 2016).

3.2 Limitations

There were no limitations to survey. All access and egress points could be clearly seen during the surveys and the weather at the time of survey was suitable for foraging and commuting bats.

3.3 Surveyors

Table 1: The emergence/re-entry surveys were undertaken by the following surveyors:

| Date | Dusk/Dawn | Surveyor | Survey Location | NE Licence Number |
|------------|-----------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 07/08/2019 | Dusk | Jack Bell | B5 - 1 | - |
| | | Sam Rogerson | B5 - 2 | - |
| | | Stephen Parkin | B5 - 3 | 2016-23679-CLS-CLS |
| | | Johnny Walls | B5 - 4 | - |
| 08/08/2019 | Dawn | Johnny Walls | B5 - 5 | - |
| | | Sam Rogerson | B3 - 1 | - |
| | | Jack Bell | B3 - 2 | - |

4. Results

4.1 Emergence/Re-entry survey

Dusk emergence survey 7th August 2019

No bats were recorded to emerge during the dusk survey from building 5. Bat activity during the survey was low, with bats occasionally foraging and feeding past building 5, over the roof and commuting between feeding grounds. Sound analysis demonstrates that the bat species active in the area during the survey were mainly Common pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and occasional *Nyctalus* sp.

Dawn return to roost survey 8th August 2019

No bats were recorded returning to roost to buildings 3 or 5 during the dawn survey. Bat activity during the survey was low, with occasional commuting past the buildings. Sound analysis demonstrates that the species active in the area were common pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*).

Table 2 provides a summary of the surveys carried out.

Table 2: Summary of survey results.

| Type of Survey | Date | Sunset/sunrise time | Temp start (°C) | Temp finish (°C) | Notes |
|----------------|----------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|--|
| Dusk | 07/08/19 | 21:04 | 17.5 | 15 | No recorded emergence. Low activity. Foraging and commuting activity recorded. |
| Dawn | 08/08/19 | 05:37 | 15 | 14 | No recorded return to roost. Low activity. Commuting activity recorded. |

The results of the bat activity surveys suggest that during the 2019 season no bats are roosting within either building 3 or 5.

5. Discussion & relevant legislation

5.1 Emergence/re-entry Survey Summary







No bats were recorded emerging from or returning to roost within either building 3 or 5 during the survey. However, bats are dynamic creatures and do roost opportunistically through the year. If during works bats are found, all works must stop immediately until a legal licence can be obtained from Natural England.

Recordings taken at the time of survey indicate that bats are commuting past building 3 and foraging/feeding and commuting past building 5. Bat activity throughout both surveys was low suggesting a low population of bats in the local area.

5.2 Protected Species

Bats

All bat species in the UK are protected from killing, injury and roost disturbance by both national and international law, in the form of the Wildlife and Countryside act (1981) as amended. In England, bats are also protected under The Conservation (Natural Habitats &) (Amendment) Regulations 2007. The legislation that is in place makes it an offence to:

-  Intentionally capture, injure or kill a bat;
-  Intentionally disturb a bat which will likely:
 - Impair its ability to survive, breed, reproduce or rear its young;
 - Impair its ability to hibernate or migrate, or;
 - Affect the local distribution or abundance of the species.
-  Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat roost;
-  Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a roost;
-  Damage or destroy a resting place or breeding site;
-  Keep, transport, sell or exchange any life or dead bat or part of.

Bats tend to re-use the same roosts year after year and therefore a roost is protected whether bats are present or not.

Birds

All birds, their nests and their eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Care should be taken to ensure that no birds are present during the demolition of the buildings, and that no harm comes to any nest, eggs or nesting birds.

6. Potential Ecological Issues, Impact Assessment & Recommendations

6.1 Bats

No bats were recorded roosting within the buildings surveyed, there are no issues relating to bats.

6.2 Birds

Bird nests were recorded within building 5 at the time of the preliminary building assessment.

6.3 Impact Assessment & Recommendations

The proposed works are not expected to have any negative effect on the local bat population. No further surveys are required.

If works are to be carried out during the breeding bird season, it is recommended that a breeding bird check should be undertaken (no more than two days prior to works) to check for breeding birds. If breeding birds are found, works will need to be postponed until birds have fledged.

6.4 Further Surveys

At present no further surveys are required. It should be noted however that bat surveys are only valid for a limited amount of time, if works are delayed for more than 18 months from the date of survey they should be repeated.

7. Conclusion

The activity surveys recorded no bat roosts within buildings 3 or 5 and therefore the demolition of these buildings can go ahead at any time.

If demolition works are to be carried out during the breeding bird season, a breeding bird check should be undertaken (no more than two days prior to works). If breeding birds are found, works will need to be postponed until birds have fledged.

Subject to the recommendations within this report being followed, the proposed demolition works should be compliant with relevant legislation and planning policy regarding protected species.

8. References

- Collins, J (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.
- Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004) *Bat Workers Manual* (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservancy Committee, Peterborough.
- S.A.P Ecology & Environmental Ltd (2019). B3, B4 and B5 Preliminary Building Assessment, Eaglesfield.

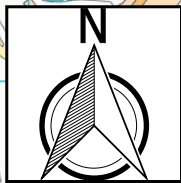



Figure 1: Site Location

Legend

 Survey Site

Date: 13/09/2019

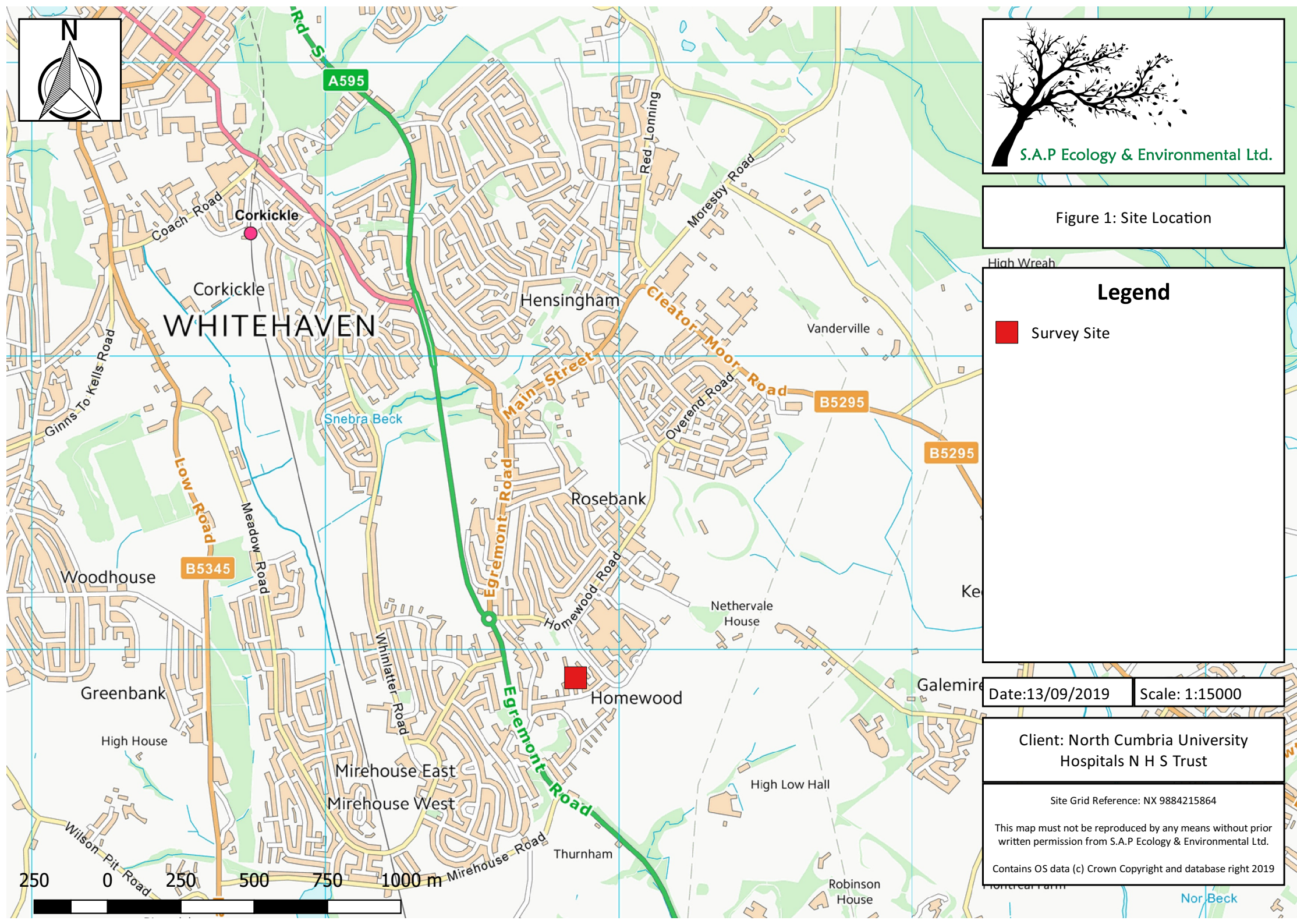
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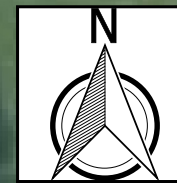
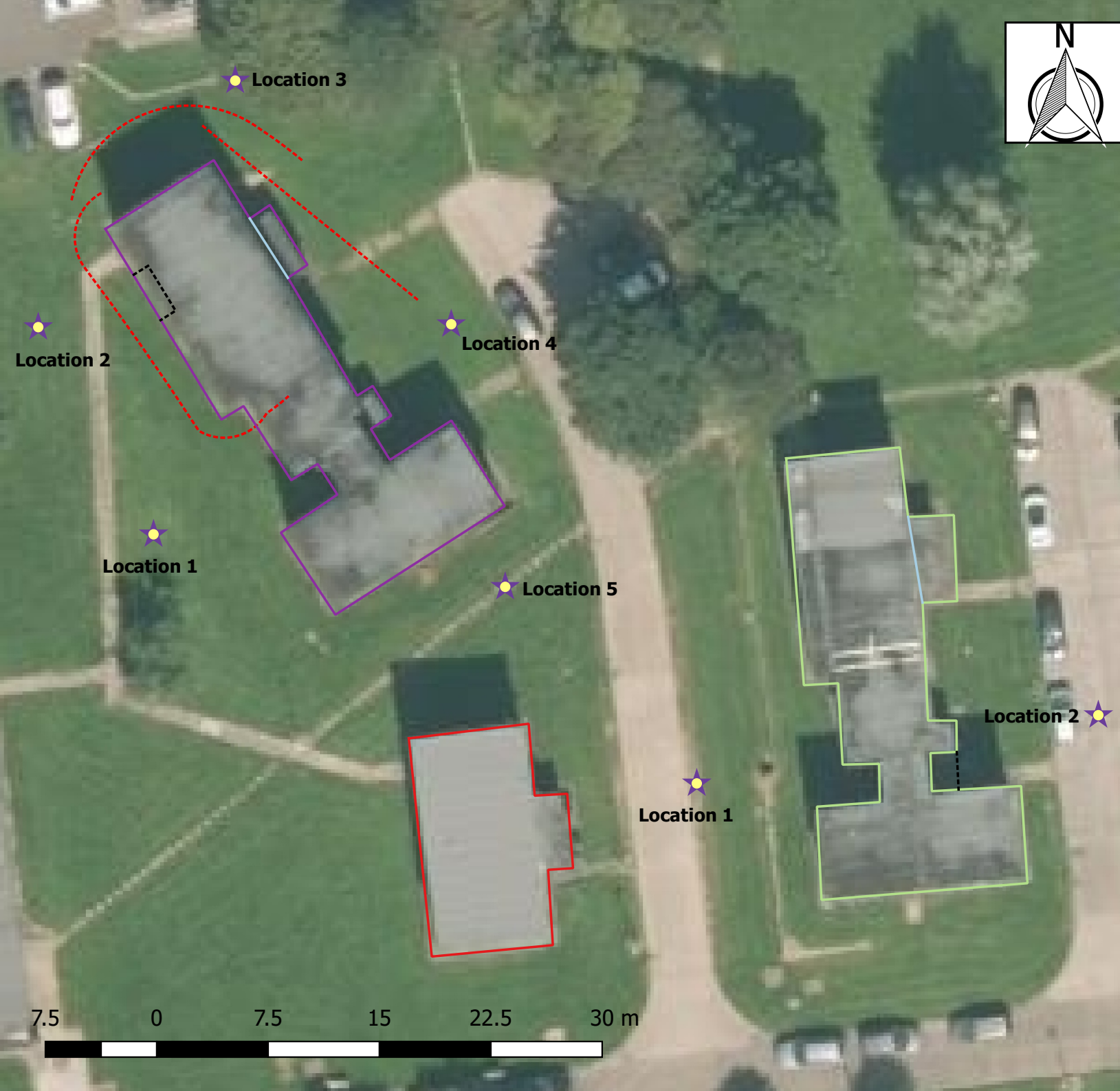
Client: North Cumbria University
Hospitals N H S Trust

Site Grid Reference: NX 9884215864

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Figure 2: Activity survey results

Legend

- Building 3
- Roof edge
- Roof overhang
- Building 4
- Building 5
- Roof edge
- Balcony
- Surveyor
- Bat flight path

Date: 24/09/2019

Scale: 1:350

Client: North Cumbria University
Hospitals NHS Trust

Site Grid Reference: NX 98837 15865

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