



Preliminary Roost Assessment

**Tree 5 and Tree Groups 10 and 11: Kirkby Valley
Golf Course, Ingoe Lane, Kirkby, L32 4SS
Grid ref: SJ 396 976**

June 2025

Client:	L32 Trading Ltd.
Issue Date:	10th June 2025
Surveys Conducted:	May 2025

Quality Management

Job No	***		
Project	Development and reprofiling of an area of grassland to construct a 9 hole Academy golf course.		
Location	Land to the east of Kirkby Valley Golf Course, Ingoe Lane, Kirkby, L32 4SS. Grid ref: SJ 396 976 Grid Ref: SJ 286 923		
Title	Preliminary Roost Assessment of Tree 5 and Groups 10 and 11		
Document Type	**	Issue / Revision	01
Date	10/06/25		
Prepared by	Bill Gaudie	Signature (for file)	
Checked by		Signature (for file)	

Revision Status / History

Rev	Date	Issue / Purpose / Comment	Prepared	Checked
			WG	WG

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Environmental Business Solutions (EBS) was instructed in May 2025 to undertake a further Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of Tree 5 and Tree Group, (in accordance with Planning Permission Condition 35) at Kirkby Valley Golf Club, Ingoe Lane, Kirkby, L32 4SS, herein referred to as 'the Site', Grid Ref: SJ 286 923. The assessment is required to conform to a planning application condition associated with the proposed creation of a new golfing (a 9 hole academy course) facility and potential redevelopment of existing member facilities and associated infrastructure on Site. The location and red line boundary of the Site is shown in Figures 1 and 2.
- 1.2 The initial PRA survey was conducted in 2019 and further surveys have been commissioned in 2020 and also 2021 due to minor changes to the proposed layout of the proposed development and time delays. In order to proceed with the proposals and to comply with Planning Condition 35, this further survey was instructed by the Client. See previous reports regarding the results of the historical surveys.
- 1.3 The survey requirement was identified during an earlier Preliminary Ecological Assessment conducted in May 2019 by a different ecological consultancy that identified 1 tree and 2 Tree Groups on Site that required further Potential Roost Feature (PRF) Assessment to be undertaken.
- 1.4 Recommendations and conditions following the 2020 PRA included further PRF assessment of Tree 5, and tree groups (Groups 10 and 11) to be carried out adhering to Knowsley Council Planning Consent Agreement 35 dated Sept 2021.
- 1.5 Condition 35 stated "Trees 3, 5, 8 & 9 have the potential for bat roost and in accordance with the recommendations within 'Protected Species Report (Bats: Trees)' shall be soft felled. Prior to their removal, pre-felling inspection must be undertaken on Tree 5 and Tree Groups 10 and 11."
- 1.6 The results of the 2019 and 2020 PRA and PRF assessments are provided within this report.
- 1.7 **Site Description**
The Application Site is located immediately to the east of the existing 18 hole Kirkby Valley Golf Course, on an area of disused and unmanaged grassland containing hedgerows, scrub and unmanaged trees. The town of Kirkby lies approximately 1.6 km to the NE, Fazakerly lies approx. 1.3km SW of the Site and Waddicar approx. 1.7km to the north.
Valley Road dual carriageway runs immediately to the south of the Site and Aintree Lane runs to the west.
The existing golf course is dominated by amenity grassland, plantation woodland, stands of scattered trees, with ponds and mosaic habitats associated with golf courses, such as ditches and sand bunkers. The River Alt runs south to north through the Site.
- 1.8 **Proposals**
The development proposals include construction of a new 9 hole Academy course, driving range facility, repurposing of the existing club house and construction of a new members clubhouse with all associated infrastructure, lighting, parking and utilities included.

Fig 1. Proposed whole development area in wider context

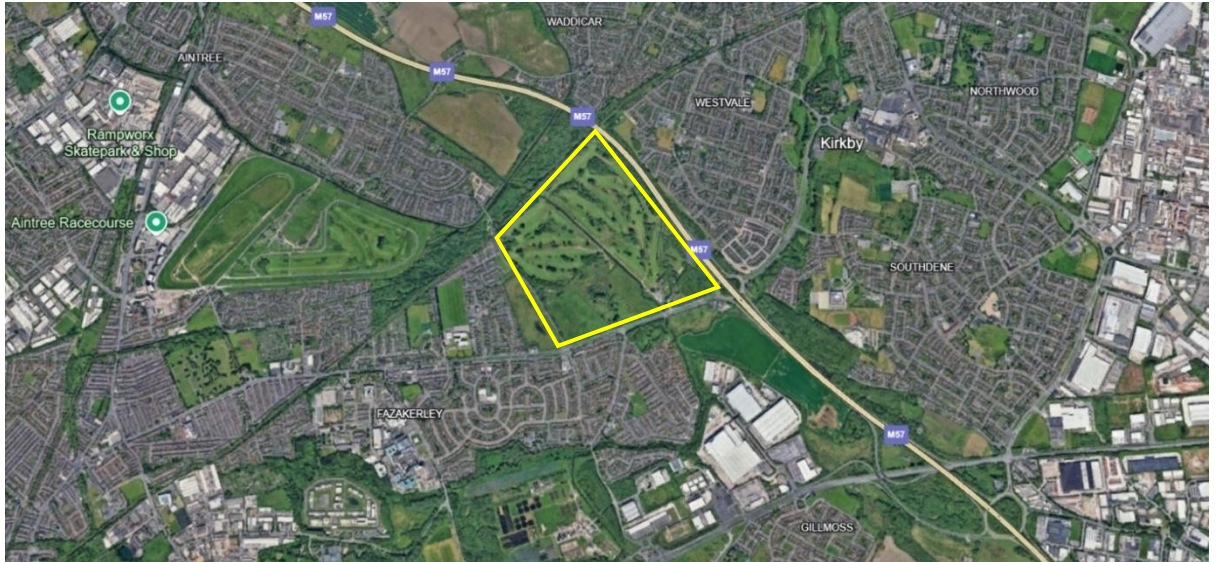


Fig 2. Site of development in context to wider Site



1.9 Survey Objectives

This report is centred on the development area shown in fig 2.

- 1.10 It is not thought there will be significant loss of trees as a result of the proposed construction and development works. Any trees affected within the wider golf course context will be subject to appropriate surveys with resulting mitigation or compensation measures required complied with if any roosting bats are identified. If bat roosts are located during survey work then development work may be delayed in order to apply for (and grant) a Licence from Natural England. This will legally allow work to be undertaken that may affect bats or their roosts.
- 1.11 This 2025 PRA was undertaken on Tree 5 and Tree Groups 10 and 11 to:
- Undertake a further ground level assessment of trees to establish if evidence of use existed for bat species, or if bats were present

- Determine if the PRFs can be reclassified or if further surveys or mitigation are required on the trees.
- 1.12 This report will state the methodologies utilised during the assessments, to convey the results, evaluate findings and make recommendations concerning the protection and/or mitigation measures concerning the protection of bat species found to be present or roosting at the Site.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The PRA assessment for tree 5 followed methods described in the Bat Conservation Trusts' 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (2016)' The tree was classified according to its level of suitability and evidence of roosting bats recorded during the inspection.
- 2.2 Ground level inspections were undertaken to search for roosting features, such as scratches, droppings, insect wing cases and other feeding remains, bat corpses, urine and grease stains at potential entrance holes and audible bat calls. An Explorer Premium 8803AL (9mm) endoscope and a ladder were used to check accessible features. Equipment used included: VisualOpticsVO18-10ww endoscope, Petzl Ticker LED head torch, Cluson Smartlite1,000,000 candlepower torch, and ladders. Close focusing binoculars were used to better assess any features of interest not accessible.
- 2.3 The surrounding areas were assessed for suitable habitats with value to bats during the PRA.
- 2.4 The PRA was undertaken on 30th May 2025. The weather conditions were sunny and clear with a maximum daytime temperature of 23°C and a maximum windspeed of 21mph and therefore suitable to undertake the survey.
- 2.5 The PRA assessment was undertaken by Bill Gaudie BSc hons (Wildlife Conservation) MCIEEM, who holds Bat Class Licence Level 2. Previous assessments were conducted in 2019 and 2020. The results of those surveys can be found within this report.
- 2.6 **Constraints**
The PRA was undertaken at a time of year where foliage could obscure any potential roost features from ground level.

3 Results

- 3.1 During the PRA conducted in May 2025 it was noted that there were habitats surrounding the Site that would be considered moderate to high value for foraging and commuting bats, such as grassland, scrub and hedgerow. As per Condition 35 of Planning conditions, Tree 5 and Tree Groups 10 and 11 were reassessed for their potential to support bats and roosts.
- 3.2 Historical Assessment data and result summary from PRA and PRF undertaken in 2019 and 2020 are listed below:

Tree 5

2019 Roost potential signs:

There is a woodpecker hole located on the western side of the tree at 2m, this is the only feature. The tree is considered to hold moderate potential for roosting bats.

2019 PRF survey results:

The tree was subject to a thorough examination. The hole recedes into a cavity with a depth of 45cm where it was rotten at its base. The tree's potential to support roosting bats remains moderate.

2020 Roost potential signs:

The woodpecker hole located on the western side of the tree at 2m was still present. A new split

and subsequent cavity have also developed at 2m as a result the tree leaning over further. The woodpecker hole and the new features were fully endoscoped during the ground level inspection.

No evidence of past or present use by bats was found. The tree's potential to support roosting bats remains moderate for roosting bats. The feature has, however, been subject to an exhaustive search by endoscope on two consecutive years with no evidence of past or present use by bats

Tree Group 10

2019 Roost potential signs:

The majority of trees contain bark that is delaminating and in places, may be sufficiently large enough to provide cavities behind suitable for occasional roosting purposes. The features however are highly unlikely to provide a stable thermal environment for long term use. Aintree Lane is also lit by street lamps, which deters some species of bats that favour trees.

The trees are considered to hold negligible - low potential for roosting bats.

2020 Roost potential signs:

There were no changes to the condition of the trees. The trees are considered to have negligible -low potential for roosting bats.

Tree Group 11

2020 Roost potential signs:

The trees have varying degrees of damage as a result of vehicle strikes and also wind damage, which has resulted in wound healing and also broken/snapped off limbs. One of the trees was noted to have at least two woodpecker holes at approximately 10 and 12m. This tree is located on the eastern side of the group with the holes on the east side of the tree facing the adjacent woodland.

The trees are considered to hold moderate potential for roosting bats.

2020 PRF survey results:

The trees with damaged parts and snapped off limbs had their features checked and none were found to provide any cavities suitable to support roosting bats. Of the two woodpecker holes, only one was found to recede into a nesting chamber of approximately 30cm. The lower of the two holes did not have any downward or upward facing cavities beyond the entrance hole. The higher woodpecker nest chamber was checked fully by endoscope with no evidence of past or present use by bats found.

The feature is considered to hold **moderate** potential for roosting bats.

3.3 PRA 2025 of Trees and Tree Groups

Tree Number 5
Description
Mature poplar with decaying heartwood, leaning and contained within other mature trees.
Roosting Potential Moderate
Moderate due to woodpecker hole on western side of tree at height of c.2m. Inspected with the endoscope. No evidence of present or historical use identified.
Roosting Evidence
Although there was a woodpecker hole seen there was no evidence of past or present use by bats. This tree remains moderate for bat roosting potential.
Tree Group 10
Description
Linear standing deadwood comprising of approximately 30 semi mature trees along following the contour of Aintree Lane on southern Site boundary
Roosting Potential Negligible
Features noted included delamination and peeling of bark on most trees within group that could be large enough to support occasional roosts. These are not thought to be able to support long term roosts. Aintree Lane is a major road illuminated by street lights that may cause light conditions not favourable to bats.
Roosting Evidence
No evidence of roosting bats were identified during the PRA.

Tree Group 11
Description
Mature white willow (<i>Populus alba</i>) found on edge of woodland adjacent to existing golf course. All trees similar height of approx. 20m
Roosting Potential Moderate
Historical weather and vehicle damage has resulted in broken and damaged limbs. 2 woodpecker holes were noted in one tree on the eastern side of the group facing the woodland.
Roosting Evidence
No evidence of roosting bats were identified in the tree group during the PRA. Woodpecker holes were found not to have any present or historical evidence of bat activity when inspected with the endoscope

- 3.3 Following the PRA and reassessment of potential roosting features identified in historical surveys from 2019 and 2020 no evidence of roosting bats, or past or present use were noted in Tree 5 or in Tree Groups 10 and 11.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 Tree 5 and Tree Group 11 were found to have moderate potential for roosting bats due to the woodpecker holes recorded.
- 4.2 Precautionary measures, such as soft felling under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist, should be adopted during the felling works for Tree 5 and Tree Group 11 due to being

identified as of moderate potential for roosts. Pre-felling PRF inspections should also be undertaken immediately prior to commencement of works to identify any roosting features.

- 4.3 Tree group 10 should be subject to precautionary felling and if to be removed during the active roosting season all areas of peeling bark on the dead trees should be inspected by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately prior to any works being undertaken. Should felling be required to be undertaken during hibernation then an ecologist is not required to be present.
- 4.4 If any evidence of bats are discovered or suspected, all works must immediately cease and advice obtained from the ecological consultant or Natural England. If a roost is found then works should be delayed until adequate survey data is obtained to support a NE Licence that will negate the legal protection given to roosting bats.
- 4.5 Bats are transient mammals, therefore if works have not commenced within 12 months of this report then it may be required to repeat certain surveys.
- 4.6 Mitigation in the form of bat boxes should be included within the proposed development to ensure the long term status of the local bat populations in the area are maintained. Native trees and shrubs are also to be planted to compensate for trees lost to the proposed development.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 This report details the historical findings of the PRA and PRF surveys undertaken at the Site in 2019 and 2020 and surveys Tree 5 and Tree Groups 10 and 11 in accordance with 'Planning Application Condition 35', as stated by Knowsley Council. No other trees or groups were assessed during this PRA.
- 5.2 All surveys have been conducted by suitable qualified and experienced ecologists and surveyors in line with current guidelines.
- 5.3 No evidence of roosting bats were recorded during the PRA survey conducted in May 2025.
- 5.4 Soft felling under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist, of Tree 5 and Tree Group 11 is recommended, due to them being assessed as moderate for bat roosts. Further PRF assessments are recommended on both of these areas of trees immediately prior to any felling works starting.
- 5.4 Tree Group 10 will require supervision works from a licenced bat consultant during felling, unless they can be removed during the bat hibernation period.
- 5.5 Mitigation on Site should be undertaken in the form of erection/installation of bat boxes on suitable trees and compensatory planting of native shrubs and trees to offset the loss of trees and potential roosting features within the proposed development.

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7.0 References

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