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PEAR TREE FARM

BRIERLEY, BARNSELY

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

August 2016

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

An Ecological Assessment has been carried out for the site by Weddle Landscape Design in August 2016.

The Ecological Assessment while finding no evidence of bats recommended *“that initially a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of the development site including trees and buildings should be undertaken to identify any features which might support roosting bats.”*

Furthermore *“if features are found which have the potential to support roosting bats then further survey work may be required to ascertain the presence/likely absence of bats using the specific features identified or to ascertain the current usage of the site by bats.”*

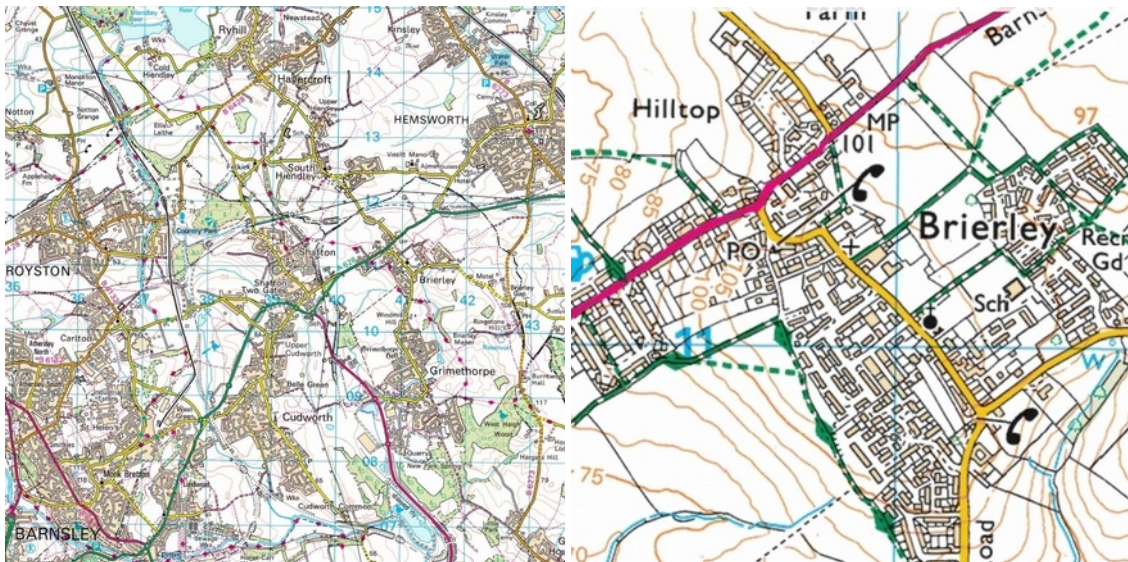
MaxDesign Limited have therefore asked Weddle Landscape Design to carry out a Preliminary Roost Assessment of the Buildings and Trees on the site.

This report has been produced by Neil Northrop BA DipLD MCIHort CMLI with over 10 years ecological surveying and report writing experience. This report has been prepared in accordance with the Landscape Institute’s Code of Conduct. This report aims to comply with BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity: Code of practice for planning and development.

Bat survey activities were carried out in accordance with the methodologies detailed in *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition, Collins J, The Bat Conservation Trust (2016)*.

1.1 Site Description

The Planning Application site is approximately 0.5 hectares. The site is located north-east of Barnsley at Ordnance Survey grid reference SE 409 112.

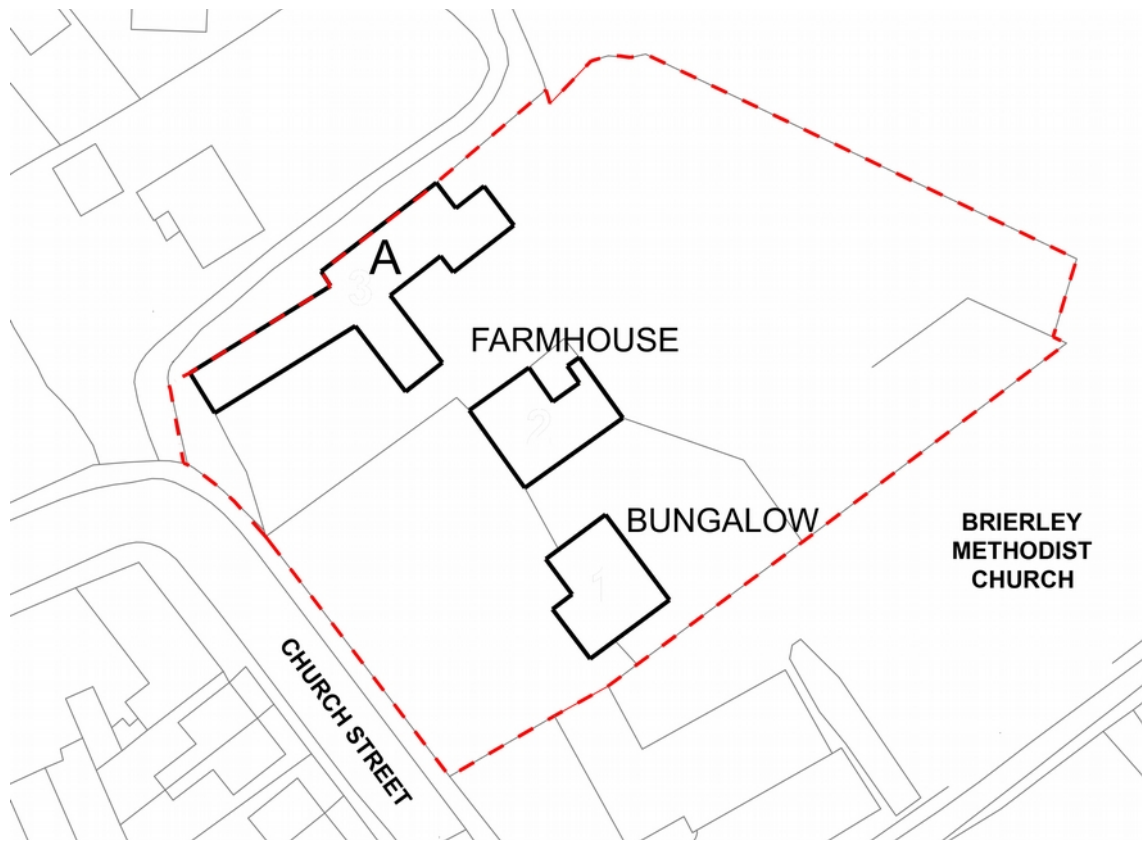


Site Location

Further site and location information is provided in Section 1.1 of the Ecological Assessment report.

1.2 The Proposals

There are three buildings on the site and they have been split up according to the diagram below.



The existing farmhouse and bungalow will be retained and are not affected by the development.

A full planning application is being prepared for a residential development on the site for 5 residential dwellings. Building A will be demolished.

2.0 LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

2.1 Legislation

All species of British bat are protected by *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), extended by the *Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000* and *Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006*. They are also European Protected Species under *The Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010* (as amended).

Therefore it is an offence to:

- recklessly, intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;
- deliberately disturb bats (whether in a roost or not);
- damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts;
- possess or transport a bat or any part of a bat;
- sell, barter or exchange bats, or parts of a bat.

Any activity or development which would result in a contravention of the above legislation will require a European Protected Species (EPS) License from Natural England. Three tests must be satisfied before this License (to permit otherwise prohibited acts) can be issued:

- The activity to be licensed must be for imperative reasons of overriding public interest or for public health and safety;
- There is no satisfactory alternative;
- Favourable conservation status of the species must be maintained.

2.2 Planning Policy

Government policy guidance for biodiversity and nature conservation is provided within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Government planning policy guidance throughout the UK requires local planning authorities to take account of the conservation of protected species when determining planning applications. This makes the presence of a protected species a material consideration when assessing a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. This requirement has important implications for bat surveys as it means that, where there is a reasonable likelihood of bats being present and being affected by the development, surveys must be carried out before planning permission is considered.

Adequate surveys are therefore required to establish the presence of bats, to enable a prediction of the likely impact of the proposed development on them and their breeding sites or resting places, and, if necessary, to design mitigation and compensation.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Biological Records Centre was contacted for record data on or within a 1km radius of the site.

The National Biodiversity Network was also used to locate any records of bats from other record sources on or within 1km of the site.

3.2 Bat Surveys

Bat survey activities were carried out in accordance with the methodologies detailed in *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition, Collins J, The Bat Conservation Trust (2016)*.

The preliminary roost assessment was undertaken by Neil Northrop BA DipLD MCIHort CMLI with over 10 years ecological surveying experience.

We do not hold Bat Survey Licences. We follow the methodology set out within *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition* which states:

'...surveys, such as emergence or activity surveys, do not require a licence because they do not cause disturbance to bats when undertaken correctly...'

It is also acknowledged that an unlicensed surveyor *'...should immediately withdraw if evidence of bats is found.'*

This survey was fully compliant with these requirements.

The survey comprised the following elements:

Preliminary Building Roost Assessment

A thorough external and internal inspection of buildings to look for evidence of bats and assess bat roosting potential. Evidence of bats may take the form of droppings, urine stains, feeding remains, live bats, dead bats, grease mark stains, fur and claw marks made by bats regularly roosting in the same location.

During the external survey the roof and walls were inspected from ground and roof level (using binoculars to aid visibility where required) to search for gaps and voids that would allow bats access to suitable roost sites.

Buildings were assigned a roost suitability as defined within Table 4.1 of *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition, Collins J, The Bat Conservation Trust (2016)*. This table is reproduced within Appendix A.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Desk Study

The data search with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Biological Records found no evidence of bats within the 1km search area.

The search did not identify any bat records within the site.

The NBN Gateway did not identify any other bat records with the site or the 1km search area.

4.2 Bat Surveys

Preliminary Building Roost Assessment

The daylight building roost assessment was carried out on 23rd August 2016. The weather was dry and sunny throughout.

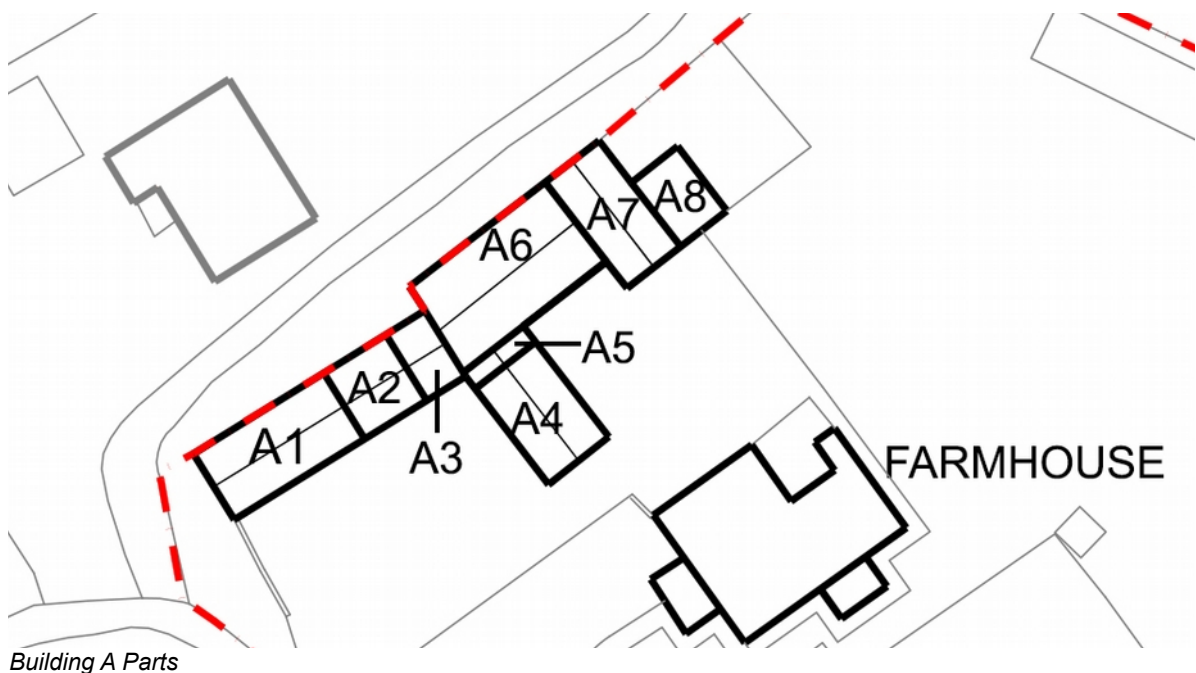
The survey aimed to identify any potential roosting locations, entry and exit points and any other direct evidence of bats.

The existing farmhouse and bungalow are not affected by the proposed development and are not considered within this assessment.

All of the buildings are currently used as workshops and for storage of materials. Evidence of Common Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) was found throughout.

Photos are provided within Appendix B.

Building A was split up into parts as shown and described below.



A1, A2 and A3

This is a single storey stone and brick built barn and is split into 3 sections by solid internal walls. The windows and doors are well sealed on A1 and A2. The door to A3 is loosely fitted. The stone, brickwork and pointing are generally in a good condition.

Both the South-west elevation of A1 and the wall between A2 and A3 rise up above roof level with a gable parapet. Both have significant damp throughout.

All have a corrugated cement sheet roof featuring a continuous vent along the length of the ridge and potential access points beneath the sheeting. One broken roof sheet was found on the north side of A1 allowing bats to potentially access the interior of the barn.

The internal inspection found there was not a separate roof void, no insulation or lining and a timber roof structure.

On closer inspection very few suitable roosting locations were found and no direct evidence such as droppings, feeding remains, stains or scratching was seen. No squeaking or chattering was recorded.

Due to there being potential access points into the barn and some suitable roosting locations this building is considered to have **low** suitability for roosting bats.

A4

This is a single storey stone a brick built barn covered in cement render. The doors are window openings are tightly fitted.

The roof is a corrugated cement sheet roof and the ridge is well pointed. There are potential access points beneath the sheeting however no direct evidence of bats was found.

No internal access was not available to this section of the building, however the householder confirmed it to be of similar construction to A1, A2 and A3.

This building is considered to have **low** suitability for roosting bats.

A5

The roof of this section of the building has collapsed and has **negligible** suitability for roosting bats.

A6

This building is a single storey stone built barn. The windows and doors are well sealed, except for an open window into what used to building A5. The stone, brickwork and pointing are generally in a good condition.

The roof is a corrugated cement sheet roof and the ridge is well pointed. There are potential access points beneath the sheeting however no direct evidence of bats was found.

The internal inspection found this building to be very similar to A1, A2 and A3. On closer inspection very few suitable roosting locations were found and no direct evidence such as droppings, feeding remains, stains or scratching was seen. No squeaking or chattering was recorded.

Due to there being potential access points into the barn and some suitable roosting locations this building is considered to have **low** suitability for roosting bats.

A7

This building is different from the others and is partly two storey brick built barn. The southern gable has been covered in cement render. The doors are tightly fitting and the brickwork and pointing are generally in a good condition. The roof is slate tile and this and ridge tiles appear to be intact throughout.

The internal inspection of this building was slightly hindered by the instability of the first floor however the internal brickwork and woodwork was all inspected with binoculars for direct evidence of bats, however none was found.

Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) nesting ledge was identified within the building, but was unoccupied at the time of survey.

The internal inspection found there was a felt lining to the roof.

Due to there being potential access points into the barn and some suitable roosting locations including behind fascia board this building is considered to have **low** suitability for roosting bats.

A8

This is a single storey brick wall and corrugated cement sheet roof canopy currently being used as a chicken coop. There are significant openings and the roof is in a deteriorating state of repair.

The interior is open to the elements however closer inspection of all the woodwork found no direct evidence of bats.

The exposed and draughty nature of these canopies does not provide the right micro climate preferred by roosting bats. Therefore the canopy is considered to have **negligible** suitability for roosting bats.

5.0 INTERPRETATION

Data Search

The data search with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Biological Records and the NBN Gateway did not identify any records of bats within the site or within the 1km search area.

Buildings

No direct evidence of bats was found during the external and internal surveys.

However the corrugated cement sheet roofing used on the majority of the building allows potential for bats to access the interior of the buildings.

Therefore further survey work will be required to ascertain the presence or likely absence of bats within the buildings prior to any works commencing.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Buildings

Although no direct evidence of bats was found, potential entry points exist on several buildings.

Buildings A1, A2, A3, A4, A6 and A7 are considered to be of **low** roost suitability for bats.

Therefore a single survey visit is required during the period May-August. The survey should comprise one dusk emergence or one dawn re-entry survey. (See tables 7.1 and 7.3 within Appendix A for further information.)

Buildings A5 and A8 are considered to be of **negligible** roost suitability for bats and do not require further surveying prior to construction commencing.

The results of the presence or likely absence survey will inform any further survey, mitigation or licensing requirement.

7.0 MITIGATION MEASURES

The development should include the planting of trees, shrubs, hedges and grassland to improve the foraging resource of the site for bats. Native species or cultivars of native species should be chosen when specifying trees and shrub planting.

To enhance the roosting habitats available to bats, a Schwegler 1FR bat tube should be incorporated into the gable ends of new buildings, however this requirement should be confirmed following the outcome of the presence/likely absence survey.

Any proposed new external lighting for the development should be designed to ensure that lights are angled downward and that night time light levels remain relatively low.

APPENDIX A – Tables

Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition, Collins J, The Bat Conservation Trust (2016).

Table 4.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.

Suitability	Description Roosting habitats	Commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.
Low	<p>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).</p> <p>A tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.</p>	<p>Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat.</p> <p>Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.</p>
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	<p>Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens.</p> <p>Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.</p>
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.	<p>Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge.</p> <p>High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, treelined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.</p>

Table 7.1 Recommended timings for presence/absence surveys to give confidence in a negative result for structures (also recommended for trees but unlikely to give confidence in a negative result).

Low roost suitability	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability
May to August (structures)	May to September with at least one of surveys between May and August	May to September with at least two of surveys between May and August
No further surveys required (trees)		

Table 7.3 Recommended minimum number of survey visits for presence/absence surveys to give confidence in a negative result for structures (also recommended for trees but unlikely to give confidence in a negative result).

Low roost suitability	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability
<p>One survey visit. One dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey (structures).</p> <p>No further surveys required (trees).</p>	<p>Two separate survey visits. One dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey.</p>	<p>Three separate survey visits. At least one dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey. The third visit could be either dusk or dawn.</p>

APPENDIX B – Site Photos

Photograph 1



Building A1, A2, A3 and A4, south elevation

Photograph 2



Building A4, south-east gable end

Photograph 3



Building A8 – Chicken Coop

Photograph 4



Building A6, north elevation

Photograph 5



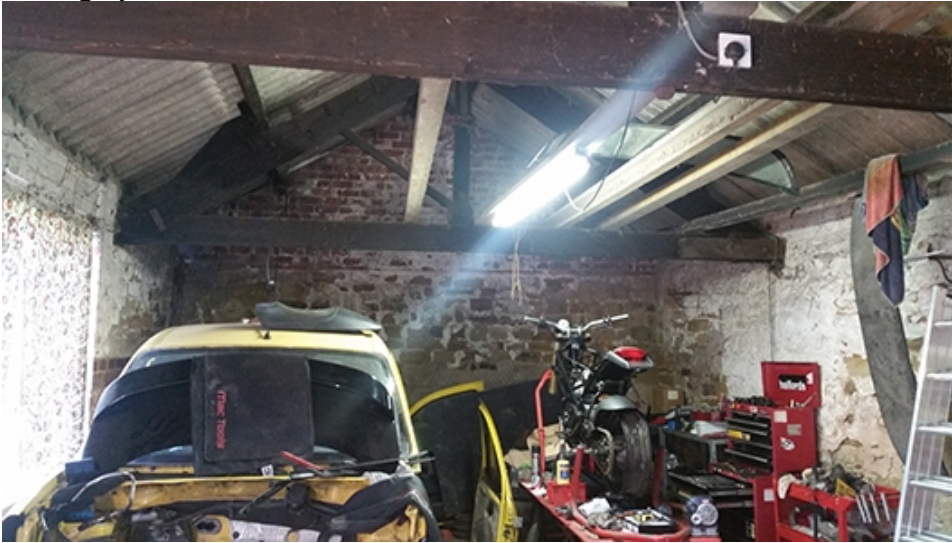
Building A1 and A2 north elevation

Photograph 6



Building A1, north-west parapet gable

Photograph 7



Building A1, internal

Photograph 7



Building A7, internal