ROAVR | GROUP

Project: 23_PRA_08_28
Site: 25-27 Millhouses Street, S74 9BQ
Client: Sam Shaw

Project Number:	23_PRA_08_28
Report Type:	Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report [PRA]
Site Address:	25-27 Millhouses Street, S74 9BQ

Role:	Name:	Position:	Date:
Surveyor	Alex Barnes BSc	Arboricultural and Field Ecological Consultant	29/08/2023
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Revision History		
Date:	Version number:	Summary of changes:
14/9/2023	1.0	First Draft
14/9/2023	1.0	First Issue
11/8/2024	2.0	Second Issue - updated to include details of GLTA

Summary:

1. ROAVR were appointed by Sam Shaw to undertake a preliminary bat roost assessment survey and report at 25-27 Millhouses Street, S74 9BQ.

2. It is proposed to redevelop the site with the renovation of the existing dwelling which requires alterations to the roof space. The Local Planning Authority (Barnsley Metropolitan Council) have requested a PRA to ensure the proposed alterations to the roof and the proximity to suitable foraging habitat do not have potential to negatively impact roosting bats or any other protected species.

1. Before visiting the site, a desk study was undertaken in order to determine records of local designated sites, habitats and bat species within a 2km of the proposed development. Data was sourced via the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (DEFRA MAGIC) on the 17th August 2023, at this stage, and due to the size of the proposed development a further Local Environmental Records Centre (LERC) search was not deemed necessary.

3. A site survey was carried out by Alex Barnes on the 29th August 2023 under the guidance provided within Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2016).

4. 25-27 Millhouses Street, S74 9BQ is a two storey semi-detached property most likely of 1930's origin. It is in a state of disrepair and access was open and good. The property is surrounded by modified grassland, trees and introduced shrubs.

1. An internal and external examination discovered numerous known potential roosting features. No known evidence of bats was seen within the void space. The building was assessed as holding moderate suitability for roosting bats.

5. Located close to the Milton Ponds (to the north east of the site) and bordered by similar properties with vegetated gardens and Milton Park with grassland, trees and standing water bodies, there is moderate potential for foraging bats to sporadically and opportunistically utilise the property through the adjacent linking gardens.

1. Two dusk emergence surveys are recommended as per the guidance located within Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition) Collins, J. (Ed.) 2023.

Matt Harmsworth Tech.Arbor.A HND Countryside Recreation, Assoc. ICFor Arboricultural and Ecological Consultant - Member of the British Ecological Society.
ROAVR Group

Table of Contents:

Acknowledgements:

Data referred to within this report has been sourced from Natural England Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (DEFRA MAGIC) database.

1 Introduction

1.1 ROAVR Group were commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at 25-27 Millhouses Street, S74 9BQ.

1.2 The survey was comprised of a desktop study, which was undertaken in August 2023 and a site survey, which was carried out by Alex Barnes on the 29th August 2023.

1.3 The methodology and results are outlined within the report. Where applicable, recommendations for suitable mitigation and ecological enhancements are provided.

1.4 The report is to be submitted to support a planning application to renovate the site.

1.5 The information and recommendations within this report have been prepared and provided in accordance with CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct.

SITE DESCRIPTION

1.6 The survey site covers an area of approximately 909.0 sqm and is centred on 'SE37490022'.

1.7 The site is situated in the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council control area. The site is located in the centre of Hoyland just northeast of Milton Park.

1.8 The site is a detached residential dwelling house.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

1.9 The site is to be redeveloped with the construction of a extension and general improvements as shown on drawing P02AAA Site Plan 4NO DETACHED.PDF provided to me for inspection in August 2023.

POLICY AND LEGISLATION

1.10 All UK bat species and their roosts are strictly protected under European and UK legislation (Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (CHSR), and the Wildlife and Countryside Act, (1981) (WCA). Furthermore, Annexe II of the Habitats Directive lists four UK bat species, providing them further protection. Under the National Planning Framework, bats and their roots must be considered during development.

SCOPE OF WORKS

1.11 The aims of this assessment were to:

- Assess the presence/potential for roosting bats within the existing building;
- Identify potential access/egress points for bat species;
- Assess potential habitat usage for foraging/commuting bats on-site;
- Determine whether further Bat Surveys may be necessary;
- Provide recommendations for suitable mitigation and ecological enhancement (if required).

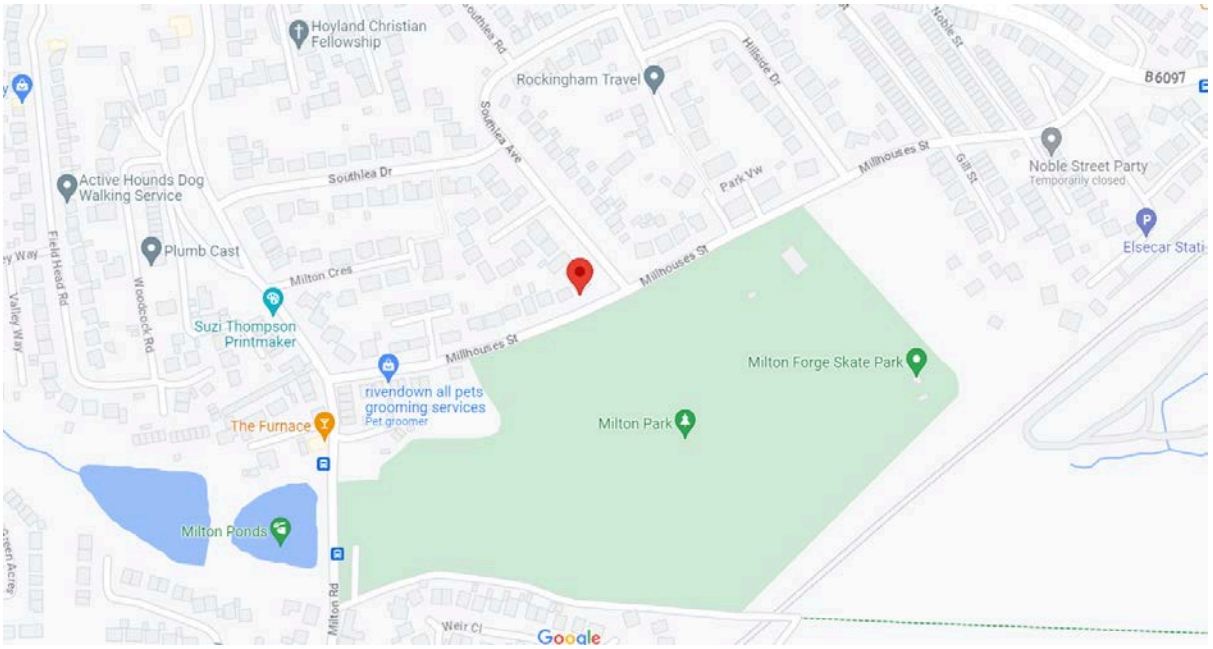

Figure 1 - Site Location Plan (Google Maps 2023).

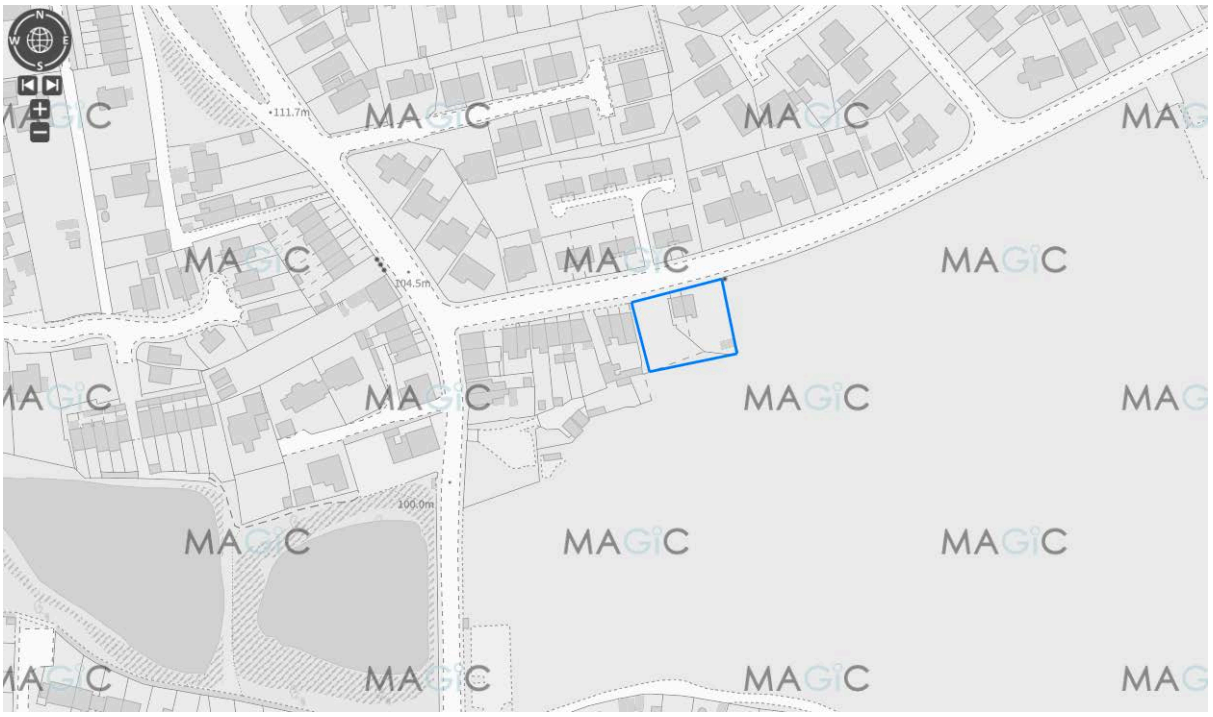

Figure 2 - Site Location Plan and Assessment Boundary (DEFRA MAGIC 2023).

2 Methodology

DESKTOP STUDY

2.1 Site-specific information in relation to land designations, bat species and protected habitats within a 2km zone of influence (ZoI) was sourced from DEFRA MAGIC.

2.2 In order to ensure that ecological data searches were up to date, species data was screened and all data records pre-2012 were omitted from the results.

2.3 Results of the desktop study should be considered to be indicative only.

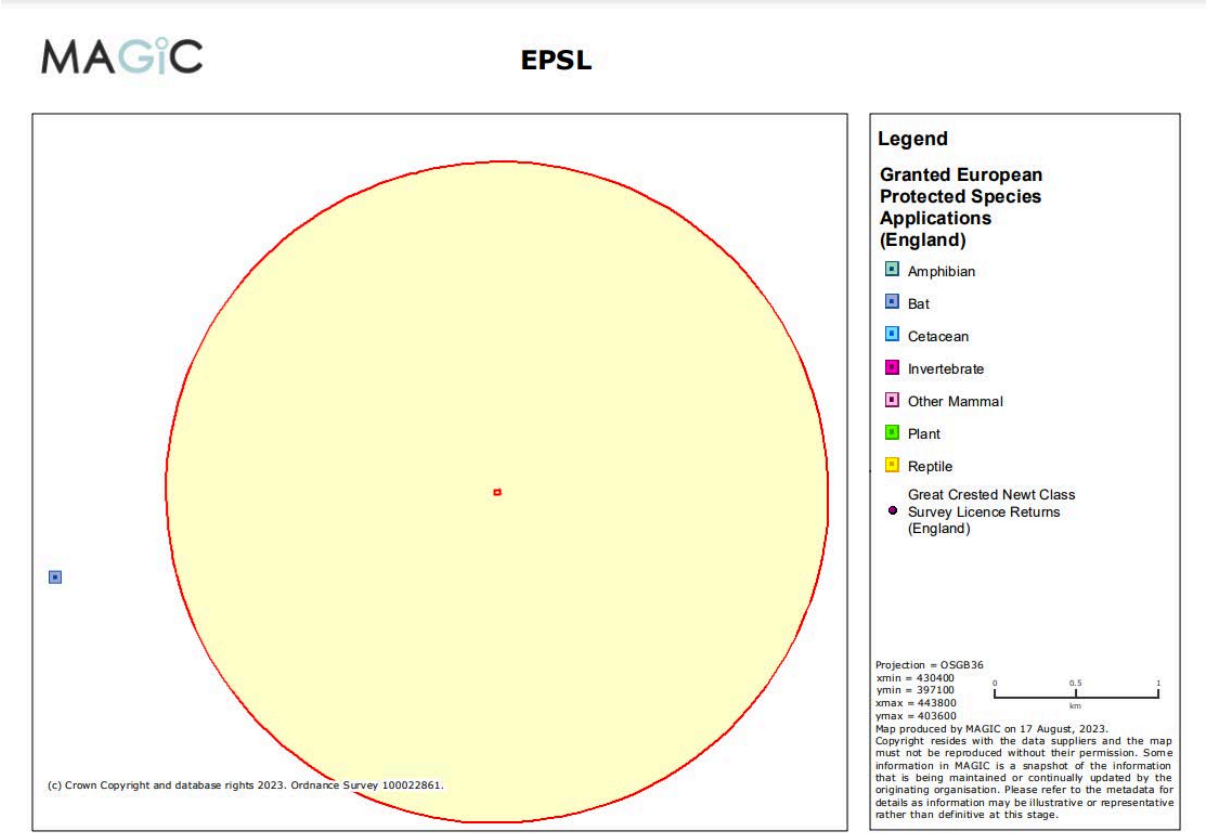

Figure 2 - EPSL licences granted within 2km ZOI.

PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

2.4 A Preliminary Roost Assessment, comprised of a preliminary ground level roost assessment was undertaken by Alex Barnes on the 29th August 2023. The PRA was undertaken in line with the Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition) Collins, J. (Ed.) 2023.

2.5 The survey included an active search for evidence of roosting bats such as droppings, feeding remains, oil staining, bat fur and/or scratch marks. The survey also assessed the building for suitable Potential Roosting Features (PRF)).

2.6 The survey was conducted from the ground and also using a drone to inspect roof spaces externally in such a manner that was previously not possible.

SPECIES POTENTIAL

2.7 The potential for roosting bats within building B1 and foraging/commuting bats within the existing habitats was assigned a rank as per Table 2.7.1. An assessment was carried out using data collected during both the desktop study and site survey.

Table 2.7.1: Rank of potential suitability for bats 'Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2016).

Suitability	Comments
Negligible	Negligible habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. Unlikely to support maternity or hibernation roosts.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat.
High	A structure 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 habitats.
Confirmed roost	Evidence of roosting bats confirmed by site survey.

ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS AND MITIGATION

2.8 An evaluation of the potential impacts to roosting and foraging/commuting bats caused by the proposed development was made with reference to the the 'Bat Mitigation Guidelines' (Mitchell-Jones, 2004) and CIEEM's 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018).

LIMITATIONS

2.9 The site surveyor does not currently hold a bat licence. However, this is not seen as a major limitation as no licensable activities were thought to be needed to fully evaluate the building.

2.10 With the assumption that the existing conditions on-site remain unchanged. The results of this report are likely to remain valid for 12-month sinline with the guidance published by CIEEM and the Bat Conservation Trust.

3 Desktop Study

BAT ECOLOGY AND LEGISLATION

3.1 Several bat species have been recorded within 2km of the site including Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*); Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*) and Brandt's Bat *(Myotis brandtiis)*. In order to obtain this information, a record search was undertaken on the 17th August 2023 using the NBN Atlas for England.

3.2 In the UK, bats are strictly protected by both national and European legislation due to their declining populations and vital role in the ecosystem. All species of bats in the UK are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981, which prohibits the intentional or reckless disturbance, harm, or destruction of bats and their habitats. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 implements the EU Habitats Directive in the UK, providing even more stringent protections. This means it is an offence to deliberately capture, kill, or disturb bats, or to damage, destroy, or obstruct access to their roosts.

3.3 Specific licences may be granted for certain activities that might otherwise be considered offences under these regulations, such as building developments or research projects, but these are typically accompanied by requirements for mitigation and compensation measures to protect the bat populations. It is essential to maintain compliance with these legislations to conserve the bat populations.

3.4 All bat species are also a Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority species. The Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan (2010) provides advice on the design of development proposals.

http://www.barnsleybiodiversity.org.uk/Barnsley%20BAP%20II%20adopted%202010.pdf

SITE DESIGNATIONS

3.5 There were two designated sites within the 2km ZoI (Tables 3.1.1).

Table 3.1.1: Statutory and non-statutory designated sites recorded within a 2km radius of the survey site.

Site Name	Grid Reference	Area (ha)	Approx. Closest Distance from Site (km)	Notes.
Local Nature Reserves (England)- ELSECAR RESERVOIR	SK38229953	13.55	0.8 km	Located 890m SE of the site. No known information on bat species at the site.
SSSI Impact Risk Zones - to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites (England)	SE37510025	NA	0 km	Consultation with Natural England is not required as the proposal does not fall within Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
Green Belt (England)	SK38229953	22704.8768	0.4 km	Liverpool, Manchester and West Yorks Greenbelt Local AuthorityBarnsley District + Rotherham

*Data from DEFRA MAGIC.

LOCAL HABITAT

3.6 The entire site is a residential site and is not located within a priority habitat. B1 is a detached property that sits on the northern edge of Milton Park. It is bordered to the south by native scrub and trees that link into Milton Park. Milton Ponds are located 130m southwest of the property.

HISTORICAL SPECIES RECORDS

3.7 Records for bats are present within 2km of the Site, including records for Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Daubenton's (*Myotis daubentonii*) and Whiskered/Brandt's Bat (*Myotis mystacinus/brandtii*). These records were obtained through a search of NBN Atlas on the 17th August 2023.

4 Site Survey

4.1 The site survey was undertaken on the 29th August 2023. The survey was undertaken during sunny interval conditions with an air temperature of 17c and moderate winds. There was no precipitation.

ON-SITE ROOSTING POTENTIAL

All methodology follows the current guidance from the Bat Conservation Trust (Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition) Collins, J. (Ed.) 2023) unless otherwise specified.

The survey was undertaken via a ground-based daytime inspection with the assistance of close focus binoculars and a DJI Mavic Mini Pro drone operated by a CAA approved operator (operator ID - GBR-OP-63WQD93CFL2F). The surrounding habitats were assessed in relation to their connectivity and foraging resource value.

The survey focused on identifying a range of characteristic signs which can indicate current/recent use of a potential roost site by bats in addition to a detailed focus on potential features which could be utilised by bats as survey effort should not focus on field signs alone. A more detailed external inspection was then undertaken using a drone to allow examination of the roof for potential roosting features that cannot be viewed from the ground.

An internal inspection of the roof void limited to only safely accessible areas was conducted to identify any field signs of bats including: droppings, grease marks, urine stains, feeding remains and bats (living or dead).

In terms of limitations of this survey, the access was good with the loft void being accessed via the surveyor expanding loft ladder. The loft void was unlined so an inspection was made only from the loft hatch.

Building B1:

Building B1 is a detached two storey residential dwelling house that is dilapidated. It has a pitched roof covered with slate tiles. The loft void is unlined and there is no boarding in the loft. Some windows are missing and the property is only partially glazed. Mortar is missing from the eaves and there are no soffits or bargeboards present. There are some slipped and missing tiles on the northern and southern elevations.

Plate 1: The southern elevation of B1.

Field Results:

External	Feature of value to bats	Notes
External Stonework	*Yes*	*Some gaps and cracks noted.*
Window/Door Frames	*Yes*	*Missing and partially boarded windows giving access to the building.*
Eaves Coverings	*Yes*	*Mortar missing from eaves.*
Roof Coverings	*Yes*	*Slipped and missing tiles.*
Internal	**Feature of value to bats**	**Notes**
Membrane Coverings	*Yes*	*No membrane present giving direct access to the loft void.*
Roof Void Floor Covering	*Yes*	*Numerous cracks and crevices noted*
Protruding Daylight	*Yes*	*Light penetrates throughout the loft void.*
Evidence From Bats	*No*	*No evidence seen.*
Restrictions	*Yes*	*Loft void could not be fully accessed.*

FORAGING & CONNECTIVITY

Although the building is somewhat isolated in a residential street, the surrounding landscape does provide moderate foraging and commuting habitat in the form of grassland, scrub, trees and Milton Ponds to the immediate southwest of the site.

Bats are commonly found in both broad-leaved and coniferous woodlands, which serve as excellent foraging sites. The trees offer an abundance of insect prey and provide cover, reducing the chances of predation. Woodland edges, particularly those adjacent to open habitats such as grassland or water, are crucial commuting routes.

Hedgerows, lines of trees, and other linear features are used by many bat species as commuting routes between roosting and foraging sites. They provide navigational aids and offer protection from predators. Ancient and species-rich hedgerows may also serve as good foraging areas.

Rivers, ponds, lakes, and wetlands attract a large quantity of insects, making them attractive foraging sites for bats. Water bodies are also commonly used as commuting routes, with some species like the Daubenton's bat, specifically adapted to forage over water surfaces.

Grasslands, especially those adjacent to other habitats such as woodlands or hedgerows, are important for certain bat species. They provide a rich source of insect prey.

Although urban areas are generally less suitable due to light pollution and habitat fragmentation, many bat species have adapted to urban life. Parks, gardens, and green corridors can provide important foraging sites and commuting routes.

Traditional farmland can provide a mosaic of habitats, including hedgerows, ponds, and grazed fields, which can be suitable for foraging and commuting.

Different bat species have different preferences and tolerances for these habitats, and so a mix of these features can support a diverse bat community. Conservation efforts often aim to maintain and enhance these landscape features to promote bat populations.

The landscape immediately adjacent to the property supports patchy scrub, hedgerows and broadleaf trees that provides excellent foraging habitat for bats in calm conditions.

Plate 2: Foraging habitat to the south of B1.

5 Evaluation and Assessment

5.1 Results from the desktop study and site survey were evaluated to assess bat species potential (as per Table 2.7.1). An evaluation of potential ecological constraints (in relation to bats) to the proposed development and recommendations for appropriate mitigation strategies are provided in Table 5.1.1

5.2 No known evidence of bats was observed during the internal inspection of the property. The external inspection noted numerous potential roosting features in the form of missing mortar from the eaves and slipped tiles. The site has good connectivity to good foraging habitat to the south at Milton Park.

5.3 The missing mortar beneath the eaves and ridges provide roosting potential for crevice dwelling bats species such as Common and Soprano Pipistrelle species which are known to be present in the local area. Therefore, based on this information and the guidance outlined by the Bat Conservation Trust, the building has been assessed as having moderate suitability for roosting bats.

5.4 To determine whether roosting bats are using the building, further bat emergence/re-entry surveys should be carried out. This would require 2 separate survey visits by 2 surveyors at dusk supported by night vision aids and thermal cameras. The visit should be carried out between May and August inclusive as the optimal period. September is considered sub-optimal.

5.5 Survey visits can only be carried out when temperature at sunset is 10 C or more and there are no strong winds or heavy rain. Should bats be found to be roosting in the buildings two further survey visits will be required and then a licence applied from Natural England to allow the proposed works of the building to be carried out.

5.6 Construction works should be limited to daylight hours (excl. dawn and dusk) in order to prevent disturbance to nighttime foraging activity. Post-construction, the use of artificial lighting should be limited where possible. Motion sensors on outside lighting will prevent prolonged disturbance. It is recommended that outside lighting be set on short-timers (1 minute) and that the sensitivity is set to large moving objects only.

Table 5.1.1: Potential ecological constraints (in relation to bats) to the proposed development and appropriate mitigation strategies.

Bats (Chiroptera)	Presence/Potential	Further Comments	Potential Impacts	Recommendations for Mitigation
Roosting Bats (buildings)	Moderate	Building B1 had moderate potential for roosting bats in the form of small cracks/crevices and missing mortar.	The proposed development may result in both short-term and long-term disturbance to roosting bats (if present) if appropriate mitigation strategies are not put in place.	Two bat presence/absence surveys are to be carried out. The surveys should be carried out between May and September (with September considered to be sub-optimal), a minimum of two weeks apart should further surveys be required. No works must proceed until further surveys have been carried out and appropriate mitigation strategies have been identified. The surveys should be supported by IR and thermal cameras.
Roosting Bats (buildings)	Negligible	There were no trees on site capable of supporting roosting bats.	None.	No further survey work required.

Bats (Chiroptera)	Presence/Potential	Further Comments	Potential Impacts	Recommendations for Mitigation
Foraging/Commuting Bats	Moderate	The site is considered to be part of a mosaic of suitable foraging / commuting habitats. The adjacent landscape has excellent foraging potential.	The proposed development may result in the loss of suitable foraging / commuting habitats if suitable mitigation strategies are not put in place.	Care must be taken to ensure that flight paths are not obstructed. Construction works should be limited to daylight hours in order to prevent disturbance to nighttime foraging activity. The use of artificial lighting should be limited where possible. Motion sensors on outside lighting will prevent prolonged disturbance. It is recommended that outside lighting be set on short-timers (1 minute) and that the sensitivity is set to large moving objects only.

7 Conclusions

7.1 The property at 25-27 Millhouses Street, S74 9BQ is to be redeveloped with an extension and alterations. These alterations will require works to the roof of the building and possible disturbance / destruction of PRFs.

7.2 A local record search using NBN Atlas and DEFRA Magic on the 17th August 2023 highlighted that a number of bat species are present within the local landscape.

7.3 The features present at the property are suitable for crevice dwelling bats species which are present in the local area. These features amount to areas of missing mortar on the ridge and eaves of the property and slipped / missing tiles, as such the property has been classified as having moderate suitability for bats.

7.4 It is recommended that two bat presence/absence surveys be carried out. The survey should be carried out between May and September (with September considered to be sub-optimal).

7.5 Should bats be found to be roosting in the buildings one further survey visit will be required to obtain sufficient information to classify the roost type and then a licence applied from Natural England to allow the proposed works of the building to be carried out.

8 References

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9 Report Limitations

9.1 ROAVR Group has prepared this Report for the sole use of the above named Client/Agent in accordance with our terms of business, under which our services were performed. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this Report or any other services provided by us.

9.2 This Report may not be relied upon by any other party without the prior and express written agreement of ROAVR The assessments made assume that the land use will continue for its current purpose without significant change. ROAVR has not independently verified information obtained from third parties.

9.3 This report, data tables and raw data remain the copyright of ROAVR until such time as any monies owed are settled in full and the report may be withdrawn at any time.

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Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

Mr. Matthew Harmsworth
Lead Arboricultural and Ecological Consultant

Matt Harmsworth

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Prepared by: Max Shaw BSc QCIEEM
Checked by: Matt Harmsworth BSc

Appendix 1: Site Location and Assessment Boundary

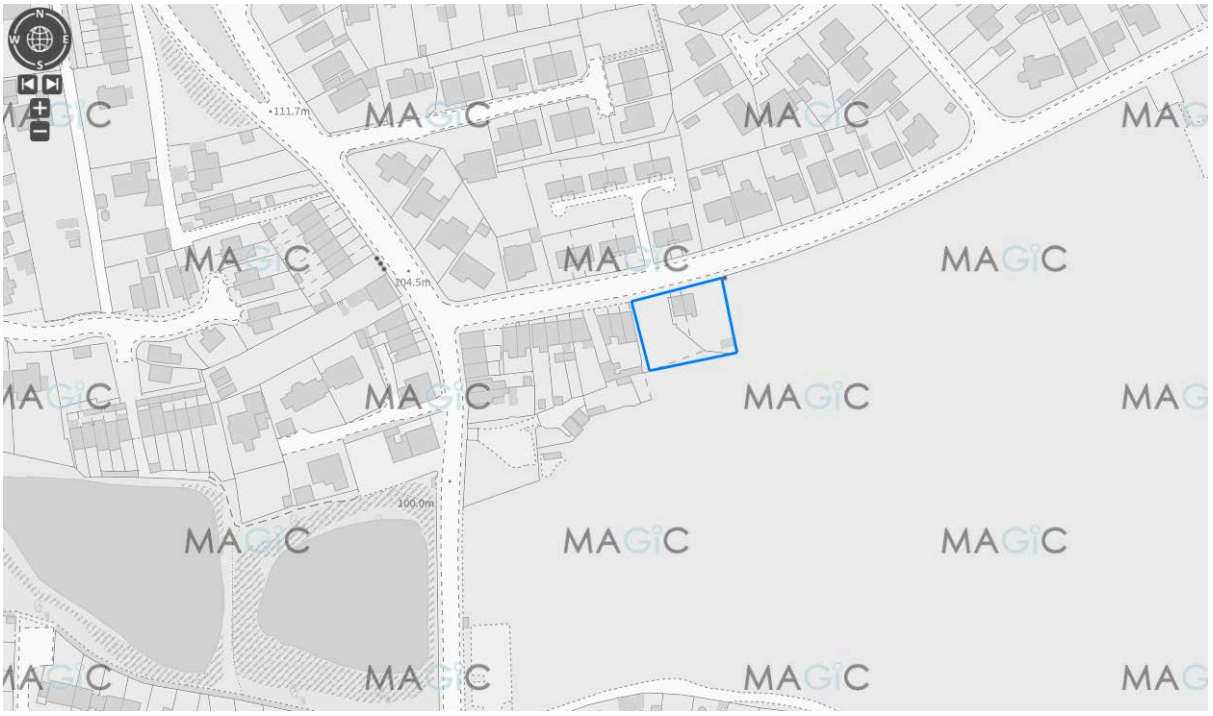


Figure A1.1: An extract from DEFRA showing the site location.

Appendix 2: Additional Site Photographic Plates & Target Notes

Detail	*Photograph*
Plate showing the eastern elevation	
Aerial plate showing the roof of the property	
Aerial plate showing the roof of the property	

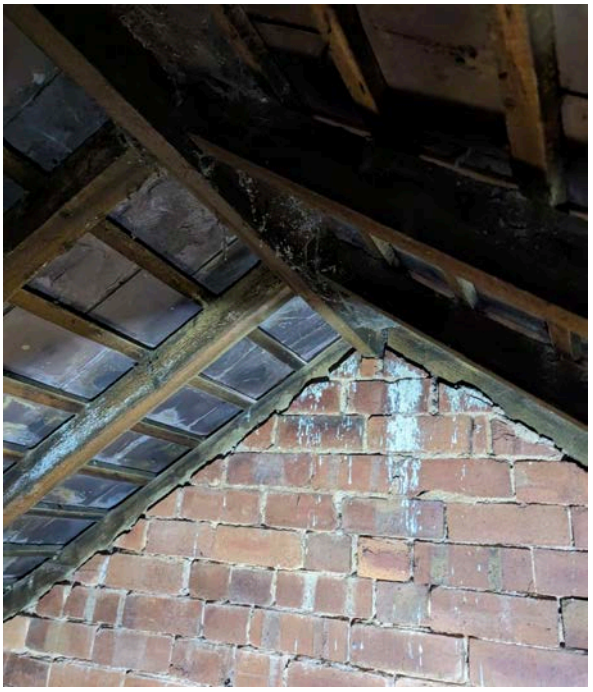
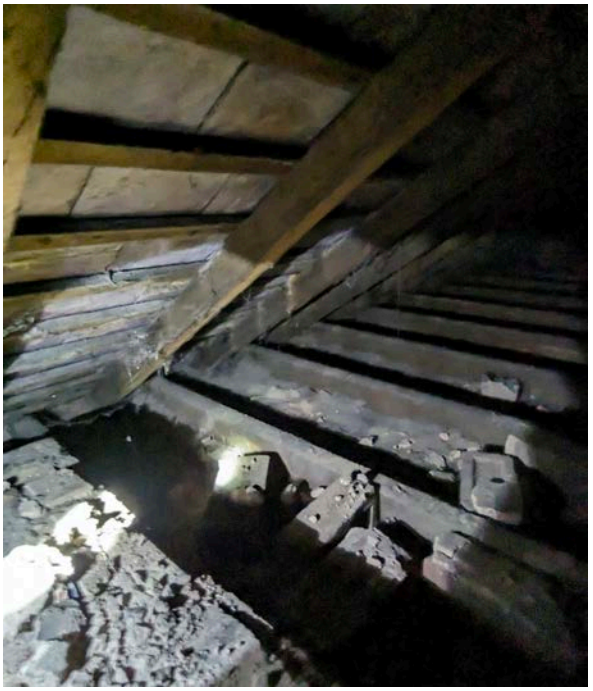
Plate showing the eaves of the property and missing mortar	
Plate showing the eaves of the property and missing mortar	
Plate showing the loft void which is unlined and with a large number of suitable cracks and crevices	

Plate showing the loft void floor which is not lined.	

Appendix 3: Site Habitat Map

What Are PRFs & What Does It Mean For My Project?

Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) are specific structures or characteristics in buildings, trees, or other parts of the environment that might provide suitable places for bats to roost, or set up home.

These can include things like gaps under roof tiles, holes in walls, hollows in trees, and other sheltered, undisturbed spaces that bats might find attractive.

A **Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment** is a survey conducted by an ecologist to check a property or area for these Potential Roosting Features. The goal is to identify whether there's a likelihood of bats being present, which could impact development plans because bats and their roosts are legally protected.

Now, what does this mean for a client, typically someone planning a development or construction project?

If the assessment finds **no PRFs**, or if the features found are assessed as offering **negligible potential** for bats, the customer can usually proceed with their plans without further steps to mitigate bat impact.

However, if the assessment **finds PRFs** that could potentially house bats, the next step would typically be **a more detailed** bat survey, **carried out at dusk or dawn** when bats are most active.

If bats are indeed found, **this doesn't mean the project can't proceed**, but there might be some requirements to meet first. Usually this involves drawing up mitigation measures which are implemented **after planning** is determined.

