

# Stables at Frickley Bridge Lane, Brierley

## Bat Survey Report

20<sup>th</sup> July 2020



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| Document ref: MBE/BAT/2020/59 |                                             |                                   |                                             |          |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------|
| Purpose and Description       | Originated                                  | Checked                           | Reviewed                                    | Date     |
| For Planning                  | P Middleton<br>MCIEEM<br><i>P Middleton</i> | R Bell<br>MCIEEM<br><i>R Bell</i> | P Middleton<br>MCIEEM<br><i>P Middleton</i> | 20/07/20 |

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1.1 The bat survey was commissioned by planning consultant Michael Townsend on behalf of the client Glyn Burns on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
- 1.1.1 The survey was undertaken to inform a planning application which will result in the proposed demolition/removal of outbuildings to make way for a new dwelling off Frickley Bridge Lane, Brierley.
- 1.1.2 The preliminary roost assessment survey was conducted on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
- 1.1.3 There were no visible signs of bat presence on either the inside or outside of the surveyed buildings and they lack significant potential to support roosting bats. Consequently, they were considered to display negligible bat roost potential.
- 1.1.4 It was concluded that no further bat survey effort is necessary providing that works commence within 24 months of survey.
- 1.1.5 Demolition of the buildings should either take place outside of the bird nesting season (March to September) or it should be preceded by a nesting bird check, to be undertaken by an ecologist.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1.1 The bat survey was commissioned by planning consultant Michael Townsend on behalf of the client Glyn Burns on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020. The survey was undertaken to inform a planning application which will result in the proposed demolition/removal of four buildings to make way for a new dwelling off Frickley Bridge Lane, Brierley.
- 2.1.2 Middleton Bell Ecology were contracted initially to conduct a baseline assessment to determine the likely presence or absence of roosting bats and to identify roost locations, access points, species present, level of use and the importance of nearby landscape features.
- 2.1.3 The buildings are situated adjacent to pasture, approximately 60m east of Frickley Bridge Lane in a somewhat rural location on the outskirts of the village of Brierley, approximately 8km northeast of Barnsley town centre.

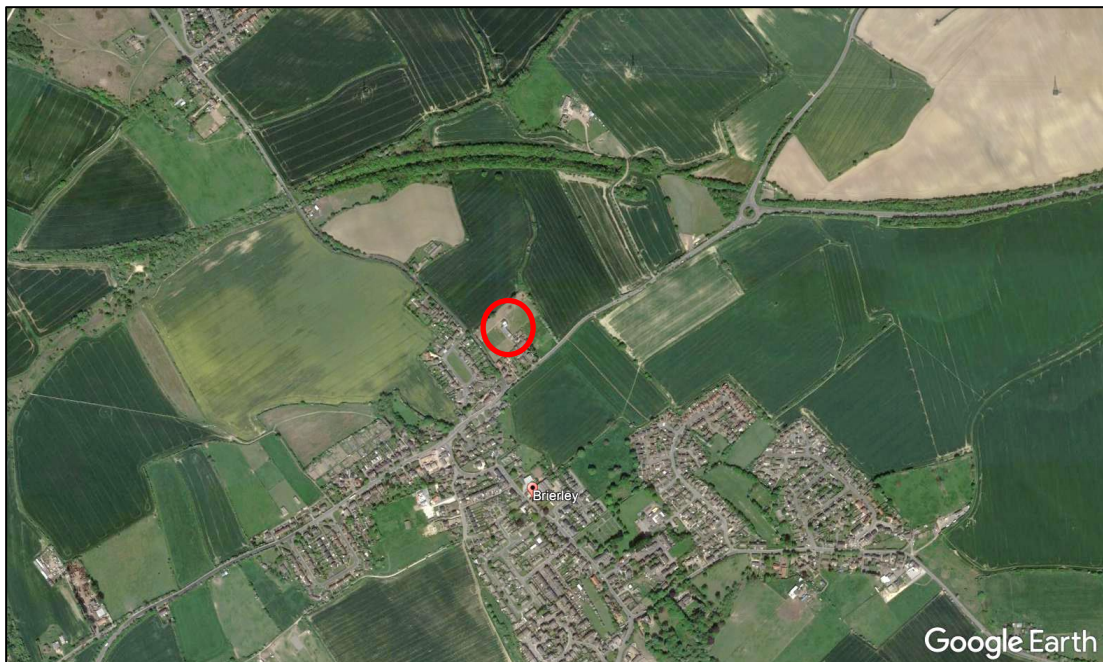
## 3. Habitat Assessment

- 3.1.1 The immediate surrounding area consists of pasture with extensive arable land in the wider area. There is a tree lined disused railway Line (Barnsley to Hull) 360m north but no woodlands within a 1km radius of the site. This locality is therefore likely to support no more than a moderate assemblage and abundance of bats (see Figure 1).
- 3.1.2 Table 1 summarises the habitats present, adjacent to and further afield of the application site.

**Table 1. Location and habitat table**

| Name and address: Frickley Bridge Lane, Brierley, Barnsley      |         |               |                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OS Grid Ref. SE 4088 1153                                       |         | Altitude. 93m |                                                                       |
| Local Planning Authority: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council |         |               |                                                                       |
| Features on site and adjacent to site                           |         |               |                                                                       |
| Feature                                                         | On site | Adjacent      | Comments                                                              |
| Buildings                                                       | ✓       | ✓             | Residential                                                           |
| River bordered by trees                                         |         |               |                                                                       |
| Standing water                                                  |         |               | None within 1km                                                       |
| Bridges tunnels and culverts                                    |         |               | Disused railway tunnel 430m northeast                                 |
| Trees                                                           |         | ✓             | Nearest trees are 23m northwest along a field boundary                |
| Woodland                                                        |         |               | Nearest at the Dell in Grimethorpe, 1.4km south southeast of the site |
| Grassland                                                       | ✓       | ✓             | Heavily grazed pasture                                                |

**Figure 1. Site location, as indicated by red circle**



### **3.2 Aims**

3.2.1 The survey was conducted to help determine the following:

- The presence/absence of roosting bats.
- Potential roosting areas and access/egress points into structures.
- Determine the level of bat roost potential associated with the structures.
- Identify further survey work or mitigation requirements.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1 Data Consultation**

4.1.1 The decision was made not to request bat records from either the Biological Records Centre (Barnsley) or bat group (South Yorkshire Bat Group) given the lack of bat roost potential displayed by the surveyed buildings.

4.1.2 A search of the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was undertaken to identify historic European Protected Species (EPS) licences obtained for locations within 2km of the site.

### **4.2 Field Survey**

4.2.1 The following personnel conducted the survey on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020:

- Peter Middleton (MCIEEM; Class license WML-A34-Level 4, 2017-27977-CLS-CLS)

4.2.2 The following activities were carried out during the surveys in compliance with relevant Bat Survey Guidelines (Collins 2016):

- A brief inspection and assessment of the site and habitats present to within 300m.
- An extensive examination of all parts of the buildings both inside and out to record structural features and condition and to record features that may be suitable for roosting bats. Particular attention was paid to any crevices or gaps in walls, lintels, gaps between beams and joists and to the possibility of finding droppings stuck to walls, floors or other surfaces, or insect remains below beams, among a number of other factors. All signs indicative of a bat roost presence including live or dead bats, droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and staining were recorded.
- An assessment of the buildings' bat roost potential (negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed roost).

4.2.3 The following equipment was used or at hand during the survey:

- Clulight
- Binoculars
- Endoscope
- Ladders
- Camera

### 4.3 Survey Limitations

4.3.1 No limitations to the preliminary roost assessment survey were encountered.

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Data Consultation

5.1.1 One historical bat EPS mitigation licence has been issued for a location within 2km of the surveyed buildings. The licence was issued in 2012 to permit the destruction of a common pipistrelle resting place in a location 1.5km south of the application site.

### 5.2 Field Survey

5.2.1 No evidence of bat roosting was recorded on site. The buildings lack any significant bat roosting potential and were assessed as displaying negligible potential for use by roosting bats. The buildings are described in detail below.

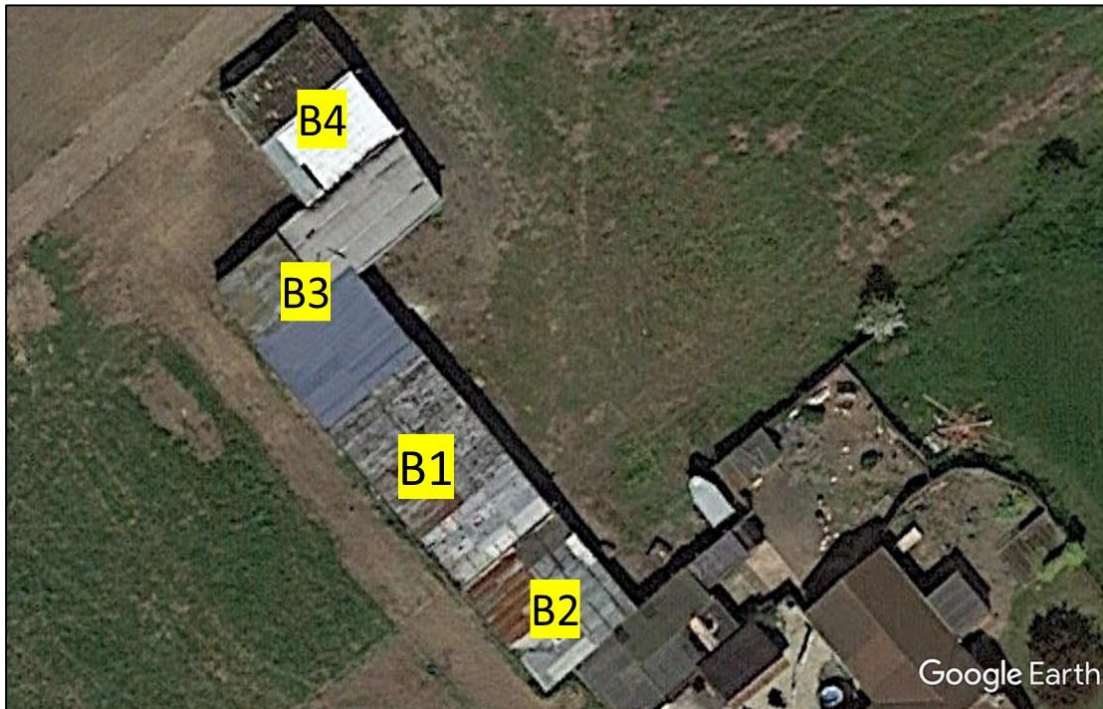
#### *Description*

5.2.2 For ease of description the building sections have been numbered and are shown in Figure 2.

5.2.3 The surveyed buildings comprise a complex of stables and out-buildings which are joined together in a long row. Building 1 (B1) is a somewhat large single-skin concrete block-built stable building with a shallow mono-pitched corrugated sheet metal roof, supported by recycled telegraph poles and timber battens (Plate 1). There is a doorway from B1 to Building 2 (B2). B2 is a dilapidated two compartment stable built of single-skin concrete blocks and timber beneath a shallow mono-pitched corrugated sheet metal roof which also covers a wide open-fronted canopy (Plate 2). Building 3 (B3) is an 'L' shaped open fronted structure used for storing hay. This building has a

timber frame with single-skin concrete blocks to 1.2m and a shallow pitched corrugated sheet metal roof, supported by a mix of recycled telegraph poles and machine cut timber joists. The building is largely open fronted with the rear and sides clad with a mixture of metal sheets and vertical 'hit and miss' boards (Plate 3). Building 4 (B4) is a dilapidated timber-framed structure with a pitched sheet metal roof supported by recycled telegraph poles, wood joists, and battens. It is open-fronted whilst two sides are clad with asbestos sheets (Plate 4).

**Figure 2. Building plan**



*External inspection*

- 5.2.4 All site buildings are single skin and consequently, they entirely lack features with potential to accommodate crevice roosting bats as there are no crevices, holes or voids anywhere on the exterior. No signs of bats were found.

**Plate 1. Front of B1**



**Plate 2. B2 showing open front and wide canopy supported by vertical timber**



**Plate 3. North end of B1 and adjoining B3**



**Plate 4. Front (northeast elevation) of B4**



### Internal inspection

- 5.2.5 The only features found on the inside of the buildings which have potential to accommodate roosting bats were: a vertical timber support against a wall with a crevice behind in B2, and a gap behind a horizontal timber roof joist adjacent to a wall in B3. Both features were directly inspected with the former found to be heavily 'cobwebbed'. No signs of bats were found, however, a defunct swallow *Hirundo rustica* nest was noted in B2.

**Plate 5. Inside of B1**



**Plate 6. Inside of B3**



## 6. Assessment

### 6.1 Summary and Evaluation of Findings

- 6.1.1 No bats were found roosting in the buildings during the preliminary daytime assessment and there were no signs of bat occupation. The buildings are considered to display a negligible level of potential for use by roosting bats as they comprise

single-skin structures largely lacking potential roost features. This assessment is therefore considered to be an accurate determination of the buildings potential to support roosting bats and no further bat survey effort is considered necessary, providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date.

## 6.2 Legislation and Policy Guidance

6.2.1 Bats receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

6.2.2 It is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection or obstruct access to any such place.
- Damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat.
- Possess a bat (live or dead), or any part of a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
- Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (dead or alive), or parts of parts.

6.2.3 The Convention on Biological Diversity, signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, requires member states to develop national strategies and to undertake a range of actions aimed at maintaining or restoring biodiversity. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the Convention.

6.2.4 In England & Wales, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, “to have due regard, as far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”. It notes that “conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat”. Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein’s *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* bats are included as priority species within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. At a more local level there are Local Biodiversity Action Plans for smaller geographical areas which may cover a greater or lesser range of bat species.

6.2.5 Where it is proposed to carry out works which will have an adverse impact on roosting bats, the site must either be registered on the Bat Low Impact Class Licence (BLICL) or a European Protected Species (EPS) license must first be obtained from Natural England. This requirement applies even if no bats are expected to be present when the work is carried out.

6.2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework for England was revised in 2019. This document states that plans should ‘promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity’.

## *Birds*

6.2.7 All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird.

## **6.3 Recommendations/enhancements**

6.3.1 No bats were recorded roosting on site during the survey works and consequently there is no compulsory requirement for mitigation. However, in order to enhance the ecological value of the site and in accordance with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), it is suggested that bat roosting features are added as part of the re-development. It is advised that one or more bat boxes, of a design such as the Build-in WoodStone Bat Box or Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box C (see Plates 7 - 9) are integrated into the new dwelling. The box/s should be sited at wall top height on the south or west elevation and away from areas of light spill. For further information on appropriate bat roosting features please contact Middleton Bell Ecology.

### **Plates 7-9. Build-in bat roost products**



## **6.4 Conclusion**

6.4.1 There were no visible signs of bat occupation on either the inside or outside of the surveyed buildings and they are considered to offer negligible bat roost potential.

6.4.2 No further survey effort is necessary for buildings providing the recommendations provided in this report are enacted and works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works are to commence after this date, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey.

6.4.3 Works should proceed with caution and vigilance for unexpected bat presence, as single bats can roost almost anywhere. If bats are subsequently discovered, work should cease, and further advice sought without delay.

6.4.4 Demolition of the buildings should either take place outside of the bird nesting season (March to September) or they should be preceded by a nesting bird check, to be undertaken by an ecologist.

## **7. References**

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