

Construction Enhancement Management Plan - Biodiversity

Woodhead Hall Farm, Platts Common

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1. Summary

- 1.1.1 This Construction Enhancement Management Plan – Biodiversity of Woodhead Hall Farm was commissioned by the Thomas Daley of Thomas Daley Homes Ltd, on 23rd July 2024.
- 1.1.2 Planning permission (Ref.: 2022/1234) was granted in December 2022 to permit re-development of the site to include alteration, restoration and extension of the farmhouse, farm cottage and conversion and extension of existing barns, together with the erection of a further four new dwellings. The 1.8 ha site will also be partially re-landscaped. This Construction Enhancement Management Plan – Biodiversity has been written to inform the discharge of Condition 22 of the planning permission.
- 1.1.3 The landscaping plan identifies those areas of habitat within the site which are to be retained within the proposed scheme. These areas comprise the existing grassland, scrub and scattered trees located in the eastern corner of the site (to the southeast of Woodhead Hall), together with scattered trees around the periphery of the site, and hedgerow along the eastern access track. The areas of habitat to be retained are classed as ‘biodiversity protection zones’.
- 1.1.4 The biodiversity protection zones are to be fenced off from the development areas. The fencing should be installed taking account of British Standard 5837 (2012): Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction, to ensure the root protection zones are fenced around retained trees. Fencing is to be installed to prevent access to construction vehicles and staff. This fencing may either comprise permanent post and rail fencing or steel (Heras-type) fencing. This fencing should remain in place for the duration of the construction works.
- 1.1.5 Any required vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside the main bird nesting period (March to August, inclusive), if at all possible. If elements of the vegetation clearance works are required during the nesting bird season, then they will be preceded by a nesting bird check, to be undertaken by an ecologist within 48 hours of clearance works.
- 1.1.6 Each building should be subject to a barn owl inspection within 48 hours of construction works commencing. This inspection is to be upgraded to a full nesting bird check if undertaken during the main nesting bird period (March-August). Any active bird nests recorded during nesting bird checks will be protected until the chicks have fledged or the nest have failed, with any barn owl nests protected from disturbance.
- 1.1.7 Roosting bats have been recorded using five buildings on the site. Consequently, works may not proceed on these buildings until a bat mitigation licence has been obtained for the development. Prior to works commencing on roost buildings, all construction staff should receive a toolbox talk from a licensed bat ecologist. As the first stage of renovation works, following the toolbox talk, known and potential roost sites on each building should either be stripped under the supervision of the ecologist, or excluded using one-way exclusion devices. Once known and potential roost sites have been stripped or excluded, then the ecologist will hand the building over to construction staff who can proceed with renovation according to their chosen method.
- 1.1.8 Nesting bird, roosting bat and invertebrate provision is to be included in the development and is detailed in this document. Hedgehog holes will also be included. Prior to occupation of the new dwellings, this provision will be signed off by the ecologist.

2. Introduction

- 2.1.1 This Construction Enhancement Management Plan – Biodiversity of Woodhead Hall Farm was commissioned by the Thomas Daley of Thomas Daley Homes Ltd, on 23rd July 2024. Woodhead Hall Farm is located at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: SE 37206 02033 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Location plan



- 2.1.2 Planning permission (Ref.: 2022/1234) was granted in December 2022 to permit re-development of the site to include alteration, restoration and extension of the farmhouse, farm cottage and conversion and extension of existing barns, together with the erection of a further four new dwellings. The 1.8 ha site will also be partially re-landscaped.
- 2.1.3 This Construction Enhancement Management Plan – Biodiversity has been written to inform the discharge of Condition 22 of the planning permission. Condition 22 states:

Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development shall take place (including demolition, ground works and vegetation clearance) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan - Biodiversity (CEMP-B) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP-B shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;

- Identification of 'biodiversity protection zones';*
- Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements);*
- The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features (e.g. daylight working hours only starting one hour after sunrise and ceasing one hour before sunset);*
- Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs, including advanced installation and maintenance during the construction period;*
- The times during construction when specialists ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works;*

- Responsible persons and lines of communication;
- The role and responsibilities on site of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) or similarly competent person(s).

2.1.4 The Construction Enhancement Management Plan – Biodiversity is informed by ecological survey work undertaken in 2021 and reported in the Ecological Impact Assessment (Enzygo, 2023). A landscaping plan has been developed for the scheme by PWP Design Ltd. This plan is included in Appendix 1 of this document.

3. Existing Condition and Features of Ecological Interest

3.1.1 The landscaping plan included in Appendix 1 identifies those areas of habitat within the site to be retained within the proposed scheme, with these areas also shown in Figure 2. These areas comprise the existing grassland, scrub and scattered trees located in the eastern corner of the site (to the southeast of Woodhead Hall), together with scattered trees around the periphery of the site, and hedgerow along the eastern access track.

Figure 2. Areas of retained habitat



3.1.2 The areas of habitat to be retained, as shown in Figure 2, are classed as 'biodiversity protection zones'. Biodiversity present within the buildings (i.e. roosting bats and nesting birds) is located outside these zones and is considered separately.

4. Ecologically Sensitive Working Practices

Biodiversity protection zone fencing

- 4.1.1 The biodiversity protection zones are to be fenced off from the development areas. The fencing should be placed taking account of British Standard 5837 (2012): Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction, to ensure that root protection zones are fenced around retained trees. Fencing is to be installed in accordance with the areas shown in Figure 2; the fencing is intended to prevent access to construction vehicles and staff. This fencing may either comprise permanent post and rail fencing, or Heras fencing. This fencing should remain in place for the duration of the construction scheme.
- 4.1.2 Construction staff are to be instructed not to enter the fenced sections of the site without prior agreement from the site foreman. Any works, other than foot access or non-intrusive survey works, are to be undertaken only following agreement with the project ecologists (Middleton Bell Ecology). Signs should be fitted to fencing stating that no access is permitted to these fenced biodiversity protection zones without prior agreement from the project ecologists.
- 4.1.3 New landscaping is to be installed and managed in accordance with the Landscape Masterplan (Appendix 1) and Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan (Middleton Bell Ecology, 2025). These details are not repeated in this document.

Plate 1. Tree Protection Fencing



Nesting birds

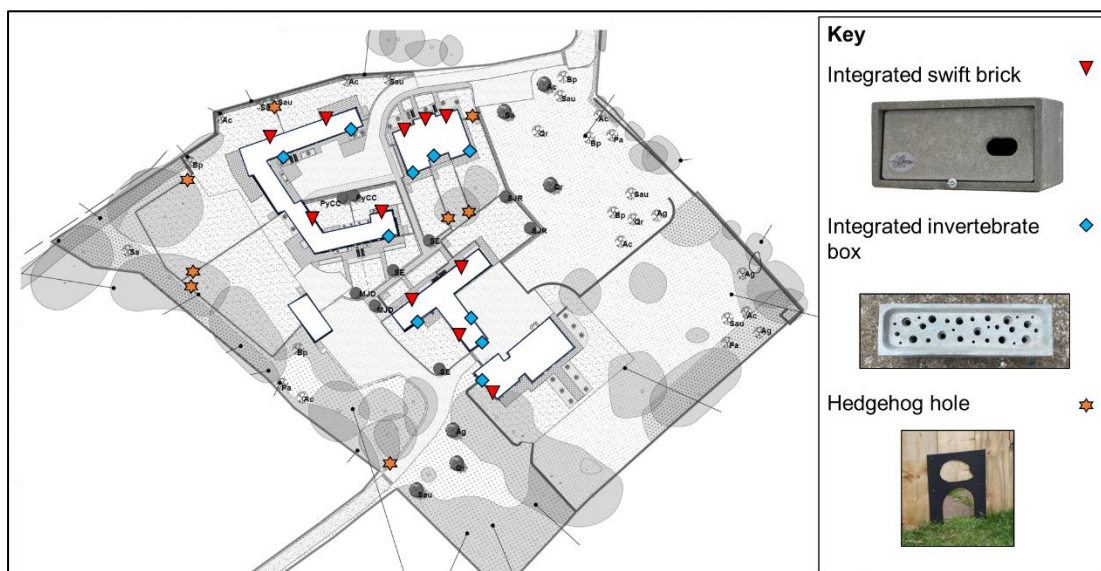
Vegetation

- 4.1.4 Any required vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside the main bird nesting period (March to August, inclusive), if at all possible. If elements of the clearance works are required during the nesting bird season, then they will be preceded by a nesting bird check, to be undertaken by an ecologist within 48 hours of clearance works.

Buildings

- 4.1.5 Site buildings have been shown to be used for nesting by a variety of species, including historically by barn owl *Tyto alba*.
- 4.1.6 A barn owl compensation strategy has been written for the development (Middleton Bell Ecology, 2024). This document stipulates that within 48 hours of construction works commencing on each site building, and regardless of time of year, an update barn owl inspection will be undertaken by a licensed barn owl surveyor. A strict requirement to avoid the main barn owl breeding period (March-August) was not considered necessary given the apparent absence of breeding barn owl from site in recent years.
- 4.1.7 If building re-development works commence during the main bird nesting period (March-August) then the pre-commencement barn owl survey undertaken by the ecologist upon each building should be extended to comprise full nesting bird checks. If evidence of active bird nest/s is recorded, then an exclusion area appropriate to the species in question, should be set up and monitored until the chicks have fledged, or the nest has been abandoned/failed. Works on any building found to support a barn owl nest must cease until the chicks have fledged, or the nest has been abandoned/failed, in order to prevent disturbance of the nest.
- 4.1.8 New nesting provision for barn owl is detailed in the barn owl compensation strategy (Middleton Bell Ecology, 2024). In order to enhance provision for other nesting birds, one swift *Apus apus* box is to be included within each new dwelling, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Swift box, invertebrate box and hedgehog hole locations

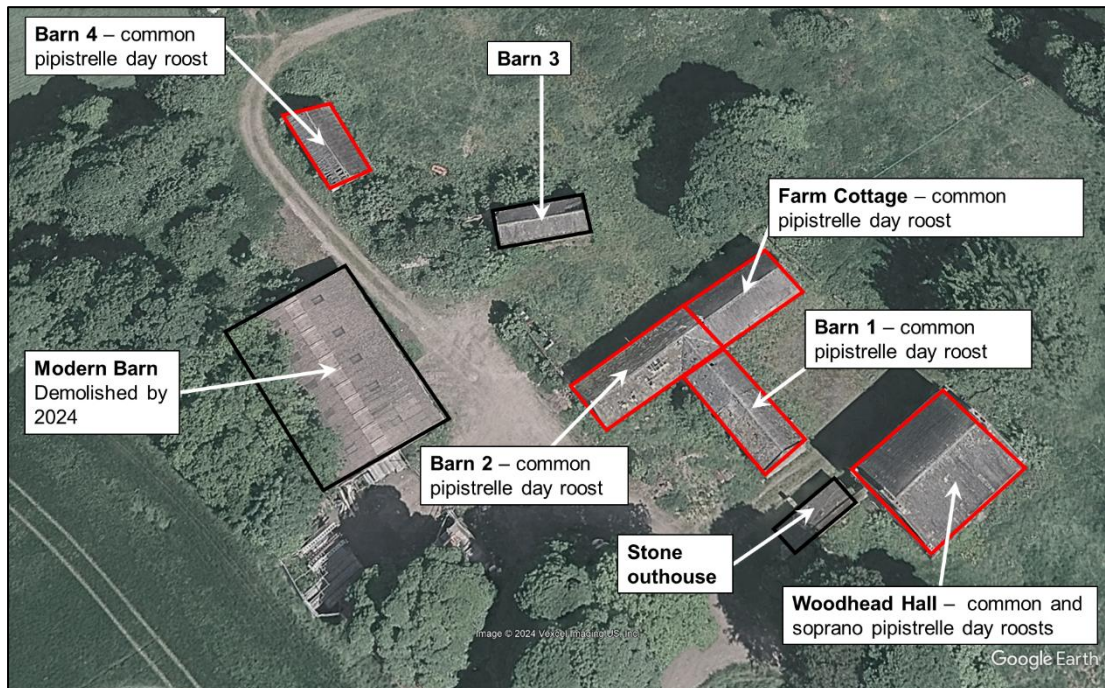


Bats

Roosting

- 4.1.9 Roosting bats have been recorded using Barn 1, Barn 2, Barn 4, the Farm Cottage and Woodhead Hall (Figure 3). Consequently, works may not proceed on these buildings until a bat mitigation licence has been obtained for the development. Plans are in place to register the site on the Earned Recognition licence, following the discharge of nature conservation related planning conditions.
- 4.1.10 Given that site buildings display some suitability for use by roosting bats during the winter, licensable works (notably roof strips) may not commence during the peak hibernation period (December to February). Given the apparent absence of maternity roosts from the site then providing the safeguards detailed below are followed, licensable works may proceed at any other time of year.
- 4.1.11 Prior to works commencing on roost buildings all construction staff should receive a toolbox talk from a licensed bat ecologist. A copy of this talk is included in Appendix 2 of this document. As the first stage of renovation works, following the toolbox talk, known and potential roost sites on each building should either be stripped under the supervision of the ecologist, or excluded using one-way exclusion devices. Once known and potential roost sites have been stripped or excluded, then the ecologist will hand the building over to construction staff who can proceed with renovation according to their chosen method. New bat roost mitigation will be installed as detailed in Figure 4.

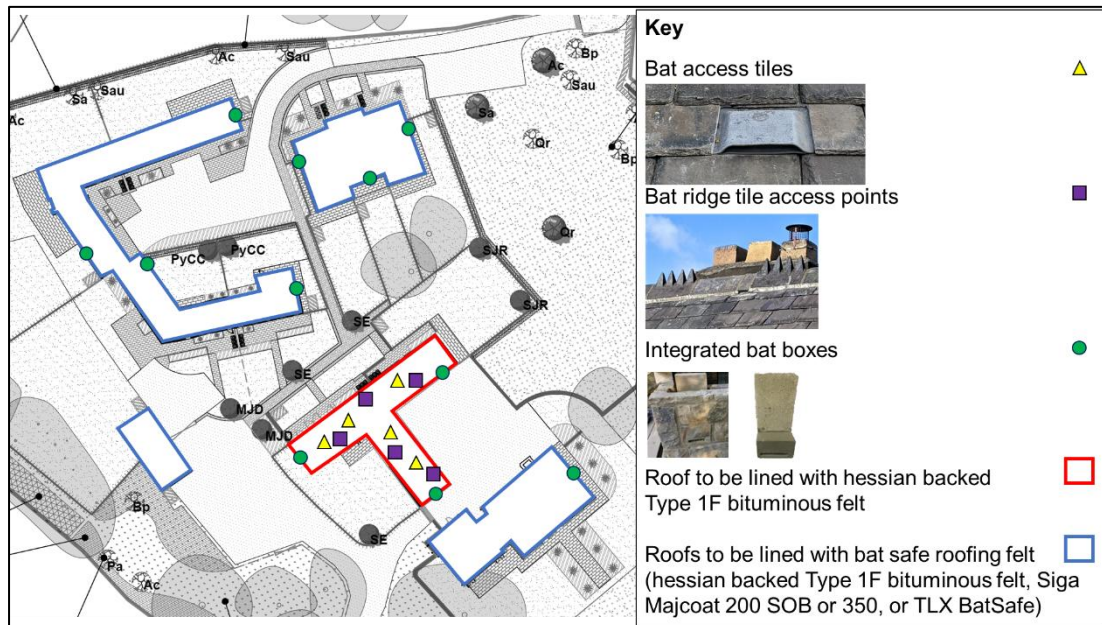
Figure 3. Bat roost plan, with red outlines indicating roost buildings



4.1.12 In order to avoid temporary lighting impacts upon foraging and commuting bats, any new external site lighting, erected during the construction period, should only be illuminated when the site is in active use. Security lighting on storage areas should be subject to proximity sensor timed illumination only. Any new site lighting is to be low height, directional and pointing downwards and preferably a warm white in colour.

4.1.13 An ecologically sensitive lighting plan for the development, required to inform the discharge of Condition 24, is currently being developed but is not yet complete.

Figure 4. Bat roost mitigation plan



5. Responsibilities

5.1.1 The client Thomas Daley of Thomas Daley Homes Ltd will be ultimately responsible for the delivery of the measures identified in this document outside of the period when the ecologist (Robert Bell of Middleton Bell Ecology) is physically on site. The ecologist is however available to discuss the development and can typically attend site within one week of a request being made.

5.1.2 The ecologist will attend site to undertake pre-commencement barn owl survey and if necessary a full nesting bird check within 48 hours of works commencing. In addition, the ecologist will be on site to oversee licensable works on Barn 1, Barn 2, Barn 4, the Farm Cottage and Woodhead Hall. A log will record all visits by the ecologist and pertinent findings will be passed on verbally to the foreman and by email to the client.

5.1.3 Prior to occupation of the new dwellings, installed invertebrate boxes, hedgehog holes, swift boxes and bat roost features will be signed off by the ecologist.

6. References

Enzygo (2023) Woodhead Hall Farm – Ecological Impact Assessment. Enzygo Ltd.

Middleton Bell Ecology (2024) Woodhead Hall Farm, Platts Common – Barn Owl Compensation Strategy. Middleton Bell Ecology.

Middleton Bell Ecology (2025) Woodhead Hall Farm, Platts Common – Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan. Middleton Bell Ecology.

PWP Design Ltd. (2024) Woodhead Hall Farm – Landscape Management Plan. PWP Design Ltd.

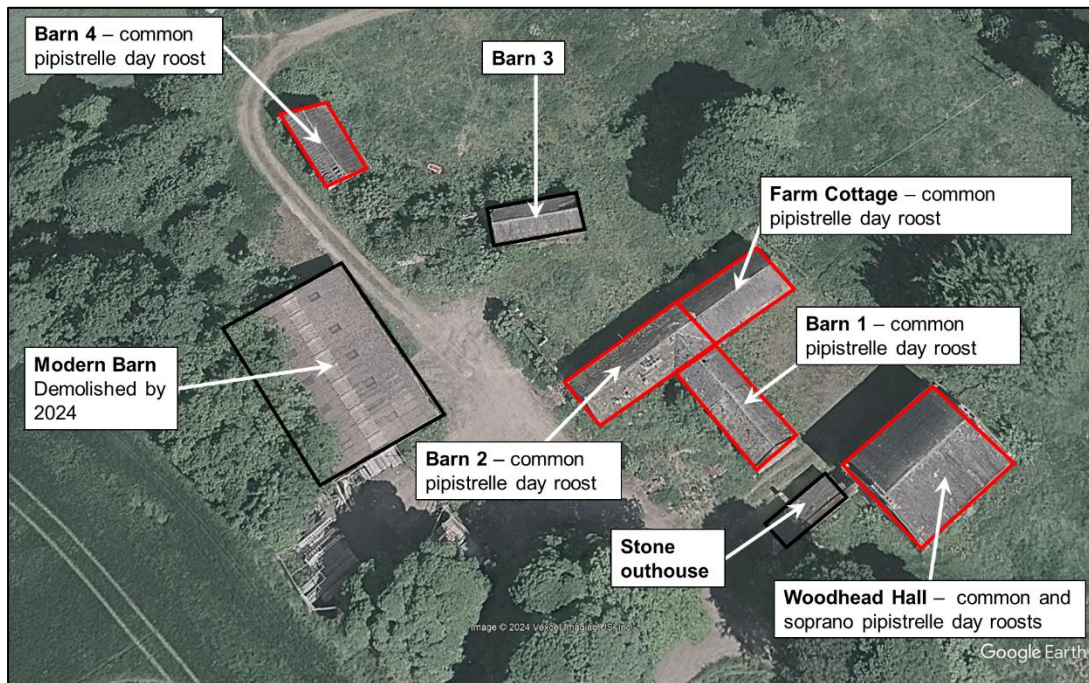
Appendix 1. Landscape Masterplan

Appendix 2. Toolbox Talk

TOOLBOX TALK NOTES – WOODHEAD HALL FARM

- Woodhead Hall Farm supports numerous common and soprano pipistrelle day roosts, located across five of the buildings, as shown in Figure A2.1

Figure A2.1. Bat roost locations



- The site is to be registered on the Earned Recognition bat licence to permit impacts to permit destruction of site roosts. No works are permitted to Barns 1, 2, 4 or the Farm Cottage or Woodhead Hall, until this licence is in place.
- Once the licence is in place, then the ecologist will either oversee the roof strips and capture of any bats present from roost locations, or undertaken the exclusion of these roost locations using one-way devices. Any captured bats will be moved by the ecologist to a tree mounted release box/boxes. Such works cannot be undertaken during the peak winter period (December – February). The ecologist will confirm once each building is expected to be clear of roosting bats.
- Outside of a bat licence, it is illegal to deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat, with bats also protected from deliberate or reckless disturbance and from deliberate or reckless damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place (roost). Disturbing a bat roost can lead to unlimited fines, up to six months in prison and seizing of items used to commit the offence, e.g. vehicles, plant or machinery.
- If bats are recorded at a time that an ecologist is not present on site, then all works in the surrounding area should cease and a licensed bat worker should be contacted immediately (Robert Bell – 07816 328926).
- Several species of bat in the UK has been shown to occasionally carry rabies. For this reason, and to avoid injuring the bats, construction staff should not handle bats.

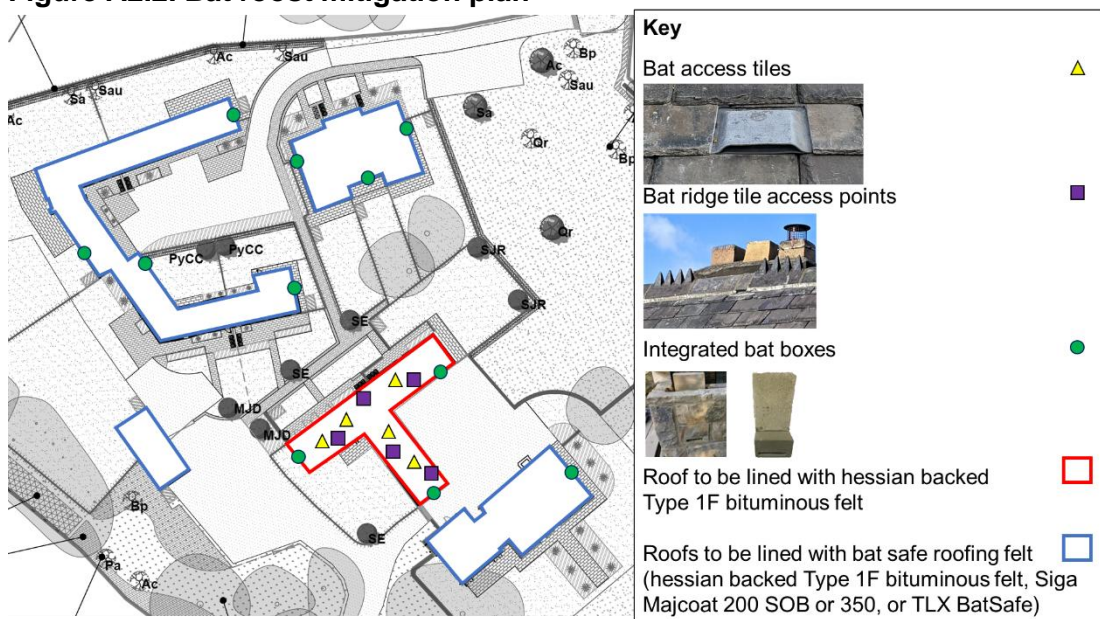
- UK bats are very small animals and the bodies of the smallest bats are able to fit inside a match box. Several species of UK bat are able to conceal themselves in gaps and crevices little wider than 1 cm.

Plate A2.1. Image shows a pipistrelle bat approximately 5cm in length



- Bat droppings appear similar in size and shape to mouse droppings, but if rolled between your thumb and forefinger will crumble to dust, unlike mouse droppings.
- Any material with potential to form a crevice should be removed by hand with care. Where possible, suitable crevices/features should be searched using a torch prior to removal. All material concealing an enclosed crevice/void should be lifted in such a way as to avoid crushing any animals underneath. If bat droppings are encountered during stripping works then all works in the surrounding area should cease and the licensed bat worker should be contacted.

Figure A2.2. Bat roost mitigation plan



- A key requirement of the bat licence is that only either hessian backed Type 1F bituminous felt, TLX BatSafe or Siga Majcoat 200 SOB or 350 membrane are to be used during roofing of site buildings. Only hessian backed Type 1F bituminous felt can

