BAT SURVEY REPORT

Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Station Road, Bolton Upon Dearne, Rotherham

Produced by: Protected Species Surveys
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Client: Clay Architectural Designs Ltd

Location: **Station Road, Bolton Upon Dearne, Rotherham**
Date: January 2023 (Rev A)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Protected Species Surveys was instructed by Clay Architectural Designs Ltd to conduct a building assessment of a former church building, station road, Bolton Upon Dearne, Rotherham, South Yorkshire. The preliminary building assessment was undertaken on 29th August 2022 with subsequent nocturnal survey completed on the same date.

1.2 All works were undertaken by Craig Greenwell, being a licensed bat worker for over 12 years (Ref: 2015-10587-CLS-CLS) and 14 years' experience in the field of Ecological Consultancy along with assistant bat worker with over eight years of ecological experience and licensed level 1 bat worker (Ref: 2021-51397-CLS-CLS).

1.3 The former church is situated within the centre of Bolton Upon Dearne with access to the building via station road and priory road set within a heavily urbanised environment. The site is bordered on all aspects by residential houses with agricultural land to the east and west and around the village leading to the wider area set within a rural landscape. The site is located north of Rotherham town and centred on grid reference SE45380271 (Figure 1).

Site Proposals

1.4 Current proposals comprise the demolition of the building to facilitate redevelopment of the site.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

2.1 In order to compile existing baseline information, relevant ecological information was sought from South Yorkshire Bat Group with a search radius of 1km from the site boundary.

External / Internal Building Assessment

2.2 The internal / external building assessment was undertaken on 29th August 2022 to search for potential bat access points and evidence of bat activity in accordance with BCT, 2016[1].

2.1 A licensed bat worker from Protected Species Surveys (Natural England Licence Number: 2021-51397-CLS-CLS) with over eight years'

[1] Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn). Bat Conservation Trust, London.

experience as a bat worker who completed the building assessment of all buildings affected by the proposals within the site boundary.

2.2 The external elevations of the buildings were assessed for features that could provide suitable access points for bats. Such features comprise:

- small gaps at the eaves;
- gaps underneath over lapping asbestos roof sheeting;
- gaps under lifted and raised flashings;
- gaps in stonework and masonry where degradation of mortar has occurred.
- gaps around or over the top of doors;
- gaps at broken or missing windows;
- gaps around wall ventilation points;

2.3 The internal building survey was focused on roof timbers and other cavities where bats could potentially roost. During the survey the evidence of current or previous occupation by bats was sought. Such evidence comprised:

- the presence of dead or live bats;
- concentrated piles or scattered bat droppings;
- food remains such as insect wing fragments;
- urine staining on woodwork, stored items or pipe work.

2.4 Where access to potential access points was possible a full inspection using an endoscope was completed to identify current or previous evidence of use such as the physical presence of bats or bat droppings. Indicators that potential access points had not recently been used included the presence of cobwebs and general detritus within the access. From this, features of likely / potential value for bats can be broadly identified and a decision made over the selection of locations for more detailed work if required.

Nocturnal Survey

2.6 A single dusk nocturnal survey was completed by experienced ecologists including a licensed bat worker (Ref: 2021-51397-CLS-CLS and 2015-10587-CLS-CLS). During the survey two surveyors were positioned such that all aspects of the building were covered. The dusk emergence survey started approximately 15 minutes before sunset and finished at least 90 minutes after sunset.

2.7 During the nocturnal survey, the location and species of any bat observed emerging from / returning to the building was recorded and,

the level of activity within the vicinity was also recorded. To aid species identification ultrasonic bat detectors (Bat Box Duet) were used.

2.8 The survey was conducted in appropriate conditions, i.e. ambient temperature above 10°C with little wind and no rain.

2.9 This methodology takes into account the statutory guidance from English Nature[2] (now Natural England) and further guidelines introduced by the Bat Conservation Trust[3] (BCT).

- Dusk Survey 29th August 2022 – 19:47 – 21:32 (sunset 20:02) 17°C, no rain, 0% cloud and no wind.

Birds

2.11 During the survey evidence of current or previous usage of the building by other avifauna was also sought. Evidence sought included the presence of active or redundant nests in the building.

3.0 RESULTS

Desk Study

3.1 The results of the consultation search from South Yorkshire Bat Group identified four bat records within 1km of the site boundary. Two of the records comprised unidentified *Pipistrellus spp.* as a result of bat carer visits for juvenile bast 510m west and 680m north of the application site. Two records of common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* were recorded 200m and 650m north-east of the application site although no other information was provided for the records.

Building Assessment

3.2 The building (former church) comprised a one and two-storey, brick-built former modern church with a pitched clay tiled roof and clay ridge tiles (Photo 1). Other structural features of note comprised of four single-storey, brick-built adjoining annex sections with flat felted roofs on the eastern aspect of the building. Four dormer windows were present, two on the eastern aspect and two on the western aspect.

3.3 Potential bat access points were observed via gaps around the dormer window on the eastern aspect and beneath the clay ridge tiles.

[2] Jones AJ (2004) Bat Mitigation Guidelines, English Nature

[3] Hundt L (2012) Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd edition, Bat Conservation Trust

Photo 1: External view of building

3.4 Internally the roof was open to the ridge with a small, enclosed roof void present (Photo 2). The roof void was enclosed and boarded up with sarking boarding and spray foam insulation. No internal / external evidence of use by bats was identified during the survey. The

3.5 building was considered to offer **low** potential to support roosting

bats.

Photo 2: Interior view showing roof void open to the ridge

3.6 A timber framed shed was present within the site boundary situated within the north-eastern corner of the application site. The building was in good condition and constructed of a single layer of timber panelling with a shallow single-skinned, pitched sheet metal corrugated sheet roof (Plate 3). The timber shed did not provide any suitable bat roosting features and was considered to offer **negligible** potential to support roosting bats.

Photo 3: View of timber shed within the grounds of the application site.

Nocturnal Survey

Dusk Survey 29th August 2022 (Figure 2)

3.7 During the survey, the first bat recorded was a common pipistrelle commuting along the eastern aspect of the former church building entering the survey area from the south-east heading away from the building at 20:13. The next observation was also a common pipistrelle commuting over the survey area heading in an easterly direction at 20:34. Bat activity was largely dominated by common pipistrelle commuting through the survey area from adjacent gardens. A single noctule *Nyctalus noctula* was recorded commuting high over the survey area at 21:01. No bats were observed emerging or entering any of the on-site building (former church).

Birds

3.8 During the survey evidence of current or previous usage of the building by other avifauna was also sought. No evidence of nesting birds was observed.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Site Proposals

4.1 Current proposals comprise the demolition the former church building and shed to facilitate redevelopment of the site.

Bats

4.2 All species of bats are listed on the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 making it illegal to deliberately disturb any such animal or damage / destroy a breeding site or roosting place of any such animal. Bats are also afforded full legal protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is illegal to recklessly or intentionally kill, injure or take a species of bat or recklessly or intentionally damage or obstruct access to or destroy any place of shelter or protection or disturb any animal whilst they are occupying such a place of shelter or protection.

4.3 The timber shed located within the north-eastern corner of the site was considered to offer negligible potential to support roosting bats. Therefore, bats are not an ecological constraint to the demolition of this structure.

4.4 The building assessment considered the former church building to offer low potential to support roosting bats. Therefore, in accordance with industry guidelines (BCT, 2016) a single nocturnal bat survey was carried out to determine the presence / absence of roosting bats. During the nocturnal survey period no bats were observed emerging or returning to the building. Bat activity was dominated by common pipistrelle commuting through the survey with occasional noctule commuting high over the site. No bats were observed emerging or entering the former church building.

4.5 From the results of the completed survey work it has been concluded bats are not a statutory constraint to the proposed works.

4.6 In the event works have not commenced within 12 months of the nocturnal survey, it is recommended that an updated nocturnal survey is undertaken to determine the current status of the site in terms of bats.

4.7 In the unlikely event that evidence of bat occupation or live bats are discovered during any stage of works, all works must stop immediately, and further advice should be sought from Protected Species Surveys.

Birds

4.8 During the internal building assessment, no evidence of active bird nests was recorded. As such the presence of nesting birds is not a statutory constraint to the proposed demolition works.

In the unlikely event bird nests are confirmed prior to, or during works all works should stop and further advice sought.

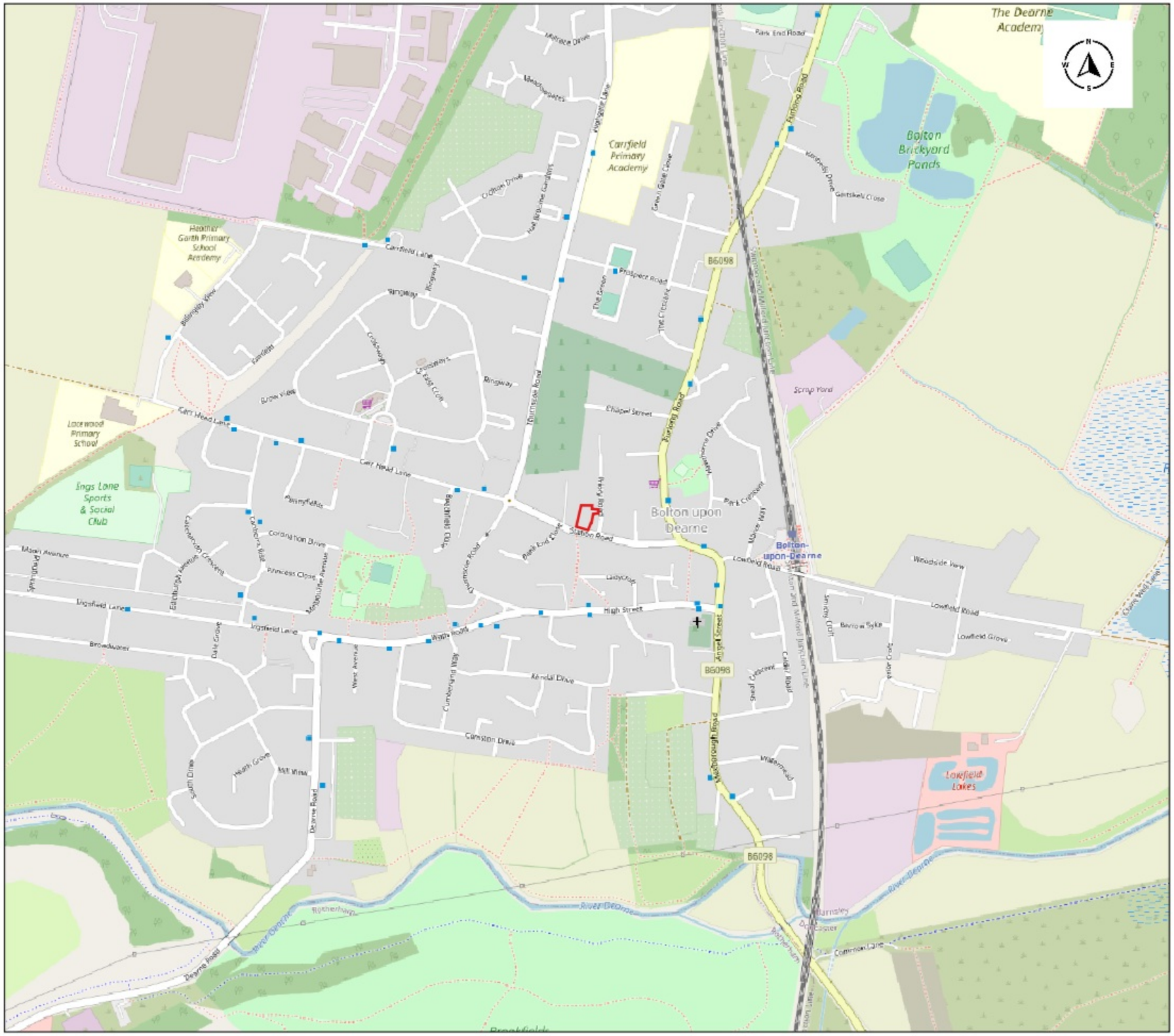
Figure 1 - Site Location Plan

Client: Clay Architectural Designs Ltd

Site Location: former church building, station road, Bolton Upon Dearne, Rotherham, South Yorkshire

Key:

Site Boundary



Scale: 1:1

Date: 25/09/2022

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0 100 200 m

Figure 2 - Phase 1 Habitat Plan

Client: Clay Architectural Designs Ltd

Site Location: former church building, station road, Bolton Upon Dearne, Rotherham, South Yorkshire

Key:

- Site Boundary

Phase 1 Habitats

- Buildings(Former Church)
- Built Environment: Buildings/hardstanding
- Cultivated/disturbed land - amenity grassland
- Annex Buildings
- Surveyor locations

Scale: 1:1

Date: 25/09/2022

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0 7.5 15 m