

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.  
Ecological Consultants.**

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**23A HACKINGS AVENUE, CUBLEY.**

**OS REF: SE 24405 02152.**

**PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT.**

**Ref No: 241202.**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024.**

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# **1. INTRODUCTION.**

1.1. An application is being submitted to convert 23A Hackings Avenue, Cubley from a workshop/storage building into a residential dwelling.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd has therefore been commissioned to carry out a preliminary roost assessment to support the application. A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) was carried out of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) assessment was carried out by Whitcher Wildlife Ltd on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

1.4. Appendices I and III of this report provides additional information on protected species and the protection afforded to them and is designed to assist the reader in understanding the contents of this report.

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## 2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. The buildings were thoroughly checked internally and externally for potential bat roosting sites by looking for the following signs: -

- \* Holes, cracks or crevices.
- \* Bat droppings.
- \* Prey remains.
- \* Staining on external walls.

2.2. Unless otherwise stated, all lofts were accessed and inspected using a high-powered torch and where necessary an endoscope.

2.3. A thorough external inspection was carried out from ground level for any gaps or openings in the roof and ridge tiles, behind soffits and fascia's and in the walls of the structure for suitable roost access points and field signs to indicate possible use by bats.

2.4. All windowsills, walls and the ground around the structure were checked for signs of bat droppings or staining to indicate possible use by bats. Where necessary, ladders were utilised to gain access within the limits of health and safety.

Any access constraints encountered are outlined within the following report.

2.5. The PRA was carried out in line with Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4<sup>th</sup> edition)*, with an assessment of the buildings suitability for roosting bats made in accordance with these guidelines.

2.6. A dusk emergence survey was not carried out during this survey as it was carried out outside the bat activity season.

2.7. The survey was carried out by James Campbell MCIEEM. Since 2003 James has had experience in a professional capacity as a Wildlife Consultant carrying out Ecology Surveys and Phase 1 Habitat surveys and is a full member of CIEEM. James holds numerous licences with several licensing bodies including:-

- Natural England Survey Licences in respect of bats, great crested newts, water voles, badger class licence, white clawed crayfish and barn owls.
- Nature Scotland Licences in respect of bats and great crested newts.
- Natural Resources Wales Licences in respect of bats and great crested newts.

He has also successfully completed numerous courses run by CIEEM, BCT and FSC regarding protected species and in carrying out Phase 1 Habitat surveys. He is also confined spaces trained and qualified to NVQ Level 2 in tree climbing and aerial rescue.

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### **3. SURVEY RESULTS.**

#### **3.1. Data Search Results.**

3.1.1. A data search request was submitted to South Yorkshire Bat Group for records of bats and bat roosts within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.2. The results show a number of bat records. The most relevant of these is a record of a bat roost within a building in Cubley 0.7km from the survey area. This record is dated 2018, and therefore cannot be relied upon to represent the current status of the roost. No other information is provided on this roost.

3.1.3. There are various field records of bats, including pipistrelle species, noctule and myotis, whiskered/Brandts and Leisler's. However, none of these were relevant to the survey area.

3.1.4. A copy of the data search results can be provided to the client upon request but should not be placed into the public domain.

#### **3.2. Site Description.**

3.2.1. The site was located to the south of Penistone in the village of Cubley. The property was in an area of dense residential buildings. In the wider area there were open fields and areas of woodland. The only connective habitats to the building are a line of trees to the north and private gardens to the south but these are of a lesser value.

3.2.2. The aerial photograph below shows the location of the survey area indicated by the red arrow, and the surrounding landscape.



3.2.3. The survey area comprises a small workshop/storage building. The building was located at the bottom of several gardens. The aerial photograph below shows the surveyed building outlined in red.

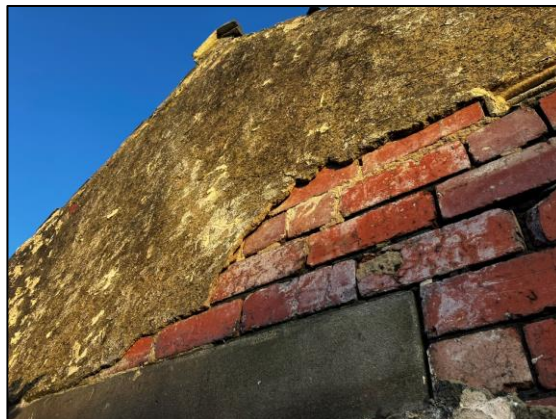


### 3.3. Preliminary Roost Assessment.

3.3.1. The storage building was a single storey building utilised as a workshop/storage. Internal and external aspects of the building are shown in the photographs below.



3.3.2. The building was constructed from brick, the majority of which were externally rendered most of which is tight fitting with some areas cracking and missing. However, these will not provide suitable roosting opportunity for roosting bats. The photograph below shows an area of the missing rendering.



3.3.3. All the windows and doors were generally tight fitting and were normally closed. These areas will not generally provide a suitable roosting opportunity for bats. However, there was a small gap around the door as it does not fit flush to the frame. This could provide access into the building for roosting bats during the summer months.

3.3.4. The roof was pitched, covered with blue slate, ridge tiles and no lining internally, however it was back pointed. Some of the slates were damaged but were only split in half providing no access into the building for roosting bats.

3.3.5. The northern and southern gable ends are both tightly pointed, and both have four air vents. However, these were extremely small, providing no access into the building for bats.

3.3.6. The wooden gutter on the eastern and western elevations was held up on brick corbels and the slate was tight to the eaves providing no gaps suitable for roosting bats.

3.3.7. Internally, the building was completely open to the underside of the roof. The building was generally well sealed with very little opportunity for bats to access inside.

3.3.8. There was limited roosting potential for bats inside the building, and a thorough search throughout the building did not find any evidence of bats. It is unlikely that bats utilise the inside of the building.

3.3.9. Taking into consideration the construction of the building and low suitability of any roosting features as well as the limited connective habitats to and from the building, the building was assessed to provide a **low potential for summer roosting bats**.

3.3.10. There were no features in the building of sufficient depth or nature that will provide any suitability for hibernating bats, and the internal conditions are unsuitable for hibernating bats due to the usage and condition of the building and therefore is assessed as **negligible potential for hibernating bats**.

3.3.12. There was a low potential for birds to nest in the building. No bird activity was observed during this survey as it was carried out outside the nesting bird season.

3.3.13. A cotoneaster plant was identified growing up the western wall of the building. Cotoneaster is a Schedule 9 invasive plant species listed on the schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). The photograph below shows the plant.



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## **4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.**

4.1. The building was assessed to provide low potential for summer roosting bats and therefore any works could have a high impact on roosting bats. Therefore, a further dusk emergence survey will need to be carried out prior to any works commencing.

4.2. The building was assessed as providing negligible potential for hibernating bats, therefore the any works to the building will have no impact on any bat hibernation roosts.

4.3. There is poor habitat connectivity to and from the site for bats, which make it low value for foraging and habitat for bats. Therefore, the proposals will have no impact on foraging or commuting bats.

4.4. There is a low potential for birds to nest in the building. The nesting bird season extends from March to August each year. Any works carried out during the nesting season could have a high impact on nesting birds.

4.5. The cotoneaster growing on the western elevation of the building is a Schedule 9 invasive plant species listed on the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). If the works are carried out without precautions, there could be a high impact on the plant and could cause the plant to spread. Therefore, suitable precautions should be followed to avoid spreading the plant during the proposed works.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. As the building provides a low potential for roosting bats and it is recommended that a bat dusk emergence survey should be carried out during the bat activity season, which extends from May to August. This survey will need to be carried out prior to any works commencing. If a bat roost is identified there will be a requirement for additional surveys and a licence.

5.2. It is recommended that any works to the building are carried out outside of the nesting bird season which extends from March to August or should be immediately preceded by a nesting bird survey. If any active nests are found, no works should be carried out that will disturb the nest or prevent the birds from accessing to and from the nest.

5.3. It is recommended that several bird boxes are erected around the site where possible to mitigate for the loss of the bird nesting potential and a bat box in a suitable location on the building or on a nearby tree.

5.4. As a cotoneaster plant has been identified during this survey the following precautions should be implemented during the proposed works. All soil within 2m of the plant, as well as the plant itself should be treated as controlled waste and bagged and suitably disposed of. Any tools and boots used in this area should be sprayed off in a suitable location to stop the contamination of the rest of the site.

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|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Prepared by:           |                                       |
| James Campbell MCIEEM. | Date: 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2024. |

|                           |                                       |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Checked by:               |                                       |
| Ruth Georgiou BSc MCIEEM. | Date: 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2024. |

## 6. REFERENCES.

CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Collins J. (ed.) 2023. *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologist: Good Practice Guidelines (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023) *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough. *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006* Available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/579/contents/made> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

*The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019* Available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/579/contents/made> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

*The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69> (Accessed: 15/04/2024).

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## **Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.**

### ***Ecology***

There are currently 18 species of bat residing in Britain, 17 of which of which are known to breed here. They are extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

All appear to be diminishing in numbers, probably due to habitat change and shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet.

As their diet consists solely of insects, bats hibernate during the winter when their food source is at its most scarce. They will spend the winter in hollow trees, caves, mines and the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly the pipistrelle (the commonest and most widespread British bat) can quickly adapt to man-made structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

### ***Surveys***

During walkover surveys, bat roosts can be identified by looking for:

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices within any building, tree or other structure.
- Bat droppings along walls, window cills, or on the ground.
- Prey remains, such as insect wings.

Further investigations can be made using endoscopes, by carrying out aerial inspections of trees or by conducting bat activity surveys during dusk and dawn over summer months.

### ***Legislation***

Bats are protected under Appendix II and III of the Bern Convention (1982), Schedule 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (some species under Annex II), Annex II of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) and EUROBATS agreement. Numerous species are also listed

under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) making them species of principal importance.

All bats and their roosts are therefore protected in the UK. This makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any bat, to interfere with any place used for shelter or protection, or to intentionally disturb any animal occupying such a place.

The UK has designated maternity and hibernacula areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) under the Habitats Directive. Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan also includes action for a number of bat species and the habitats which support them.

Where development proposals are likely to affect a bat roost site, a licence is required from Natural England.

## **Appendix II. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.**

### ***Ecology***

The nesting season will vary according to the weather each year but generally commences in March, peaks during May and June and continues until September. It is also worth remembering that some birds nest in trees and scrub, but others are ground nesting or prefer man-made structures or buildings.

### ***Surveys***

Nesting bird surveys search for potential nest sites in vegetation, buildings etc. Potential nesting sites are observed over a suitable period of time for bird movements or calling male birds that would indicate the presence of a nest. The presence of a nest can be identified from the field signs without the necessity to see the nest itself, thereby avoiding any disturbance of the nests. The best way to avoid this issue is to plan for vegetation clearance to be carried out outside the bird-nesting season.

### ***Legislation***

Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part 1. -(1) Of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - kills, injures or takes any wild bird; takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Part 1. -(5) of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturbs young of such a bird, he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the above by inserting after “intentionally” the words “or recklessly”.

## Appendix III. INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES INFORMATION.

### *Ecology*

The Government has acknowledged the problems that can be caused by non-native invasive species. In 2008 the Government launched “The Invasive Non-Native Species Framework Strategy for Great Britain”. The strategy provides a framework for a more co-ordinated approach to invasive species management. It seeks to create a stronger sense of shared responsibility across government, key organisations, land managers and the public.

The Non-Native Species Secretariat has been established to oversee the implementation of the strategy. Details of the secretariat including risk assessments and action plans for some species are available at [www.nonnativespecies.org](http://www.nonnativespecies.org).

In general, there are four basic methods of controlling weeds; mechanical, chemical, natural and environmental.

- ***Mechanical control*** includes cultivation, hoeing, pulling, cutting, raking, dredging or other methods to uproot or cut weeds.  
*Where this method is used all plant material must be considered “controlled waste” and must be disposed of properly.*
- ***Chemical control*** uses approved herbicides.
- ***Natural control*** uses pests and diseases of the target weed to weaken it and prevent it from becoming a nuisance.
- ***Environmental control*** works by altering the environment to make it less suitable for weed growth, for example by increasing or decreasing water velocity.

### *Surveys*

A site will be searched for invasive plant species growing on site, from mature plants to new shoots. A site will also be searched for dead stems indicating that plants that may have seasonally died back are present.

### *Legislation*

Invasive species listed under Schedule 9 are prohibited from release into the wild. Schedule 9, Section 14(2) prohibits ‘planting’ or ‘causing to grow’ in the wild of any plant listed in Part 2 of Schedule 9.

The following is a list of all the species of plant listed under Schedule 9 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

| <b>Common Name</b>              | <b>Scientific Name</b>                                    | <b>England &amp; Wales</b> | <b>Scotland</b> |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Alexanders, Perfoliate          | <i>Smyrniurn perfoliatum</i>                              | ✓                          |                 |
| Algae, Red                      | <i>Grateloupia luxurians</i>                              | ✓                          |                 |
| Archangel, Variegated<br>Yellow | <i>Lamiastrum galeobdolon</i> subsp.<br><i>Argentatum</i> | ✓                          |                 |
| Azalea, Yellow                  | <i>Rhododendron luteum</i>                                | ✓                          |                 |
| Balsam, Himalayan               | <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>                             | ✓                          |                 |
| Carolina Water-shield           | <i>Cabomba caroliniana</i>                                | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Cotoneaster                     | <i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>                           | ✓                          |                 |
| Cotoneaster, Entire Leaved      | <i>Cotoneaster integrifolius</i>                          | ✓                          |                 |
| Cotoneaster, Himalayan          | <i>Cotoneaster simonsii</i>                               | ✓                          |                 |
| Cotoneaster, Hollyberry         | <i>Cotoneaster bullatus</i>                               | ✓                          |                 |
| Cotoneaster, Small Leaved       | <i>Cotoneaster microphyllus</i>                           | ✓                          |                 |
| Creeper, False Virginia         | <i>Parthenocissus inserta</i>                             | ✓                          |                 |
| Creeper, Virginia               | <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>                        | ✓                          |                 |
| Dewplant, Purple                | <i>Disphyma crassifolium</i>                              | ✓                          |                 |
| False-acacia                    | <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>                               |                            | ✓               |
| Fern, Water                     | <i>Azolla filiculoides</i>                                | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Fig, Hottentot                  | <i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>                                 | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Garlic, Few-flowered            | <i>Allium paradoxum</i>                                   | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Garlic, Three-Cornered          | <i>Allium triquetrum</i>                                  | ✓                          |                 |
| Hogweed, Giant                  | <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>                           | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Hyacinth, water                 | <i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>                               | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Kelp, Giant                     | <i>Macrocystis angustifolia</i>                           | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Kelp, Giant                     | <i>Macrocystis integrifolia</i>                           | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Kelp, Giant                     | <i>Macrocystis laevis</i>                                 | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Kelp, Giant                     | <i>Macrocystis pyrifera</i>                               | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Kelp, Japanese                  | <i>Laminaria japonica</i>                                 | ✓                          | ✓               |
| Knotweed, Giant                 | <i>Reynoutria sachalinensis</i>                           | ✓                          |                 |

|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                         |   |   |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| Knotweed, Hybrid                           | <i>Reynoutria japonica</i> x <i>Reynoutria sachalinensis</i>                                                                                                            | ✓ |   |
| Knotweed, Japanese                         | <i>Reynoutria japonica</i>                                                                                                                                              | ✓ |   |
| Knotweed, Japanese                         | <i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i>                                                                                                                                             |   | ✓ |
| Lettuce, water                             | <i>Pistia stratiotes</i>                                                                                                                                                | ✓ | ✓ |
| Montbretia                                 | <i>Crocasmia</i> x <i>crocosmiiflora</i>                                                                                                                                | ✓ |   |
| Parrot's-feather                           | <i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>                                                                                                                                           | ✓ |   |
| Pennywort, Floating                        | <i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i>                                                                                                                                        | ✓ |   |
| Pigmyweed, New Zealand                     | <i>Crassula helmsii</i>                                                                                                                                                 | ✓ | ✓ |
| Potato, Duck                               | <i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>                                                                                                                                             | ✓ |   |
| Primrose-willow, Floating                  | <i>Ludwigia peploides</i>                                                                                                                                               | ✓ |   |
| Primrose, Water                            | <i>Ludwigia grandiflora</i>                                                                                                                                             | ✓ |   |
| Rhododendron                               | <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>                                                                                                                                            | ✓ |   |
| Rhubarb, Giant                             | <i>Gunnera tinctoria</i>                                                                                                                                                | ✓ |   |
| Rose, Japanese                             | <i>Rosa rugosa</i>                                                                                                                                                      | ✓ |   |
| Salvinia, Giant                            | <i>Salvinia molesta</i>                                                                                                                                                 | ✓ | ✓ |
| Seafingers, Green                          | <i>Codium fragile</i>                                                                                                                                                   | ✓ |   |
| Seafingers, Green                          | <i>Codium fragile tomentosoides</i>                                                                                                                                     |   | ✓ |
| Seaweed, Californian Red                   | <i>Pilea californica</i>                                                                                                                                                | ✓ | ✓ |
| Seaweed, Hooked<br>Asparagus               | <i>Asparagopsis armata</i>                                                                                                                                              | ✓ | ✓ |
| Seaweed, Japanese                          | <i>Sargassum muticum</i>                                                                                                                                                | ✓ | ✓ |
| Seaweeds, Laver (except<br>native species) | <i>Porphyra</i> sp. except -<br><i>P. amethystea</i><br><i>P. leucosticta</i><br><i>P. linearis</i><br><i>P. miniata</i><br><i>P. purpurea</i><br><i>P. umbilicalis</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| Shallon                                    | <i>Gaultheria shallon</i>                                                                                                                                               |   | ✓ |
| Wakame                                     | <i>Undaria pinnatifida</i>                                                                                                                                              | ✓ | ✓ |
| Waterweed, Curly                           | <i>Lagarosiphon major</i>                                                                                                                                               | ✓ | ✓ |
| Waterweeds                                 | All species of the genus <i>Elodea</i>                                                                                                                                  | ✓ |   |