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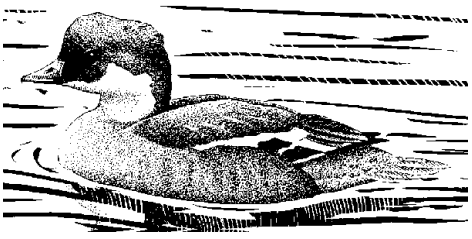
Bat Survey to
Bleachcroft Farm
Barnsley Road

Cudworth
S72 8UX

28th October 2021



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1. Summary

1.1 A bat scoping survey to the outbuildings at Bleachcroft Farm, Cudworth has been carried out to establish the likelihood of the buildings being used by roosting bats ahead of proposed conversion work. The survey was undertaken outside the optimal time for bat occupancy but still aimed to establish the likelihood of bats in the building. The application seeks permission to convert the buildings to residential dwellings.

1.2 The preliminary roost assessment survey was carried out on 28th October 2021 and established that it is unlikely that a nursery roost would be present but the building offers limited roosting opportunities that could be of potential interest to bats and therefore a method statement has been included.

1.3 The buildings are a pair of large, detached former mill buildings constructed from stone and, originally, they had a blue slate roof. The smaller building has suffered from fire damage and the larger building has undergone partial demolition leaving just the shell of the buildings and only a very small section of roofing. The stone walls are rubble filled and most of the exterior surfaces are well pointed but there are sections of internal wall that have some cracks and crevices in the stonework. Close inspection suggests that many of the cracks are shallower than they appear and are simply a result of some of the mortar falling away.

1.4 The scoping survey established that bats are not likely to be using the site as a nursery roost though individual bats could turn up from time to time but there is no evidence tosuggest this. As the roost potential is low, a method statement has been included that will create both temporary and permanent roosting features and will make contractors aware of the potential for bats to be present. The method statement will prevent potential harm to bats and increase the site’s appeal to bats by creating permanent roosting features.

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2. Introduction

2.1 A bat scoping survey was carried out to the outbuildings at Bleachcroft Farm, Barnsley Road, Cudworth S72 8UX (NGR SE380088) in accordance with the Planning Authority's request, to determine whether bats have or are using the property as a roost site.

2.2 The current proposal seeks to convert the buildings to residential dwellings.

2.3 The survey took place at a time considered to be outside the optimal period for bat occupancy, therefore, the survey aimed to establish the following:

- the likelihood of bats using the building by undertaking a scoping survey
- determine if activity surveys are required
- identify any potential roosting areas
- provide an impact assessment of the development on bats
- define mitigation proposals where required
- assess the requirement for a protected species licence.
- Assess the building for use by nesting birds

3. Methodology

3.1 The site was surveyed in accordance with BCT best practice guidelines by John Gardner, a surveyor with 40yrs field experience in searching for bats and is registered to use the Class Survey Licence WML CL20 (Level 4). The licence number is 2015-15656-CLS-CLS.

3.2 The exterior of the building was inspected during daylight using torches, binoculars and an endoscope where possible. All normal signs of bats were looked for including bats, dead baby bats, bat droppings, prey remains, scratching and staining of entry and exit holes.

3.3 The building was assessed for its degree of potential to support roosting bats including assessing the building design, construction, materials, and condition. This combined with an assessment of the location of the site and the surrounding habitat in terms of bat suitability allows an assessment to be made as to the potential of the building to support bats. Factors such as the proximity of good foraging areas (woodland, water bodies) and features that link the site to the wider surrounds such as linear features (hedgerows etc) were also considered.

3.4 This report sets out the findings of a bat scoping survey carried out to the above property on Thursday 28th October 2021. The report highlights the ecological constraints and opportunities associated with the proposed works and appraises the potential impacts. Appropriate actions to ensure the protection of bats are identified and mitigation measures detailed where appropriate.

4. Survey constraints

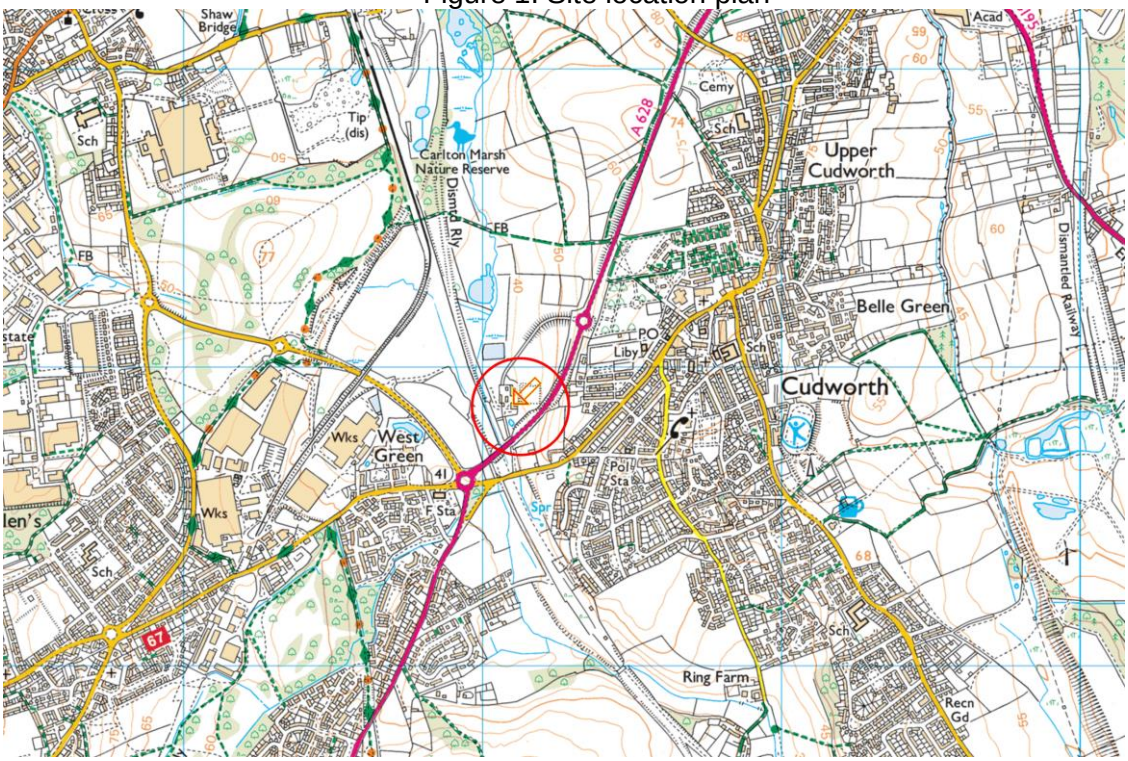
4.1 There were no constraints that would affect the overall conclusions and recommendations made herein.

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5. Site Description

5.1 The site consists of two large former mill buildings set adjacent to open pasture water and woodland. The foraging habitat on site is considered average, but the surrounding areas to the west and north offers good foraging and the local bat population is known to be healthy from other surveys in this area. The site is connected to the wider landscape by linear features.

Figure 1. Site location plan



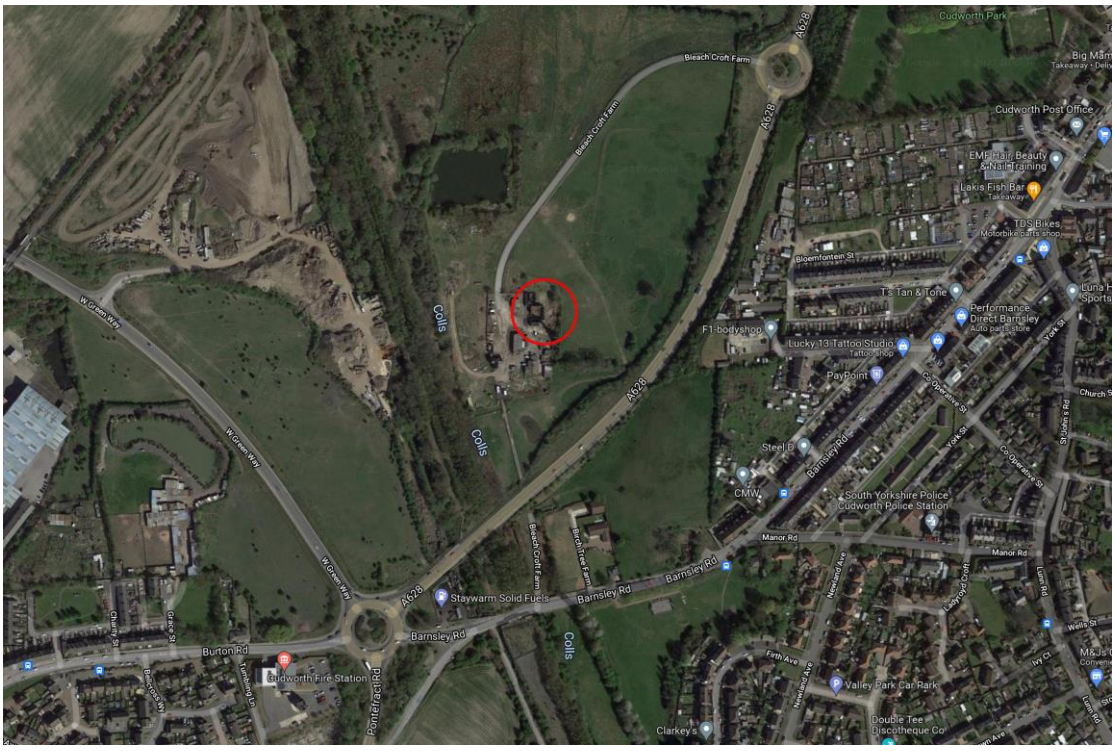


Figure 2 Aerial view of the site, surrounds and buildings surveyed

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6. Desk Study

No desk study was carried out as the building has limited value to bats and the zone of influence is such that there will be no impact beyond the site footprint. The site is both isolated and private and it is highly unlikely that any records exist for the site and most records within 2km will be simply historical records.

7. Activity surveys

7.1 No activity surveys were conducted due to the time of year and the nature of the building.

8. Survey results

The site comprises two former mill buildings joined together in an offset pattern with one being much lower in height than the other. There is very little left of the roof, and the smaller building has suffered fire damage.

The roof is entirely missing on one of the units and only a small remnant remains on the other. Of the small section remaining, some of the original blue slates are present but there is no lining and there are large gaps and missing sections. A few ridge tiles remain but the ridge is effectively open to the elements, and it is highly unlikely that bats would be able to roost there.

None of the walls have any soffits, facia or cladding that would provide interest to bats and all window casements are missing. All gable wall and wall tops are exposed to the elements including the section where the roof is still present.

The walls are constructed from stone and, externally, are reasonably sound, with much of the pointing present and a lack of structural gaps or cracks. The walls are rubble filled and do not have a cavity. Some of the internal walls, particularly the south facing internal wall of the larger of the two buildings, appears to have suitable gaps which might appeal to individual bats. Using ladders and a torch and checking as many of these gaps as possible did not show signs of use by bats. Many of what appeared to be deeper gaps, are in fact quite shallow and simply result from eroded mortar. Some cavities are considered too big to be of interest to bats as they could be easily accessed by birds and other predators; jackdaws were present on site and may nest in some of the larger cavities. Large sections of the internal walls on the smaller of the two buildings have been repointed in recent months in an attempt to stabilise the walls so there are far fewer gaps present.

Although there are superficial gaps in the stonework, the building is of low interest to bats and is unlikely to support a nursery roost.

9. Interpretation and analysis

The daytime scoping survey established the building is in an advanced state of collapse and has undergone fire damage and just the shell of the buildings remain. The smaller of the two buildings is considered to be of very limited roosting potential and regarded as being of negligible interest to bats. The larger building appears to have some cavities in sections of the south facing internal wall that could potentially support roosting bats but many of these gaps are shallow. It is unlikely that a nursery roost would be present in these buildings. There is very little left of the roof and therefore, it is highly unlikely to support ridge dwelling species. Bats are transient creatures and can turn up at any time and individuals may well use the site from time to time but it is very difficult to prove and even a single activity survey may result in a ‘snapshot’ and not record bats. Given the overall low potential, it would be more beneficial to implement a

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method statement detailing precautionary steps that would mitigate against any harm to bats or loss of potential roosting sites.

Additionally, there are other dwellings on site which offer greater roosting potential, particularly a bungalow 100m south which has a stone tiled roof and good facia and soffits.

There were no barn owls present and, though kestrels may roost occasionally, they are thought to be breeding in the large brick chimney 50m south of the site. No nesting birds were noted.

10. Impact assessment

The restoration and conversion of these buildings is unlikely to damage or destroy any bat roosts and will not cause loss or fragmentation of habitat. Incorporating permanent roosting features into the building will increase the site's appeal and potential to support roosting bats.

11. Mitigation measures

The building is not thought to support roosting bats and is considered to be of low interest to bats. Consequently, there are no requirements for an EPS licence but mitigation should be considered. By adopting the actions detailed in the method statement, impact and potential harm to bats will be minimised.

- All contractors to be made aware of the potential presence of bats, particularly when repointing. This can be in the form of a toolbox talk.
- 2x Schwegler universal bat summer roost 1FTH should be placed on the south elevation as indicated below. These should be in place before work commences on the restoration and can be removed (if required) once a permanent roost feature has been incorporated into the south gable wall (per next item).
- As the south gable wall is rebuilt, a Schwegler bat wall system 3FE should be included in the stonework as a permanent roosting feature.
- If bats are found at any time during the works, all works must cease and advice sought from a qualified ecologist.

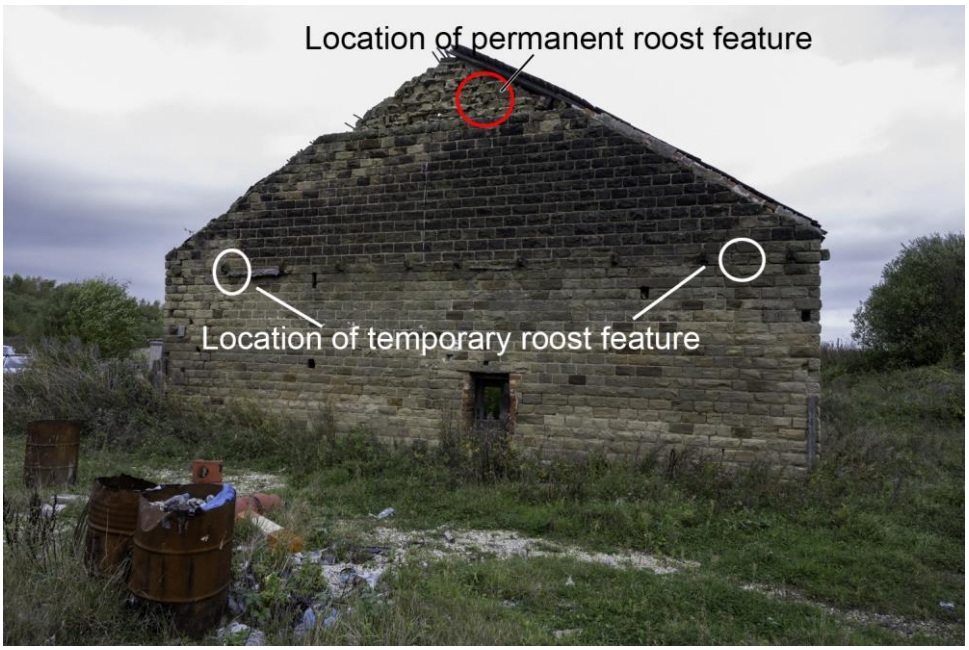


Plate 1. Location of proposed bat roost features

The application is subject to local planning control and bylaws and therefore the method statement can be conditioned as part of any permission that might be granted.

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12. Conclusion

The building has limited potential to support roosting bats and is considered to be of negligible in parts and of low interest elsewhere. Conversion of the buildings is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the local bat population and will not fragment habitat. Inclusion of permanent bat roosting features have been recommended in a method statement which will result in a significant increase in the site’s potential to support bats.

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Appendix 1: site photographs





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north elevation


east elevation


north elevation (larger building)

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east elevation

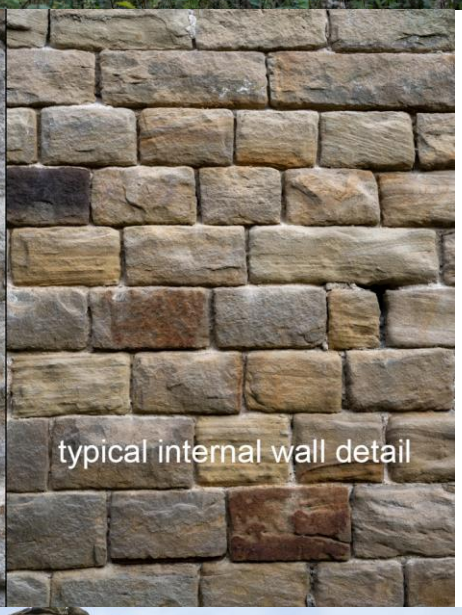

south elevation


roof interior

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south wall (internal)


rubble filled walls


typical internal wall detail


south wall internal

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remaining roof section


west elevation