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BAT PRESENCE / ABSENCE SURVEY

At

Hollin Royd Farm
Lane Head Road
Cawthorne
Barnsley
S75 4AJ

NGR: SE 26538 07299

Prepared for:	Elliot Pemberton, Five Seventy-Three Ltd
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CIEEM REGISTERED PRACTICE 2024-2025

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A bat presence / absence survey was undertaken at Hollin Royd Farm, Cawthorne by United Environmental Services (UES) Ltd in August 2024.

The objective of this survey was to establish whether or not bats are using the building on site to roost, and if so to assess the type and importance of roosts in order to inform the planning process. The surveys were carried out to recognised guidelines, timings and weather conditions, with particular reference to Natural England and Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) publications. The development proposals include the demolition of the existing dry-stone wall storage shed and the construction of a new agricultural barn.

Hollin Royd Farm is located outskirts of Cawthorne village, South Yorkshire. The habitat on site comprises a drystone walled building surrounded by modified grassland. The grassland to the north, south and west is regularly mown, and the grassland to the east is used for pasture grazing and silage harvesting. There is an access track that runs along the southern boundary which is lined with mature trees. Hollin Royd Farm is situated in an area which provides moderate to high quality habitat for bats. The presence of green space in the local area provides an array of food sources and commuting opportunities, whilst roosting opportunities are also of a high quality due to the number of mature trees and old farm buildings present in and around the local aera.

The quality of roosting habitat within the building on site is considered to be low. The building on site presents a number of potential roosting features (PRFs) which could be used by bats. The gaps within the drystone walls present many cavities and crevices suitable for roosting bats. The internal features are limited to gaps between the timber beams and metal roof sheeting. However, there are also gaps within the internal elevation of the drystone wall. Having said this, most of the cavities were inspected with an endoscope and no field signs of bats, such as droppings, were found during the building inspections.

Two species of bat were recorded during the bat presence / absence survey: common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *Myotis* sp. bat. Activity was low which consisted predominantly of foraging and commuting with common pipistrelles identified foraging west of the building between the building itself and the adjacent barn.

No bats were found to be roosting within the building on site. Therefore, no further survey or mitigation work is required for the development to proceed, with regards to bats.

This report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 5, which provide visual representations of the survey results and statutory and planning context.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Author, surveyors and qualifications

This report is compiled and written by Bethany Dineley BSc UES Graduate Ecologist. Other surveyors include:

- Daniel Smith BSc MScRes, UES Ecologist. Daniel is licensed by Natural England to disturb, take and handle all species of bats under licence number 2024-12117-CL18-BAT (level 2).
- Harry Fox BSc MRes, UES Graduate Ecologist

All surveyors have the knowledge, skills and experience identified within CIEEM's "Competencies for Species Survey: Bats" (2013) or were under the supervision of a surveyor with the required competencies.

1.2 Survey objectives

UES was commissioned in August 2024 to conduct site surveys which include the following activities:

- Conduct internal and external building inspections to look for field signs of bats.
- Confirm bat presence or likely absence by conducting an emergence survey of the building.
- Assess the type and importance of the roost(s), if present.
- Recommend appropriate mitigation and compensation, if applicable.

1.3 Proposed development

The proposed development plans to demolish and replace the dry-stone wall storage shed for an agricultural barn.

1.4 Structure of the report

This report sets out the methodology, results, and recommendations in relation to a specific bat survey. Recommendations are in line with statutory legislation and planning policy objectives.

The report should be read in conjunction with appendices 1 to 5, which give visual representations of the survey results.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

All surveys were carried out to recognised guidelines, timings and weather conditions, with particular reference to Natural England and BCT publications (see references for further information).

The habitats on site and in the surrounding area were assessed during a walkover survey and through studying aerial photographs, in order to gauge their suitability to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.

2.2 Building inspections

The building on site was searched both externally and internally for bat presence and features associated with bat activity, as detailed in BCT guidance (Collins, 2023).

2.2.1 External inspection

The external inspection of the building was carried out from ground level using binoculars, and also using ladders and an endoscope to investigate suitable gaps. The objective of the survey was to find and record any signs of bat use, for example:

- Bat droppings
- Feeding remains
- Grease staining / urine marks
- Corpses or skeletons

The bat signs listed above are visible from the outside of a building. The following areas were searched, where present:

- Roof and ridge tiles
- Lead flashing
- Eaves
- Boxed soffits
- Fascia and barge boards
- Windowsills and panes
- Walls
- Gaps under felt
- Cracks / holes in woodwork or behind cladding
- Gaps in brickwork and mortar
- Air bricks
- Grills
- Vents

2.2.2 Internal inspection

The internal inspection covered all of the accessible rooms and roof spaces within the building.

Bats regularly utilise specific areas within roof spaces, which were searched for any field signs of bats using high-powered torches and an endoscope, where considered necessary by the licenced ecologist. The following features were searched, where present:

- Roof beams and junctions
- Gaps under felt
- Dividing walls
- Chimney breasts

- Gaps in brickwork and mortar
- Cracks / holes in woodwork
- Floor or other surfaces on which droppings could accumulate

2.3 Emergence survey

Potential roost access points were identified during the building inspections. These points were covered by a surveyor during the dusk emergence.

Bat echolocation, flight and habitat characteristics were recorded where possible, in order to determine the species. The level and type of bat activity was also recorded to establish how bats are using the site.

2.3.1 Equipment

BATLOGGER M bat detectors and recorders were used during the survey. This device records bat echolocation calls across the full spectrum, with a sensitivity range of 10 – 150 kHz. The integrated heterodyne live monitoring also allows the observer to hear the echolocation calls in real time, with automatic tuning. The recordings are individually time/date, GPS and temperature stamped and are of high enough quality to produce time expansion quality sonograms.

Nightfox Whisker Night Vision Binoculars were used in conjunction with Nightfox XB5 940nm Low Glow Infrared LED Flashlights to monitor part of the building during the surveys. The Binoculars were positioned alongside surveyors to cover potential roost access points and recorded video footage to be reviewed post-survey. Surveyors can use the binoculars during the survey as a night-vision aid.

2.3.2 Weather conditions

Table 1 - Weather conditions and survey timings

DATE	SURVEY TYPE	TIMINGS	SUNSET / SUNRISE	TEMP.	WIND	RAIN	CLOUD COVER
19/08/24	Emergence	20:11 – 21:56	20:26	17°C	Moderate wind	Light	100%

2.4 Survey limitations

There was moderate strength wind and light rain during the emergence survey; however, bat activity was still recorded during the survey. Therefore, it is not considered to be a significant limitation.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Habitat assessment

Hollin Royd Farm is located outskirts of Cawthorne village, South Yorkshire. The habitat on site comprises a drystone walled building surrounded by modified grassland. The grassland to the north, south and west is regularly mown, and the grassland to the east is used for pasture grazing and silage harvesting. There is an access track that runs along the southern boundary which is lined with mature trees. The habitats onsite are of moderate quality for foraging and commuting bats.

Habitats within the immediate surrounding area (500m) consist of predominantly of agricultural fields lined with hedgerows and mature trees. An industrial estate is also located approximately 300m south-east of the site. There are numerous mature woodlands within the immediate area including Dixon Wood and Flash House Plantation which are located approximately 250m south-west and 300m north-east, respectively. Daking Brook which is surrounding by mature riparian habitat runs from west to east, approximately 250m north of the site. The Daking Brook also runs along side the Flash House Plantation. The habitats within the immediate area are of high quality for foraging and commuting bats.

In the wider surrounding area, the habitats are similar in composition; the landscape is a mosaic of pasture and arable fields lined with hedgerows and trees, and blocks of mature woodlands. These habitats will provide high quality foraging and commuting opportunities. The village of Cawthorne is located approximately 1.4km east of the site which is of low quality for foraging and commuting opportunities.

3.2 Building inspections

3.2.1 External inspection

The building that is proposed to be impacted by the development is a drystone walled structure used as storage of items such as wood and machinery. The building is approximately 2m high and 4x10m in area. The roof is composed of corrugate metal sheeting and is mono pitched, sloping down towards the east. There are external walls present on the northern, eastern and southern elevations; however, the western elevation is an open façade. There are many gaps within the drystone walls that form cavities suitable for roosting bats (see Appendix 3 – Photographs; Photograph 6). Majority of the cavities were inspected with an endoscope; however, no evidence of bats was found. Many of the entrances to the cavities were covered which suggests there has been no recent bat activity. The building has a timber bargeboard located on the northern elevation of the building (Photograph 5). There is cavity behind the bargeboard which can be used for roosting opportunities for bats.

No bat droppings or any other field signs were found during the external building inspection.

3.2.2 Internal inspection

The internal area of the building is easily accessible via the open façade on the western elevation. This area is also very well lit due to the open façade which will reduce the suitability roosting bats. Majority of the internal area is cluttered with storage which will have an impact of a bat's flight path. The roof is single skinned with corrugated metal sheeting and has no lining present. There are gaps between timber beams and the metal sheets; however, this is

of poor roosting quality. The drystone wall on the inside also presents suitable gaps for bats to access into cavities and crevices.

No bat droppings or any other field signs were found during the internal building inspections.

3.3 Activity summary

Table 2 – Bat activity summary

DATE	SURVEY TYPE	SPECIES	NOTES
19/08/24	Emergence	Common pipistrelle *Myotis* Sp.	Common pipistrelle bats were identified foraging between the barn and a woodstore shed. *Myotis* sp. were recorded during the emergence survey; however, the bats were not seen by the surveyors.

4 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Evaluation of results

In summary, Hollin Royd Farm is situated in an area which provides moderate to high quality habitat for bats. The presence of green space in the local area provides an array of food sources and commuting opportunities, whilst roosting opportunities are also of a high quality due to the number of mature trees and old farm buildings present in and around the local aera.

The quality of roosting habitat within the buildings on site is considered to be low. The building on site presents a number of PRFs which could be used by bats. The gaps within the drystone walls present many cavities and crevices suitable for roosting bats. The internal features are limited to gaps between the timber beams and metal roof sheeting. However, there are also gaps within the internal elevation of the drystone wall. Having said this, most of the cavities were inspected with an endoscope and no field signs of bats, such as droppings, were found during the building inspections.

Two species of bat were recorded during the bat presence / absence survey: common pipistrelle and *Myotis* sp. bat. Activity was low which consisted predominantly of foraging and commuting with common pipistrelles identified foraging west of the building between the building itself and the adjacent barn.

No bats were recorded roosting within the building on site.

4.2 Mitigation and compensation measures

As no bats were found to be using the building on site to roost, no further mitigation or compensation measures are required with regards to bats.

5 CONCLUSION

Hollin Royd Farm is situated in an area which provides moderate to high quality habitat for bats. The presence of green space in the local area provides an array of food sources and commuting opportunities, whilst roosting opportunities are also of a high quality due to the number of mature trees and old farm buildings present in and around the local aera.

The quality of roosting habitat within the building on site is considered to be low. The building on site presents a number of PRFs which could be used by bats. The gaps within the drystone walls present many cavities and crevices suitable for roosting bats. The internal features are limited to gaps between the timber beams and metal roof sheeting. However, there are also gaps within the internal elevation of the drystone wall. Having said this, most of the cavities were inspected with an endoscope and no field signs of bats, such as droppings, were found during the building inspections.

Furthermore, no bats were recorded roosting within the building during the emergence survey in August 2024.

As no bats were found to be using the building, no further mitigation or compensation measures are required with regards to bats.

6 REFERENCES

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2013). *Competencies for Species Survey: Bats*.

Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (2021). *National Planning Policy Framework.*

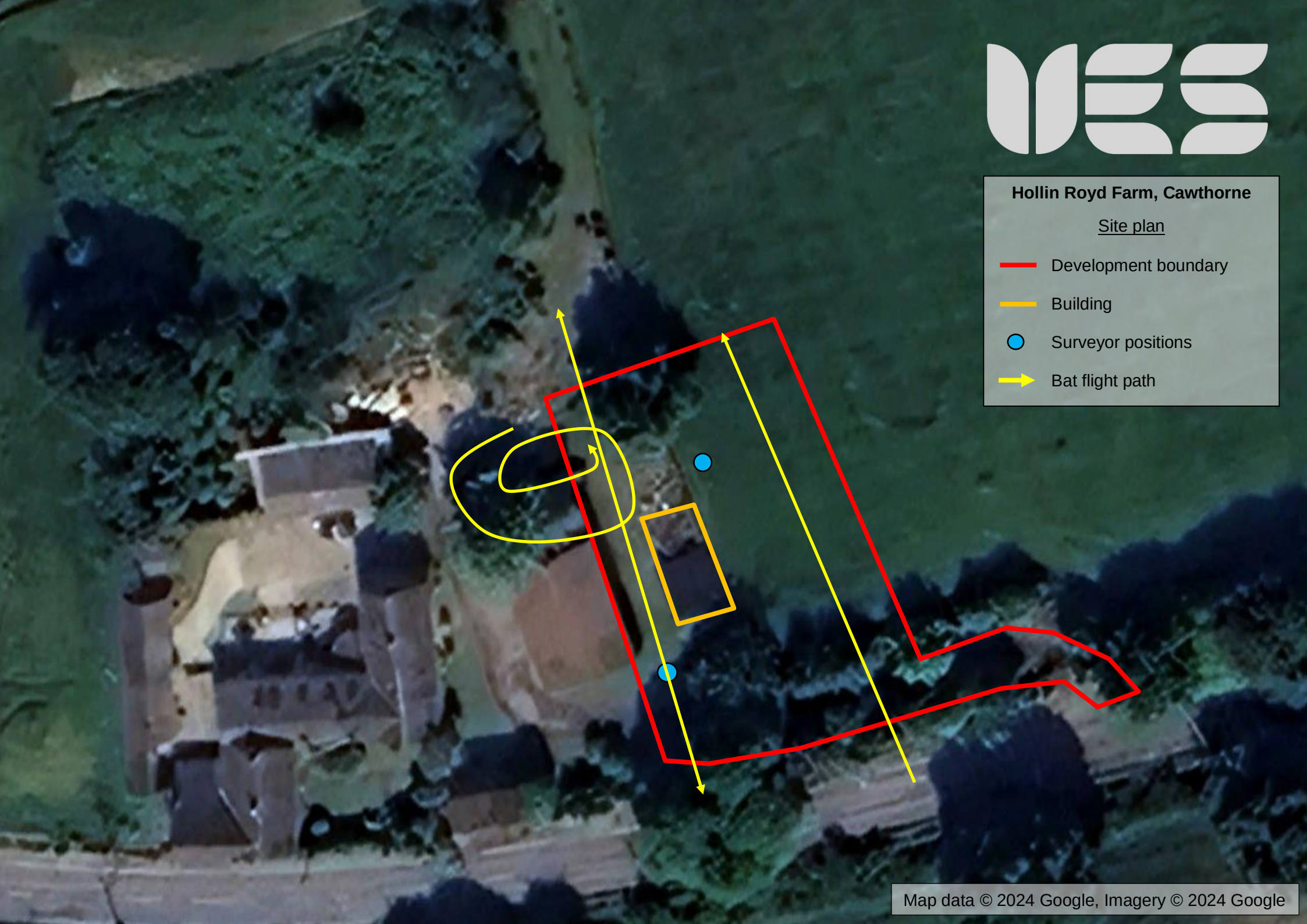
Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines.* (4th ed.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines.* English Nature.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). *The Bat Workers Manual.* (3rd ed.) JNCC

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site plan


Hollin Royd Farm, Cawthorne
Site plan
Development boundary
Building
Surveyor positions
Bat flight path
Map data © 2024 Google, Imagery © 2024 Google

Appendix 2 – Aerial photographs


Hollin Royd Farm, Cawthorne
Close aerial photograph
Development boundary
Map data © 2024 Google, Imagery © 2024 Google


Hollin Royd Farm, Cawthorne
Close aerial photograph
Ownership boundary
Development boundary
Map data © 2024 Google, Imagery © 2024 Google


Hollin Royd Farm, Cawthorne
Wide aerial photograph
Site location
Map data © 2024 Google, Imagery © 2024 Google

Appendix 3 – Photographs

Photograph 1 – Western elevation of the building north of the dividing wall.

Photograph 2 – Western elevation of the building, south of the dividing wall.

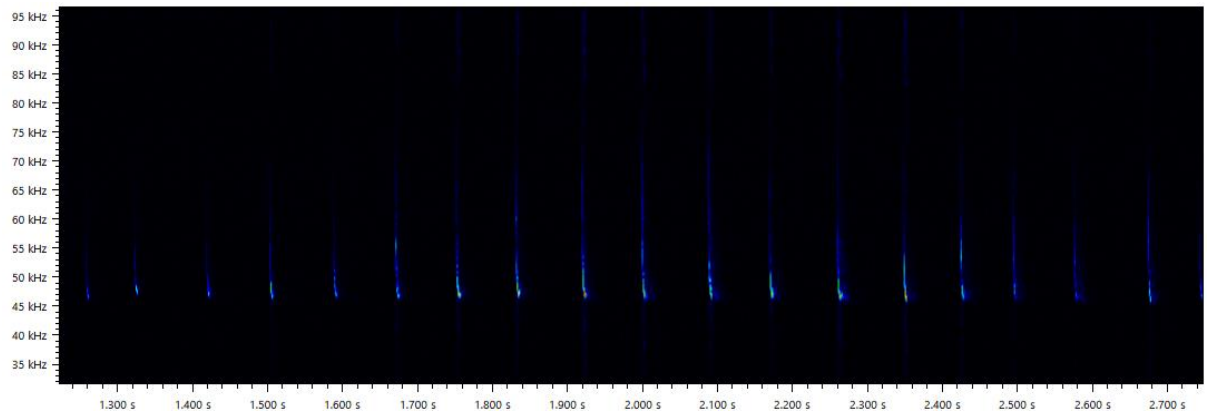
Photograph 3 – Southern elevation of the building.

Photograph 4 – Eastern elevation of the building.

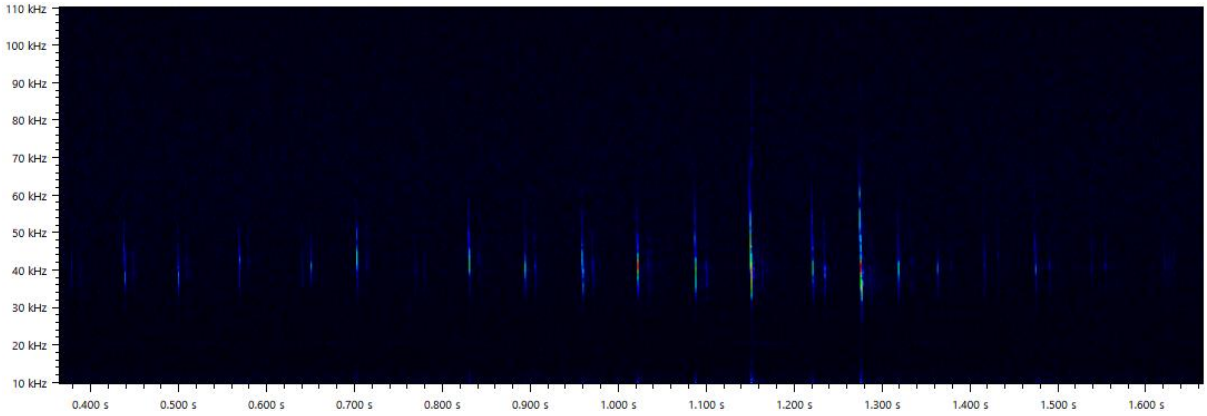
Photograph 5 – Northern elevation of the building.

Photograph 6 – Gaps within the drystone walls.

Appendix 4 – Results



Sonogram 1 - Common pipistrelle pass at 20:54 on 19th August 2024.



Sonogram 2 - Myotis species pass at 20:57 on 19th August 2024.

Surveyor position 1 – North-east of the building on 19th August 2024.

Surveyor position 2 – South-west of the building on 19th August 2024.

Appendix 5 – Statutory and planning context

Ecological assessments
Ecological assessments play an important part within the planning context; they include an initial assessment which highlights any specific interests of a site. From the initial site assessment, the surveyor assesses the suitability of habitats within the site to support protected species and makes recommendations for further survey works if required. The following paragraphs provide a brief interpretation of the legislative protection that is relevant to the findings of this report.

Bats
In the United Kingdom, all species of bat and their roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the "Habitats Regulations"). The Wildlife and Countryside Act is the domestic implementation of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention) and was amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture a bat
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection (even if the bat is not present at the time)
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any live or dead bat, any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat

Under UK law, a bat roost is *any structure or place which any wild [bat] … uses for shelter or protection*. As bats often reuse the same roosts, legal opinion is that a roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time of the activity taking place.

Penalties for offences include fines of up to £5000, plus up to six months imprisonment, for each offence committed.

If an activity is likely to result in any of the above offences, a licence can be applied for to derogate from the protection afforded. These licences must provide appropriate mitigation and are issued by Natural England.

A Natural England mitigation licence application requires a Mitigation Method Statement and, in many cases, a Reasoned Statement of Application. The Mitigation Method Statement contains details of the proposed mitigation works. The Reasoned Statement needs to provide a rational and reasoned justification as to why the proposed development meets the requirements of the Conservation (National Habitats & c.) regulations 1994, namely Regulations 44(2)(e), (f) or (g), and 44(3)(a).

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) provides guidance on the interpretation of the law in relation to the natural environment and development.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 lists the following bat species as species of principle importance under Section 41:

- Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*
- Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*
- Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*
- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*
- Greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

Section 40 requires every public body in the exercising of its functions 'have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity' (all biodiversity and not just section 41 species and habitats); therefore making these bats a material consideration in the planning process and requiring a detailed ecological bat survey before planning permission can be granted.

Planning policy

National Planning Guidance is issued in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF). The most relevant section is 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Key relevant principles stated in 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment are;

174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

179. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity[61]; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation[62]; and
b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement 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

180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons63 and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.