

Homelea, Bolton upon Dearne

Bat Survey Report

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1. Summary

- 1.1.1 A bat survey of the outbuildings at Homelea was commissioned by the client Vicky Shaw on 29th August 2023.
- 1.1.2 The survey was undertaken to inform the full or partial demolition of the three outbuildings to facilitate the construction of a new dwelling.
- 1.1.3 No signs of bat presence were recorded from the surveyed buildings. The surveyed buildings were considered to display negligible bat roosting suitability.
- 1.1.4 No evidence of nesting birds was recorded from the surveyed buildings.
- 1.1.5 No further bat survey is considered necessary providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works commence after this time, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey works to be undertaken.
- 1.1.6 Works should proceed with caution and vigilance for unexpected bat presence, as single bats can roost almost anywhere. If bats are subsequently discovered, work should cease, and further advice sought without delay.
- 1.1.7 In order to enhance the site in relation to roosting bats and nesting birds, it is recommended that a single new integrated bat box and a single new integrated swift box be installed in the new building.

2. Introduction

- 2.1.1 A bat survey of the outbuildings at Homelea was commissioned by the client Vicky Shaw on 29th August 2023.
- 2.1.2 The survey was undertaken to inform the full or partial demolition of the three outbuildings to facilitate the construction of a new dwelling.
- 2.1.3 Bat survey works detailed in this report include a desk-based study, and an internal and external visual inspection.
- 2.1.4 Homelea is located to the south of Carr Head Lane within a residential area of Bolton on Dearne, approximately 11 km southeast of Barnsley town centre.

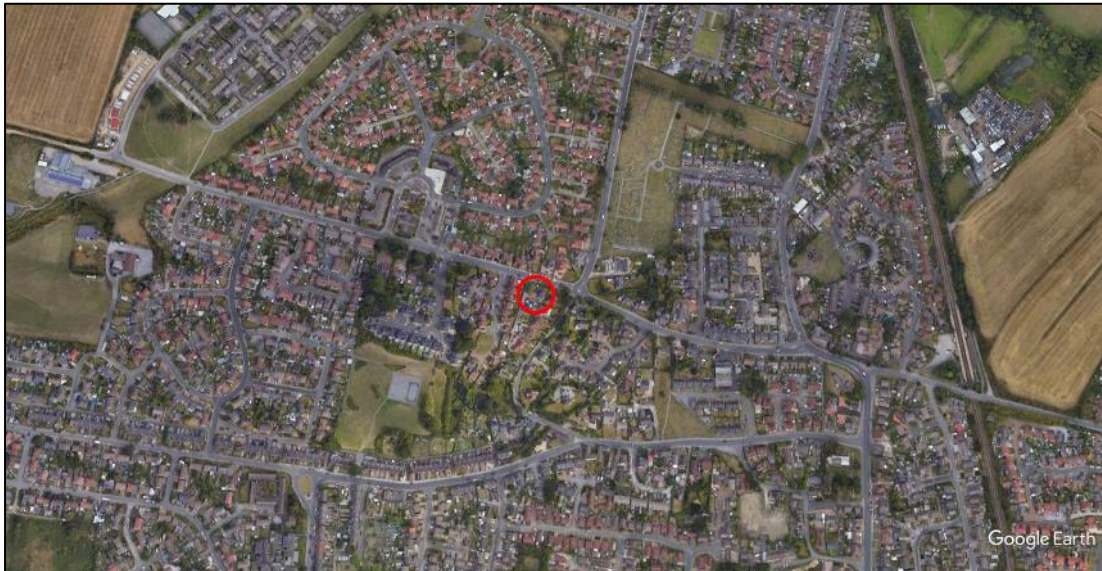
3. Habitat Assessment

- 3.1.1 The site was located in a residential area with relatively little semi-natural vegetation in the immediate surroundings. The site was likely to be subject to a high degree of artificial light spill from neighbouring street lighting.
- 3.1.2 The range of species expected to use the local area for roosting was expected to be limited to common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, whilst the density of bats using the local area was expected to be relatively low. Table 1 summarises the habitats present, adjacent to and further afield of the surveyed building.

Table 1. Location and habitat table

Name and address: Homelea, Carr Head Lane, Bolton on Dearne, S63 8DA			
OS Grid Ref. SE 45197 02737		Altitude. 7 m	
Local Planning Authority: Barnsley Council			
Features on site and adjacent to site			
Feature	On site	Adjacent	Comments
Buildings	✓	✓	Located adjacent to dwellings
River bordered by trees			River Dearne 590 m to south.
Standing water			Lowfield Lakes 970 m to southeast
Bridges tunnels and culverts			Associated with River Dearne
Trees		✓	Trees in adjacent gardens
Woodland			Nearest woodland 720 m to south
Grassland	✓	✓	Lawn on site

Figure 1. Site location, as indicated by red circle



3.2 Aims

3.2.1 The survey was conducted to help determine the following:

- The presence/absence of roosting bats.
- Bat roosting areas and access/egress points into the buildings.
- The level of bat roost potential associated with the buildings.
- The number and species of bat roosting within the buildings, if present.
- Identify further survey work or mitigation requirements.

4. Methodology

4.1 Data Consultation

4.1.1 No bat records were requested from either Barnsley Biological Records Centre or South Yorkshire Bat Group given the negligible bat roosting potential displayed by the surveyed buildings.

4.2 Field Survey

Internal and External Visual Inspection

4.2.1 The internal and external visual inspected was undertaken on 8th September 2023 by Robert Bell (MCIEEM; Class license WML-A34-Level 4, 2016-25236-CLS-CLS).

4.2.2 The following activities were carried out during the surveys in compliance with relevant Bat Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2016):

- A brief inspection and assessment of the site and habitats present to within 300m.
- An extensive examination of all parts of the buildings both inside and out to record structural features and condition and to record features that may be suitable for roosting bats. Particular attention was paid to any crevices or gaps

in walls, lintels, gaps between beams and joists and to the possibility of finding droppings stuck to walls, floors or other surfaces, or insect remains below beams, among a number of other factors. All and signs indicative of a bat roost presence including live or dead bats, droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and staining were recorded.

- An assessment of the buildings' bat roost potential (negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed roost).

4.2.3 In addition, any signs of nesting bird usage of the building were recorded.

4.2.4 The following equipment was used or at hand during the survey:

- Clulight
- Binoculars
- Endoscope
- Ladders
- Camera

4.3 Survey Limitations

4.3.1 No significant limitations to survey works were encountered.

5. Results

5.1 Field Survey

Internal and External Visual Inspection

5.1.1 No signs of bat presence were recorded from the surveyed buildings. The buildings were considered to display negligible bat roosting suitability. The layout of site buildings is shown in Figure 2.

5.1.2 The dwelling on site will not be impacted by the scheme.

Figure 2. Building layout



Garage

- 5.1.3 The garage comprised a single storey brick-built structure with a dual-pitched clay plain tile covered roof (Plates 1 & 2). The structure was used partially for storage and partially as an extension of living space. The garage had plastic soffits and barge boards. An up-and-over door was present on the west gable with several double-glazed plastic-framed windows and plastic doors present on the north elevation. Skylights were present in the north pitch of the roof.
- 5.1.4 In terms of potential bat roosting features, a single plain tile was missing on the south pitch. This location could be subject to close inspection (Plate 3), with no signs of bats seen and the space cobwebbed. There was also a 1.2 cm wide crevice between the barge board and wall on the east gable, which could be fully inspected.
- 5.1.5 Internally the roof was vaulted with no access to a very small (less than 0.5 m high) void at the roof's apex (Plate 4).
- 5.1.6 No signs of bats were recorded from any location on the garage, and it was considered to display negligible bat roost suitability.

Outbuilding

- 5.1.7 The outbuilding comprised a single-storey brick-built unit with a felt covered flat roof and a plastic door in the southwest elevation (Plates 5 & 6). Plastic gutters were present.
- 5.1.8 No potential roosting features were noted from the building's exterior. The interior was inspected with no voids present.
- 5.1.9 No signs of bats were recorded from any location on the outbuilding, and it was considered to display negligible bat roost suitability.

Pagoda

- 5.1.10 An open-sided wood framed pagoda with a gently sloping felt covered roof was present in the northwest corner of the garden.
- 5.1.11 No potential roosting features were noted from the building's exterior. No signs of bats were recorded from any location on the outbuilding, and it was considered to display negligible bat roost suitability.

Plate 1. North elevation of garage

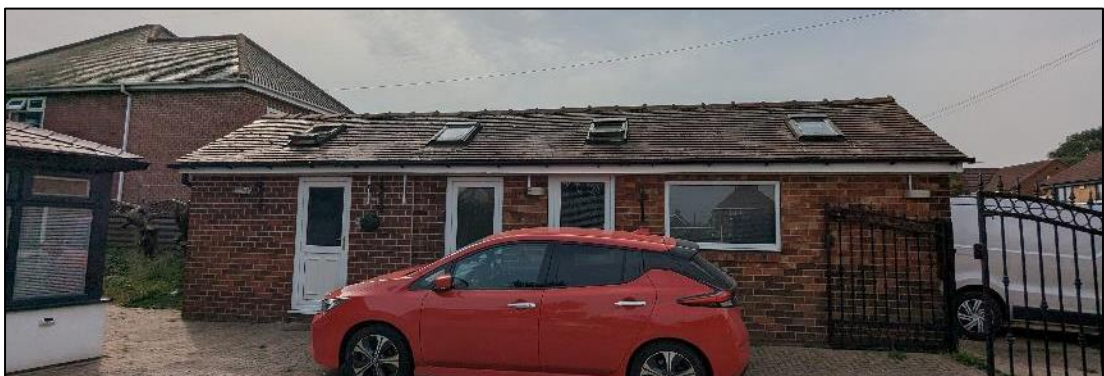


Plate 2. South pitch of garage roof



Plate 3. Missing plain tile on garage roof



Plate 4. Interior of garage



Plate 5. Southeast elevation of outbuilding



Plate 6. Southwest elevation of outbuilding



Plate 7. Pagoda



6. Assessment

6.1 Summary and Evaluation of Findings

- 6.1.1 No bats were found roosting in the buildings during the preliminary daytime assessment and there were no signs of bat occupation. The buildings were considered to display a negligible level of bat roost suitability.
- 6.1.2 No evidence of nesting birds was recorded from the surveyed buildings.

6.2 Legislation and Policy Guidance

Bats

- 6.2.1 Bats receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 6.2.2 It is an offence to:
- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat.
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection or obstruct access to any such place.
 - Damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat.
 - Possess a bat (live or dead), or any part of a bat.
 - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
 - Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (dead or alive), or parts of parts.
- 6.2.3 The Convention on Biological Diversity, signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, requires member states to develop national strategies and to undertake a range of actions aimed at maintaining or restoring biodiversity. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the Convention.
- 6.2.4 In England & Wales, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, “to have due regard, as far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”. It notes that “conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat”. Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein’s bat *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared bat, greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, noctule and soprano pipistrelle are included as priority species within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. At a more local level there are Local Biodiversity Action Plans for smaller geographical areas which may cover a greater or lesser range of bat species.
- 6.2.5 Where it is proposed to carry out works which will have an adverse impact on roosting bats, the site must either be registered on the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) or Earned Recognition (ER) licence, or a European Protected Species (EPS) license must first be obtained from Natural England. This requirement applies even if no bats are expected to be present when the work is carried out.
- 6.2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework for England was revised in 2021. This document states that plans should ‘promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation 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’.

Birds

6.2.7 All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird.

6.3 Further Survey, Recommendations and Enhancements

Bats

6.3.1 No further bat survey is considered necessary providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works commence after this time, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey works to be undertaken.

6.3.2 No bats were recorded roosting on site during the survey works and consequently there is no compulsory requirement for mitigation. However, in order to enhance the ecological value of the site and in accordance with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), it is suggested that one new bat roosting feature be incorporated within the dwelling. It is advised that an enclosed and integrated bat box, of a design such as either the Build-in WoodStone Bat Box or Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box C (Plates 8-10) be installed. A suitable location for this box would be the south elevation of the new house, to be fitted as high as possible on the wall.

Plates 8-10. Build-in bat roost products



Birds

- 6.3.3 It is recommended the new dwelling include an integrated swift box, such as a Manthorpe Swift Brick (Plates 11 & 12). This box could be fitted on the north elevation of the new dwelling, in order to afford the maximum drop from nest locations for birds emerging from this unit. Studies have shown that swift *Apus apus* boxes are used by the full range of nesting birds that utilise buildings; consequently, these boxes will also provide potential nesting space for house sparrow *Passer domesticus* and starlings *Sturnus vulgaris*.

Plates 11 &12. Manthorpe Swift Brick



6.4 Conclusions

- 6.4.1 No evidence of bat presence was recorded in association with the building during the desk-based survey or the visual inspection, with the buildings considered to display a negligible level of bat roost suitability. It is therefore considered that the survey work undertaken has demonstrated the probable absence of roosting bats.
- 6.4.2 No further survey effort is necessary, providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works are to commence after this date, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey.
- 6.4.3 Works should proceed with caution and vigilance for unexpected bat presence, as single bats can roost almost anywhere. If bats are subsequently discovered, work should cease, and further advice sought without delay.

7. References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. The Bat Conservation Trust.