

# Preliminary Roost Assessment

Land at

Cob Kiln Lane

Urmston

M41 9LB

For

EBR Designs



# Gritstone ecology

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the report

The report is written by Stewart Bradshaw, for EBR Designs. Stewart carried out a Preliminary Roost Assessment of buildings at Cob Kiln Lane, on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020. The survey report will be used to provide supporting information for a planning application, at the site.

## 1.2 Survey aims

The aim of the survey was to determine the actual or potential presence of bats and the need for further survey or mitigation.

## 1.3 Surveyor details

Stewart is licenced to disturb, take and handle all species of bats in all counties of England under licence number 2015-15615-CLS-CLS. He has more than 10 years' experience in ecological consultancy, including the planning and preparation of bat surveys, and mitigation licences.

## 1.4 Proposed development

The development proposals are for the demolition of a steel framed agricultural building & stables blocks, and the construction of a children's nursery.

## 1.5 Site context

The application site is on the southern edge of Urmston adjacent to open farmland along The Mersey Corridor. Habitat to the north is dominated by housing and busy well-lit roads. Habitat to the south consists of open farmland, trees, hedgerows and watercourses.

The site is located on Cob Kiln Lane, Urmston, M41 9LB, GR SJ 87747 74294, approximately 500m southeast of Urmston Town Centre.

The site includes a detached steel framed agricultural building, and a series of wooden stable blocks, and steel storage containers, paddocks, and areas of compacted stone hard landscaping.

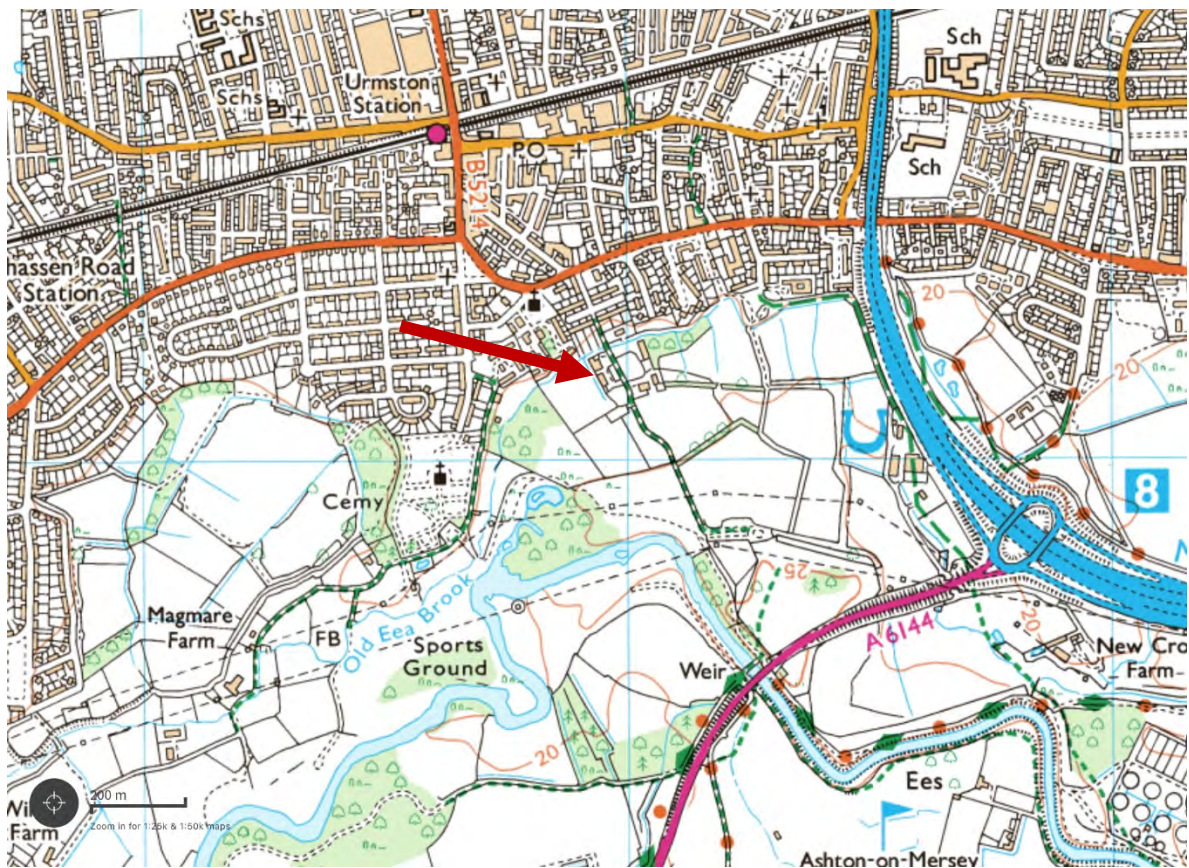
Habitat within 50m of the site includes; housing and busy roads, mature countryside hedgerows, mature trees, grazed pastures, and watercourses.

Habitat within 500m includes, open farmland, hedgerows, mature trees, blocks of woodland, ponds, and watercourses.

The site and surrounding area provide high quality foraging, commuting, and roosting opportunities for bats. With lower quality urban habitat to the north, and higher quality habitat to the south along The Mersey Corridor.



## 1.6 Site location



1.6a – Cob Kiln Lane – site location.



1.6b – Cob Kiln Lane – aerial photograph.







1.6c – Cob Kiln Lane - building numbers and red line boundary.

## 2 Methods

### 2.1 Survey timings

The survey was undertaken on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020. Weather conditions during the survey were cloudy, cool, and dry, with a temperature of 11°C.

### 2.2 Desk study

No desk study of the site was undertaken, prior to the preliminary roost assessment, and no other ecological surveys have been carried out in relation to the proposals.

The development has a small footprint, and impacts beyond the site boundary are unlikely. A site-specific investigation was considered more suitable.

### 2.3 Habitat assessment

The habitat on site and in the surrounding area was assessed using Ordnance Survey mapping, and aerial photography. Habitat features on site, and those in the surrounding area were assessed for their suitability for use by bats during the site visit.

### 2.4 Building inspection

A systematic search of the exterior of the buildings was made to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate any evidence of bats such as live or dead specimens, bat droppings, urine splashes, fur-oil staining and or squeaking noises. Bat specimens and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence; the other types are not always the result of bat activity. Sometimes bats leave no visible sign of their presence on the outside of a building (even when they do wet weather can wash evidence away.)



The search included (where present) the ground beneath potential access points, windowsills, window panes, walls, behind peeling paintwork and lifted rendering, hanging tiles, weatherboarding, eaves, soffit boxes, fascia's, lead flashing, gaps under felt, under tiles / slates and in existing bats boxes. Gaps in brickwork and stonework were searched (where present). All evidence of use by bats, or features with the potential to be used by bats was recorded and photographed.

A systematic search of the inside of the building was undertaken to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate evidence of bats. Bat specimens (live or dead) and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence. Other evidence can include urine splashes, fur-oil staining, feeding remains, squeaking noises, bat fly (Nycteribiid) pupal cases (Hutson 1984) or odour.

Areas inspected include;

Within rooms

- floors and surfaces
- behind wooden panelling
- in lintels above doors and windows
- behind window shutters and curtains
- behind pictures, posters, furniture, peeling paintwork, peeling wallpaper, lifted plaster and boarded up windows
- inside cupboards and in chimneys accessible from fireplaces.

Within roof spaces

- the tops of gable end and dividing walls
- the top of chimney breasts
- ridge and hip beams and other structural timbers
- mortise and tenon joints
- all beams
- the junction of roof timbers, especially where ridge and hip beams meet
- behind purlins
- between tiles and the roof lining (where accessible)
- under flat felt roofs.

The areas listed above were inspected (where present), any additional areas with potential for use were also inspected.

## 2.5 Equipment

The equipment listed below was available for use during the surveys and was used where required.

Clulite CB2 1,000,000 candlepower torch. Rigid Seesnake CA-300 digital endoscope with 0.9m cable reach with 17mm and 6mm imaging heads. Digital camera with 50x zoom. 10x42 close focussing binoculars, 4m ladders, bat handling gloves, DNA sampling tubes.

## 2.6 Survey limitations

None. All accessible areas of the buildings were searched in detail. The survey was completed in November, a time of year when bats are less active, and external signs of use are less likely to be present.



### 3 Results

#### 3.1 External inspection – Building 1



3.1a – The east side of building 1 viewed from the south.

Building 1 is a modern steel framed agricultural building, which is used for the storage of farm machinery.

The building has an equally pitched roof, covered with corrugated steel panels, and ridge plates; roof pitches face east & west, gables face north & south. Steel fascia are fitted at the eaves and gables. The building has corrugated steel panel walls, with corrugated asbestos cement panels at the base. The roof is fitted with roof lights, there are no other windows. There is a large steel door on the east wall.

The building is modern well maintained, and in good condition. Wall panels are tightly fitted with no missing or damaged panels, and no gaps. The roof is in good condition, with no missing panels, or gaps between roof or ridge panels. Ventilated panels at the ridge are fitted with an internal steel mesh. Small gaps at the eaves & gables, and gaps around the door give access to bats, or nesting birds.

There are no features externally which are likely be used by roosting bats, and no evidence of use by bats was present during the inspection.





### 3.2 Internal inspection – Building 1



3.2a – The inside of the barn.

The building has a steel framed structure. There is no internal roof void and no other enclosed areas which are suitable for use by roosting bats. Walls are single layered corrugated steel and corrugated asbestos cement panels, with no lining. Floors are solid concrete.

The barn is well-lit by natural light through skylight roof panels and is in use daily as an equipment store.

The walls are single layered steel and asbestos cement panels, with no suitable cavities between panels at the overlap. The steel framed structure of the barn provides no suitable crevices for roosting bats.

There are small gaps at the eaves and gables and around the steel door, which could give crawled access to the inside of the building, however no droppings, feeding remains, or other evidence of use was found, and the building has no cavities or other enclosed spaces which could be used by roosting bats.





### 3.3 Building 2



Building 2 is a small stable block abutting the north wall of building 1. The building has a single pitched roof covered with corrugated steel roofing panels. Walls are single layered brick at the base, with single layered wooden panels above. Internally the building has a wooden roof structure, there is no roof void, and no internal wall lining.

The stables are in use daily, and although open to bats in flight, offer no suitable roosting features.

### 3.4 Building 3



Building 3 is a small stable block adjacent the south gable end wall of building 1. The building has a single pitched roof covered with corrugated steel roofing panels. Walls are single layered concrete block at the base, with single layered wooden panels above. Internally the building has a wooden roof structure, there is no roof void, and no internal wall lining.

The stables are in use daily, and although open to bats in flight, offer no suitable roosting features.

### 3.5 Building 4



Building 4 is a small L-shaped stable block to the south of building 3. The building has a single pitched roof covered with corrugated steel roofing panels. Walls are constructed of single layered wooden panels. Internally the building has a wooden roof structure, there is no roof void, and no internal wall lining.

The stables are in use daily, and although open to bats in flight, offer no suitable roosting features.



### 3.6 Building 5



Building 5 is a small stable block on the east of Cob Kiln Lane, on the southern site boundary. The building has a single pitched roof covered with corrugated steel roofing panels. Walls are single layered brick at the base, with single layered wooden panels above. Internally the building has a wooden roof structure, there is no roof void, and no internal wall lining.

The stables are in use daily, and although open to bats in flight, offer no suitable roosting features.

### 3.7 Building 6



Building 6 is a small stable block on the east of Cob Kiln Lane, adjacent building 5. The building has a single pitched roof covered with corrugated steel roofing panels. Walls are single layered concrete block at the base, with single layered wooden panels above. Internally the building has a wooden roof structure, there is no roof void, and no internal wall lining.

The stables are in use daily, and although open to bats in flight, offer no suitable roosting features.

### 3.8 Buildings 7 & 8



Building 7 is a small stable block on the east of Cob Kiln Lane, adjacent the eastern site boundary. The building has a single pitched roof covered with corrugated steel roofing panels. Walls are single layered concrete block at the base, with single layered wooden panels above. Internally the building has a wooden roof structure, there is no roof void, and no internal wall lining.

The stables are in use daily, and although open to bats in flight, offer no suitable roosting features. Building 8 is a steel container which

is used for storage. The building has no features externally, or internally which could be used by roosting bats.





### 3.9 Evidence of use

**No evidence of use by bats was present during the survey, either internally, or externally in the buildings.**

### 3.10 Level of potential

The buildings have **negligible potential** for use by roosting bats. This is as the structure of the buildings offers no suitable roosting opportunities, and as no indications of use by bats were present internally.

## 4 Evaluation

The buildings are set in an area which, in general, provides high quality habitat, for foraging, commuting and roosting bats, and bats are likely to be present locally.

The hedgerows, woodlands, watercourses, and open farmland surrounding the site are likely to be used by foraging bats.

Building 1 is a modern agricultural building with a steel frame, and single layered corrugated steel panelled roof and walls. There is no internal lining, and there are no enclosed spaces or crevices which could be used by roosting bats. There are no external or internal features which are suitable for use by roosting bats.

Buildings 2 – 7 are a series of small stables with single pitched corrugated steel covered roofs, and single layered wooden and brick or blockwork walls. The buildings have a simple timber roof structure with no roof voids, wall lining or crevices which are suitable for use by roosting bats.

Building 8 is a steel storage container which has no features suitable for use by roosting bats.

The stables have open stable doors which could be accessed by bats in flight, building 1 has gaps around the eaves and steel door which could give crawled access. The buildings have no features internally which could be used by roosting bats. They are well-lit by natural light in the daytime, and subject to disturbance daily. Although bats could access the buildings, they do not provide suitable shelter for roosting bats.

No indications of use by bats, such as feeding remains, or droppings, were found during the building inspections. Stable floors are swept and cleaned regularly, however areas which are often used by bats as feeding perches or night roosts such as upper walls and roof timbers were dusty and cobwebbed, indicating that these areas are not used by bats.

The buildings have no roof voids, or other enclosed spaces, and are in daily use; the lack of any evidence of use inside the buildings, such as droppings or feeding remains, reduces the likelihood of a significant roost being present.

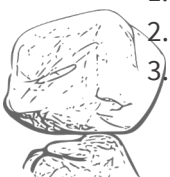
The buildings have **negligible suitability** for use by roosting bats.

### 4.1 Legal and planning context

All species of bats in the UK and their roosts are legally protected by UK and European legislation. The UK the legal protection is summarised as follows:

You will be committing a criminal offence if you:

1. Deliberately\* capture, injure or kill a bat
2. Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
3. Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)





4. Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
5. Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost even if bats are not present at the time

\*In a court, 'deliberately' will probably be interpreted as someone who, although not intending to capture/injure or kill a bat, performed the relevant action, being sufficiently informed and aware of the consequence his/her action would most likely have).

If bats or bat roosts are present in the buildings the proposed demolition would likely result in an offence being committed.

## 5 Impact assessment

The development proposals are for the demolition of a steel framed agricultural building & stables blocks, and the construction of a children's nursery.

The buildings have no features which are suitable, or likely to be used by roosting bats, and have **negligible suitability** for use by roosting bats.

The proposed work is unlikely to impact on bats or bat roosts; and, once completed is unlikely to provide any increase in levels of disturbance for bats locally.

**The proposals are unlikely to impact on bats or bat habitat either during construction, or as a result of the continued use of the site.**

## 6 Required actions

The buildings have negligible suitability for use by roosting bats, no field signs of use by bats were found internally or externally during the inspections, and no further survey work is required with regard to bats.



## 7 References

Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Policy Framework.

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. (3rd 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



## 8 Appendix 1 – Photographs



1 – Building 1 is a large steel agricultural building.



2 – The walls and roof are corrugated steel and corrugated asbestos cement.







3 – The building has no external features suitable for roosting bats.



4 – Internally the walls are not lined and there are no features suitable for use by roosting bats.







5 – All stable blocks have a similar construction.



6 – Base walls are solid blockwork or brickwork, with single layer timber or sheet metal walls.







7 – Roofs have a simple timber structure with sheet metal coverings.



8 – Building 8 is a steel storage container with no suitable features.

