



# AllAboutEcology

Ecological Consultant

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal  
'Low Impact' Ecological Impact Assessment

For

Linburn Hall, Hamsterley  
DL13 3QL



For

Ms Hannah Walton

September 2021

# Document Verification

Document Title	• Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Prepared By	• Tricia Snaith BSc BA PGCE PGCert EST MifL ACIEEM
Authorised By	• Andrew Watson FLS CEnv MICFor CBiol MRSB FArborA LCGI

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	
Issued 30th September 2021	Authorised - A Watson



Revision
-



Revision
-

## Reasons For Revision

Update



Revision
-



Revision
-

# Table of Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b><i>Executive Summary</i></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b><i>Introduction</i></b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Survey Objectives</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Development Proposals</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Site Location</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Surveyors &amp; Timing</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b><i>Legal Status Of Protected Species</i></b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b><i>Survey Methodology</i></b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Pre-survey Data Search (Desk Top Survey)</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Field Surveys</b> .....	<b>8</b>
4.2.1	Habitat Survey .....	8
4.2.2	Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment .....	9
4.2.3	Bat Activity Survey (Presence/Absence Survey) .....	9
4.2.4	Bat DNA Analysis.....	10
4.2.5	Protected Species .....	11
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Site Assessment</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b><i>Survey Results</i></b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Pre-survey Data Search (Desk Top Surveys)</b> .....	<b>13</b>
5.1.1	Designated Sites .....	13
5.1.2	Local Protected Species Data.....	16
5.1.3	Previous Surveys .....	18
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Field Surveys</b> .....	<b>19</b>
5.2.1	Phase I Habitat Survey .....	19
5.2.2	Preliminary Roost Assessment (Bat Building Survey) .....	20
5.2.2	Bat Activity Surveys .....	27
5.2.3	Bat DNA Analysis Results.....	33
5.2.4	Protected Species Scoping Survey .....	34
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Site Assessment</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>6</b>	<b><i>Ecological Constraints &amp; Opportunities</i></b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b><i>Conclusion &amp; Recommendations</i></b> .....	<b>37</b>
Conclusion	.....	37
Recommendations	.....	38
	<b><i>Appendix 1 - References</i></b> .....	<b>39</b>
	<b><i>Appendix 2 – Assessments</i></b> .....	<b>42</b>
	<b><i>Appendix 3- Raw Data</i></b> .....	<b>45</b>
	<b><i>Precautionary Method Statement</i></b> .....	<b>2</b>

## Table of Figures

Figure 1- Existing and proposed plans.....	4
Figure 2 – Position of the survey area using GIS & Google.....	5
Figure 3 – Habitats within 2km of Site.....	15
Figure 4 – Bat records supplied by DBG.....	17
Figure 5 – Site.....	19
<i>Figure 6 – Building elevations.....</i>	20
Figure 7 – western end of the buildings.....	21
Figure 8 – Southern roof.....	22
Figure 9 – Northern elevation.....	23
Figure 10 – Internal ground floor.....	24
Figure 11 – Roof void.....	25
Figure 12 – barn internal.....	26
Figure 13 – Bat surveyor positions.....	28
Figure 14 – Initial survey results.....	29
Figure 15 – Dawn survey.....	30
Figure 16 – new tile position.....	31
Figure 17 – Dawn survey.....	32
Figure 18 – Bat emergence point.....	33

# 1. Executive Summary

We are requested by Ms Hannah Walton to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for bats at Linburn Hall, Hamsterley, Bishop Auckland.

Potential for Protected Species surveys were undertaken at the property.

1.1 It is proposed to refurbish and extend the existing farmhouse and convert the existing barns into living accommodation, including reroofing the area.

1.2 Desk top data searches indicate:

- a. The buildings are present in an area with bat foraging potential, including active farm buildings.
- b. No important sites or habitats are present on site.
- c. Local wildlife records – limited bat records exist, potential for important ground nesting birds.

1.3 Field surveys were carried out on in 2021:

- a. The farm was in a state of mismanagement, the site has undergone improved management practices over the last year – manure spread on fields, muck heaps sorted and cleared, unmanaged tracks improved.
- b. The proposed eastern extension to uptake existing hardstanding.

1.4 Potential for protected species:

- a. Bats – preliminary assessment – the buildings have potential roost features present in both the farmhouse and barns.
- b. Bats – activity surveys identified a Common pipistrelle roost – south east eaves of the main farmhouse, no change in use was noted through the season.
- c. Bats – activity survey – significant foraging was noted around the site, decreased activity around the buildings during summer and autumn (potentially foraging in the adjacent trees not in the covered yard).
- d. Bats – no evidence of bats were observed within the barns due for conversion.
- e. Bat – a bat activity survey in June 2021 identified a Common pipistrelle and a single Whiskered foraging around the farm, woodland and buildings
- f. Other species – barns have the potential to support nesting birds – Swallows. A number of Jackdaw nests were present around the site.

- 1.5 Further survey effort considered necessary:
- a. **A Nature England mitigation licence will be necessary for any additional work on the southern elevation of the main farmhouse roof.**
  - b. No further ecological surveys are considered necessary at this present time.
  - c. The project ecologist will be on call during the proposed development.
- 1.6 Ecological considerations:
- a. The general assessment of the site is one of local wildlife interest.
  - b. Bats – the proposed new roofing has the potential to retain any suitable roosting sites for crevice dwelling bats.
  - c. Bats the proposed eastern extension to include bat roost features to be retained for the life of the structure.
  - d. Swallows – the existing livestock sheds to retain/include potential nesting sites.
  - e. The existing proposals have limited potential to impact on ground nesting birds, the improved management of the farm will improve the conditions on site (outside the remit of this report).
  - f. The enclosed Method Statement should be followed during the proposed works.
- 1.7 The general content of the report will remain valid for a maximum of two years, further surveys will be necessary after this time.
- 1.8 If any BAP species are found during construction the project ecologist is to be informed so that further advice can be provided.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Survey Objectives

We are requested by Ms Hannah Walton to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – Protected Species Survey with reference to bats at the Linburn Hall, Hamsterley.

This report will inform the planning application.

The surveys will:

- Data search with parties holding pertinent wildlife and ecological records.
- Record the habitats present.
- Record incidental evidence of relevant species.
- Evaluate ecological features within the zone of influence.
- Evaluate the likelihood that protected, priority or invasive species are present.
- Identify possible ecological constraints on development.
- Determine appropriate avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures (as far as possible) within the survey area.
- Advice on further Ecological surveys required.

Produce a written report presenting the above information either:

- ‘Low Impact’ Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) Report where sufficient information has been gained to allow an assessment of no significant effects.
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report if further surveys are considered necessary.

### 2.2 Development Proposals

It is proposed to extend the existing living accommodation into adjacent redundant barns.

**Potential for ecological impact** – the following activities have the potential to impact on bat roosts without relevant mitigation.

Any roof renovation or re tiling or repointing of existing structures.

Plans supplied by the architect – September 2021



Figure 1- Existing and proposed plans

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal For Ms Hannah Walton At Linburn Hall, Hamsterley DL13 3QL

30<sup>th</sup> September 2021



2.3 Site Location

Site	Linburn Hall, Hamsterley	
Post Code	DL13 3QL	
Grid Reference	NZ 07638 29421	
Counties, Metropolitan Districts and Unitary Authorities (GB)	County Durham	
Parishes (GB)	South Bedburn CP	
National Character Area	Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe	
Planning	County Durham	

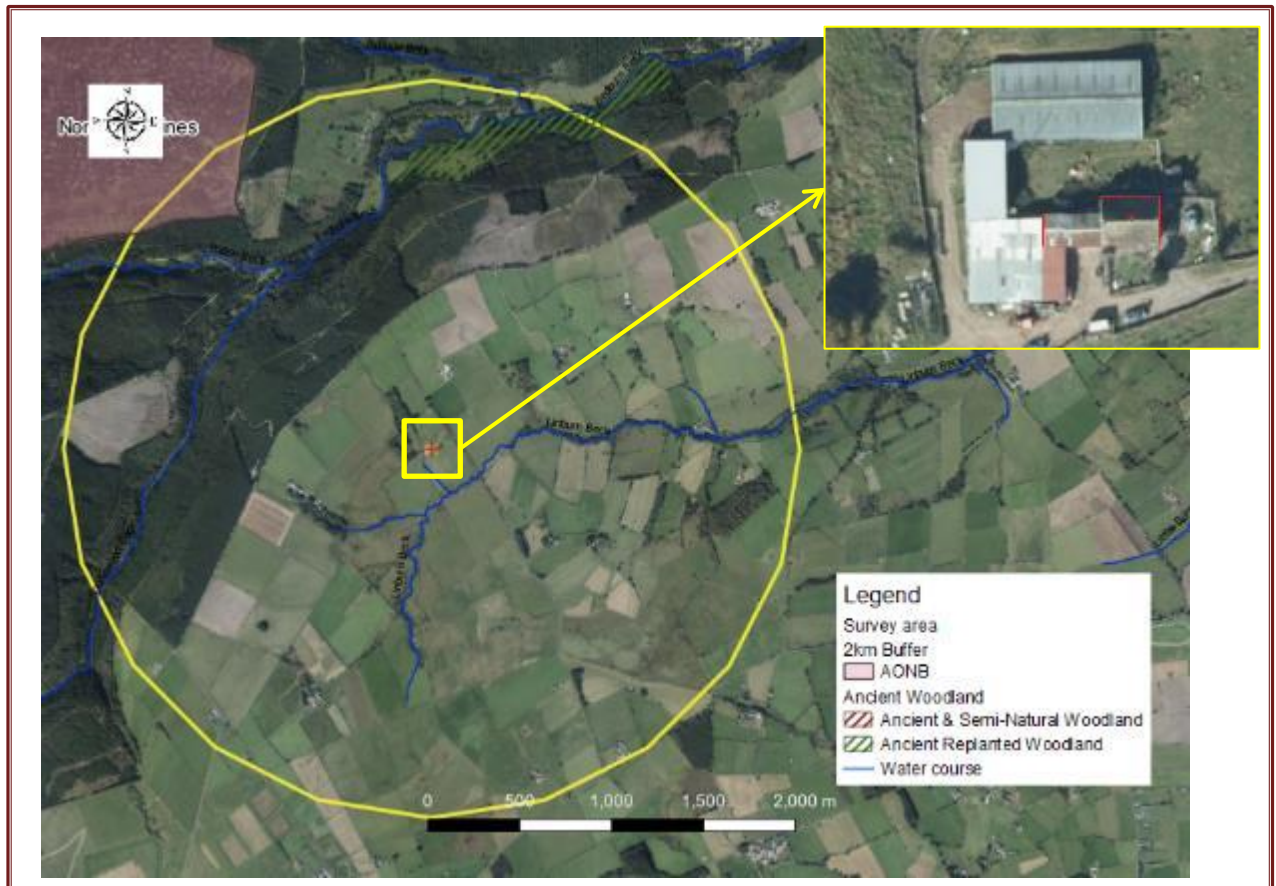


Figure 2 – Position of the survey area using GIS & Google  
The yellow circle indicates an approximate 2km zone

The survey area Linburn Hall, Hamsterley situated to the south of Hamsterley Forest, a rural location of pasture land. Linburn Beck flows south of the property.

## 2.4 Surveyors & Timing

Surveys were undertaken in 2021:

- A bat building and habitat survey on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 during daylight hours by Tricia Snaith.
- Bat activity survey – dusk – June 17<sup>th</sup> – Tricia Snaith, Louise Snaith and Andrew Watson.
- Bat activity survey – dawn – July 8<sup>th</sup> – Tricia Snaith and Louise Snaith.
- Bat activity survey – dusk – September 21<sup>st</sup> – Tricia Snaith and Louise Snaith.

Tricia Snaith holds:

WML-A34-Level 2 (Class Licence) – to survey bats using artificial light, endoscopes, hand and hand-held static nets registered number 2015-14858-CLS-CLS.

WML-CL08- To survey Great crested newts for scientific (including research) or educational purposes – Level 1 (Class Licence), which covers surveying by hand, nets, torches and aquatic funnel traps (including bottle traps) registered number 2015-13610-CLS-CLS.

### Constraints Or Limitations To The Survey Or Report

The ecological status of a site can change over time, surveys can only record what is present at the time of survey.

Bats are known to move between several roosts dependent upon their requirements and may not present at the time of survey. Bats can roost deep in cracks, crevices and cavity walls making them difficult to identify during visual inspections.

The results of ecological surveys are time limited and checking surveys may be required to confirm that the survey remains current.

### 3. Legal Status Of Protected Species

The potential impact of planning decisions on biodiversity and geological conservation need to be fully considered.

#### 3.1 Habitats Regulations – Appropriate Assessment

Developers are required to consider the potential effects on protected habitats. Under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, an appropriate assessment is required where a plan or project is likely to have a significant effect upon a European site, either individually or in combination with other projects.

*“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives”*

#### 3.2 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

It is an offence for anyone to deliberately capture, injure or kill any such animal or to deliberately take or destroy their eggs. It is an offence to damage or destroy a breeding or resting place of such an animal. It is also an offence to have in one's possession or control, any live or dead European protected species.

A person will commit an offence if they deliberately disturb such animals in a way as to be likely significantly to affect:

- (a) The ability of any significant groups of animals of that species to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young, or
- (b) The local distribution of abundance of that species.

It is an offence to deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy a wild plant of a European protected species. It is also an offence for any purpose to possess, sell or exchange such a plant.

#### 3.3 UK & Local Biodiversity Action Plan

UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework in July 2012, covering the period 2011-2020, based on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) published in 1994. The current list of UKBAP priority species and habitats was published in August 2007 and now contains 1150 species and 65 habitats, the framework of which remains in place.

**Note:** This information is a guide only. Please refer to the full relevant texts for more information.

## 4. Survey Methodology

### 4.1 Pre-survey Data Search (Desk Top Survey)

Consultation of pre-existing information on Local Wildlife sites, biodiversity of the area and protected species at and around the survey site was obtained through the following:

- Google or Bing maps to study aerial photography and satellite imagery.
- Multi Agency Geographic Information Centre (MAGIC) a variety of searches are done to deduce the general character of the area and the presence of any relevant wildlife areas.
- Local wildlife groups or the Local records centre for information on relevant protected species and/or bats within a 2km radius (5km for Barn owls) of the survey area.
- Any previous reports containing relevant information.

These are used to determine if the development is within the geographical range and suitable habitat for the considered species.

### 4.2 Field Surveys

#### 4.2.1 Habitat Survey

The field survey of the site was carried out in accordance with the methodology outlined in the JNCC handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey. Each parcel of land was assessed and classified. A walkover survey was conducted; habitat and features were target noted where appropriate.

Plant species were identified and compared to county axiophytes lists. Habitats which were identified as being of particular interest would be studied in more detail. Plant species lists with abundance were recorded for such areas, if necessary. Any Schedule 9 plant species are recorded.

The quality of field data will be affected by the season of the survey, with some plant species only being evident or identifiable in certain seasons. Identification of any of these plants will be noted during the survey, if possible, further surveys may be considered necessary during the vegetative season.

## 4.2.2 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

Preliminary Roost Assessment Survey – Building/tree surveys can be carried out at any time of year, but bats are most likely to be seen or heard in roofs during the summer (mainly maternity roosts) or autumn (swarming/mating roosts) or seen in subterranean areas during the winter (hibernating bats).

### Bat (Building) Survey

A thorough inspection of all the structures is carried out during daylight hours, following the BCT - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines 2016, with prior arrangement of the owners, occupiers, caretakers etc., using access and inspection equipment, such as ladders, binoculars and a good torch:

- External inspection of the structure, looking for bat droppings and other evidence of bat usage, also suitable entry and exit points.
- Internal inspection of the structure focus in particular on areas which provide appropriate environmental conditions for bats.
- Record any signs of bats found on a plan of the structure and collect samples of droppings, bones or feeding remains for comparison with a reference collection.
- A risk analysis is carried out to ensure safe working methods are adopted.
- Appropriate people (owners, neighbours etc.) are asked whether there is any history of bats using the site.

## 4.2.3 Bat Activity Survey (Presence/Absence Survey)

A dusk emergence survey should be undertaken during the period that bats are most active (usually April through to the end of September) and are used to locate roosts in trees, buildings or built structures, as bats are not always found by internal and external inspection surveys.

Emergence/re-entry surveys can also give a reasonable estimate of the number of bats, if any, that are present. The structure will have been surveyed in daylight to assess the features and potential exit locations and the number of surveyors required.

Sufficient surveyors are used so that all aspects of the structure can be viewed at one time and position so that all possible bat exits can be observed at one time and the line-of-sight should not exceed 50m.

Activity surveys are carried out using the following timeframes:

- Dusk - Emergence survey commence ¼ hour before sunset until 2 to 3 hours after sunset.
- Dawn - Re-entry surveys consist of the 2 hours prior to sunrise.

Bat detectors which pick up the echolocation calls and are used to assist in detecting bats. Calls are also recorded for analysis, if necessary, and further confirmation of species and abundance. Care should be taken in the interpretation of this data.

Equipment used:

- Handheld bat detectors - Batbox duet and Echo Meter Touch.
- Anabat SD2 bat detectors.
- High power & close focussing binoculars.
- Torches including a Cluson high power torch & Petzl head torches.
- Endoscope.

Appropriate people (owners, neighbours etc.) are asked whether there is any history of bats using the site.

#### **4.2.4 Bat DNA Analysis**

If necessary, droppings will be collected for DNA analysis.

#### 4.2.5 Protected Species

Additional to the habitat survey, a scoping survey for the potential for the presence of any other European protected species and local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species, (more details can be found on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan website) will be undertaken within the survey area.

The potential of these BAP species being present will be assessed from the desktop surveys, consultation responses, field signs and local knowledge. In particular:

- Trees or buildings present will be viewed for their potential for bat usage.
- Buildings were assessed for their potential for use by Barn owls.
- If present any trackways, regularly used by badger, deer or relevant species, will be mapped.
- Any badger sett evidence will be recorded and assessed as to usage.
- OS maps online is used to identify ponds present within a 500m zone of the will be assessed for use by Great crested newts.
- Wetlands and waterways will be reviewed for their potential use by otter, water voles and White clawed crayfish.
- Bird presence and activity will be noted.



## 4.3 Site Assessment

### General Site Assessment

On the basis of the survey information the site will be categorised using a three-point scale as follows:

- 1= Site of high conservation priority.
- 2= Site of lower priority for conservation.
- 3 =Site of limited wildlife interest.

Any sites rated 1 or 2 will also be categorised using the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management - Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (as detailed in appendix).

### Potential To Impact Upon Sites Recognised Of Local Nature Conservation Importance

As part of the Habitats Directive developers are required to assess the likely impacts of the project either alone or in combination with other projects, upon any European sites and consider whether the impacts are likely to be significant. The Habitats Regulations Assessment is a four-stage process. Stage 1 – Screening of the site will assess the Likely Significant Effect on European sites. European sites collectively include both designated and candidate Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), and Ramsar sites.

### Potential To Host A Priority Habitat Or Species

Each site is assessed for the presence of important habitats or the potential to support priority or important species. As listed in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 - Habitats and Species of Principal Importance in England.

Structures present on site will be assessed for bat roost potential.

Aquatic habitats present will be assessed for their potential to support priority species.

Site assessments will be used to advise on additional survey effort required.



## 5. Survey Results

The raw data where appropriate can be found in the appendix.

### 5.1 Pre-survey Data Search (Desk Top Surveys)

#### 5.1.1 Designated Sites

A search was made using MAGIC (Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside) to look for sites of wildlife interest with a 2km zone of the survey site.

#### Designations

##### Land-Based designations

##### Statutory

- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Local Nature Reserves
- Moorland line
- National Nature Reserves
- National Parks
- Ramsar Sites
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Special Areas of Conservation
- Special Protection Areas
- Biosphere Reserves

##### Historic Non-Statutory

- Registered Parks and Gardens

#### Habitats

MAGIC was used to search for relevant Habitat.

Using the National Habitat Network to identify habitats in the local area.

**Designations****Land-Based Designations****Statutory**

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty	1 Features found – North Pennines
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	2 Features found – Frog Wood Bog, Low Redford Meadows and Bollihope, Pikestone, Eggleston and woodland Fells
Special Areas of Conservation	2 Features found – North Pennine Meadows and North Pennine Moors
Special Protection Areas	1 Feature found – North Pennine Moors

**Historic non-Statutory**

	No Features found
--	-------------------

**Habitats**

Ancient Woodland	1 Features identified
Wood pasture and Parkland	2 Features identified

**National Habitat Network All Habitats Combined (England)**

Used to identify the priority habitats within the 2km search zone.

<b>Habitats Networks – 57 Network maps</b>	
habitats + habitat restoration-creation, restorable habitat, plus fragmentation action, and network enhancement and expansion zones.	
<b>Habitats – 5 Priority Habitats</b>	
Ancient Woodland	none identified
Lowland fens	1 identified
Upland hay meadow	1 identified
Lowland meadows	1 identified
Upland heathland	1 identified
Rivers	3 identified
PHI (Priority Habitat Inventories)	13 identified
<b>Priority Habitat Restoration and Creation – 6 parcels identified</b>	
Restorable Habitat	6 identified
<b>Network Zones – where action may be taken</b>	
SSSI	6 identified
Network Enhancement Zone 1	10 identified
Network Enhancement Zone 2	12 identified
Fragmentation Action Zone	12 identified
Network Expansion Zone	3 identified

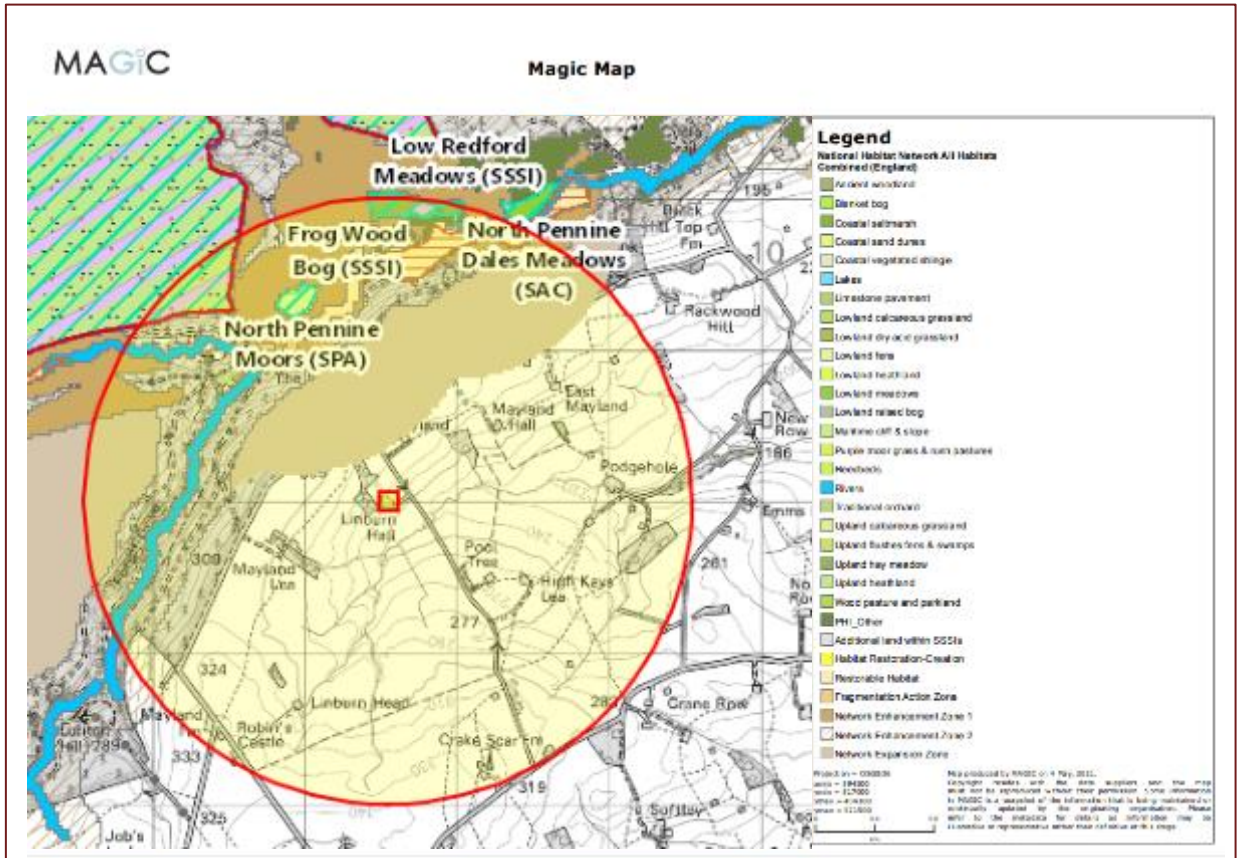


Figure 3 – Habitats within 2km of Site

### 5.1.2 Local Protected Species Data

MAGIC was used to search for relevant Species.

Using European Protected Species Licencing and Great Crested Pond data.

#### European Protected Species Licencing

MAGIC was used to identify the presence of Granted Protective Species Applications 2km of the survey site.

European Protected Species	County Durham
	None identified

#### Great Crested Newt Records

Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns	None identified
Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017-2019	None identified

#### Additional Relevant searches

Important Bird Areas	North Pennine Moors
Important Plant Areas	Moor House to Upper Teesdale IPA
<b>Farmland Birds</b>	
Arable Assemblage Farmland Birds	None identified
Grassland Assemblage Farmland Birds	3 identified

#### Farmland Birds

Species	On site	Within 2km
Black Grouse	Yes	two
Curlew	Yes	three
Grey Partridge	Yes	one
Lapwing	Yes	four
Redshank	Yes	two
Snipe	Yes	two
Yellow Wagtail	Yes	two
Corn Bunting	No	one
Tree Sparrow	No	four

#### Local Record Centre

Due to the size and nature of the site - local record centre data was not considered necessary.

## Local Wildlife Group Data

### Bat Distribution Within The County

Eleven species of bat have been recorded in County Durham, of which eight are known to breed - Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Brown long-eared bat, Whiskered bat, Brandt's bat, Natterer's bat, Noctule, Daubenton's bat, Leisler's bat, Nathusius' pipistrelle and Serotine.

The two most commonly found roosting in buildings are the common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and the soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*). Nathusius' pipistrelle have been observed at a number of wetland sites and the serotine has only been recorded twice.

Durham Bat Group has been requested for an updated data search for the area. We have archived data for some of the area.

### Bat Records From The Area Around Linburn Hall, Hamsterley

There are limited records for the area. The lack of records could be related to lack of surveyor effort. There are no roosts reported within 2km of the site.

Durham Bat Group have bat boxes installed in Hamsterley Forest north of the survey area – Brown Long-eared, Natterers, Noctule and Common pipistrelle have been recorded annually in these.

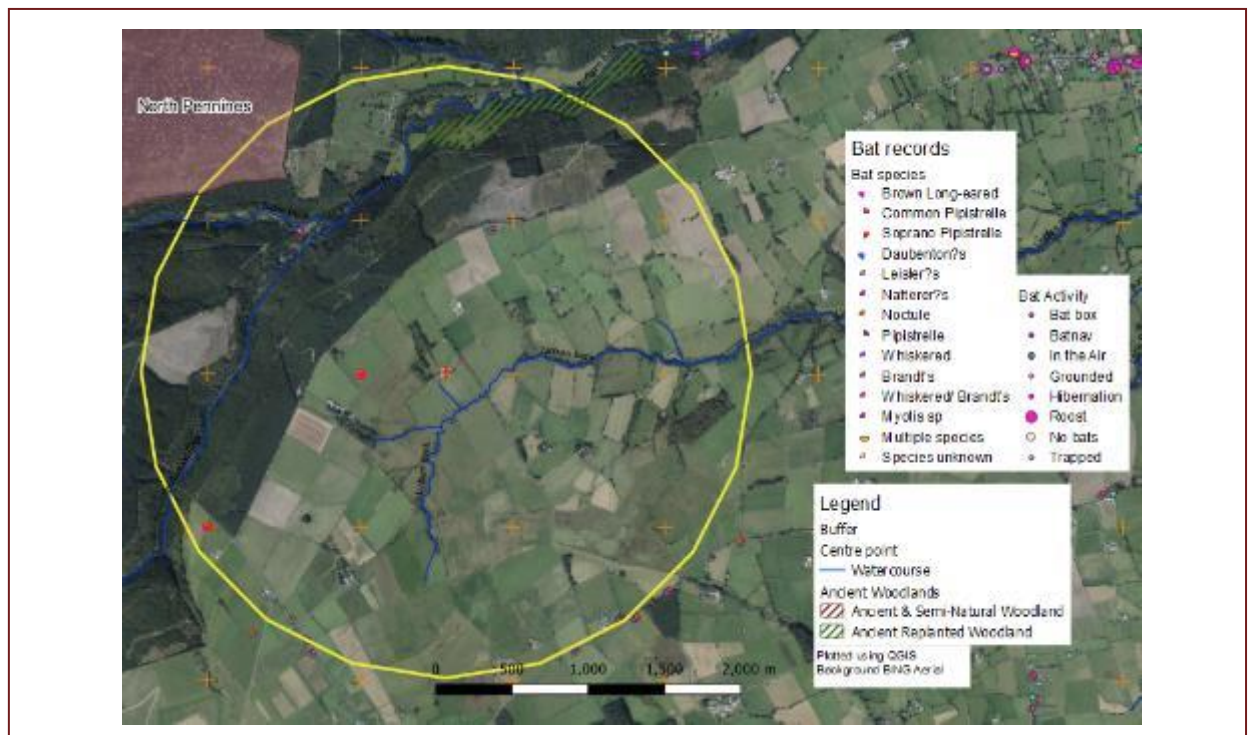


Figure 4 – Bat records supplied by DBG  
Plotted using QGIS.

### 5.1.3 Previous Surveys

No previous surveys have been conducted on site.



## 5.2 Field Surveys

### 5.2.1 Phase I Habitat Survey

A limited uptake of land is proposed, an extension to the east of the existing dwelling. Utilizing existing hard standing/car parking.



Figure 5 – Site

### 5.2.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment (Bat Building Survey)

It is proposed to renovate and extend the existing farmhouse and convert the existing stone barns.

#### General overview

The property was uninhabited at the time of survey. Farmhouse - a stone-built property with tilestone roof. The adjacent stone barns – stone built with a steel sheet roof.

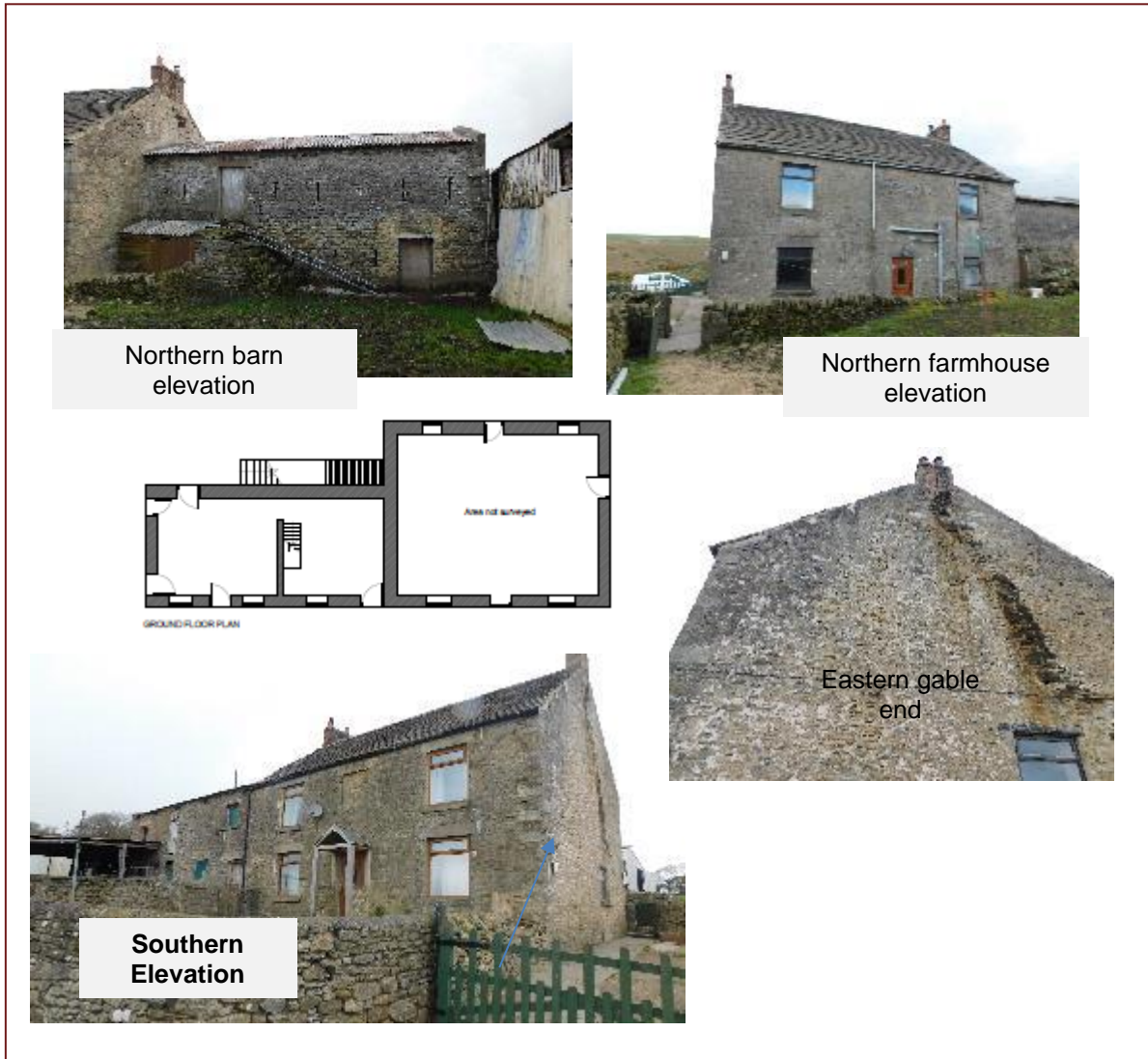


Figure 6 –Building elevations



The western gable of the barns are enclosed within a covered former cattle yard, single storey metal sheds are present. The sheds have several years of farmyard manure present, several feet deep in places.

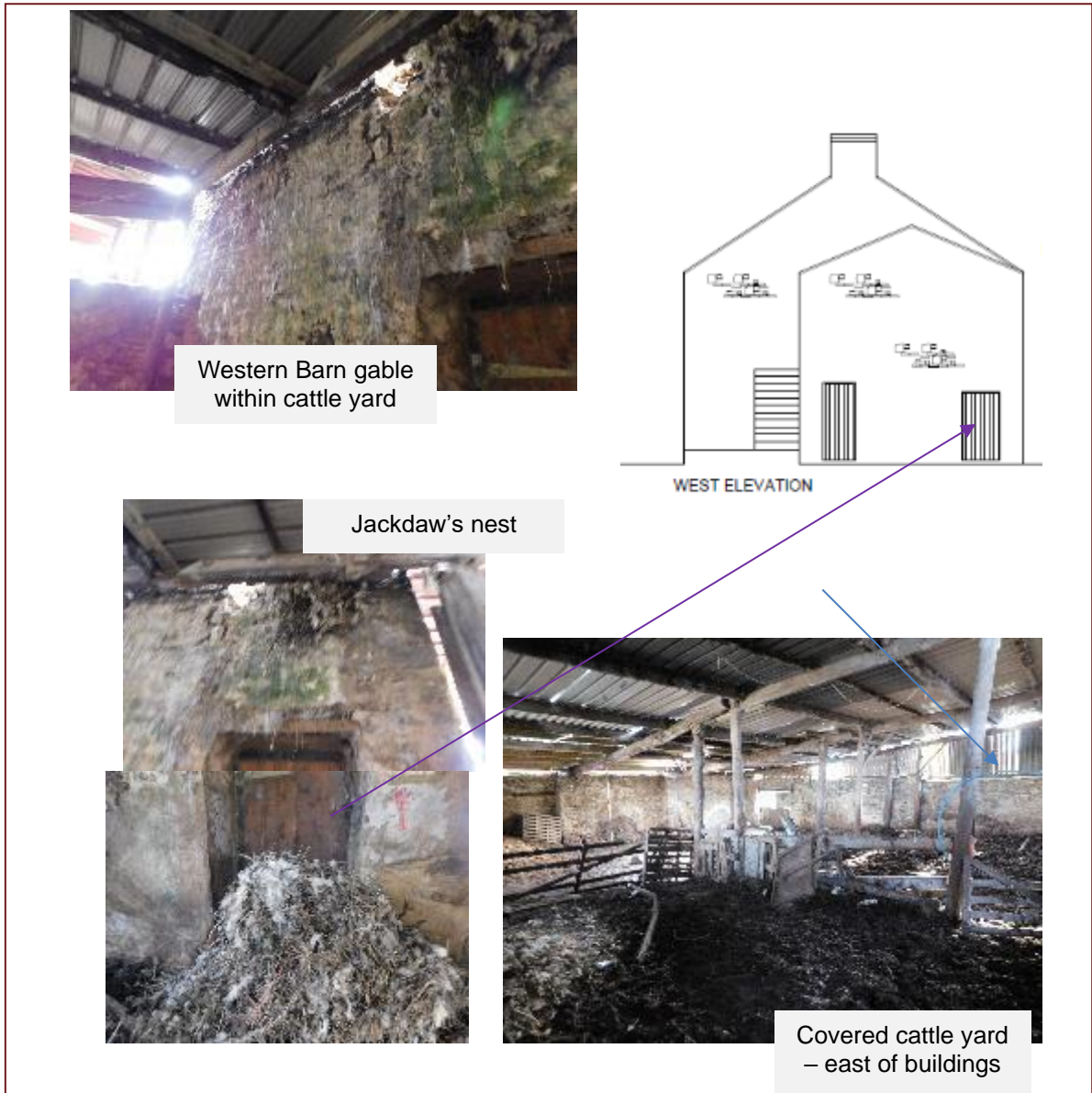


Figure 7 – western end of the buildings

The western gable is in a state of disrepair, with multiple cracks and crevices present, the walls are damp.

**External Features**

The roof on the main farmhouse has several slipped slates present. The gable is generally well pointed, the brick chimney stack has multiple cracks present.

The ridge area of the roof has slipped tiles present, large open gaps are present on the south west area of the roof.

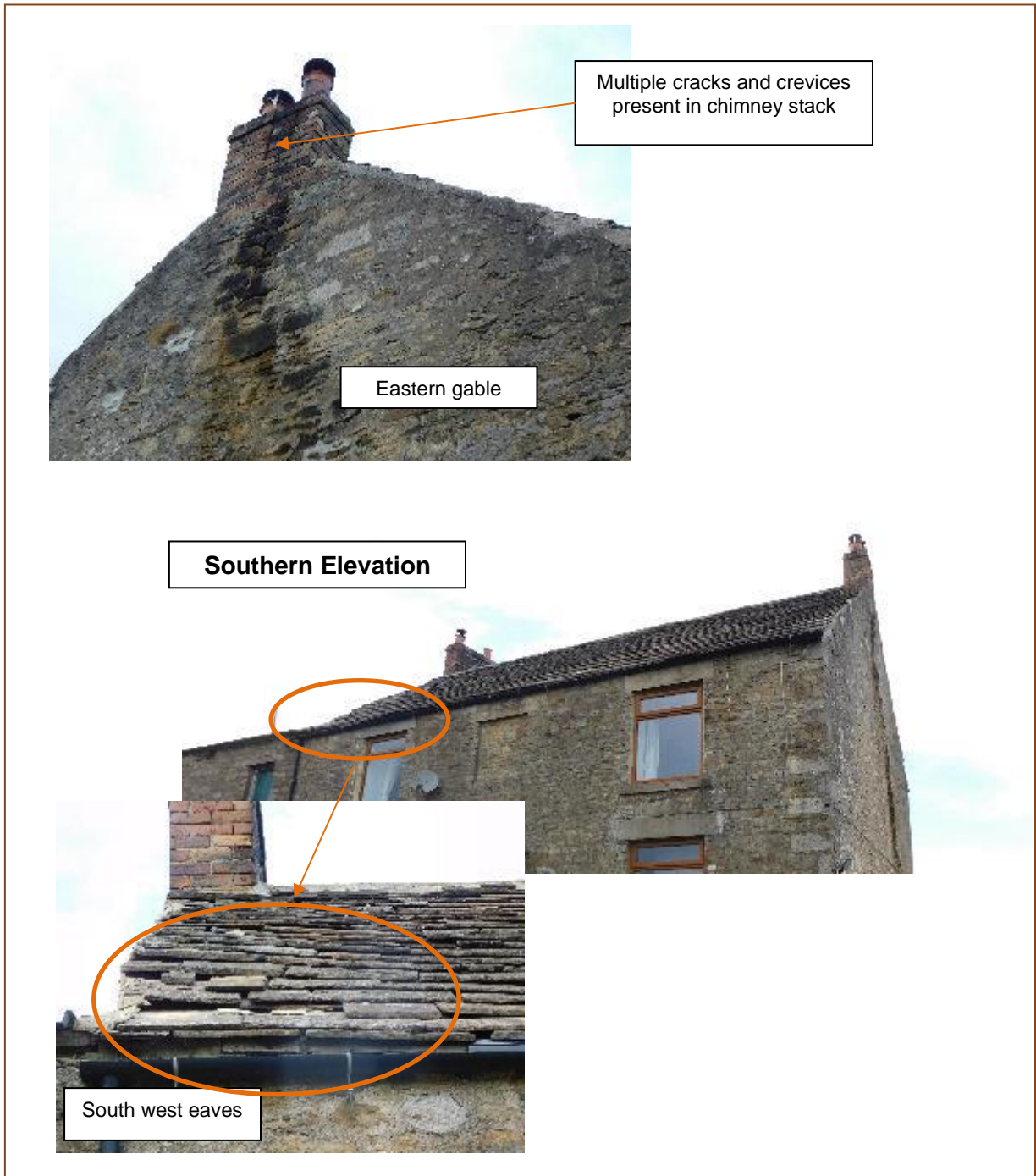


Figure 8 – Southern roof

The western elevation of the farmhouse has cracks and crevices present.

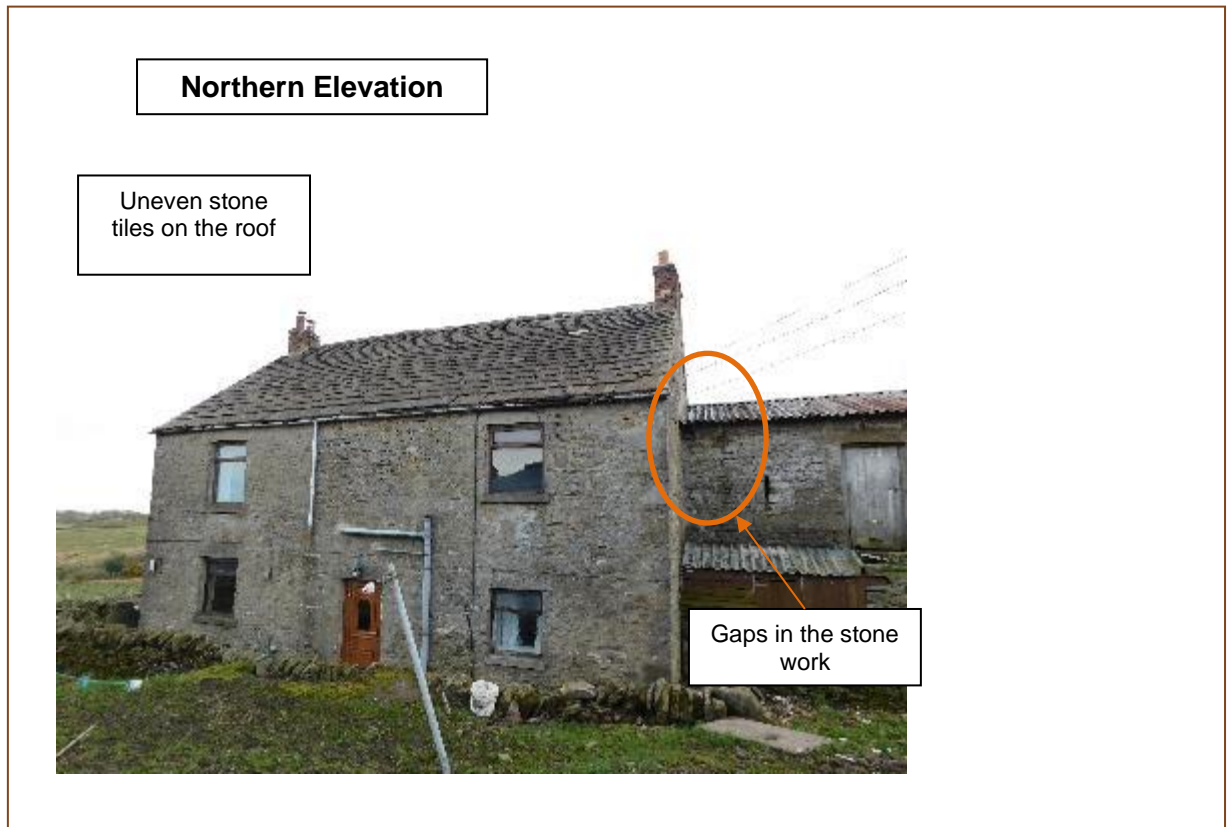


Figure 9 – Northern elevation



## Internal Features

The main farmhouse – survey conducted following initial bat activity survey. Renovation work had commenced, ceilings and internal fixtures had been removed.

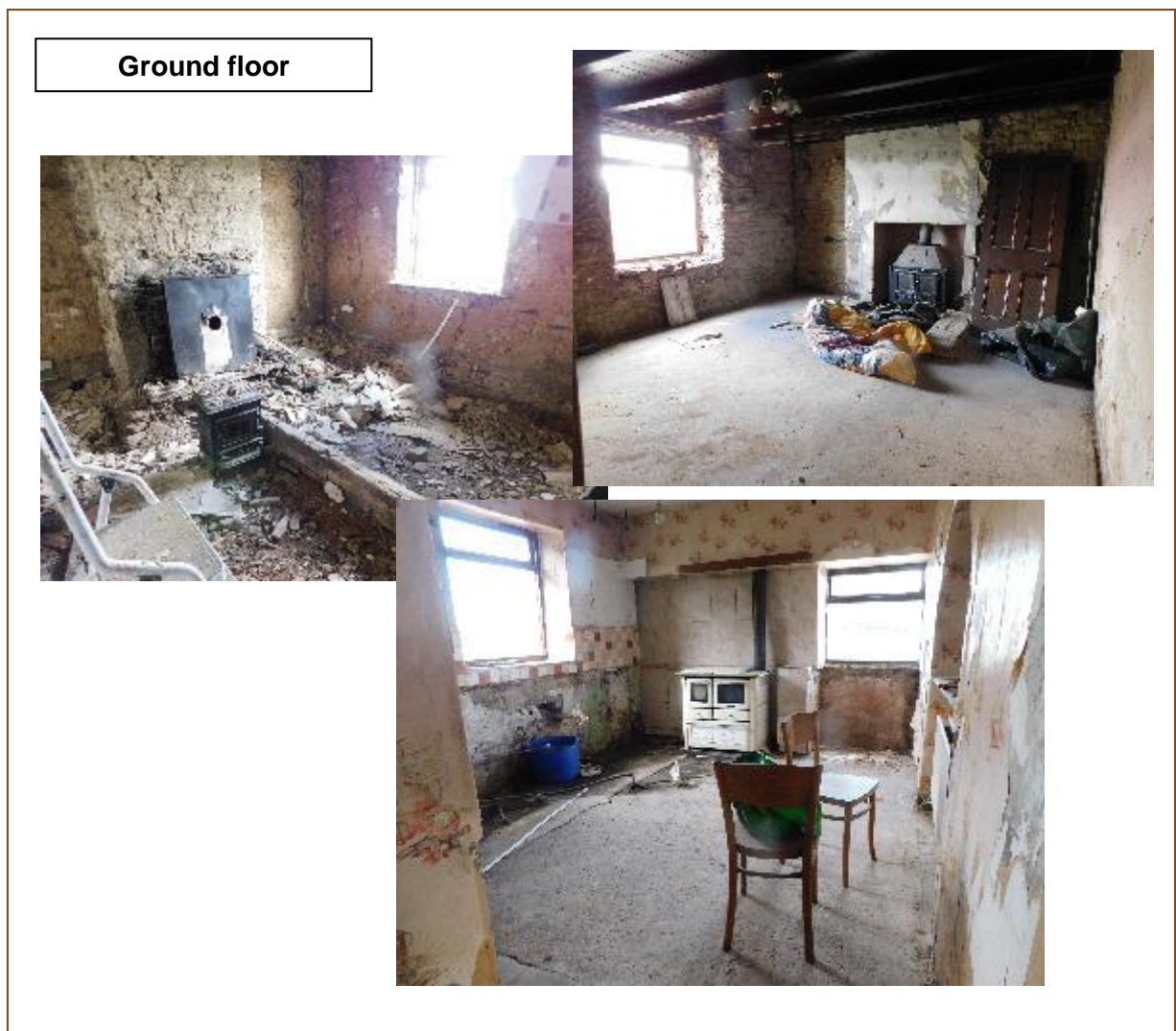


Figure 10 – Internal ground floor

## Roof Features

A large jackdaw nest present covering 20% of the roof space. Water ingress was evident in the south west corner of the roof, the ceiling had been removed – damp rotten material present. Rafters in the area are also rotten.

Internally the roof has a mainly intact mineral felt.



Figure 11 – Roof void

## Barn Internal

An open space, the barn has traditional barn vents present, no evidence of bats present – no droppings or feeding debris.



Figure 12 – Barn internal

### 5.2.3 Bat Activity Surveys

The survey area has potential roost sites present within the site – cracks and crevices present in the gables of the main farmhouse, slipped tiles on the main farmhouse roof – High potential for roosting bats.

Farm barns – no evidence of bats, steel sheet roofing creating wide ranges of temperature, open windows, drafty and cold. The building has low bat roost potential with potential for Brown long eared use as warm up area or feeding.

The buildings around the site have significant levels of farm manure present providing bat foraging areas – undercover. High potential for bat foraging activity.

The wider site has wet, damp areas also providing potential foraging areas.

Ongoing internal refurbishment has continued through out the season, bat activity surveys were spread out to consider potential bat impacts.

Three bat activity survey have been conducted. Three surveyors were present for the initial survey, two surveyors for July and September surveys.

	Dusk	Dawn	Dusk
<b>Date</b>	<b>17 June</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> July	21 <sup>st</sup> Sept
<b>Start time</b>	20:35	02:50	18:55
<b>Finish time</b>	23:15	04:50	21:05
<b>Sunrise/Sunset</b>	21:50	04:38	19:10
<b>Dusk/Dawn Civil twilight</b>	21:46	03:46	19:45
<b>Temp at start of survey</b>	16	15	14
<b>Temp at end of survey</b>	12	15	13
<b>Wind speed</b>	neg	neg	neg
<b>Precipitation</b>	nil	nil	nil
<b>Notes</b>			

#### Overall summary of Anabat recording

Recorder	June 17th			July 8th			Sept 21		
	No of spe	No of trig	No of rec	No of spe	No of trig	No of rec	No of spe	No of trig	No of rec
Nancy	2	28	57						
Sherlock	2	30	96						
Jane	2	66	236	2	5	6	1	2	2



## Initial Dusk Activity Survey – June 17th

To consider bat activity around the site. A single surveyor positioned within the covered yard, to identify any potential emergences on the western gable. Two surveyors were positioned north and south of the buildings. Anabats were positioned to pick up activity around the site, including one inside the barns.



Figure 13 – Bat surveyor positions

No bats were observed emerging on the western gable or northern elevations, Common pipistrelle bats x4 were seen emerging from the main farmhouse roof, south east wall top area.

Bat foraging activity concentrated in and around the muck in the sheds, with bats seen foraging around the area, a maximum of two bats were seen at any one point.

A single Noctule was noted by the southern surveyor & Anabat early in the survey.

A myotis was recorded by the northern surveyor and on the anabat – potentially Whiskered.

During the survey the barns internal were investigated visually for potential BLE use – none observed. No recording made on the anabat positioned inside the barns.



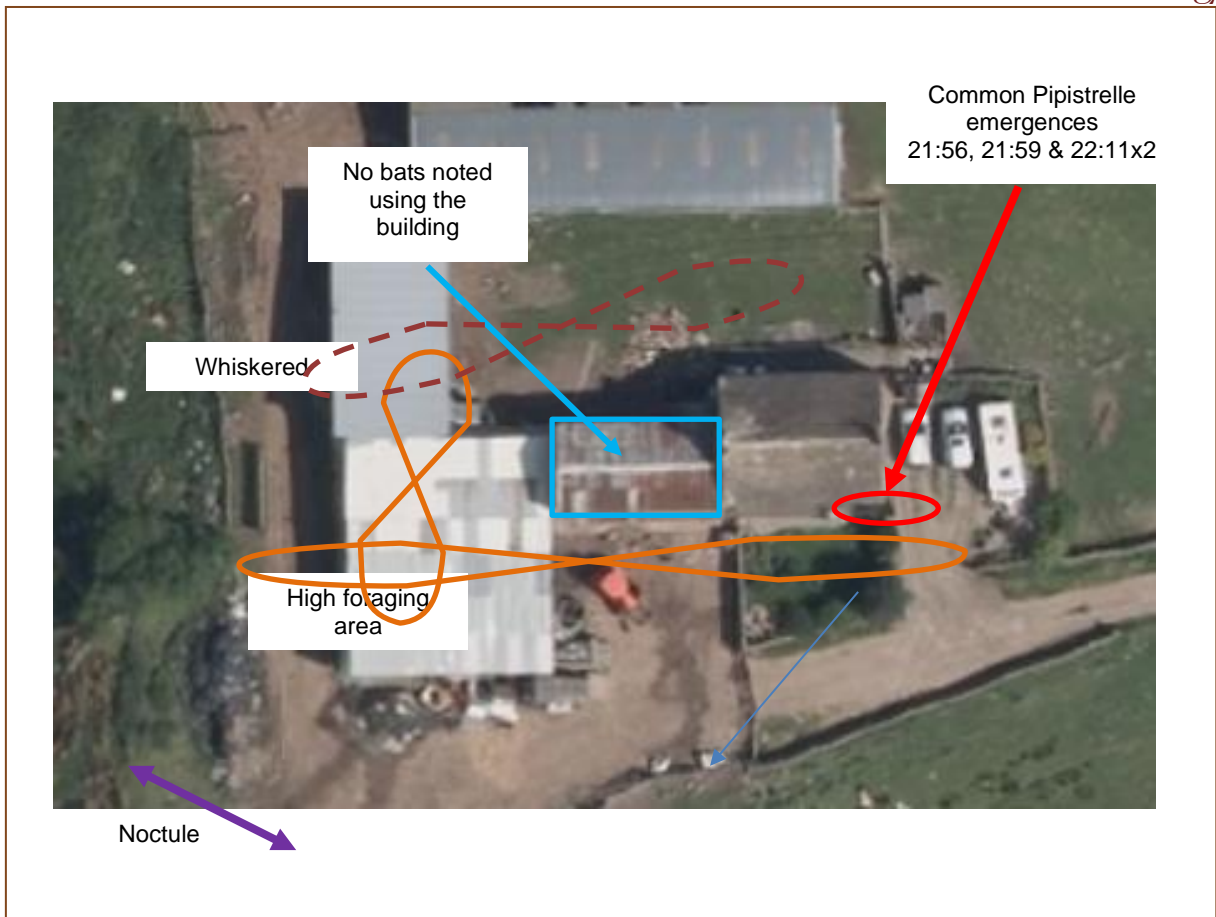


Figure 14 – Initial survey results

Following the initial survey, no further survey effort was considered necessary specifically on the barn.

Significant foraging activity was observed and recorded by a limited, max 4 bats.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Dawn Activity Survey – July 8<sup>th</sup>**

A dawn survey was conducted to advise on potential remedial roof work. Slipped tiles on the south west eave top were allowing water ingress.

Two surveyors present/one Anabat recording.

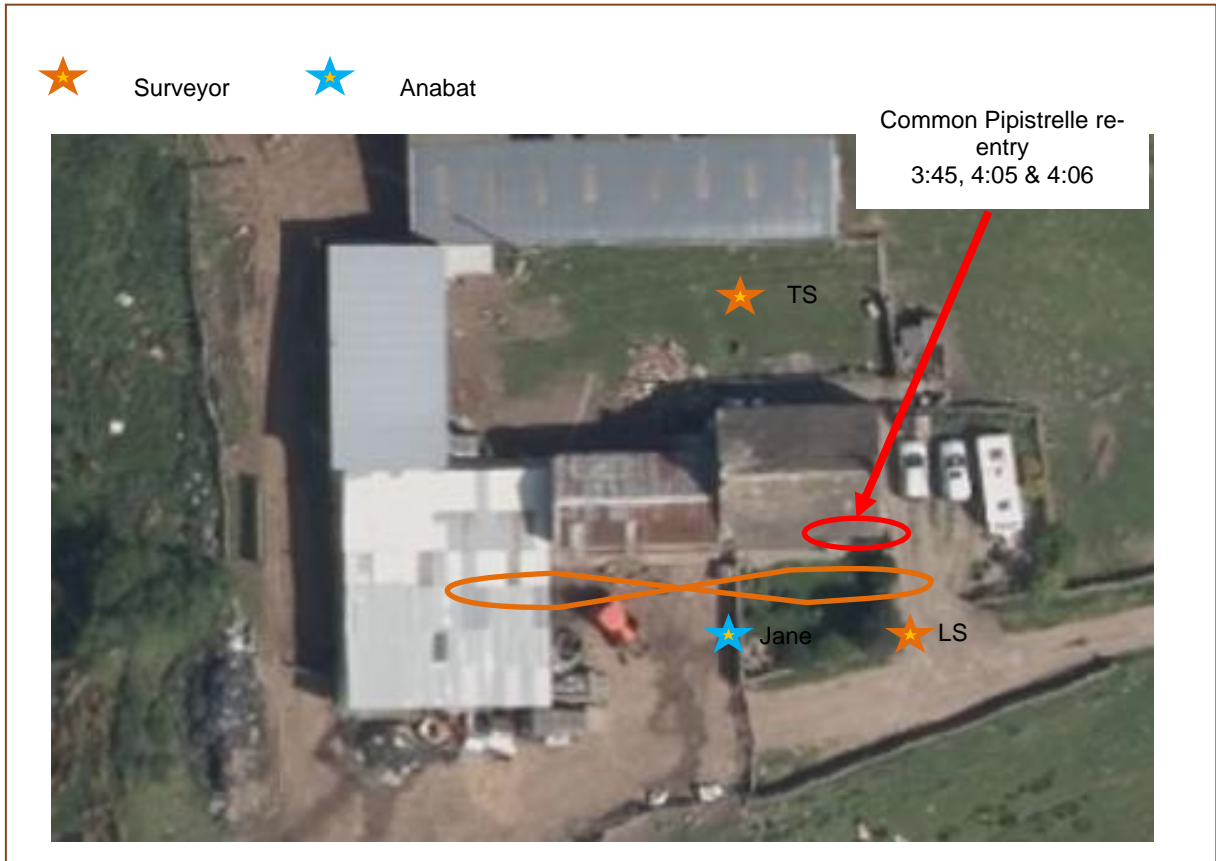


Figure 15 – Dawn survey

Bats were active on site, limited bat activity was noted to the north of the buildings. Four bats were noted re-entering the south eastern corner of the roof, in the vicinity of emergences noted in June.

No bats were noted on the south western area. A single stone slate was slipped between the first and third tiles to prevent further water ingress. This work was carried out under ecological supervision, the endoscope was used to investigate the area prior to the tile being replaced.

Potential bat access retained between the tiles.



Figure 16 – New tile position

**3<sup>rd</sup> Dusk Activity Survey – September 21<sup>st</sup>**

Final dusk activity survey. The survey was conducted late in the season. During the bat season the building had significant internal work completed, the final survey was timed to consider the bat presence.

Two surveyors present/one Anabat recording.



Figure 17 – Dawn survey

Up to 5 bats were noted emerging from the known roost site, the bats emerged silently and left site to the south west.

The covered yard had been cleared of significant amounts of manure. Extensive yard clearance had been undertaken, spreading much of the muck onto the land. Existing roads had been reinstated to allow farm machinery movement.

The area bats were emerging from was investigated, a well-worn crevice is present on the top row of stones, behind the soffit boarding.



Figure 18 – Bat emergence point

### 5.2.3 Bat DNA Analysis Results

No evidence of bats or droppings were seen within the building.

#### **5.2.4 Protected Species Scoping Survey**

The study area was also searched for potential for use by any protected species.

There is limited potential for potential presence of additional protected species to be affected.

The wider area has the potential to support a range of ground nesting farmland birds – unlikely to be impacted by the proposals.

The barns have the potential to support nesting swallows.

### 5.3 Site Assessment

The general assessment is that the land falls into category 3 - that of limited wildlife interest, due to the size of the proposals.

#### Bats

Using the tables in the appendix the buildings have moderate potential to support roosting bats, situated within a habitat with high potential for supporting foraging and commuting bats.

#### Potential Bat Impact

Any reroofing considered necessarily has high potential of disturbing or destroying a known bat roost and bats. A Natural England licence to disturb bats must be obtained if it is necessary to re-roof the property.

The western gable, inside the covered yard has limited potential to support the occasional roosting bats and care is to be taken when repointing the building.

The internal works to the house have been completed – the bat roost has remained in use with no changes over the season.

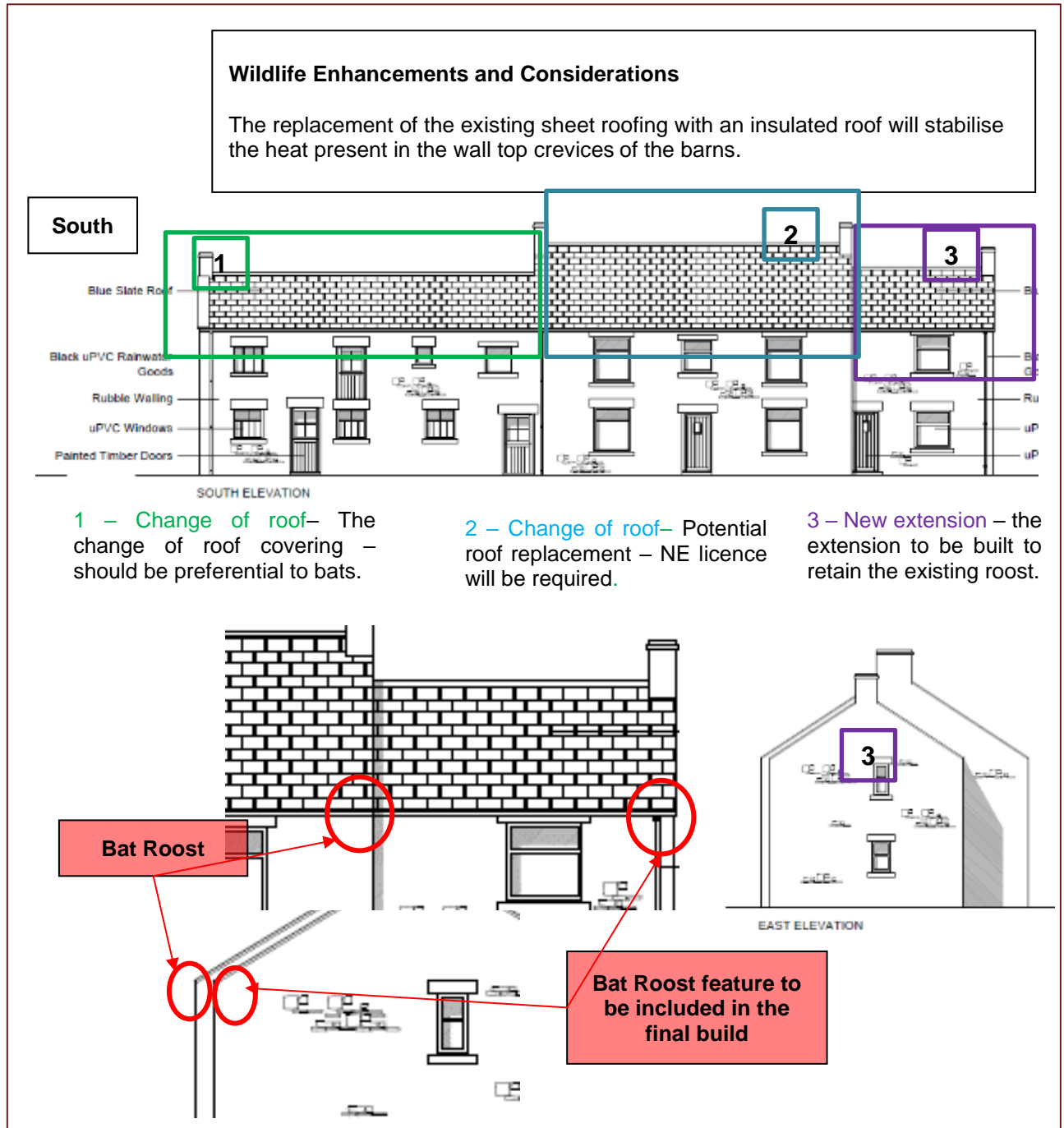
The conversion of the barns is considered to have limited potential to impact on bats.



## 6 Ecological Constraints & Opportunities

**Ecological constraints** – A bat roost has been identified on the south eastern eave of the existing building – Any re-roofing of the existing roof will require a NE licence.

The barns to be converted have potential for nesting Swallows.





## 7. Conclusion & Recommendations

### Conclusion

7.1 Desktop surveys identified the site is:

- a. Within an area with moderate bat foraging habitat and few commuting routes on site – livestock sheds/ covered yards and wet woodland.
- b. MAGIC – no important sites or habitats on site, within an area important for farmland birds.
- c. Limited bat records, bat boxes in Hamsterley Forest have a range of bats present.

7.2 Field surveys were conducted during 2021:

- a. A habitat assessment, June and July – large areas of farm debris around the site, with covered cattle yard deep manure present. The area is being improved over the season – manure spread on fields and waste sorted.
- b. Building extension – to uptake a former car parking area, no important habitat will be impacted.
- c. Building assessment farmhouse - has features present with the potential to support roosting bats.
- d. Building assessment barns – have limited features present to support roosting bats.
- e. Bat activity surveys – a Common pipistrelle roost identified within the south east eaves of the farmhouse.
- f. Bat activity surveys identified Common pipistrelle and a Myotis (Whiskered) bat foraging around the farmyard.
- g. Additional species – None identified the barns have the potential to support swallows.

7.3 No invasive species were identified on site.

7.4 The size and nature of the proposed development is unlikely to significantly impact on the local wildlife.

## Recommendations

### 7.5 Further survey requirements:

- a. Any further work proposed to the main roof will require a Natural England bat mitigation licence.
- b. No further ecological surveys are considered necessary at present.
- c. The enclosed Method Statement should be followed during the development.

### 7.6 The proposals have the potential to include suitable wildlife enhancements:

- a. Bats – the existing roost to be retained.
- b. Bats - the proposed extension has the potential to include bat roost features.
- c. Adjacent byres retain their nesting bird potential – in particular swallows.

### 7.7 Any building demolition, tree or hedge removals considered necessary during the breeding bird season March 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> inclusive will require nesting bird surveys.

For and on behalf of  
AllAboutEcology

Tricia Snaith BSc BA PGCE PGCEst MIFL ACIEEM

# Appendix 1 - References

## 8.1 References

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- National Planning Policy Framework – (updated 19 February 2019).
- CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey – a technique for environmental audit – England Field Unit Nature Conservancy Council 1990 revised 2007.
- Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition 2016.
- Great Crested Newt Suitability Index – Oldham R.S., Keeble J., Swan M.J.S. & Jeffcote M. (2000). Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*). Herpetological Journal 10 (4), 143-155.

## 8.2 Legal Status Of Protected Species - Background

### 8.2.1 The Conservation Of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017

Paragraph 43 - A person commits an offence if they deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European protected species; or deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species impairing the ability of any significant group of animals of that species to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young; or in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong; deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

Paragraph 42 - Schedule 2 lists those species of animals listed in Annex IV(a) to the Habitats Directive which have a natural range which includes any area in Great Britain.

### 8.2.2 Key Principles Of Planning

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated February 2019 to include minor clarifications to the revised version published in July 2018. Setting out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied.

Chapter 2. Achieving sustainable development.

Para 8.c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment;.....helping improve biodiversity....

Para 11 Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Chapter 11. Making effective use of land

Para 117...in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land.

Para 118a), b) c) d)

Chapter 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Para 170 Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: a) to f)

Para 171 to Habitats and Biodiversity par 174 to 177

NB para 214 The policies in the previous Framework published in March 2012 will apply for the purpose of examining plans, where those plans were submitted on or before 24 January 2019. Where such plans are withdrawn or otherwise do not proceed to become part of the development plan, the policies contained in this Framework will apply to any subsequent plan produced for the area concerned.

### 8.3 Terminology

#### Zone Of Influence

The 'zone of influence' for a project is the area over which ecological features may be affected by biophysical changes as a result of the proposed project and associated activities. This is likely to extend beyond the project site.

The zone of influence will vary for different ecological features depending on their sensitivity to environmental change. It may therefore be appropriate to identify different zones of influence for different features. The features affected could include habitats, species, and ecosystems and the processes on which they depend.

The zone of influence should be regularly reviewed and amended as the project evolves. If inadequate information is available a precautionary approach adopted.

#### Bat Roost Type

Roost type	NE definition
Day roost	A place where individual bats, or small groups of males, rest or shelter in the day but are rarely found by night in the summer.
Night roost	A place where bats rest or shelter in the night but are rarely found in the day. May be used by a single individual on occasion or it could be used regularly by the whole colony.
Feeding roost	A place where individual bats or a few individuals rest or feed during the night but are rarely present by day.
Transitional/occasional roost	Used by a few individuals or occasionally small groups for generally short periods of time on waking from hibernation or in the period prior to hibernation.
Swarming site	Where large numbers of males and females gather during late summer to autumn. Appear to be important mating sites
Mating sites	Where mating takes place from late summer and can continue through winter.
Maternity roost	Where female bats give birth and raise their young to independence.
Hibernation roost	Where bats may be found individually or together during winter. They have a constant cool temperature and high humidity.
Satellite roost	An alternative roost found in close proximity to the main nursery colony used by a few individual breeding females to small groups of breeding females throughout the breeding season.

## Appendix 2 - Assessments

### 9.1 Potential To Support Important Species

#### Bats

##### Initial Bat Site Assessments

Commuting & Foraging Habitats	
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Medium	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, treelined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.



Potential Roosting Habitats	
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation). A tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential
Medium	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.

	Minimal	Low	Medium	High
Setting	Inner city	Urban with little green space	Rural upland/ urban green space	Rural lowland
Distance to wetlands	>1km	500m-1000m	200m-500m	<200m
Distance to woodlands	>1km	500m-1000m	200m-500m	<200m
Commuting routes	Isolated by unsuitable development	No clear flyways linking the site to wider countryside	Some potential commuting routes to and from site	Site well connected to surrounding areas with multiple flyways
Recent records				Roost records within 1km

## Building Assessment

	Minimal	Low	Medium	High
Building type	Industrial type / materials	Single small building	Several buildings, large old single structure	Traditional farm buildings, castle, hospital etc.
Storeys	Flat roofed	Single	Multiple	Multiple large roof voids
Materials/condition	Modern sheet materials – steel, concrete frame	Good condition, tight joints	Few cracks and crevices	Notable cracks and crevices
Roof condition	Modern sheet materials	Good condition no gaps, weatherproof	Some access, slates, tiles	Uneven with gaps, not too open
Key features	No features	Very limited features	Some features	Hanging tiles, cladding, barge boards, soffits with access
Residents' information	No bats recorded	'few' bats	'many' bats seen	Known roost

## Appendix 3- Raw Data

Only raw data not already used within the report will be presented here.

### 10.1 MAGIC – Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (including the Ancient Woodland Inventory)

Site Check Report generated on July 01 2021.

The following features have been found in the search area:

Site	Linburn Hall, Hamsterley
Post Code	DL13 3QL
Grid Reference	NZ 07638 29421
Counties, Metropolitan Districts and Unitary Authorities (GB)	County Durham
Parishes (GB)	South Bedburn CP
National Character Area	Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe
Planning	County Durham
SSSI IRZ (yes/no)	No relevant

#### Designations

##### Land-Based Designations

##### Statutory

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty	1 Features found – North Pennines
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	2 Features found – Frog Wood Bog, Low Redford Meadows and Bollihope, Pikestone, Eggleston and woodland Fells
Special Areas of Conservation	2 Features found – North Pennine Meadows and North Pennine Moors
Special Protection Areas	1 Feature found – North Pennine Moors

##### Historic non-Statutory

	No Features found
--	-------------------

##### Habitats

Ancient Woodland	1 Features identified
Wood pasture and Parkland	2 Features identified

**National Habitat Network All Habitats Combined (England)**

Used to identify the priority habitats within the 2km search zone.

<b>Habitats Networks – 57 Network maps</b>	
habitats + habitat restoration-creation, restorable habitat, plus fragmentation action, and network enhancement and expansion zones.	
<b>Habitats – 5 Priority Habitats</b>	
Ancient Woodland	none identified
Lowland fens	1 identified
Upland hay meadow	1 identified
Lowland meadows	1 identified
Upland heathland	1 identified
Rivers	3 identified
PHI (Priority Habitat Inventories)	13 identified
<b>Priority Habitat Restoration and Creation – 6 parcels identified</b>	
Restorable Habitat	6 identified
Habitat Restoration-Creation	none identified
Habitat Creation	None identified
<b>Network Zones – where action may be taken</b>	
SSSI	6 identified
Network Enhancement Zone 1	10 identified
Network Enhancement Zone 2	12 identified
Fragmentation Action Zone	12 identified
Network Expansion Zone	3 identified

**European Protected Species Licensing**

MAGIC was used to identify the presence of Granted Protective Species Applications 2km of the survey site.

<b>European Protected Species</b>	<b>County Durham</b>
Amphibian	None identified
Bats	None identified
Cetacean	None identified
Invertebrate	None identified
Other mammal	None identified
Plant	None identified
Reptile	None identified

## Great Crested Newt Records

Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns		
Number of ponds surveyed	GCN Present	
	yes	No
None		

Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017-2019		
Number of ponds surveyed	GCN Present	
	yes	No
No features found	-	-

## Additional Relevant searches

Important Bird Areas	North Pennine Moors
Important Plant Areas	Moor House to Upper Teesdale IPA
Farmland Birds	
Arable Assemblage Farmland Birds	None identified
Grassland Assemblage Farmland Birds	3 identified

## Farmland Birds

Species	On site	Within 2km
Black Grouse	Yes	two
Cirl Bunting	No	No
Corn Bunting	No	one
Curlew	Yes	three
Grey Partridge	Yes	one
Lapwing	Yes	four
Redshank	Yes	two
Snipe	Yes	two
Stone Curlew	No	No
Tree Sparrow	No	four
Turtle Dove	No	No
Twite	No	No
Yellow Wagtail	Yes	two

## 10.2 Local Data Search

### 10.2.1 Local Records Centre

Due to the size and nature of the site - local record centre data was not considered necessary.

### 10.2.2 Local Wildlife Group

Durham Bat Group has been requested for a data search for the area. The site sits within the following 1km squares.

NZ0530	NZ0630	NZ0730	NZ0830	NZ0930
NZ0529	NZ0629	NZ0729	NZ0829	NZ0929
NZ0528	NZ0628	NZ0728	NZ0828	NZ0928
NZ0527	NZ0627	NZ0727	NZ0827	NZ0927

### Bat Records From The Area Around Linburn Hall, Hamsterley

We have the following records for the area, there are limited records for the area, Hamsterley to the south east is a well surveyed area.

1km square	Description	Bat species	Activity	No
NZ0628	Windy Bank Proposed Wind Farm Site	Brown Long-eared	Flight	
NZ0729	Windy Bank Proposed Wind Farm Site	Brown Long-eared	Flight	
NZ0628	Windy Bank Proposed Wind Farm Site	Common Pipistrelle	Flight	
NZ0729	Windy Bank Proposed Wind Farm Site	Common Pipistrelle	Flight	
NZ1027	Road from Woodland to forest edge	Common Pipistrelle	Foraging	
NY9925	Road from Woodland to forest edge	Common Pipistrelle	Foraging	
NZ0628	Windy Bank Proposed Wind Farm Site	Natterers	Flight	
NZ0729	Windy Bank Proposed Wind Farm Site	Natterers	Flight	
NZ0628	Windy Bank Proposed Wind Farm Site	Noctule	Flight	
NZ0729	Windy Bank Proposed Wind Farm Site	Noctule	Flight	
NZ0827	NZ087274	Pipistrelle	Flight	1
NZ0729	Windy Bank Proposed Wind Farm Site	Soprano Pipistrelle	Flight	



### 10.3 Bat Survey Raw Data

Surveys completed in the 2021 bat activity season:

- Bat activity survey – dusk – June 17<sup>th</sup> – Tricia Snaith, Louise Snaith and Andrew Watson.
- Bat activity survey – dawn – July 8<sup>th</sup> – Tricia Snaith and Louise Snaith.
- Bat activity survey – dusk – September 21<sup>st</sup> – Tricia Snaith and Louise Snaith.

#### 10.3.1 Weather Data

	Dusk	Dawn	Dusk
<b>Date</b>	<b>17 June</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> July	21 <sup>st</sup> Sept
<b>Start time</b>	20:35	02:50	18:55
<b>Finish time</b>	22:45	04:50	21:05
<b>Sunrise/Sunset</b>	21:50	04:38	19:10
<b>Dusk/Dawn Civil twilight</b>	21:46	03:46	19:45
<b>Temp at start of survey</b>	16	15	14
<b>Temp at end of survey</b>	12	15	13
<b>Wind speed</b>	neg	neg	neg
<b>Precipitation</b>	nil	nil	nil
<b>Notes</b>			

#### 10.3.2 Anabat Data Recordings

Recorder	June 17th			July 8th			Sept 21		
	No of spe	No of trig	No of rec	No of spe	No of trig	No of rec	No of spe	No of trig	No of rec
Nancy	2	28	57						
Sherlock	2	30	96						
Jane	2	66	236	2	5	6	1	2	2

#### 1<sup>st</sup> – Dusk survey – June 17th

Three surveyors present - Four Anabats were deployed.

#### Summary

Recorder	No of species	No of triggers	No of records
Nancy	2	28	57
Sherlock	2	30	96
Jane	2	66	236
Timothy	0	0	0

Time	Nancy		Sherlock		Jane	
	Label	Number	Label	Number	Label	Number
09:57					P45	3
09:58					P45	4
09:59					P45	5
10:00					P45	5
10:01					P45	4
10:02					P45	1
10:11					P45	1
10:12			P45	1	P45	4
10:13					P45	5
10:14					P45	5
10:15			Noct	1		
10:15			P45	2	P45	5
10:16					Pip_soc	1
10:16			P45	1	P45	5
10:17			P45	1	P45	7
10:18					P45	5
10:19					P45	7
10:20			P45	2	P45	6
10:21	P45	1	P45	5	P45	6
10:22			P45	4	P45	6
10:22					Whisk	1
10:23	P45	1	P45	5	P45	6
10:23					Whisk	2
10:24	P45	3	P45	2	P45	6
10:24					Whisk	1
10:25	P45	1			P45	5
10:26			P45	5	P45	4
10:27	P45	4	P45	3	P45	4
10:28	P45	4	P45	4	P45	4
10:28					Whisk	1
10:29	P45	3	P45	3	P45	4
10:30	P45	4	P45	1	P45	3
10:30					Whisk	1
10:31	P45	1	P45	1		
10:32			Pip_soc	1		
10:32			P45	4	P45	2
10:33			P45	5	P45	2
10:34	P45	1	P45	6	P45	4
10:35					Whisk	2
10:35			P45	5	P45	4
10:36			P45	4	P45	3
10:37			P45	1	P45	4
10:38					P45	2
10:40			P45	4		

Time	Nancy		Sherlock		Jane	
	Label	Number	Label	Number	Label	Number
10:41	P45	1	P45	6	P45	2
10:42	P45	2	P45	3	P45	3
10:43			P45	2	P45	4
10:44	P45	1	P45	5	P45	5
10:45	Whisk	1				
10:45			P45	6	P45	5
10:46	P45	1	P45	3	P45	5
10:47	P45	3			P45	4
10:48	P45	2			P45	4
10:49	P45	4			P45	4
10:50	P45	3			P45	4
10:51					P45	4
10:52	P45	1			P45	3
10:53	P45	1			P45	4
10:54					P45	4
10:55					P45	4
10:56	P45	4			P45	3
10:57	P45	3			P45	4
10:58	P45	1			P45	3
10:59					P45	3
11:01					P45	1
11:02					P45	1
11:03					P45	4
11:04	P45	3			P45	3
11:05	P45	1			P45	3
11:06					P45	1
11:06					Whisk	1
11:08	Whisk	1				
11:13	P45	1				

**2<sup>nd</sup> – Dawn survey – July 8th**

Two surveyors present - One Anabat deployed.

**Summary**

Recorder	No of species	No of triggers	No of records
Jane	2	5	6

	Jane	
Time	Label	Number
02:55	P55	1
02:56	P55	2
03:49	P45	1
04:05	Noct	1
04:15	Noct	1

**3<sup>rd</sup> – Dusk survey – September 21<sup>st</sup>**

Two surveyors present - One Anabat deployed.

**Summary**

Recorder	No of species	No of triggers	No of records
Jane	2	5	6

	Jane	
Time	Label	Number
20:01	P45	1
20:13	P45	1



# AllAboutEcology

Ecological Consultant

The Old School  
Quarry Lane  
Butterknowle  
Co Durham  
DL13 5LN

Telephone 01388 710481

Email – [tricia@allaboutecology.co.uk](mailto:tricia@allaboutecology.co.uk)

## Precautionary Method Statement

To define methods which will be employed during the works to minimise the risk of an offence being committed to any bats or other protected species potentially present and sets out how bat roosting opportunities will be retained as part of the development activity at:

### Linburn Hall, Hamsterley

In order to avoid harming any bats potentially present, damaging or blocking access to their habitats the following method statement should be followed.

**Copies should be given to the site owner, Architect, Clerk of Works and contractors involved in the building works and on display at the development.**

Should any bats (or any other protected species) be found during any procedures works will be placed on hold and the ecologist Tricia Snaith to be informed (01388710481) immediately for assistance, further survey work and a Natural England Species licence may be required before works can proceed.

Bats, their breeding sites and resting places are protected by law. The law protects them throughout their lifecycle.

### **This document applies to all structures within the development proposals**

All UK bats and their roosts are fully protected by law. To avoid breaking the law by damaging or disturbing bat roosts, resulting in possible imprisonment, fines or confiscation of equipment, certain procedures have to be followed.

You will be breaking the law if you:

- Capture, kill, disturb or injure bats (on purpose or by not taking enough care).
- Damage or destroy a breeding or resting place (even accidentally).
- Obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places (on purpose or by not taking enough care).
- Possess, sell, control or transport live or dead bats, or parts of them.

**Fines of up to £5000 per bat affected and confiscation of vehicles used can be imposed for deliberate or reckless disturbance of bats or damage to a roost site.**



## Bat Roost

A bat roost is interpreted as 'any structure or place which is used for shelter or protection', whether or not bats are present at the time.

Bat roosts can be difficult to locate. It is possible that small colonies may be present within a building and no external signs are visible. British bats vary in size, the smallest being the crevice roosting Pipistrelle with a body the size of a matchbox. This means these animals can roost within the smallest cracks or crevices. When disturbed the bat is likely to be torpid and unable to fly effectively for some minutes during this time, they are vulnerable to injury. During removal of material from the roof and tops of the walls any crevices underneath should be checked to ensure that no bat has been disturbed.



Figure 1 - Examples of bat droppings. If examined carefully, when crumbled exoskeletons of insects can be seen shining.

Common locations for crevice roosting bats within buildings include beneath roof coverings, within mortice joints, rubble fill and cavity walls and between loose stones or bricks.

Other traces that can indicate a past presence of bats are their droppings. These resemble mouse droppings but unlike mouse droppings can be crumbled to dust between finger and thumb.

Droppings may be found on wall tops and beneath slates and tiles on top of any sarking.

## Timing

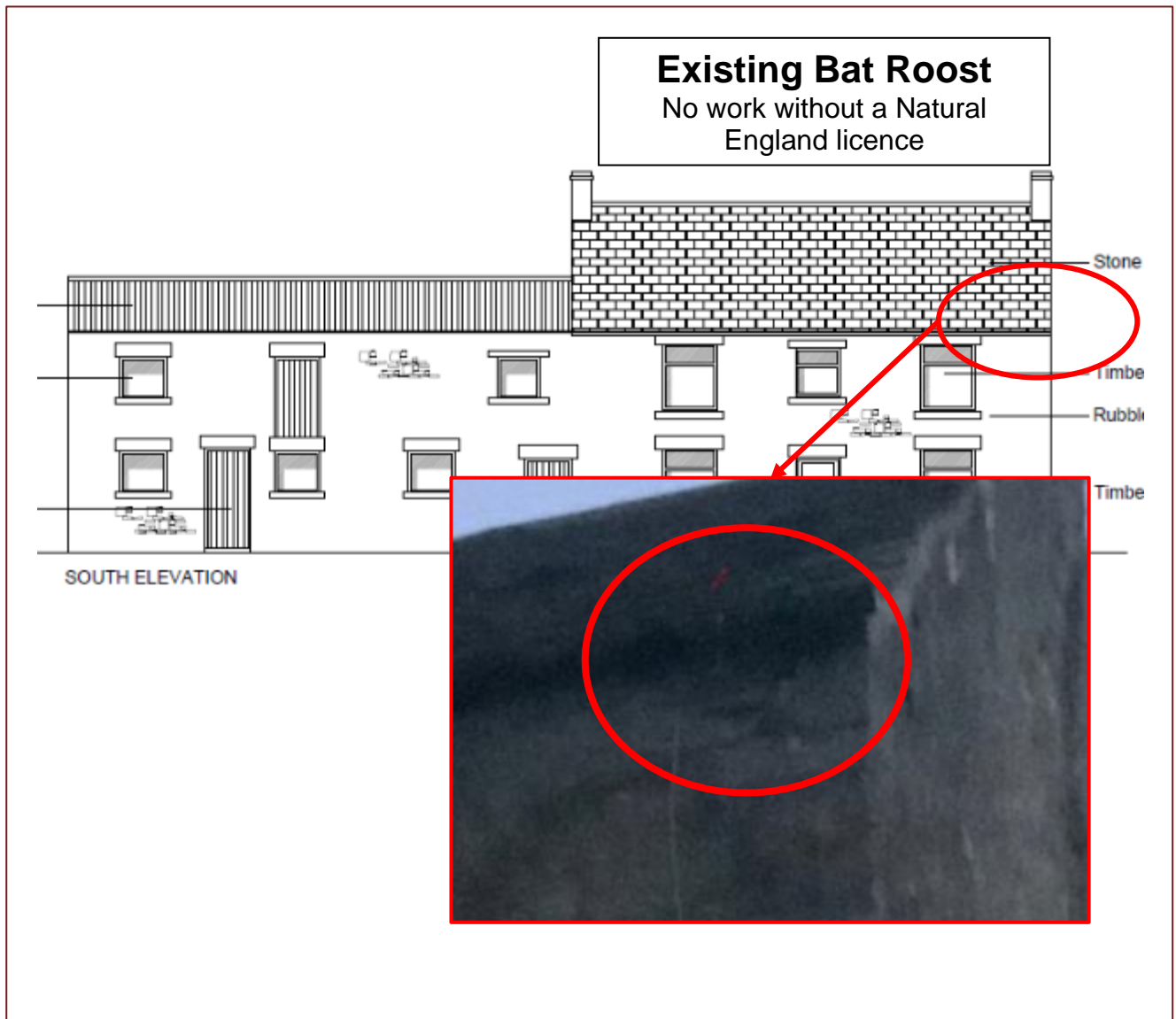
Any development work involving dismantling any stonework and the removal of the existing roof materials will be carried out avoiding the hibernation period (November to March inclusive). Periods of cold weather (below 5°C including night temperatures) will be avoided as any bats present will be in hibernation torpor and be extremely vulnerable.

Although no nesting birds were observed during the survey if the works commence during the bird nesting season (1<sup>st</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> August) the buildings should be checked for active bird's nests prior to demolition.

## Summary Of Bat Survey Findings

**A Common pipistrelle bat roost is present at eaves height, south east main farmhouse.**

No evidence of bats identified within the barns. The building has the potential to support the occasional/transient/single roosting bat and care should be taken during demolition works.



## Work Schedule

It is advised that building works where possible are designed to **avoid both the bat maternity season May – August inclusive and the bat hibernation season November – February inclusive.**

## Prior To Any Work Commencing

All site operatives including contractors and sub-contractor staff will be made aware of particular issues relating to the site and their responsibilities in the event of any bats being found.

## During Any Works

During window replacement all timber to be removed by hand, the space exposed to be investigated for the presence of bats, paying attention to exposed cavity wall areas.

The removal of the existing roof sheets are to be lifted vertically, the space below observed for the presence of bats. Paying particular attention to the areas above the wall tops and the ridge tiles.

## Guidance

If slate or tile roofing is considered then it is advised that bitumen roofing felt or a similar material should be used as an underlay for roofing tiles. It is advised that breathable roofing membranes (BRM) are avoided in particular along the ridge area.

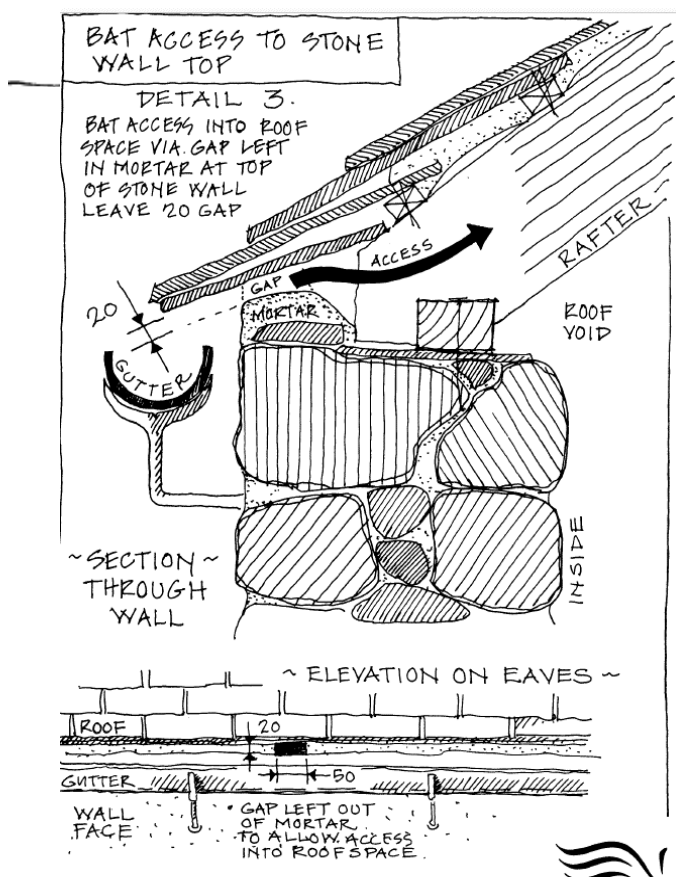
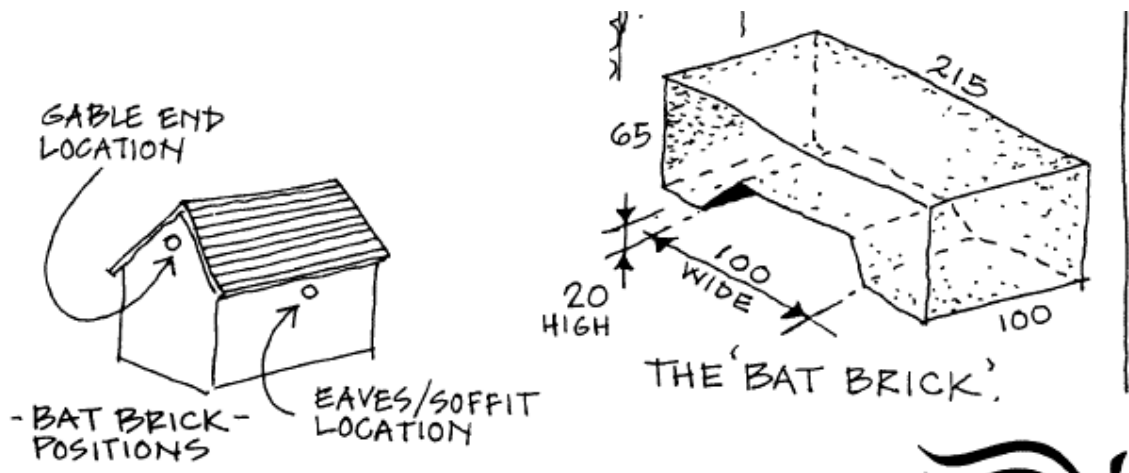
Any timber treatment should follow guidelines TIN212 published by Natural England. Permethrin and cypermethrin compounds are the most 'bat friendly' wood treatments currently available.

## Summary Of Protected Species Survey Findings

**Any bat or protected species found during operations will have the area re-covered or protected and work to cease in that area. AllAboutEcology to be informed (01388710481) immediately, to contact Tricia Snaith the project Ecologist for assistance.**

Ideas for the inclusion of Potential Bat access Points – Originally produced by the English Nature Cumbria Team.

**Bat Roost Features**



SP The above information is for guidance only and may not be appropriate in all circumstances. If in doubt seek professional advice.  
English Nature Cumbria Team: Jinhua House, Market Street, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 2QJ. Tel: 07730 200000