AllAboutEcology

Ecological Consultant

# Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
# 'Low Impact' Ecological Impact Assessment

For

## Hope House, Stanhope Road
## DL12 0SA

For

Adele Fletcher

December 2021
Revision A

# Document Verification

| | |
|---|---|
| Document Title | • Preliminary Ecological Appraisal |
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| Authorised By | • Andrew Watson FLS CEnv MICFor CBiol MRSB FArborA LCGI |

| Preliminary Ecological Appraisal | |
|---|---|
| Issued 23rd April 2021 | Authorised - A Watson |

| Revision A | |
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| Issued 26th August 2021 | Authorised - A Watson |

| Revision B |
|---|
| -Issued 10th december 2021 - Authorised - A Watson |

**Reasons For Revision**

| Revision A |
|---|
| To include Barn Owl and Bat Activity survey July 2021 |

| Revision B |
|---|
| Update proposed plans - alteration to the roof design December 2021 |

| Revision |
|---|
| - |

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# 1. Executive Summary

We are requested by Adele Fletcher to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal at Hope House, Stanhope Road.

An initial ecological assessment, bat and Barn owl surveys were undertaken at the property.

1.1 It is proposed to bring the existing farmhouse back into use, with a small increase in building footprint.

1.2 Desk top data searches indicate:

a. The site is within the North Pennines AONB and its statutory sites.
b. A rural upland setting.
c. No important habitats identified on site.
d. Existing records indicate the presence of Barn owls within 5km of the site.
e. Limited bat data Is available for the 2km of the survey area.

1.3 Field surveys were carried out on in 2021:

a. Initial ecological assessment survey – September 2018, repeated on July 19th 2021.
b. Dusk bat and bird/ barn owl survey – July 29th 2021.

1.4 Potential impact - priority habitats:

a. Any potential impact is predicted to be positive with the improvement in land management now the owners are present on the land, tidying years' worth of agricultural/manure heaps.

1.5 Potential impact - protected species:

a. Bats – a single survey in 2017 identified bats roosting in the chimney stack of the farmhouse, roof tiles have slipped and fallen in the vicinity of the previous roost site. No bat roosts identified during 2021 survey.
b. Bats – the site has limited remaining roost features in a habitat with no direct commuting routes, limited bat activity was recorded in the 2021 survey.
c. Bats – roof work will be carried out following the enclosed Bat Method Statement.
d. Bat – emergence surveys conducted in July, no bats present on site.
e. Barn owls – an active Barn owl nest and owlets was present on site, within the main farmhouse.

f. Birds – Pigeons are present on site.

g. Birds – Curlew and lapwing are present in the surrounding grassland.

h. Other species – the proposals are unlikely to affect any additional species.

1.6 Pre development works are necessary on site:

a. A Barn owl box is to be installed within the barn to be retained in situ for the life of the development.

b. The tile stone roofing to be removed to prevent further roof collapse.

c. The building has been made secure to exclude all birds for one month prior to work starting.

d. Building checked for all nesting birds prior to installation of final board.

1.7 Further survey effort considered necessary:

a. The building to be checked for nesting Barn owls prior to roof removal over the known nest site.

b. No further species or habitat surveys are considered necessary at this present time.

c. The project ecologist will be on call during the proposed development. – Site visited April, May and June 2021.

1.8 Ecological considerations:

a. The general assessment of the site is one of limited wildlife interest.

b. Bats – the inclusion of inbuilt bat features – guidance provided in the appendix.

c. Barn owls – a pair of Barn owls are present on site, a Barn owl box to be installed, in existing barns to the east.

d. The inclusion of bird boxes should be considered in the outbuilding.

e. The enclosed Method Statement should be followed during the proposed works.

1.9 The general content of the report will remain valid for a maximum of two years, further surveys will be necessary after this time.

1.10 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 Adele Fletcher to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – Protected Species Survey at the Hope House, Stanhope Road.

This report is to advise on ecological considerations present on site during necessary building work, also to inform the planning process.

Related planning – DM/17/01198/FPA.

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 (EcIA) Report where sufficient information has been gained to allow an assessment of no significant effects.

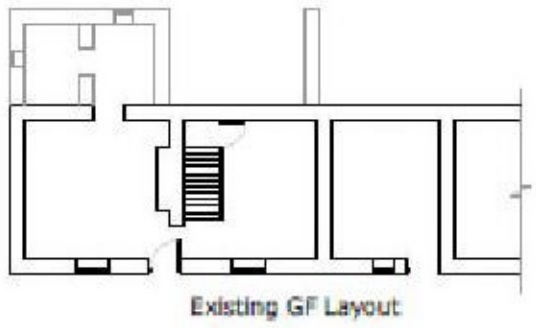
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report if further surveys are considered necessary.

## 2.2 Development Proposals

It is proposed to bring back an abandoned farmhouse into use.

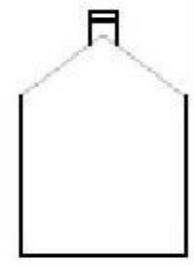
**Potential for ecological impact** – Potential for loss of Barn owl nesting sites and bat roosting sites within the site, without suitable mitigation.

## Existing Buildings

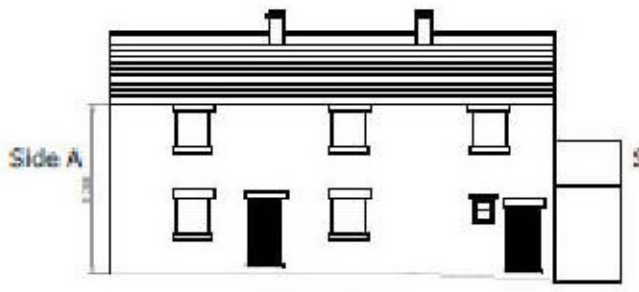


Existing GF Layout

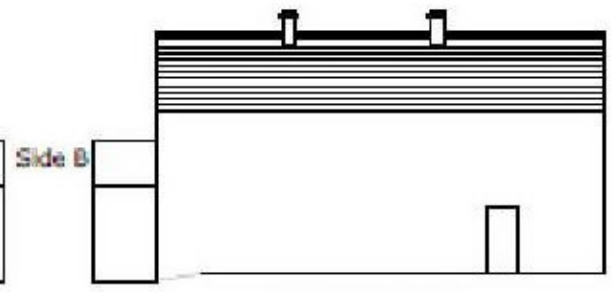
Existing FF & Roof Layout



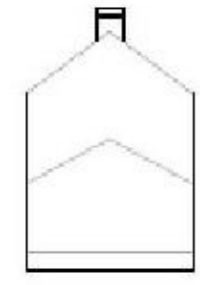
Existing Side A




Existing Front

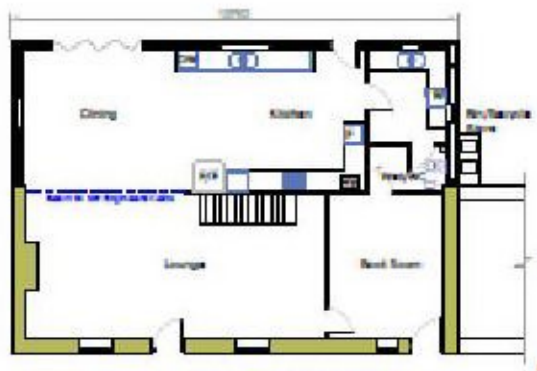



Existing Rear



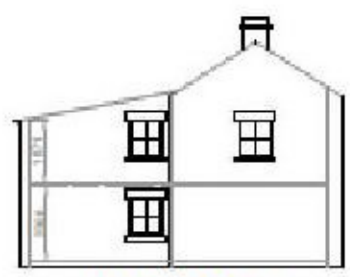
Existing Side B

## Proposed Buildings



Proposed GF Layout

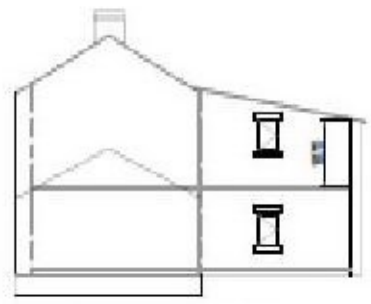

Proposed Rear



Proposed Side A

Proposed FF Layout


Proposed Front



Proposed Side B

Figure 1 – Existing and proposed layouts

## 2.3 Site Location

Hope House, Stanhope Road
DL12 0SA
Grid Ref: NY983278

| | |
|---|---|
| Counties, Metropolitan Districts and Unitary Authorities (GB) | County Durham |
| Parishes (GB) | Middleton in Teesdale |
| National Character Area | North Pennines |

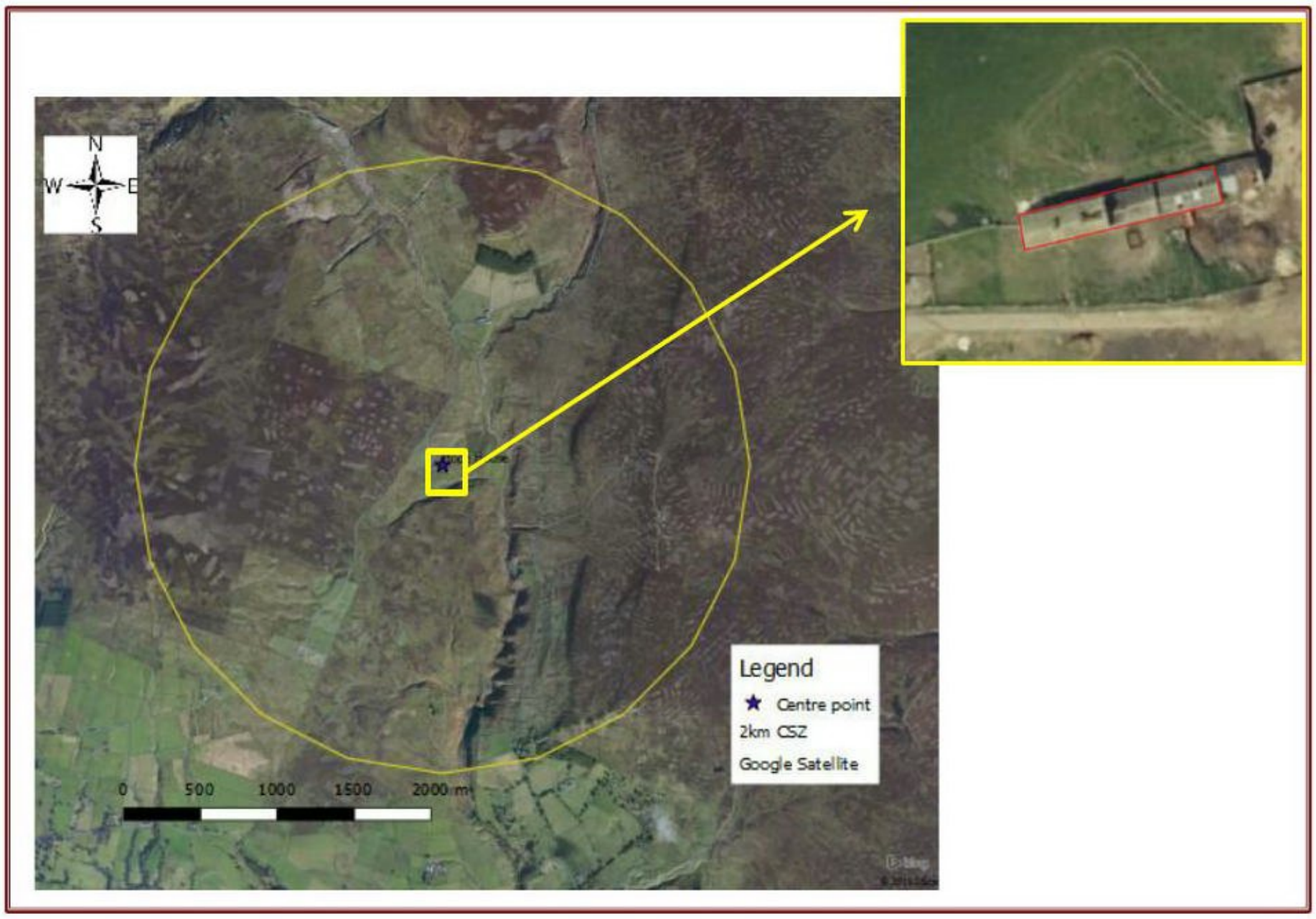



Figure 2 – Position of the survey area using GIS & Google
The yellow circle indicates an approximate 2km zone

Hope House, Stanhope Road is a derelict farmhouse situated in the Great Eggleshope Beck valley, Upper Teesdale, 5km north east of Middleton in Teesdale and 5km north of Eggleston.

Hope House is the farmhouse associated with the farm buildings and surrounding farmland. Pasture land surrounds the farmhouse and heather moorland is predominant within the 2km area.

## 2.4 Surveyors & Timing

Surveys were undertaken in 2021:

- An initial building survey was conducted in September 2018 prior to the initial planning application being finally withdrawn.
- A repeat building survey was conducted on July 19th during daylight hours by Tricia Snaith.
- Bat activity and Barn Owl survey was conducted on July 29th by Tricia Snaith & 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 particularly 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 torch.
- 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 Barn owl surveys

Barn owls are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, it is an offence to:

1. Kill, injure or take any wild bird.
2. Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built.
3. Take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

Barn owls do not intentionally 'build' a nest. However, their nest-places are characterised by a compacted layer of nest debris that is considered to be their nest. Barn owls are considered to be nesting when the female remains on the nest area prior to laying eggs, the male will bring food to the female during this period. Considered to be 10 days prior to laying the first egg.

### 4.2.6 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**

The following features have been found in the search area:

| | |
|---|---|
| Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty | North Pennies |
| Moorland Line | Yes |
| Sites of Special Scientific Interest | 3 Features found – Bollihope, Pikestone, Eggleston and Woodland Fells / Teesdale Allotments / Upper Teesdale SSSI's |
| Special Areas of Conservation | 2 Features found – Moor House-Upper Teesdale / North Pennine Moors |
| Special Protection Areas | North Pennine Moors |

**Historic Statutory**

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

**Non-statutory**

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

**Habitats**

MAGIC was used to identify the presence of the following BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) habitats within 2km of the survey site.

| **Habitat type** | |
|---|---|
| Good quality semi-improved grassland | 7 Features found |
| Lowland Heathland | 1 Feature found |
| Upland Heathland | 94 Features found |
| Blanket Bog | 33 Features found |

| **Other habitats – Priority Habitat Inventory** | |
|---|---|
| Grass Moorland (non-priority) | 72 Features found |

| **Woodland habitats** | |
|---|---|
| National Forest Inventory | 2 parcels totalling 7.42 ha<br>Coniferous – 2 |

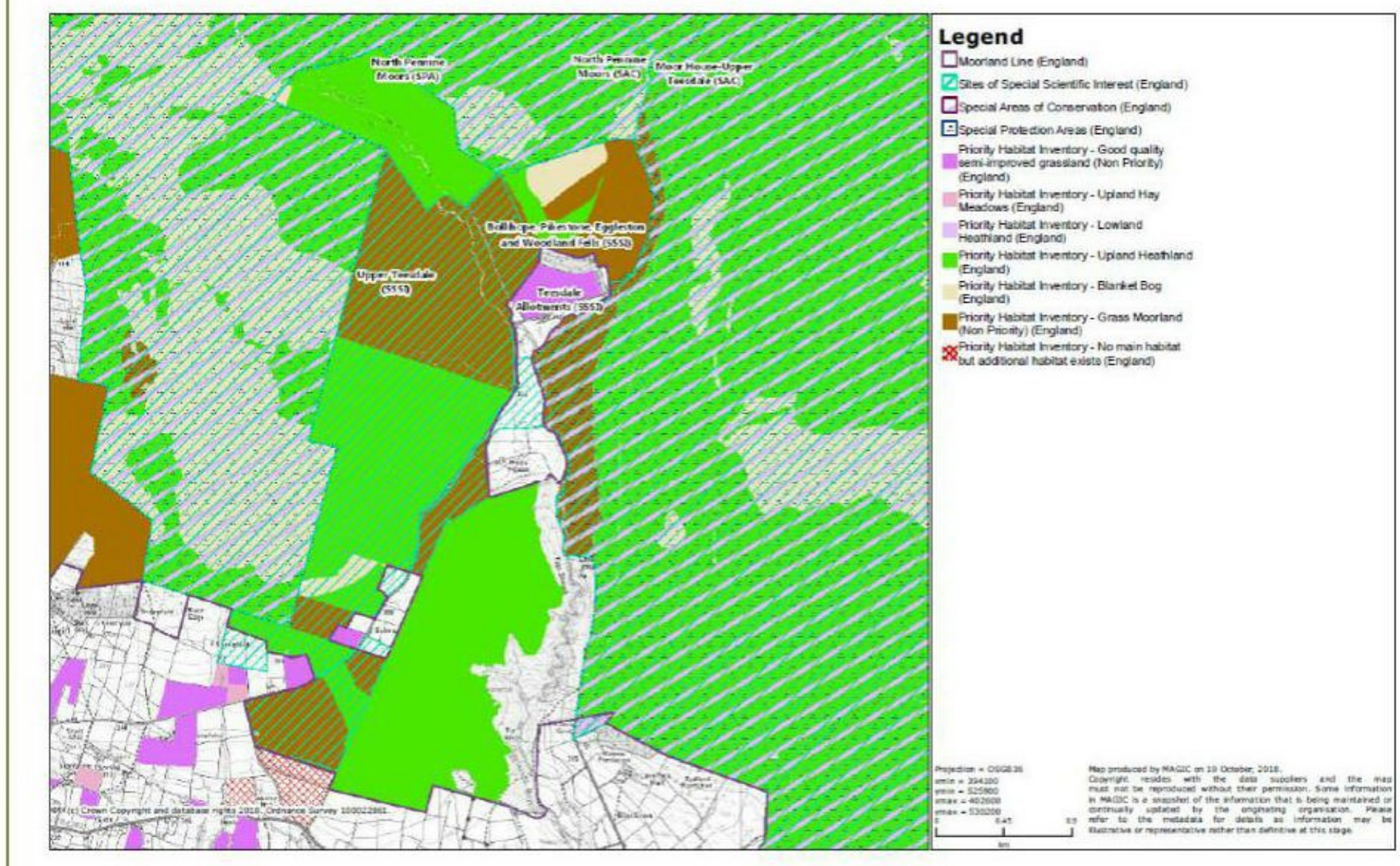



Figure 3 – Designated Areas & Habitat Inventories
2km+ around the survey site using magic maps.

### 5.1.2 Local Wildlife Data

**European Protected Species Licensing**

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

| European Protected Species | |
|---|---|
| | Non identified |

**Local Records Centre**

Due to the size and nature of the site - local record centre data was not considered necessary. The importance of the site is recorded in the designation of the relevant sites.

**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 provided data for the area.

## Bat Records From The Area Around Hope House, Stanhope Road

Roost records within the 2km area. A previous survey in 2017 identified two Common pipistrelles emerging from the chimney area of the main farmhouse.

| 1km square | Description | Bat species | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| **NY9827** | Hope House Farm | Common pipistrelle | 2 |

Bat Map of Records around the area

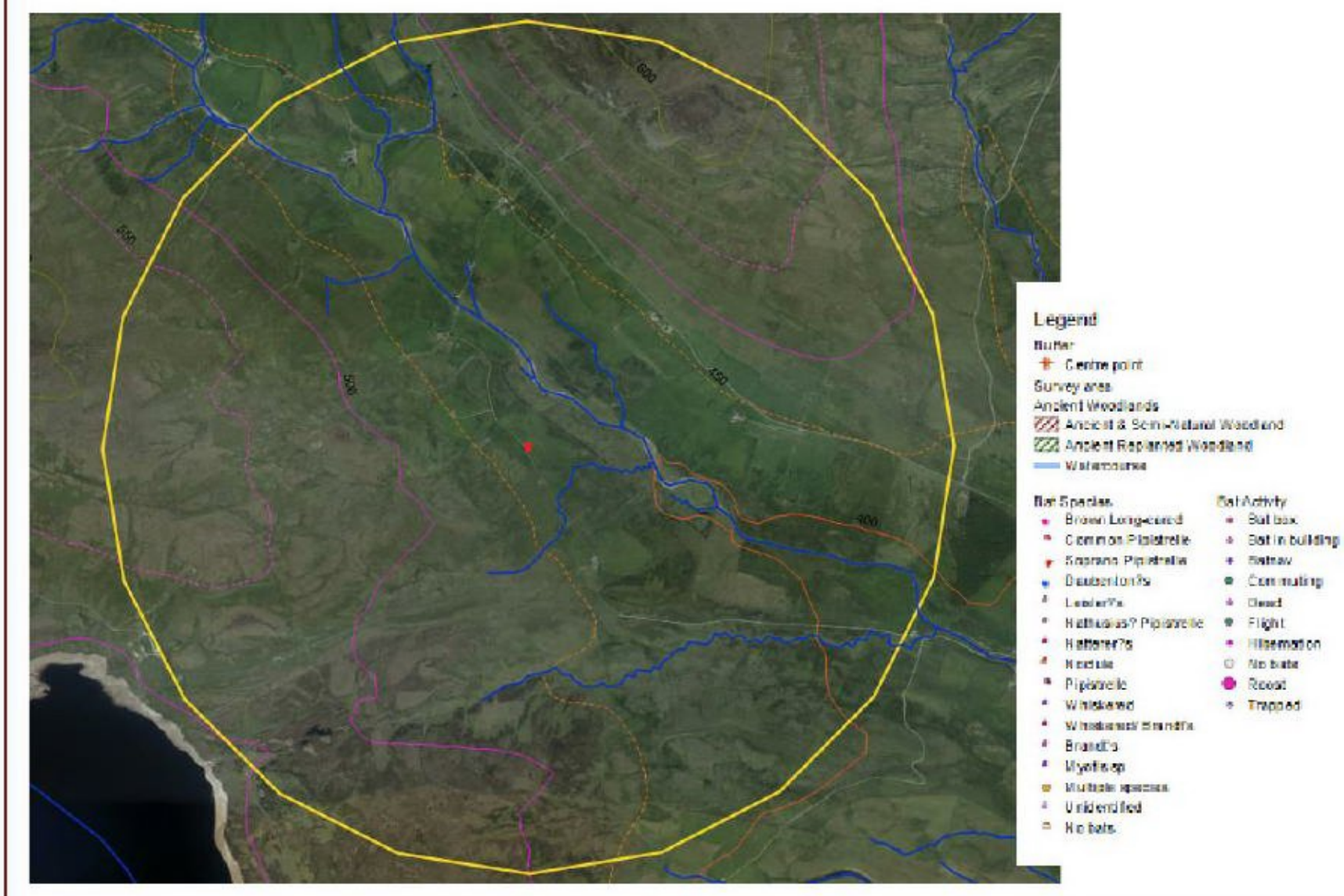



Figure 4 – Bat records supplied by DBG
Plotted using QGIS.

NB – much of the area sits above 500m on Open moorland with limited bat roosting opportunity, few buildings and suitable trees.

Durham Bat Group reports '*Hope House Farm is situated on moorland, with grazing on rough pasture, at an altitude of about 360 metres AOD. To the east the land drops quite steeply to the East Skears gorge, through which the Eggleshope Burn flows in a southerly direction to join the Tees near Eggleston in 1-km square NY9823. To the south the land rises slightly before descending towards the Tees.*

*The River Tees corridor is generally considered to be relatively "bat-rich", at least in the context of North East England. Indeed, all eight of the bat species "normally occurring" in County Durham are recorded in a single 1-km square (**NY9425**) in Middleton-in-Teesdale. This is at an altitude of around 235 metres AOD, but only two kilometres to the west of the area covered by the search.*

*Generally speaking, upland habitat has been assumed to lack bats, though recent surveys in County Durham have suggested that they may be present in sheltered habitats. Survey work around Cowshill (altitude approximately 360 metres AOD) in 2014 recorded the presence of Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle, while in the treeless Rookhope Valley and at an altitude of some 420 metres AOD Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Noctule and Daubenton's bat (identified in the hand) were recorded around Grove Rake Mine (**NY8944**) in 2015/2016.*

*The Eggleshope Burn is sheltered from the prevailing westerly winds in the East Skears gorge. A National Bat Monitoring Programme Waterway Survey was carried out in August 1998 on this water at **NY989249**, about 100 metres south of the area covered by the search. 33 Daubenton's bat passes (and 12 of uncertain identification) were recorded in two hours on the 15th, with 6 Daubenton's passes (and 28 uncertain) during a similar period of time on the 25th. Daubenton's bats were also found on some other upland streams in the Teesdale area in the late 1990s, but these surveys have in general not been repeated since.'*

**Barn Owls**

Barn Owls are known to be present within the Upper Dale, although no records can be identified. Locals regularly see Barn owls foraging over local farmland.

The owners reported a Barn owl nesting within the main farmhouse, although they have not investigated the exact position of the nest.

### 5.1.3 Previous Surveys

Ecological surveys have been conducted previously on site in relation to DM/17/01198/FPA.
Protected Species Assessment Report – June 18th 2017
Protected Species Assessment Report V2 – June (July 2nd 2017)
Preliminary Roost Assessment Report – September 2017

JP Environmental Solutions prepared a Preliminary Roost Assessment Report in relation to planning application DM/17/01198/FPA in draft format (the reports are available through the planning portal) dated September 2017. The report includes activity surveys in August 2017 and September 2017, these surveys identified a small roost present within the buildings.

## 5.2 Field Surveys

### 5.2.1 Phase I Habitat Survey

Hope House, Stanhope Road is a former farmhouse, situated within a complex of farm buildings. A mix of both traditional and modern steel frame surrounded by 'inbye' land. It is proposed to create an extension and new entrance way to the north, along the southern boundary of the grassland. The building work will be conducted from the present farmyard area. A full phase 1 survey was not considered necessary.

The following habitats were identified on site:

- Old buildings.
- Previous garden – tall ruderal vegetation – nettles.
- Bare earth – sheep collecting & sorting pens.
- Farmyard – disturbed vegetation on 'hardcore'.

No invasive species were present on site.

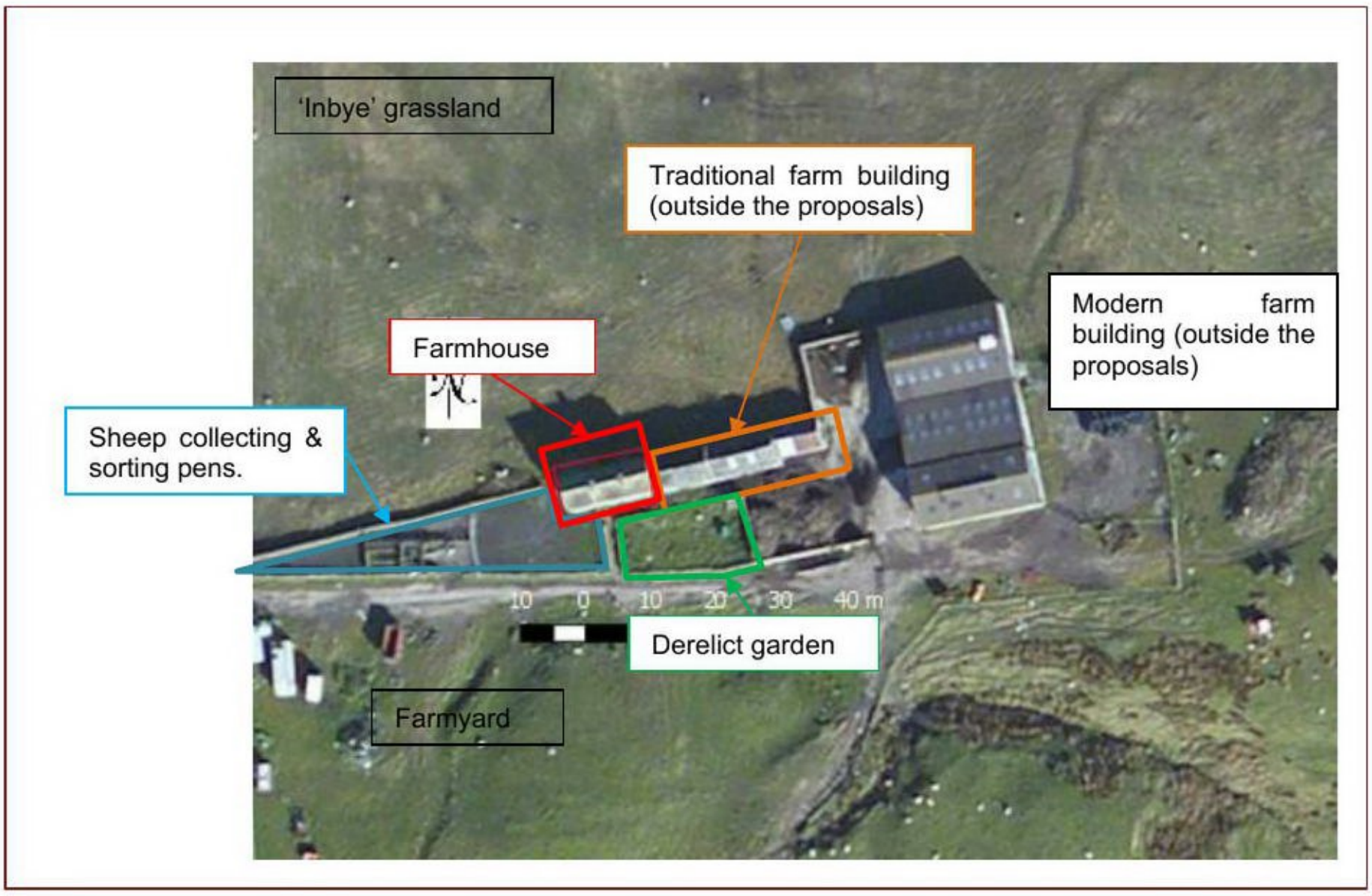



Figure 5 – Habitat around the survey area

### 5.2.2 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

**Bat Building**

A two-storey derelict farmhouse and adjacent stable. Traditionally stone built with a stone slate roof.

The buildings have been uninhabited for over 25 years and in a state of disrepair with much of the roof and gable ends having fallen in. The window panes are missing and most of the internal ceilings and wall linings have been removed.

The footprint of a rear structure is present on the northern elevation.


Figure 6 – Buildings

No obvious roost sites were present, the buildings are riddled with crevices suitable for use. A small area of scattered bat droppings (20x droppings) were present in a discrete area of the building - NB non present in 2021.

## Internal Features

The rooms are exposed to ridge height, no insulation or underfelt is present, many of the rafters and purlins are rotten. Many of the roof tiles are missing.

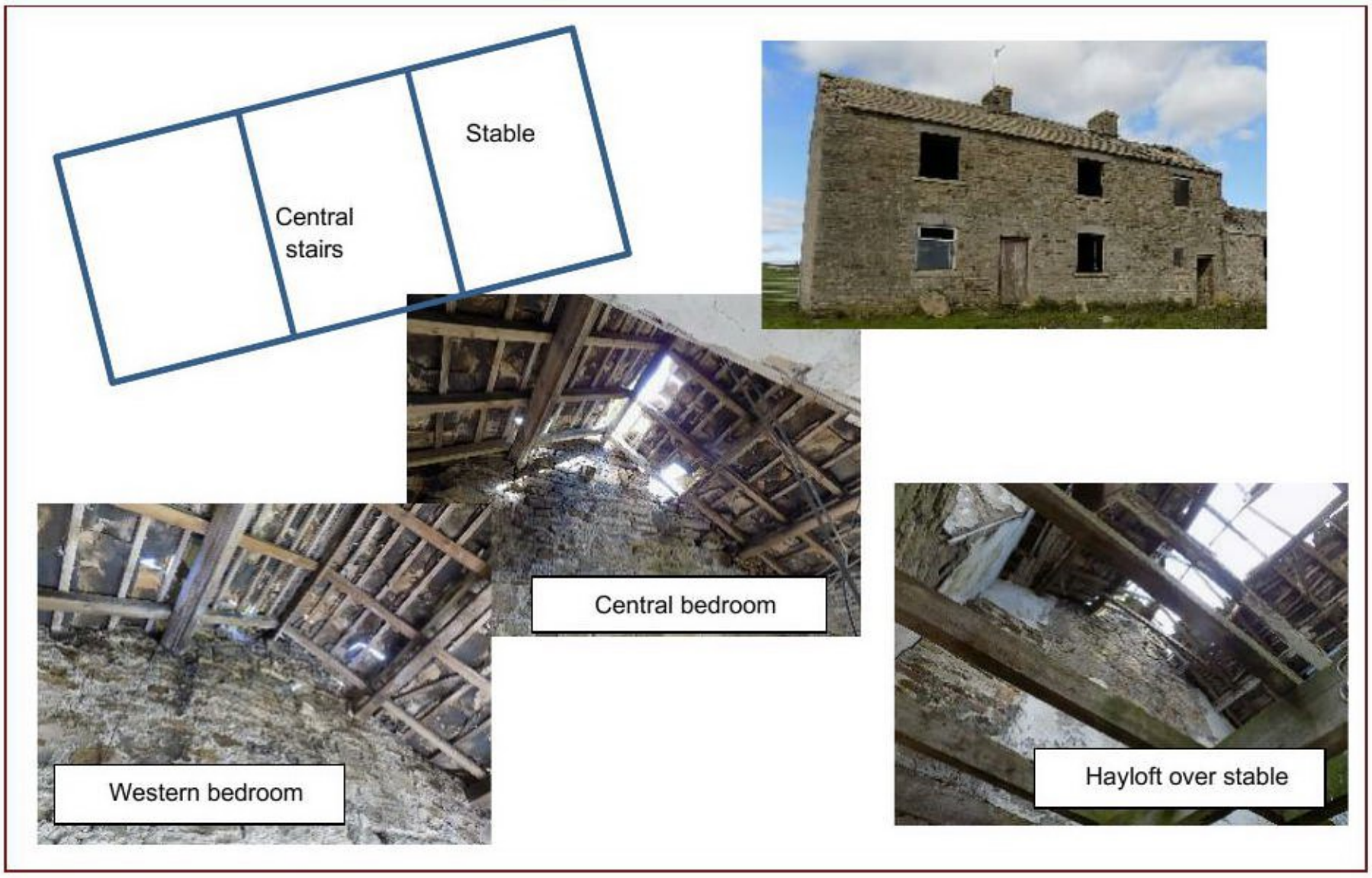



Figure 7 – First floor & Roof spaces

The ground floor ceiling and doors are present, the building has evidence of swallow nesting. No flooring is present in the stable area.

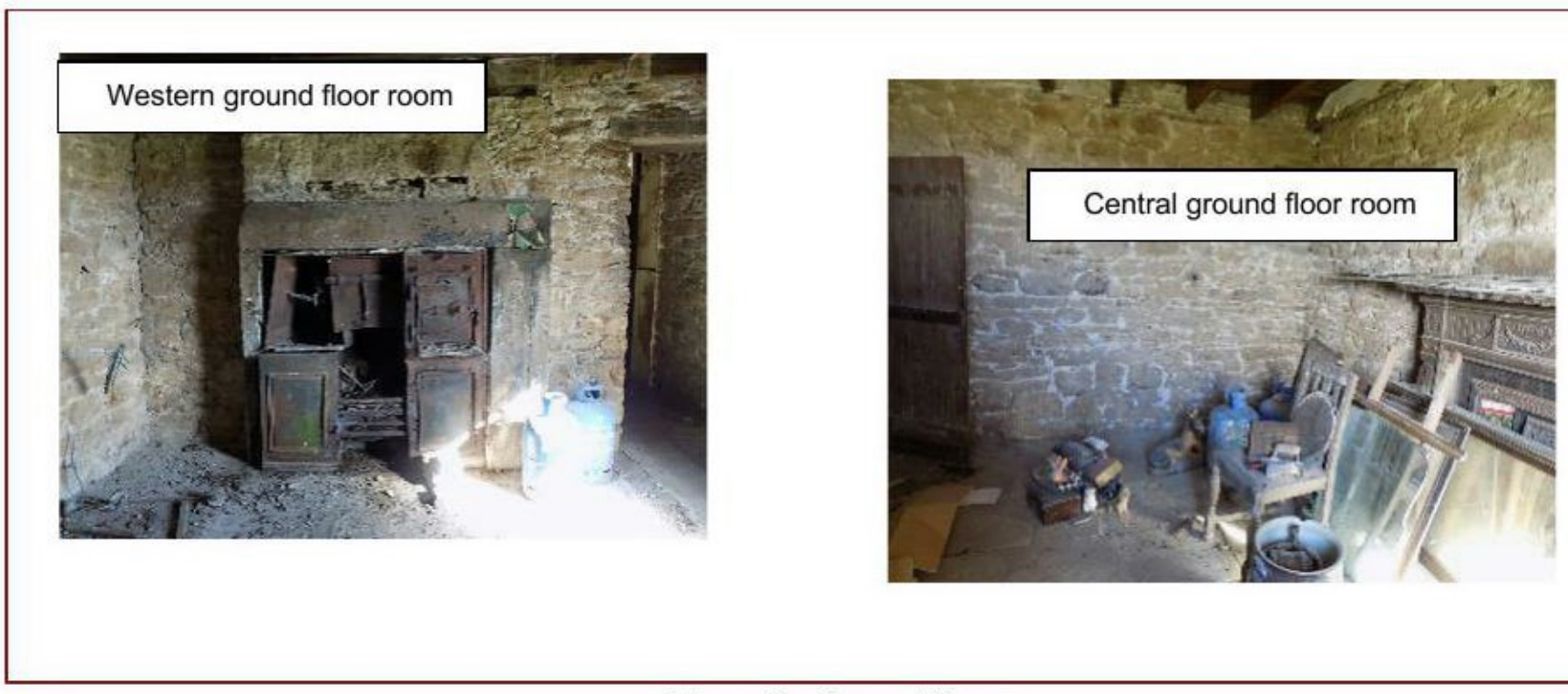



Figure 8 - Ground floor

**Bat Trees**

No trees are present within 500m of the buildings.

**Repeat Building Survey conducted in 2021**

Significant clearance activity has occurred, several metres deep of accumulated manure, from inside buildings and around the yards has been moved.

The roofing over the barn has collapsed and is in an unsafe condition, the roofing around the eastern chimney is falling in. Water ingress on the first floor has rotted most of the flooring.


Figure 9 – Changes since 2018

### 5.2.3 Bat Activity Surveys

The building assessments identified the buildings as having low potential to support roosting bats, this has decreased during the intervening period, most of the building is exposed to the elements.

The building has the potential to support the occasional roosting bat but is not suitable of supporting a significant bat roost/maternity roost.

Previous activity surveys conducted by JP Environmental Solutions conducted an emergence survey on 27th August 2017 – up to three Common pipistrelles were observed emerging from a chimney stack. During the dawn re-entry survey on 3rd September 2017, no bats were observed.

A single bat activity survey has been conducted in 2021,

- July 29th – no bats were identified emerging from the building.

Very limited activity was recorded or seen on site, a noctule was heard to the east of the site, with occasional Soprano pipistrelle.

The activity survey identified Barn owl activity.

The Barn owl was known to be present on site, emerging at dusk.

[redacted]

### 5.2.4 Bat DNA Analysis Results

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

No bat droppings have been sent for analysis. A small number of droppings have been observed in the buildings, in a single discrete area.

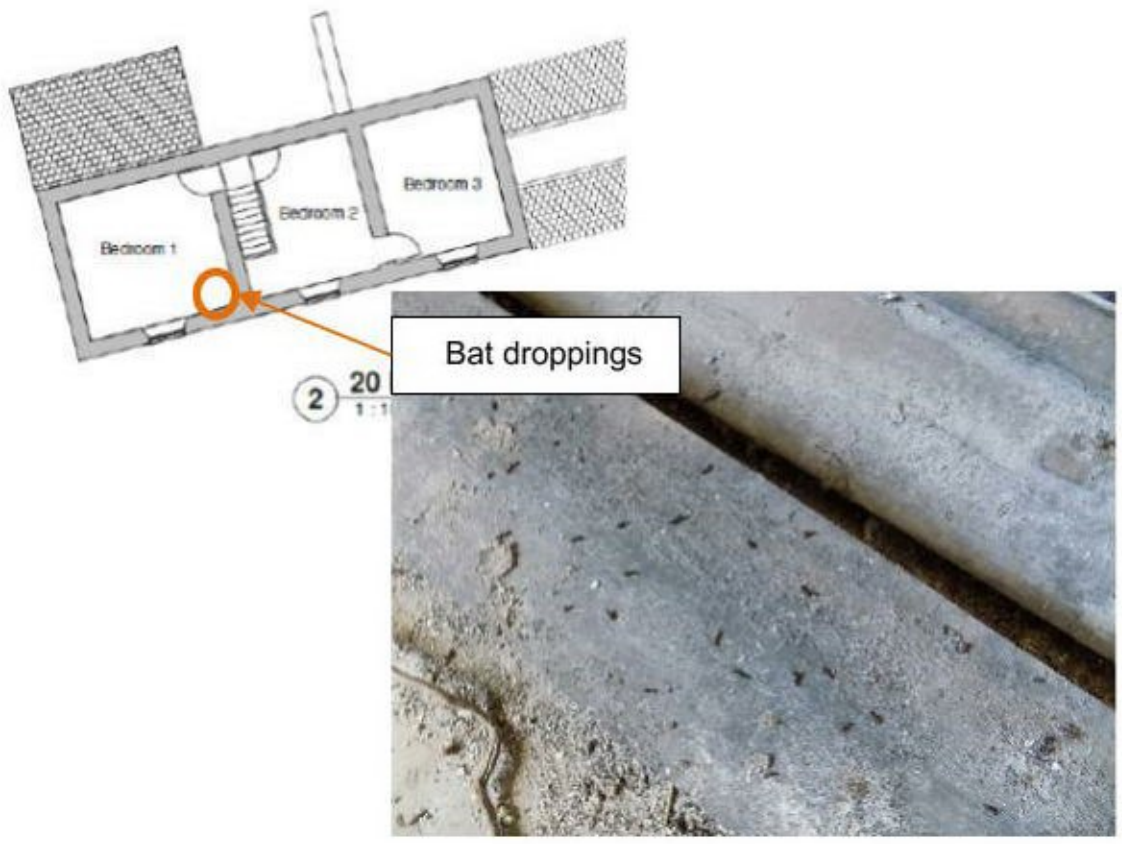



Figure 10 – Bat dropping position

### 5.2.5 Barn Owl Survey

Barn owls were known to be present on site, foraging around the farmland, and re-entering the main farmhouse with food.

An abandoned nest was present on the landing.

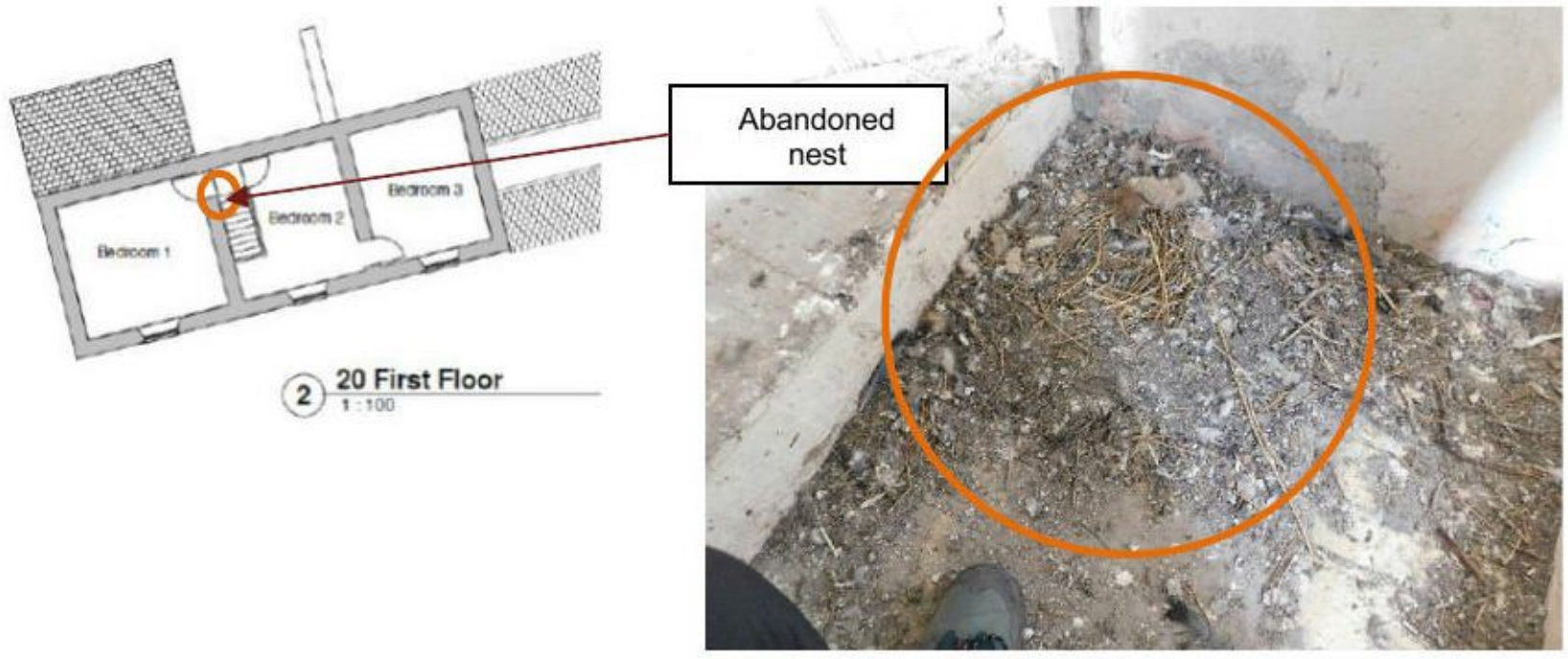



Figure 11 – Abandoned Barn owl nest

During the bat/barn owl survey the owls were observed passing in via the north-west roof and exiting via the south west, owlets could be heard above the stairs, when the adults brought food.

The nest could not be seen, the number of owlets was not identified, but more than one could be heard.

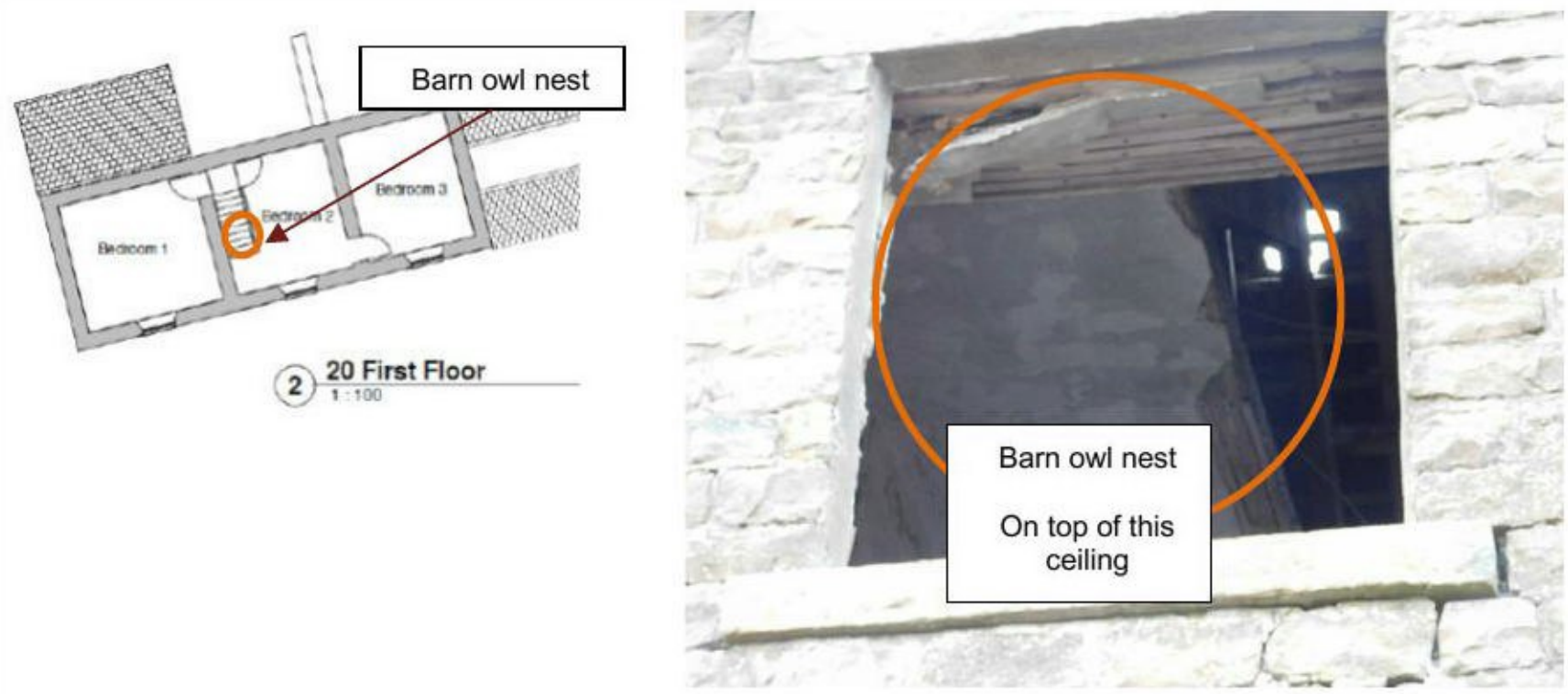



Figure 12 – active barn owl nest

### 5.2.6 Protected Species Scoping Survey

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

There was no evidence of any other animals present on site.

The proposed alterations will have nil to negligible potential impact on any other species present.

The site has the potential to host swifts and swallows. Buildings adjacent to the farmhouse will provide suitable nesting sites.

Grassland and Moorland surrounding the site have the potential to support a range of important ground nesting birds.

## 5.3 Site Assessment

The general assessment is that the site falls into category 3 - that of limited wildlife interest.

The proposed alterations are unlikely to impact upon any of the following:

**Potential Impact On Sites Of Biodiversity**

The farmstead sits within the North Pennines AONB and is encircled by the SACs, SPAs and SSSIs of the Bollihope, Pikestone, Eggleston & Woodland Fells; Teesdale Allotments; Upper Teesdale, Moorhouse and North Pennine Moors.

This area is important for its upland habitats which are maintained by the farming community.

**Potential To Support Important Habitats**

The farmhouse is situated within a working farm, habitats are predominantly disturbed land associated with livestock management – areas of hardstanding, compacted land and entrance driveway.

The wider grassland of the farmstead is uncategorised grassland within an area important for its Upland Hay Meadows.

**Schedule 9 Plants**

Non present within the proposed new farmhouse area.

## Potential To Support Important Species

### Bats

| | |
|---|---|
| **Commuting & Foraging Habitats around the survey area** | |
| Negligible | >1km to woodlands |
| Low | Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats - a gappy hedgerow, unvegetated stream, a lone tree, a patch of scrub.<br>Isolated with no clear flyways linking the site to wider countryside |
| Medium | Rural upland/ urban green space<br>Distance to wetlands 200m to 500m, |
| **Building construction and Conditions** | |
| High | Traditional farm buildings, castle, hospital etc, Multiple large roof voids |
| **Potential Roosting Features** | |
| Medium | Roof has some access, slates, tiles.<br>A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status. |
| High | Notable cracks and crevices. |
| **Local bat knowledge** | |
| Medium | Recent roost records within 1km. Resident's information – 'bats seen' |

The building initial assessment identifies a medium potential to support roosting bats with limited connectivity to areas of low to medium bat foraging habitat.

Small numbers of bat droppings have been found within the buildings, a roost of up to three Common pipistrelles was identified in 2017.

The building has negligible potential to support larger maternity roosts or large numbers of bats.

### Birds

Use of MAGIC identifies the site as being within an area with habitat suitable for the following species.

| | AA | GA | CS target area | No of records |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Black Grouse | | | N/A | 1 |
| Curlew | | Y | Y | 4 |
| Grey Partridge | Y | | N/A | 4 |
| Lapwing | Y | Y | Y | 4 |
| Redshank | | Y | Y | 1 |
| Snipe | | Y | | 3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Grassland Assemblage | 4 |

**Potential Impact Of Proposed Development**

Survey effort should be proportional to the perceived potential impact of the proposals upon any potential bat roosts present.

The building assessment identifies a low/medium potential for bats, the building survey identified the presence of a small number of bat droppings.

The renovation has the potential to destroy occasional small roosting sites which must be retained. The enclosed Method Statement must be followed to protect and retain them.

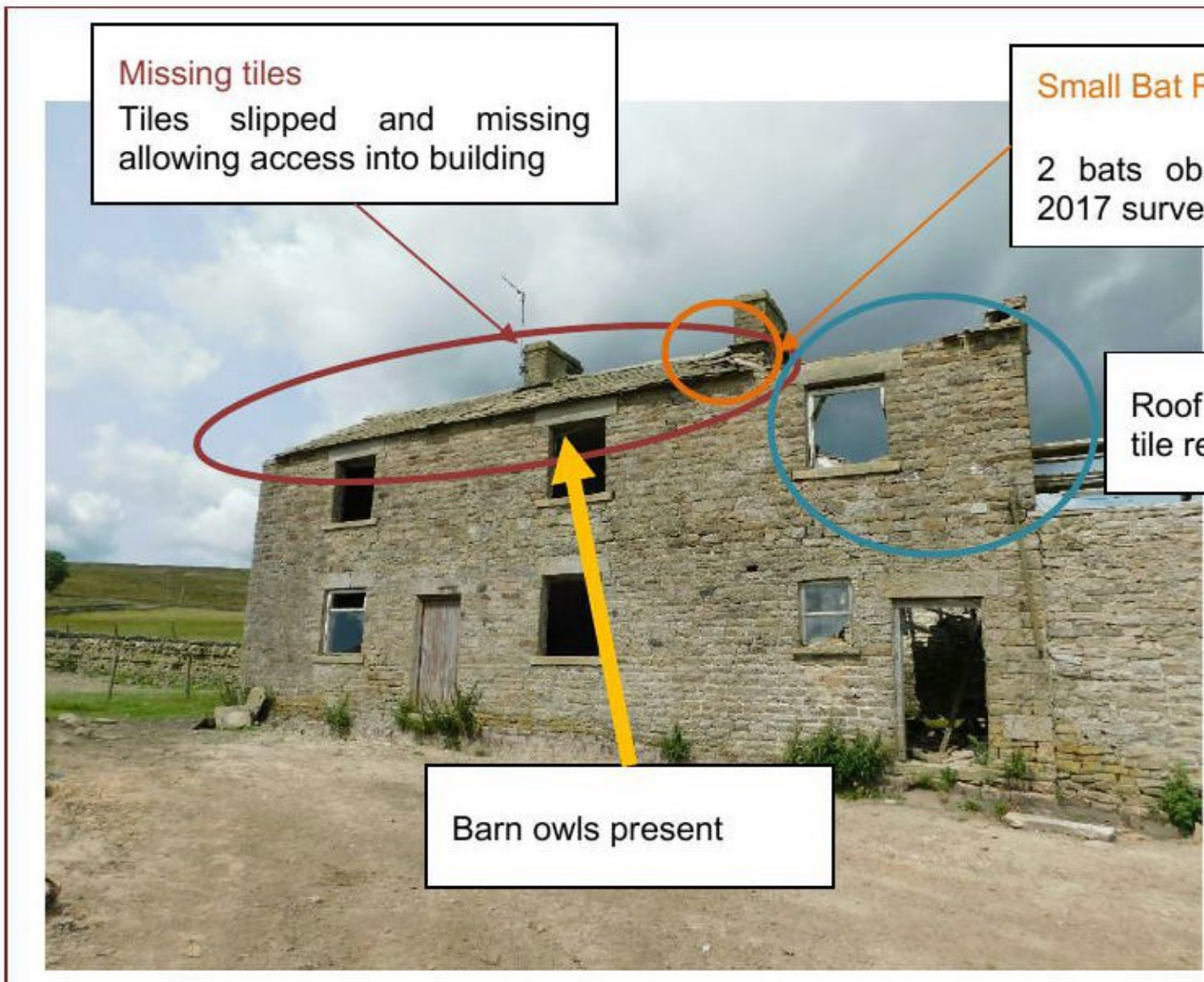
Roof – much of the roof has collapsed, provided negligible roost potential.

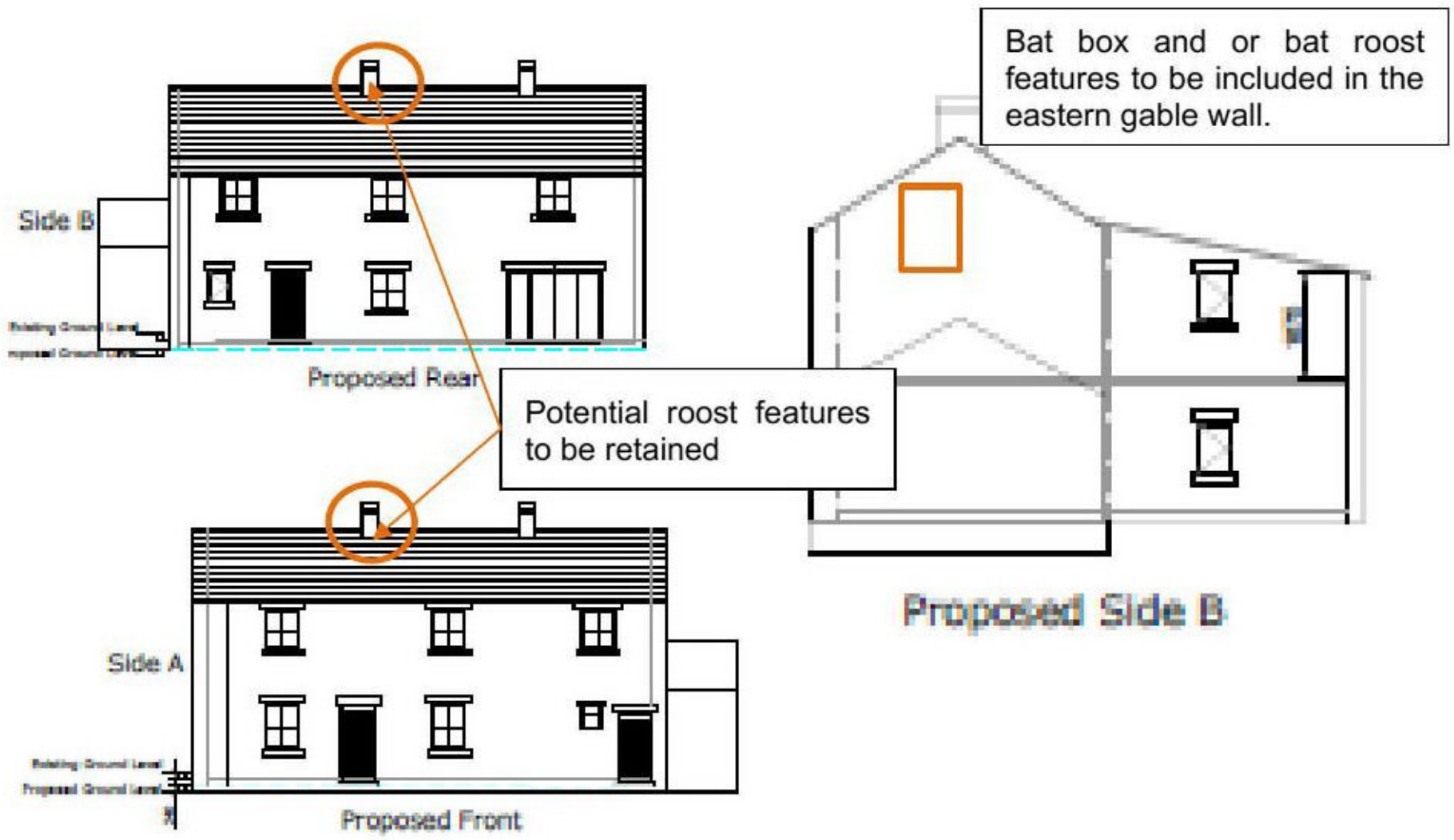
Stone walls – the stone walls have been exposed, including the chimney stacks, much of the pointing has eroded creating suitable voids for bat use.

Roof removal should be conducted following the enclosed Method Statement. Prior to works commencing on the chimney stacks an endoscopic search should be conducted by the project ecologist, potential entry/exit points should be marked up and these will be retained for the life of the building.

If at any point bats are found, work should stop immediately, and the project ecologist informed.

# 6 Ecological Constraints & Opportunities



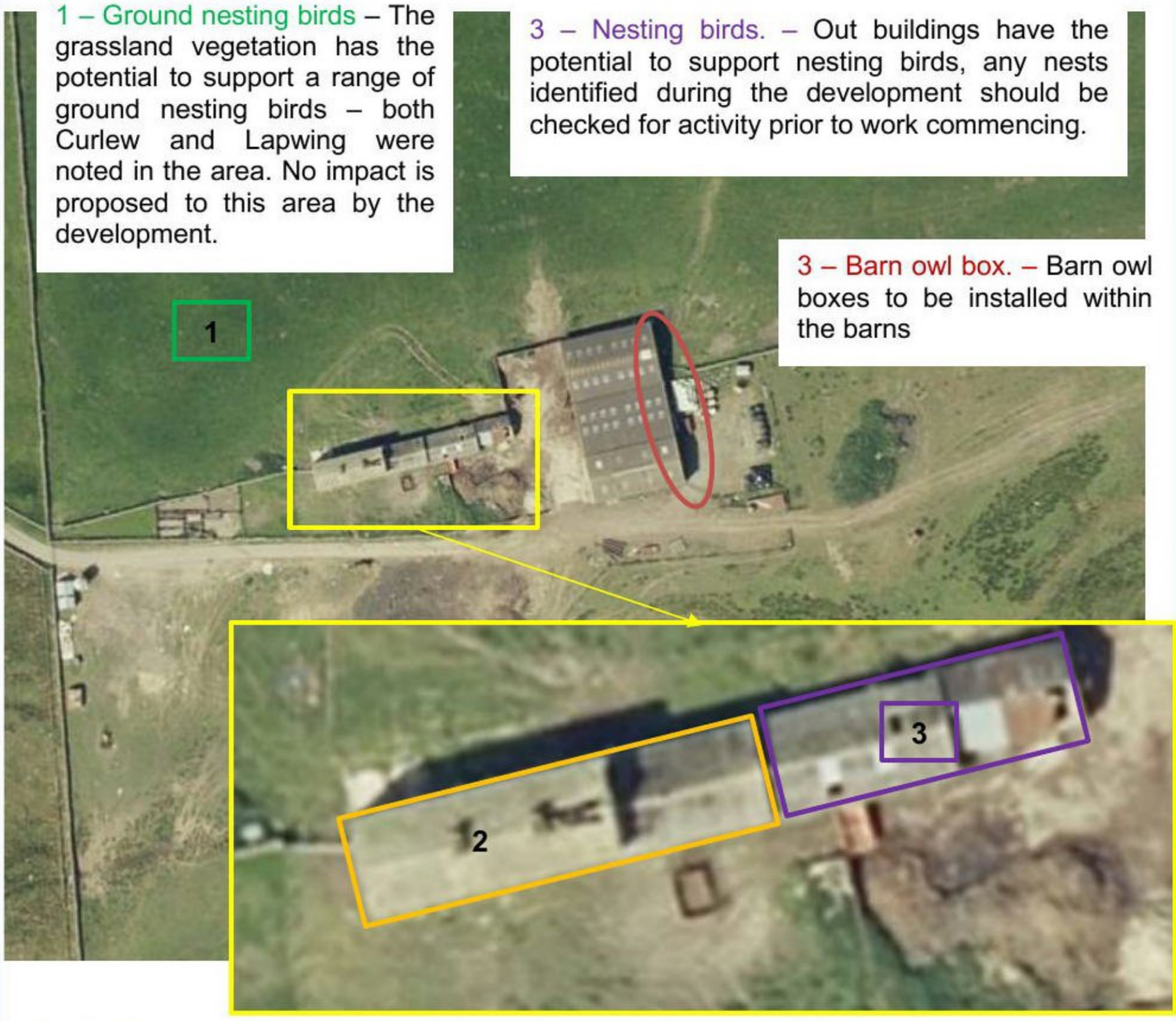



## Ecological Constraints – Protected Species

1 – Ground nesting birds – The grassland vegetation has the potential to support a range of ground nesting birds – both Curlew and Lapwing were noted in the area. No impact is proposed to this area by the development.

3 – Nesting birds. – Out buildings have the potential to support nesting birds, any nests identified during the development should be checked for activity prior to work commencing.

3 – Barn owl box. – Barn owl boxes to be installed within the barns




2 – Buildings. –
The main farmhouse has limited potential for roosting bats. Any work carried out should consider the presence of bats.

Barn owls present -- no building work until all birds have fledged.

**Wildlife Enhancements and Considerations**

The site has potential for ecological enhancement. The inclusion/retention of bat roost features should be included in the proposed extension.

A Barn Owl box to be erected within the existing barn to be retained for the life of the build as per Barn Owl Method Statement – erected November 2021.

# 7. Conclusion & Recommendations

## Conclusion

7.1 Desktop surveys identified the site is within the North Pennines AONB and its associated statutory sites, within an area of important upland and grassland areas.

7.2 Potential for Protected Species:

a. Bats – bat foraging and commuting habitat is present with moorland habitat in the wider vicinity.

b. Barn owl – is known to be present on site.

7.3 Field surveys were conducted during July 2021:

a. A habitat assessment – No important habitats are present on site.

b. Building assessment – the main farmhouse has limited potential bat roost features, cracks and crevices – very limited potential for either important bat species or a bat maternity site.

c. An active Barn owl nest is present on site.

d. Additional buildings – Barns and outhouses present on site have nesting bird potential with limited bat roost potential.

e. Additional species – None identified on site, Black grouse, curlew and lapwing were noted on adjacent land.

7.4 No invasive species were identified on site.

7.5 Ecological species surveys:

a. A general bird activity survey was conducted during daylight hours. Nesting pigeons were present in the main barn, no ground nesting birds were noted within the site curtilage.

b. A dusk survey was conducted on July 29th surveyors were present on site at 20:00 to identify any birds returning to roost and observe any Barn owls, a pair of Barn owls were observed around the main farmhouse, regular feeding behaviour was observed. No bats were present.

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

**Recommendations**

7.7 Barn owl - a permanent accessible nesting space for Barn Owls to be installed onsite prior to additional building work commencing.

7.8 Further survey requirements:

a. No additional ecological surveys are considered necessary at present.

b. The enclosed Method Statement should be followed during the development.

7.9 The proposals have the potential to include suitable wildlife enhancements:

a. Bats – the proposed conversion has the potential to include bat roost features.

b. Barn owls – additional nesting box to be installed in the existing livestock buildings.

c. The outbuildings have the potential to include nesting bird features.

7.10 Any building demolition, tree or hedge removals considered necessary during the breeding bird season March 1st to August 31st 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.
- Barn Owl Conservation Handbook – The Barn Owl Trust - Illustrated edition (25 Jun. 2012)

## 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 submitted69 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.<br>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.<br>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.<br>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.<br>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.<br>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).<br>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 a 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 |

**Barn Owl Decision Table**

| Ecological survey results | Mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Make temporary alternative provision nearby | Require an immediately pre-development survey | Impose a timing restriction (March to August incl.) | Require a built-in nesting place | Require foraging habitat creation and management |
| **No Barn Owl evidence but site suitable** | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| **Barn Owl roosted here over 2 years ago** | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| **Barn Owl roosted here within the last 2 years** | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| **Barn Owls nested historically/ pair roosting** | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Barn Owl evidence found here (unspecified)** | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Incomplete survey or inadequate survey report** | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Action Required** | As soon as possible; erect one or more Barn Owl nest boxes within 200m and in clear line of sight of the development at least 30 days before any works commence. This alternative provision should be kept free from disturbance by | Require a full survey for evidence of Barn Owl occupation by a suitably qualified person, to be conducted no more than 3 days before development works start to ensure no offence is committed under the Wildlife and Countryside | Restrict the timing of the development; works must not commence and disturbance must not increase between 1st March and 31st August. This will help ensure no offence is committed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) | A permanent accessible roosting and nesting place for Barn Owls must be created inside (i.e. within) the development: typically in a roof void or within the structure of a roof or wall at least 3 metres above ground level. The owls' access | Create as a minimum the same amount of suitable Barn Owl foraging habitat to that which is being lost by development to ensure no net loss in biodiversity. This can be on or off-site. A habitat management plan |

| Ecological survey results | Mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Make temporary alternative provision nearby** | **Require an immediately pre-development survey** | **Impose a timing restriction (March to August incl.)** | **Require a built-in nesting place** | **Require foraging habitat creation and management** |
| | on-site protection measures such as signage and fencing. In order of preference, nest boxes should be erected; i) in suitable buildings. If there are no suitable buildings, then; ii) in suitable trees. If no suitable trees then; iii) on poles. | Act (1981) as amended. Survey reports must identify, age and map evidence of occupation by Barn Owl, state occupation status (e.g. nest site) and provide specific recommendations stating what needs to happen (where, when, how) and in what order. | as amended. Approximately 75% of nesting cycles occur between March and August inclusive so at sites with evidence of nesting, either current or historic, or where a pair of birds is in residence, a timing restriction is an essential safeguard. | should replicate the existing owl access point. If there is no existing access, face the access towards open countryside. | should specify a topping regime of not more than once a year and not before 15th July. Annual topping on a rotational basis can help ensure there is always some optimum foraging habitat available for the Barn Owls. |

# 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 Aug 12 2021
Centroid Grid Ref: NY98372787

The data was checked no significant changes have occurred since our initial survey in 2018

The following features have been found in the search area:

| | |
|---|---|
| Counties, Metropolitan Districts and Unitary Authorities (GB) | County Durham |
| Parishes (GB) | Middleton in Teesdale |
| National Character Area | North Pennines |
| Planning Authority | Durham |

### SSSI IRZ Impact Zone Assessment

– using Appendix 1 – Flow Chart from User Guidance – Natural England's Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| Does the development sit within an SSSI IRZ (if yes how many) | 1 | |
| Does the proposed development fall into one or more of the development categories listed on the left hand margin of the table | | No |
| Does the nature and scale of the proposed development match the corresponding development description listed in the right hand margin of the table | | No |

## Result

| Development categories listed on the left hand margin of the table | Development description listed in the right hand margin of the table |
|---|---|
| All Planning | All planning applications (except householder) outside or extending outside existing settlements/urban areas affecting greenspace, farmland, semi natural habitats or landscape features such as trees, hedges, streams, rural buildings/structures. |
| Infrastructure | Pipelines, pylons and overhead cables. Any transport proposal including road, rail and by water (excluding routine maintenance). Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals. |
| Wind and solar energy | Solar schemes with footprint > 0.5ha, all wind turbines. |
| Minerals, oil and gas | Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil & gas exploration/extraction. |
| Rural Non-residential | Large non-residential developments outside existing settlements/urban areas where net additional gross internal floorspace is > 1,000m² or footprint exceeds 0.2ha. |
| Residential | Residential development of 10 units or more. |
| Rural Residential | Any residential developments outside of existing settlements/urban areas with a total net gain in residential units. |
| Air Pollution | Any development that could cause AIR POLLUTION or DUST either in its construction or operation (incl: industrial/commercial processes, livestock & poultry units, slurry lagoons/manure stores). |
| Combustion | All general combustion processes. Incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/ combustion. |
| Waste | Mechanical and biological waste treatment, inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill, household civic amenity recycling facilities construction, demolition and excavation waste, other waste management. |
| Composting | Any composting proposal. Incl: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management. |
| Discharges | Any discharge of water or liquid waste that is discharged to ground (i.e. to seep away) or to surface water, such as a beck or stream (NB this does not include discharges to mains sewer which are unlikely to pose a risk at this location). |
| Water supply | Large infrastructure such as warehousing / industry where net additional gross internal floorspace is > 1,000m² or any development needing its own water supply. |
| Notes | |

The following features have been found in the search area:

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

| | |
|---|---|
| Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty | North Pennies |
| Local Nature Reserves | No Features found |
| Moorland Line | Yes |
| National Nature Reserves | No Features found |
| National Parks | No Features found |
| Ramsar Sites | No Features found |
| Proposed Ramsar Sites | No Features found |
| Sites of Special Scientific Interest | 3 Features found – Bollihope, Pikestone, Eggleston and Woodland Fells / Teesdale Allotments / Upper Teesdale SSSI's |
| Special Areas of Conservation | 2 Features found – Moor House-Upper Teesdale / North Pennine Moors |
| Possible Special Areas of Conservation | No Features found |
| Special Protection Areas | North Pennine Moors |
| Possible Special Protection Areas | No Features found |
| Biosphere Reserves | No Features found |

**Historic Statutory**

| | |
|---|---|
| Registered Parks and Gardens | No Features found |

**Non-statutory**

| | |
|---|---|
| Community Forests | No Features found |
| Green Belt | No Features found |
| Heritage Coasts | No Features found |
| National Forest | No Features found |
| RSPB Reserves (GB) | No Features found |

## Habitats

MAGIC was used to identify the presence of the following BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) habitats within 2km of the survey site.

| Habitat type | |
|---|---|
| Coastal Saltmarsh | No Features found |
| Coastal Sand Dunes | No Features found |
| Coastal Vegetated Shingle | No Features found |
| Maritime Cliffs and Slopes | No Features found |
| Mudflats | No Features found |
| Saline Lagoons | No Features found |
| Calaminarian Grassland | No Features found |
| Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh | No Features found |
| Good quality semi-improved grassland | 7 Features found |
| Lowland Calcareous Grassland | No Features found |
| Lowland Dry Acid Grassland | No Features found |
| Lowland Meadows | No Features found |
| Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture | No Features found |
| Upland Calcareous Grassland | No Features found |
| Upland Hay Meadows | No Features found |
| Lowland Heathland | 1 Feature found |
| Mountain Heaths & Willow Scrub | No Features found |
| Upland Heathland | 94 Features found |
| Limestone Pavements | No Features found |
| Intertidal Substrate Foreshore | No Features found |
| Blanket Bog | 33 Features found |
| Lowland Fens | No Features found |
| Lowland Raised Bog | No Features found |
| Reedbed | No Features found |
| Upland Flushes, Fens and Swamps | No Features found |

| Other habitats – Priority Habitat Inventory | |
|---|---|
| Fragmented heath (non-priority) | No Features found |
| Grass Moorland (non-priority) | 72 Features found |
| Priority Habitat- No main habitat but additional habitats exist | No Features found |

| Woodland habitats | |
|---|---|
| Ancient Woodland | No features found |
| Traditional Orchard | No features found |
| Deciduous Woodland | No parcels found |
| National Forest Inventory | 2 parcels totalling 7.42 ha<br>Broadleaved – 0<br>Coniferous – 2<br>Other - 0 |
| Woodpasture and Parkland | No Features found |

**European Protected Species Licensing**

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

| European Protected Species | |
|---|---|
| Amphibian | None identified |
| Bats | None identified |
| Cetacean | None identified |
| Invertebrate | None identified |
| Other mammal | None identified |
| Plant | None identified |
| Reptile | None identified |

**Species**

**Brown Hairstreak** is the survey area within a Countryside Stewardship Programme

| | |
|---|---|
| Brown Hairsteak | None identified |

**Birds**

MAGIC was used to identify if the survey area is within an important bird area or a priority species target area, identifying areas targeted within the Countryside Stewardship Programme and/or target areas from the Bird Conservation Targeting Project (BCTP).

| | AA | GA | CS target area | No of records |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Black Grouse | | | N/A | 1 |
| Cirl Bunting | | | N/A | |
| Corn Bunting | Y | | | |
| Curlew | | Y | Y | 4 |
| Grey Partridge | Y | | N/A | 4 |
| Lapwing | Y | Y | Y | 4 |
| Redshank | | Y | Y | 1 |
| Snipe | | Y | | 3 |

| | AA | GA | CS target area | No of records |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stone Curlew | | | N/A | |
| Tree Sparrow | Y | | N/A | |
| Turtle Dove | Y | | N/A | |
| Twite | | | N/A | |
| Yellow Wagtail | Y | Y | N/A | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Upland Breeding Bird - CS targeting area | No features found |
| Arable assemblage | N/A |
| Grassland Assemblage | 4 |
| Important Bird Areas | No features found |

Bird Conservation Targeting Project (BCTP) birds already breeding in the area – Arable assemblage AA - corn bunting, Grey partridge, lapwing, Turtle dove, tree sparrow, and Yellow wagtail.
Grassland Assemblage - curlew; lapwing; Redshank; snipe; Yellow wagtail.

## 10.2 Local Data Searches

### Local Records Centre

Due to the size and nature of the proposals no Environment Record Centre data has been requested.

### Local Wildlife Group

Durham Bat Group has provided data for the 2km search area.

[redacted]

## Barn Owls

Detailed information on Barn owls and their roosts is in short supply. The Birds of Durham – reports the Barn owl as being as far west as Langdon Beck in Co Durham.

## Barn Owl online Survey

All Records in symbols (barnowlsurvey.org.uk)

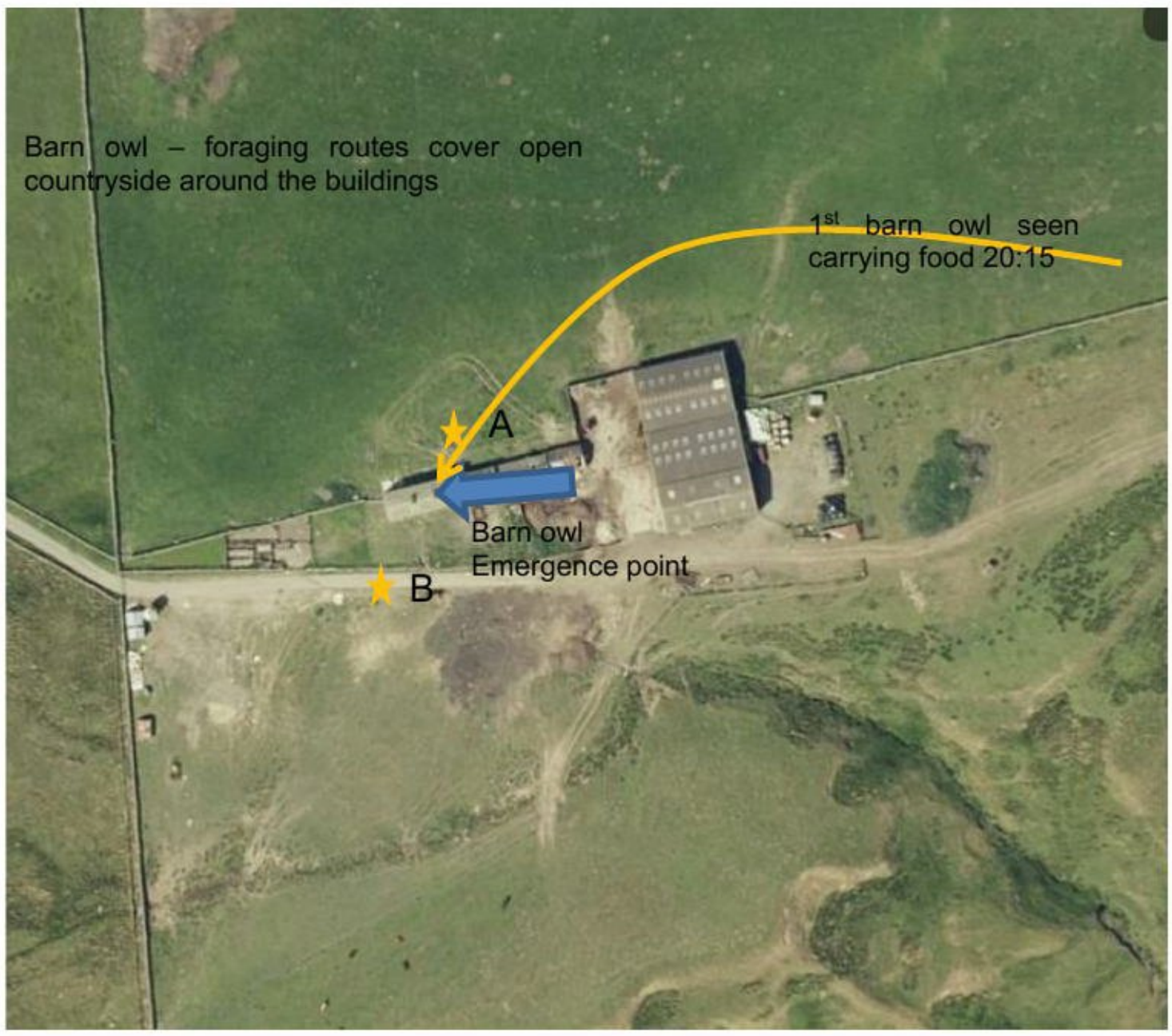
No records have been submitted.

The NBN atlas reports 22 Barn owl records in the 5km radius of site.

## 10.3 Species Activity Survey

### 10.3.1 Weather Data

| | Dusk | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Date** | **July 29th** | | |
| **Start time** | 20:00 | | |
| **Finish time** | 23:00 | | |
| **Sunrise/Sunset** | 21:15 | | |
| **Dusk/Dawn Civil twilight** | 22:00 | | |
| **Temp at start of survey** | 19.0ºC | | |
| **Temp at end of survey** | | | |
| **Wind speed** | light | | |
| **Precipitation** | nil | | |
| **Notes** | | | |

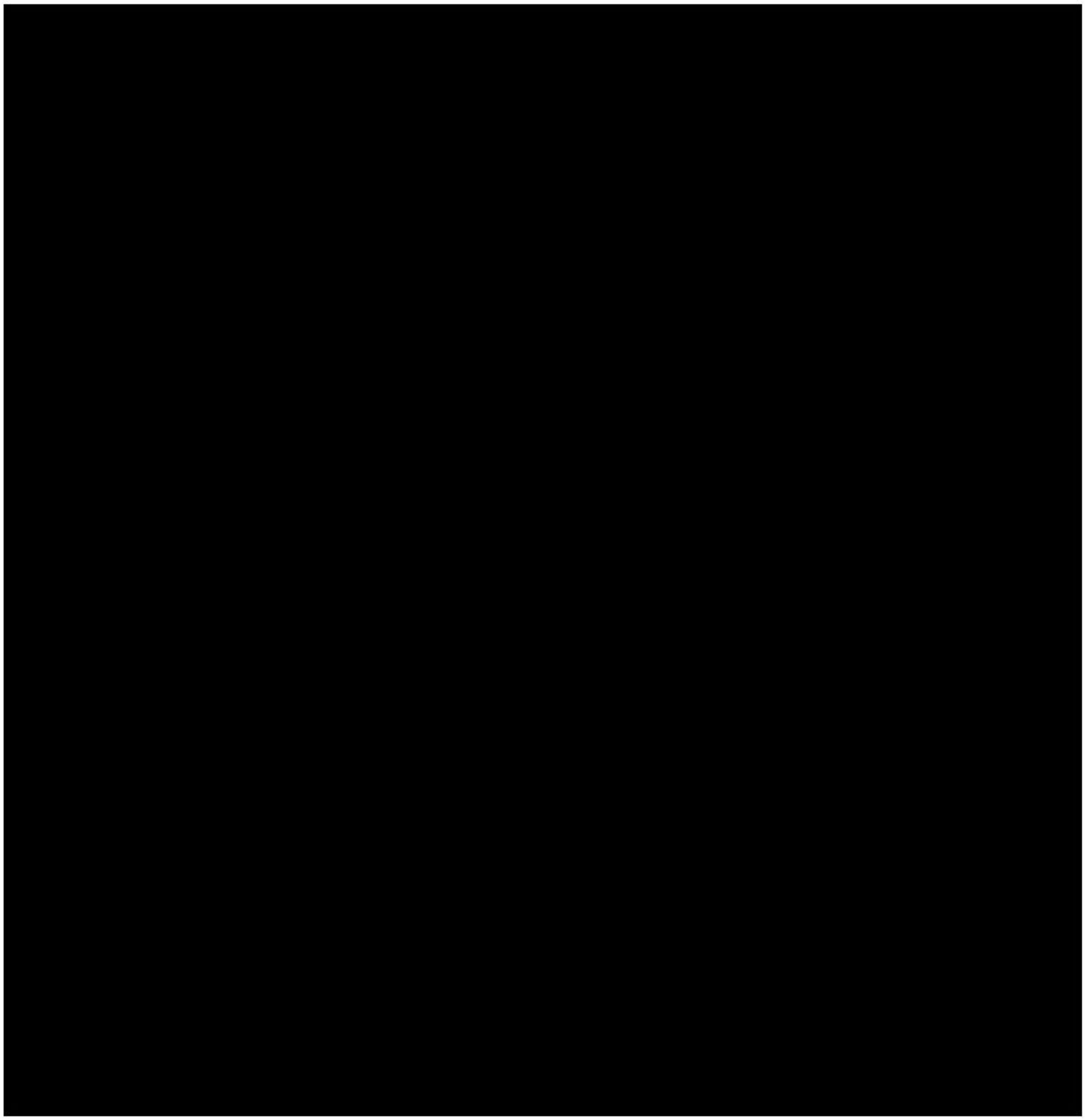


### 10.3.2 Anabat Data Recordings

A single bat survey was conducted limited bat activity was noted during the survey, mainly within habitat to the south east of the site.

**1st – Dusk survey – July 29th 2021.**

Two surveyors present - One Anabat deployed.



# AllAboutEcology

Ecological Consultant

The Old School
Quarry Lane
Butterknowle
Co Durham
DL13 5LN

Telephone 01388 710481

Email – tricia@allaboutecology.co.uk

# Bat Owl Mitigation

**Barn owls are covered by the basic legal protection afforded to most wild birds** and also extra legal protection against disturbance when nesting. The Barn owl is listed on Schedule One of the Wildlife & Countryside Act and so receives additional protection during the breeding season.

## Hope House, Stanhope Road

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 provides protection for Barn owls and most other wild bird species in England, Scotland and Wales. The eggs and nests of most bird species are also protected. Specifically, under Part 1, Section 1 (1), it is an offence to intentionally:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built.
- Take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

### Penalties for infringement

Barn owls are included in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, under Part 1 Section 21 (1) the penalty for an offence involving a Barn owl, its nest, or egg, includes a fine of up to £5,000, or up to six months imprisonment, or both, per bird, nest or egg.

A Schedule one licence is required to visit the nest of this species.

### Background

The Barn owl is a species of open country, favouring lowland habitats such as farmland and young plantation woodland.

Roosting sites - Sites used by Barn owls have no protection *per se*, the buildings or trees they occupy are effectively protected during nesting periods. At other times nest and roost sites can be legally altered or even destroyed. Traditional Barn owl sites seem to be attractive to the species as a whole; nest sites can be re-used over long periods of time, not only by the same birds, but by successive generations of unrelated individuals, and even re-occupied by new individuals after long periods of absence.

Foraging habitat - Suitable Barn owl foraging habitat receives no protection an area may prove attractive to a foraging Barn owl, it does not confer the area any sort of statutory legal protection, irrespective of the time of year, and whether or not the birds are breeding.

Populations have recovered somewhat from an earlier period of decline and have benefited from the erection of nest boxes and appropriate habitat management.

Surveys have been conducted at Hope House, Stanhope Road . Barn owls have been identified as present on site.

Barn owl box position – to be installed within the barn situated to the south east of the site.


Loss of Barn owl roosts to development must be compensated for by the provision of alternative roost and nest sites within 200 metres of the development, these should be made available at least 30 days prior to the start of works though the longer the better. Timing constraints will apply to avoid the periods when the Barn owls are nesting and raising dependant young. The provision of permanent roost and nest sites will be required within the redevelopment.

# Precautionary Method Statement
# Bats

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:

## Hope House, Stanhope Road

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 5ºC 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 (1st March to 31st August) the buildings should be checked for active bird's nests prior to demolition.

**Summary Of Bat Survey Findings**

No evidence of bats identified on site. 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**

When removing the existing/ remaining roof tiles, they 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**

Within the new roof 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.

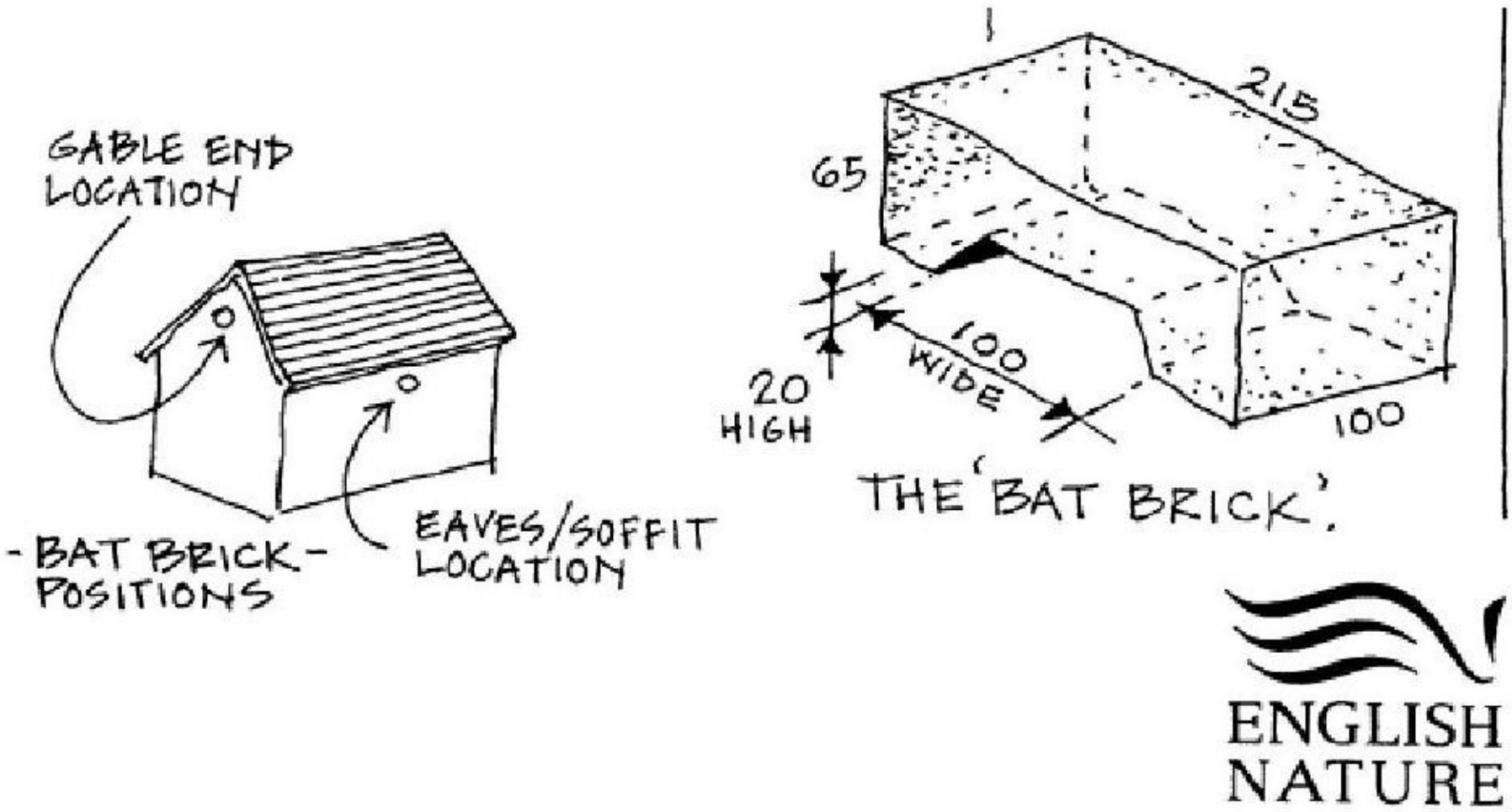
Any timber treatment should follow guidelines TIN212 published by Natural England. Permethrin and cypermethrin compounds are the most 'bat friendly' wood treatments currently available.

**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 Bricks**

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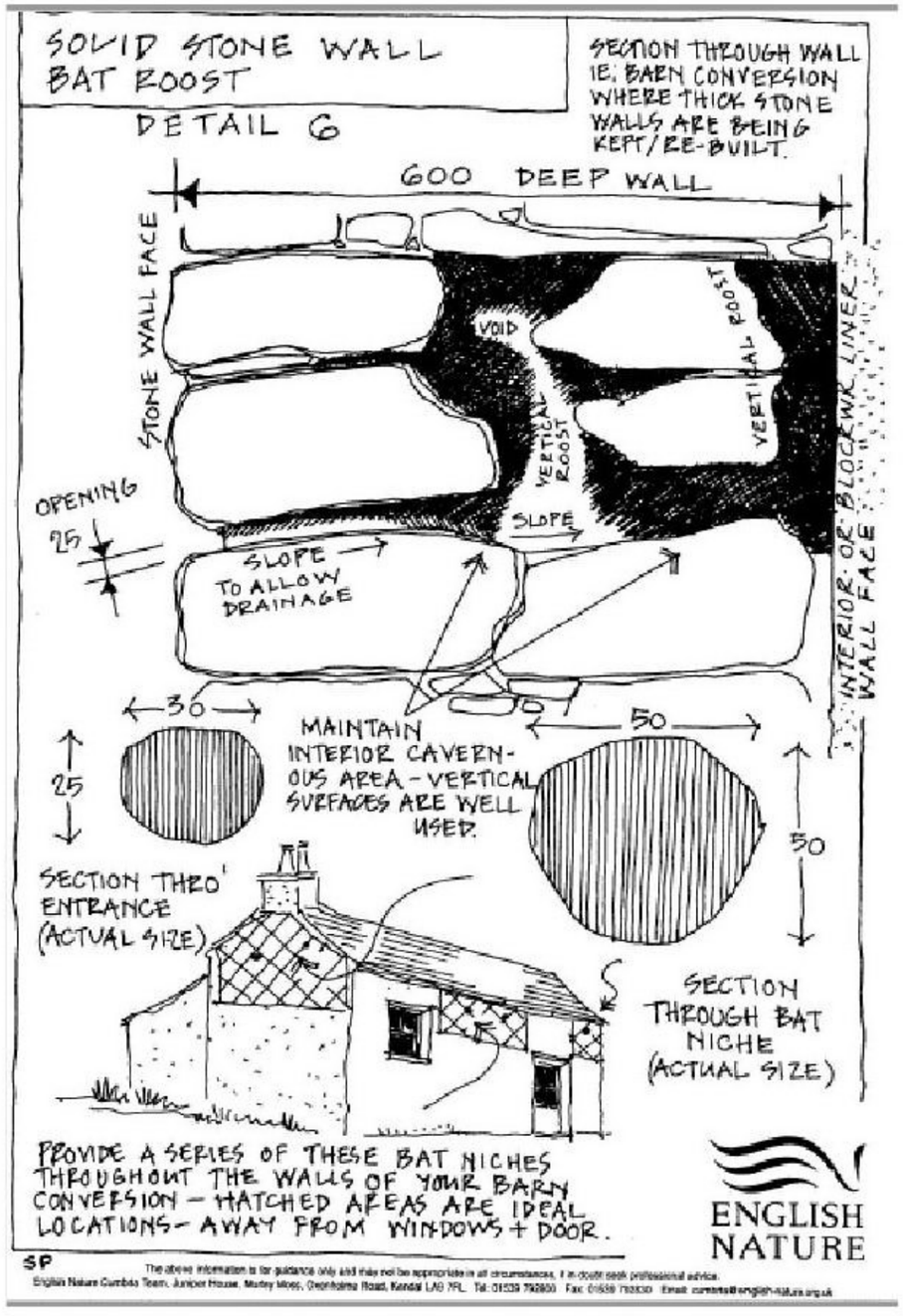
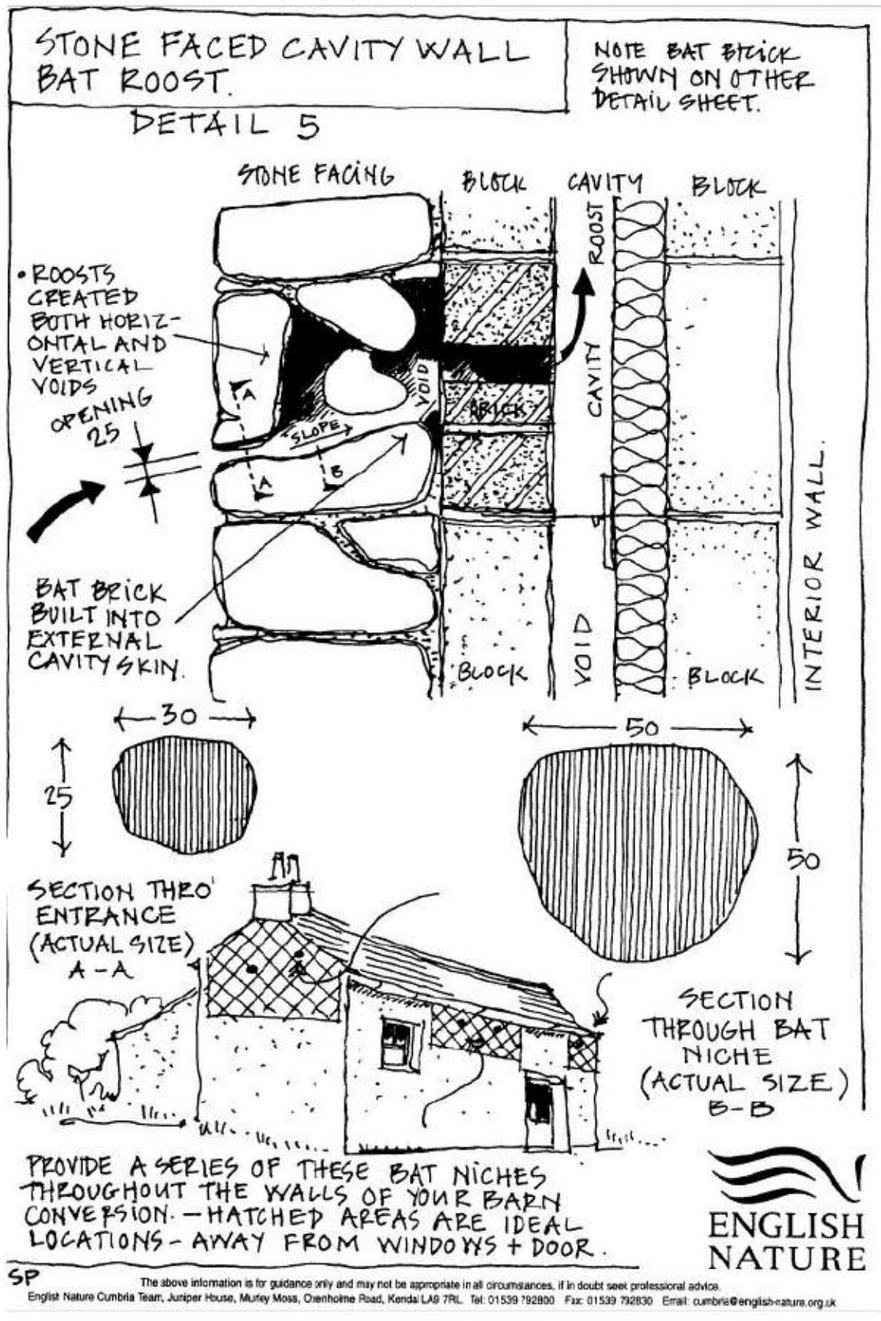

SOLID STONE WALL
BAT ROOST
DETAIL 6
SECTION THROUGH WALL IE. BARN CONVERSION WHERE THICK STONE WALLS ARE BEING KEPT/RE-BUILT.
600 DEEP WALL
STONE WALL FACE
INTERIOR OR BLOCKWK LINER WALL FACE
VOID
VERTICAL ROOST
VERTICAL ROOST
SLOPE
OPENING 25
SLOPE TO ALLOW DRAINAGE
30
50
25
50
MAINTAIN INTERIOR CAVERNOUS AREA - VERTICAL SURFACES ARE WELL USED.
SECTION THRO' ENTRANCE (ACTUAL SIZE)
SECTION THROUGH BAT NICHE (ACTUAL SIZE)
PROVIDE A SERIES OF THESE BAT NICHES THROUGHOUT THE WALLS OF YOUR BARN CONVERSION - HATCHED AREAS ARE IDEAL LOCATIONS - AWAY FROM WINDOWS + DOOR.
SP
ENGLISH NATURE
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, Juniper House, Murley Moss, Oxenholme Road, Kendal LA9 7RL. Tel: 01539 792800 Fax: 01539 792830 Email: cumbria@english-nature.org.uk


STONE FACED CAVITY WALL
BAT ROOST.
DETAIL 5
NOTE BAT BRICK SHOWN ON OTHER DETAIL SHEET.
STONE FACING
BLOCK
CAVITY
BLOCK
ROOST
• ROOSTS CREATED BOTH HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL VOIDS
OPENING 25
VOID
BRICK
CAVITY
SLOPE
A
B
BAT BRICK BUILT INTO EXTERNAL CAVITY SKIN.
BLOCK
VOID
BLOCK
INTERIOR WALL.
30
50
25
50
SECTION THRO' ENTRANCE (ACTUAL SIZE) A-A
SECTION THROUGH BAT NICHE (ACTUAL SIZE) B-B
PROVIDE A SERIES OF THESE BAT NICHES THROUGHOUT THE WALLS OF YOUR BARN CONVERSION. - HATCHED AREAS ARE IDEAL LOCATIONS - AWAY FROM WINDOWS + DOOR.
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