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**Barn at Duntisbourne House  
Duntisbourne Abbots**

**Report for:**  
Ms S Scheiber  
Duntisbourne House  
Duntisbourne Abbots  
Cirencester  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 7LE

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with your instructions, AA Environmental Limited (AAe) carried out bat surveys (visual inspections only) at the above barn (B5 in AAe's Ecological Report January 2021) on Wednesday 12 August 2020 and Wednesday 23 February 2022. The purpose of the surveys was to determine the use of the building by bats so that appropriate and proportionate mitigation could be provided. An annotated plan and a series of photographs have been attached for reference. For the impacts on the wider proposals for the site please refer to AAe's Ecological Report dated January 2021 – NB initially no works were proposed to Buildings B4 and B5.

The proposals are to convert the stable section of the barn as a storage unit for garden equipment and to clad the barn with a mix of stone fascias and timber cladding. No internal works will be carried out on the northern section of the barn which is a confirmed bat roost. The existing access points to the roost (gaps around the eaves and an access hole on the western elevation will be retained and protected). Sections of the new cladding are required for the bat roost in order to repair over existing cladding which is rotting, ensuring the continued protection of the roost.

The site is located off Crabtree Lane, Duntisbourne Abbots, Cirencester and is centred at National Grid Reference: SO 95419 06410. The site comprised a recently constructed barn associated with Duntisbourne House. The site is bordered by a field to the east, Crabtree Road to the south, Duntisbourne House and its associated grounds to the west and a field and woodland to the north.

## **2.0 LEGISLATION**

Currently there are 17 species of bat known to breed in the UK. All species and their roosts are protected under Regulation 41 of *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. As a signatory to the *Bonn Convention (Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe)* the UK is also required to protect their habitats. This legislation makes it illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats, or to obstruct access to, damage or destroy bat roosts. Under the law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

### **Baseline Data**

As certain baseline data is now readily available on the internet, the Multi-agency website ([www.magic.defra.gov.uk](http://www.magic.defra.gov.uk)) was consulted to determine whether any part of the site or nearby habitats have been statutorily or otherwise designated. In addition, a review of Google Earth's satellite imagery ([http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en\\_uk/earth/index.html](http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/index.html)) was completed to determine past land uses of the site and surrounding land.

### **Walk-over Site Survey**

Visual surveys of the site were completed to record any evidence of bats<sup>1</sup>. The survey was carried out following the guidelines provided by the Bat Conservation Trust<sup>2</sup>. Thorough internal and external examination of the existing barn was carried out, with any potential access points inspected for evidence of bats. All internal roof voids/spaces were accessed to check for any evidence of bats. Evidence of bats is usually detected by any one or more of the following signs:

- the presence of bat droppings, which tend to accumulate under established roost sites or at roost entrances;
- the accumulation of large numbers of moth wings, which have been discarded by feeding bats;
- areas of staining by urine or from fur rubbing; and
- the presence of bats themselves or their corpses.

The visual survey was facilitated by the use of binoculars, ladders, powerful torches (1M candlepower) and a Ridgid Micro CA-350 Inspection Camera endoscope.

## 4.0 RESULTS

### Baseline Data

According to the Multi-agency website, there are no ecological statutory designated sites located on or directly adjacent to the site, or within 2 km of the site. The area surrounding the barn is noted to be Deciduous Woodland which is a Habitat of Principal Importance (**N.B. the area directly adjacent to the east of the building is an open yard area**).

Google Earth Imagery shows that the barn was constructed sometime between 2017 and 2019.

### Site Description (Photographs 1-4)

The barn was of breeze block construction and had a pitched slate roof lined with a bitumen based membrane. The southern section of the barn was used for stabling and was open fronted. The northern section of the barn had been modified to provide a dedicated bat roost for a variety of species (understood to have been constructed to mitigate for works completed on the adjacent Duntisbourne House and completed under European Protected licence EPSM 2011-3234). The bat roost had a loft space with an open access hatch and a bare earth floor with a breeze block chamber to vary roosting opportunities. Access into the roost for bats was provided with an opening on the western elevation and gaps around the overhanging eaves. The timber frame and cladding on the front of the bat roost section was beginning to rot and would need repairing/replacing.

### Bats

During the initial inspection (12.08.20), at least 30 lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) bats were recorded on the ground floor level of the barn. During the most recent inspection (23.02.22), 10 lesser horseshoes were recorded on the lower level. Given the time of year, an inspection of the upper level was not completed to minimise disturbance to the bats, which were in a state of torpor and located adjacent to the access hatch.

## 5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposals are to convert the stable section of the barn as a storage unit for garden equipment and to clad the whole barn with a mix of stone fascias and timber cladding. No internal works will be carried out on the northern section of the barn which is a confirmed bat roost (a maternity and hibernacula for lesser

<sup>1</sup> Completed by an experienced and licensed ecologist.

<sup>2</sup> Collins, J. (ed) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

horseshoes and potentially other species of bat). The existing access points to the roost (gaps around the eaves and an access hole on the western elevation) will be retained and protected. The new timber cladding will also ensure the continued protection of the bat roost.

Only part of the barn will be converted, with the existing bat roost fully retained and protected. The works can be completed over a relatively short duration and outside of the winter months and key spring/summer to avoid disturbing hibernating bats and a maternity colony. Consequently, any potential disturbance of bats is not considered significant. It is therefore considered that the works can be completed without the need for a European Protected Species Licence.

However, a number of control measures will be put in place to limit the level of disturbance and ensure bats have continued roosting opportunities during and after the works, as detailed below.

In order to ensure there are alternative roosting opportunities for bats during the works, a Cathedine Night Roost (a copy of the design has been attached at Appendix A for reference) will be positioned in the adjacent woodland to the west of the site and two bat boxes installed on trees in the same woodland (e.g. x1 Schwegler type 1FF and x1 Schwegler type 2FN).

No roofing works will be completed on the barn. No internal access will be permitted into the bat roost and no materials will be installed in the bat roost.

In accordance with good practice, the works will be completed during the least sensitive time for bats (October/November) and when the day-time temperature is above 6°C to avoid encountering any bats in a state of torpor. Other than for nesting birds there are no other timing restriction for works to the other buildings on the site.

All site operatives will be given a toolbox talk by a licensed bat worker/accredited agent on the possibility of encountering bats and the legal protection they and their roosts are afforded (copy attached at Appendix B for reference). Key works will be supervised by a licensed bat worker/accredited agent with a completion report produced to ensure the works were carried out sensitively and to ensure that the roosting opportunities remain unaffected.

The relative impact of disturbance on bats is considered to be low as reasonable measures can and will be implemented. The works are scheduled to be carried out over a limited period of time and during the least sensitive times for bats. In addition, existing roosting opportunities will be maintained and new bat roosting opportunities installed to enhance roosting opportunities.

It should be noted that all species of wild bird and their nests are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Therefore, in order to avoid contravention of current legislation, any site works likely to affect potential bird nesting habitat should be timed to avoid the main bird nesting season, which, in general, runs from March to August inclusive. If this is not possible, a check should be carried out prior to any clearance works to ensure there are no active nests present.

Given the current site conditions, it is considered that if the control measures as set out in this Method Statement are strictly adhered to then the works can proceed without adversely affecting bats or their roosts and therefore there would be no contravention of current legislation. These controls can be secured via an appropriately worded condition attached to planning.

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## **Photograph Record Sheet**

Section to be converted for storage.

Bat roost section to be retained and protected.

Access gaps under eaves to be retained and protected.



Photograph 1: Showing the eastern elevation for the barn.

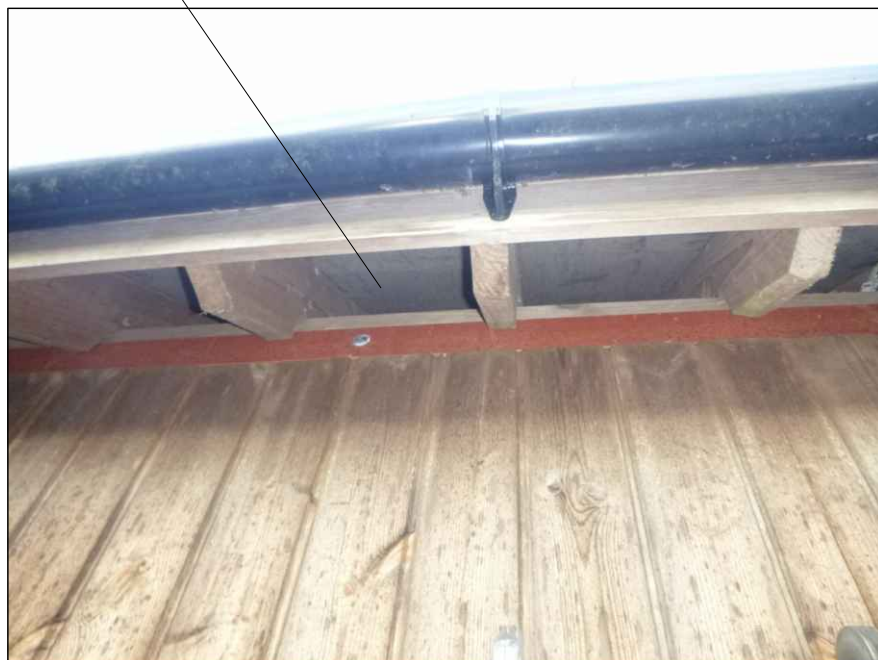


Photograph 2: Showing the western (rear) and northern (gable) elevations for the barn.

Access gaps under eaves to be retained and protected.

Access hole to be retained and protected.


Access gaps under eaves to be retained and protected.



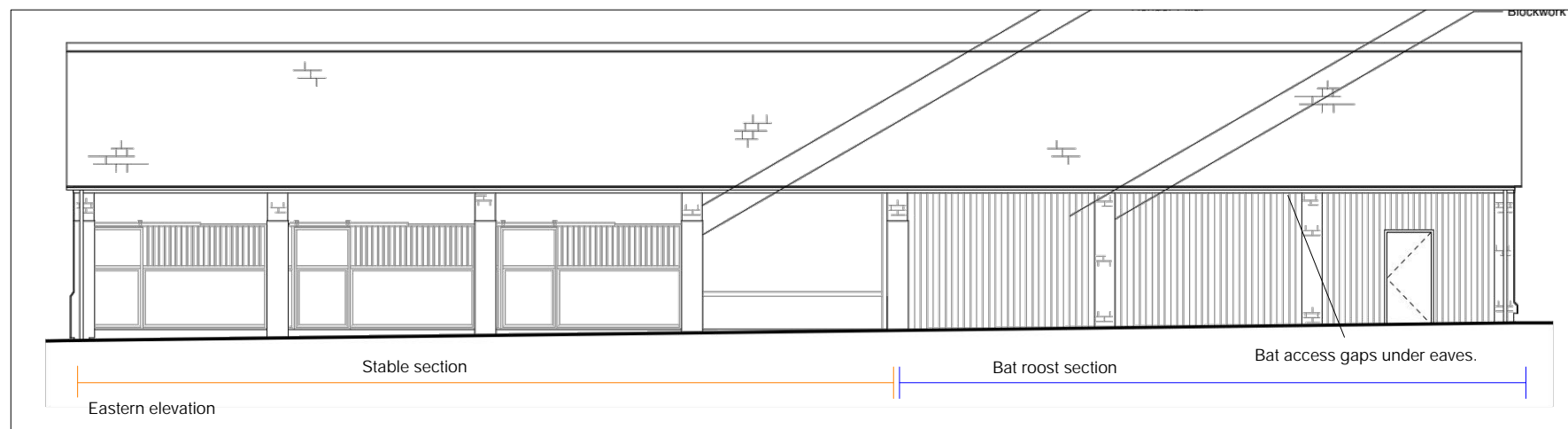
Photograph 3: Showing access gaps under the eaves which will be retained and protected.



Photograph 4: Showing the timbers at the front of the bat roost which are beginning to rot.

Rev.	Details	Drawn Chkd.	Date
Project Barn at Duntisbourne House Duntisbourne Abbots			
Title Photograph Record Sheet			
		<b>AA Environmental Ltd</b> Units 4-8 Cholswell Court Shippon Abingdon Oxon OX13 6HX T: (01235) 536042 F: (01235) 523849 info@aae-ltd.co.uk www.aae-ltd.co.uk	
Scale NTS	Date 08.03.22	Drawn JDT	Chkd. ARB
Drg. No. 203237/01		Rev.	

**Figure**



Schwegler 1FF bat box



Schwegler 2FN Bat Box

**Notes**

x1 Cathedrine Night Roost will be installed in the woodland adjacent to the barn.

**Bat Boxes**

- x1 Schwegler 1FF (or equivalent)
- x1 Schwegler 2FN (or equivalent)

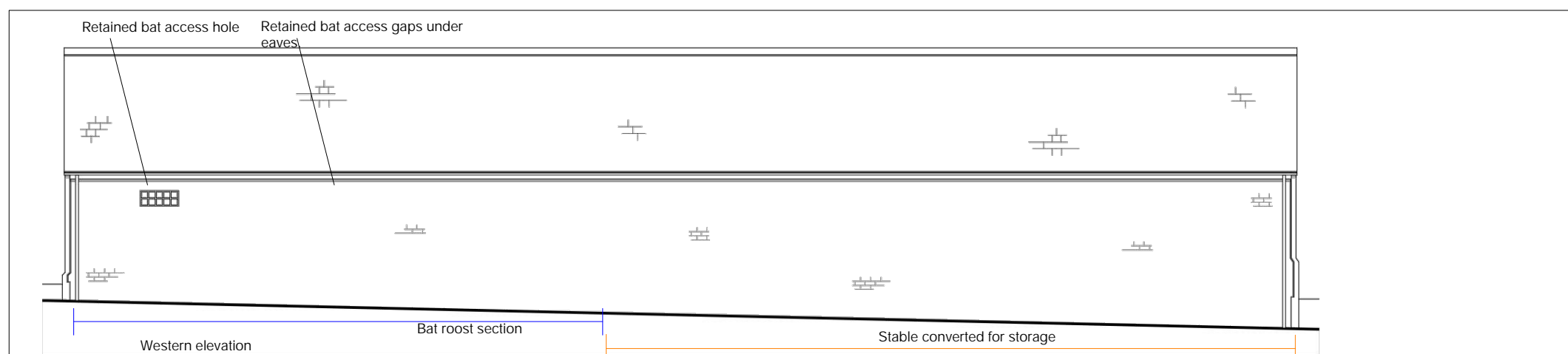
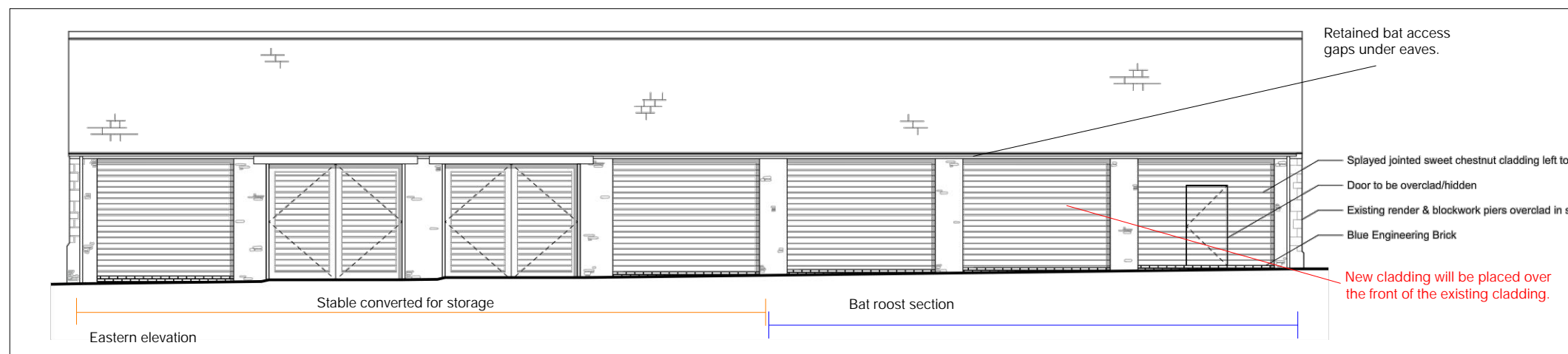
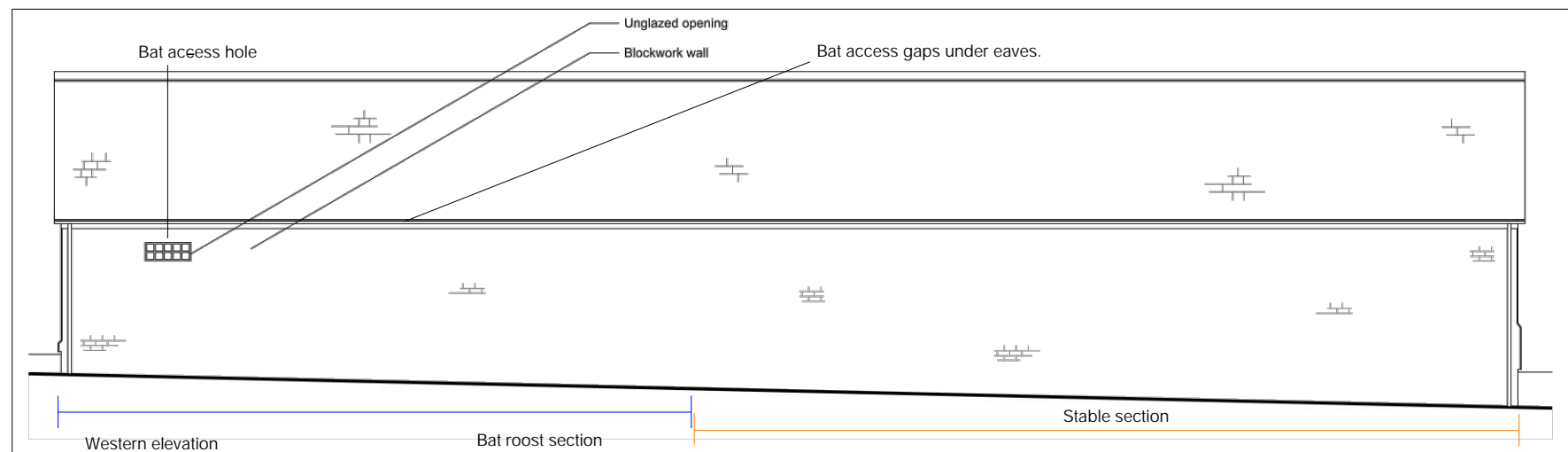
The bat boxes will be installed on suitable trees in the woodland adjacent to the barn.

All key stages of the works will be supervised by a licensed bat worker/accredited agent.

No internal access will be permitted in to the bat roost and no materials will be installed in the bat roost.

No roofing works will be required.

In accordance with good practice, the works will be completed during the less sensitive time for bats (October/November) and/or when the day-time temperature drops are above 6°C to avoid encountering any bats in a state of torpor.

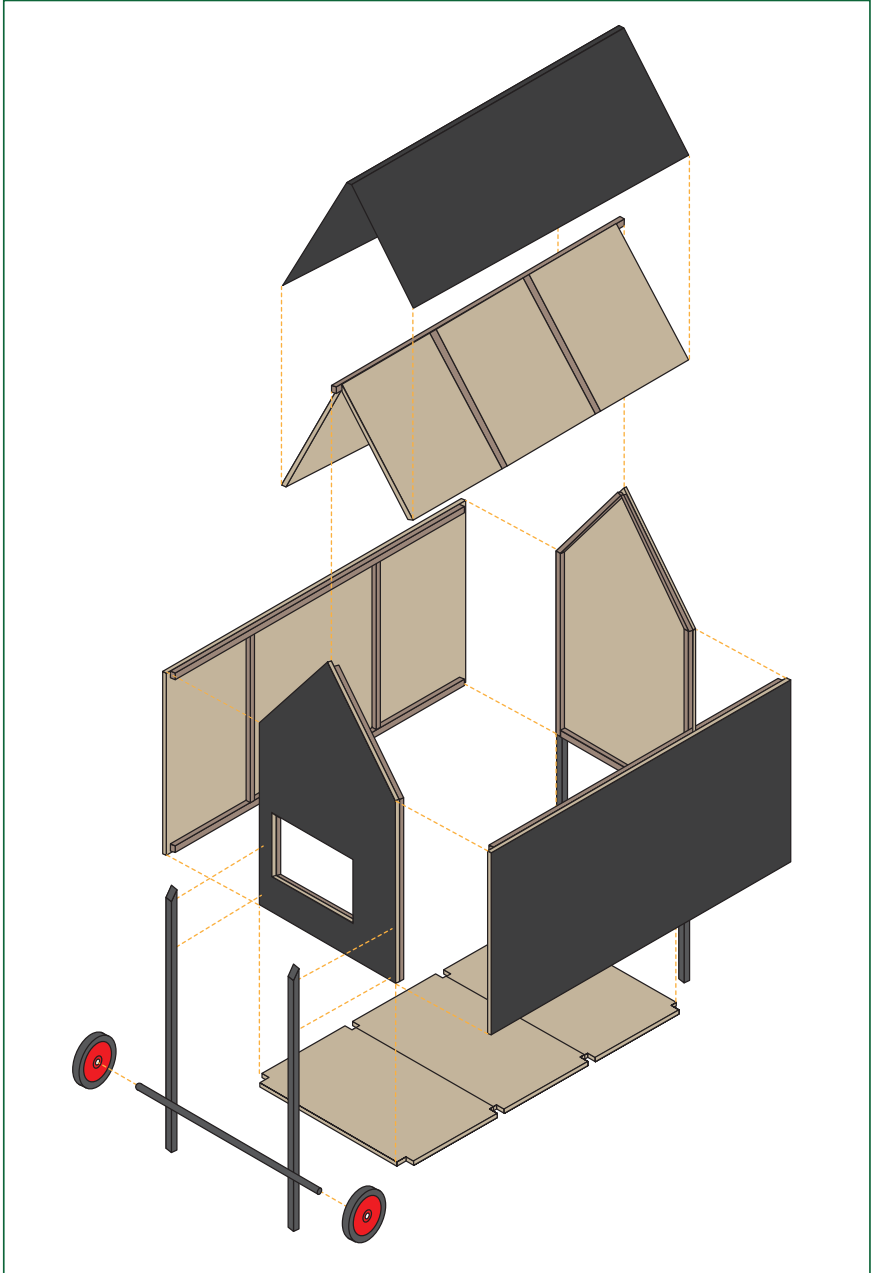
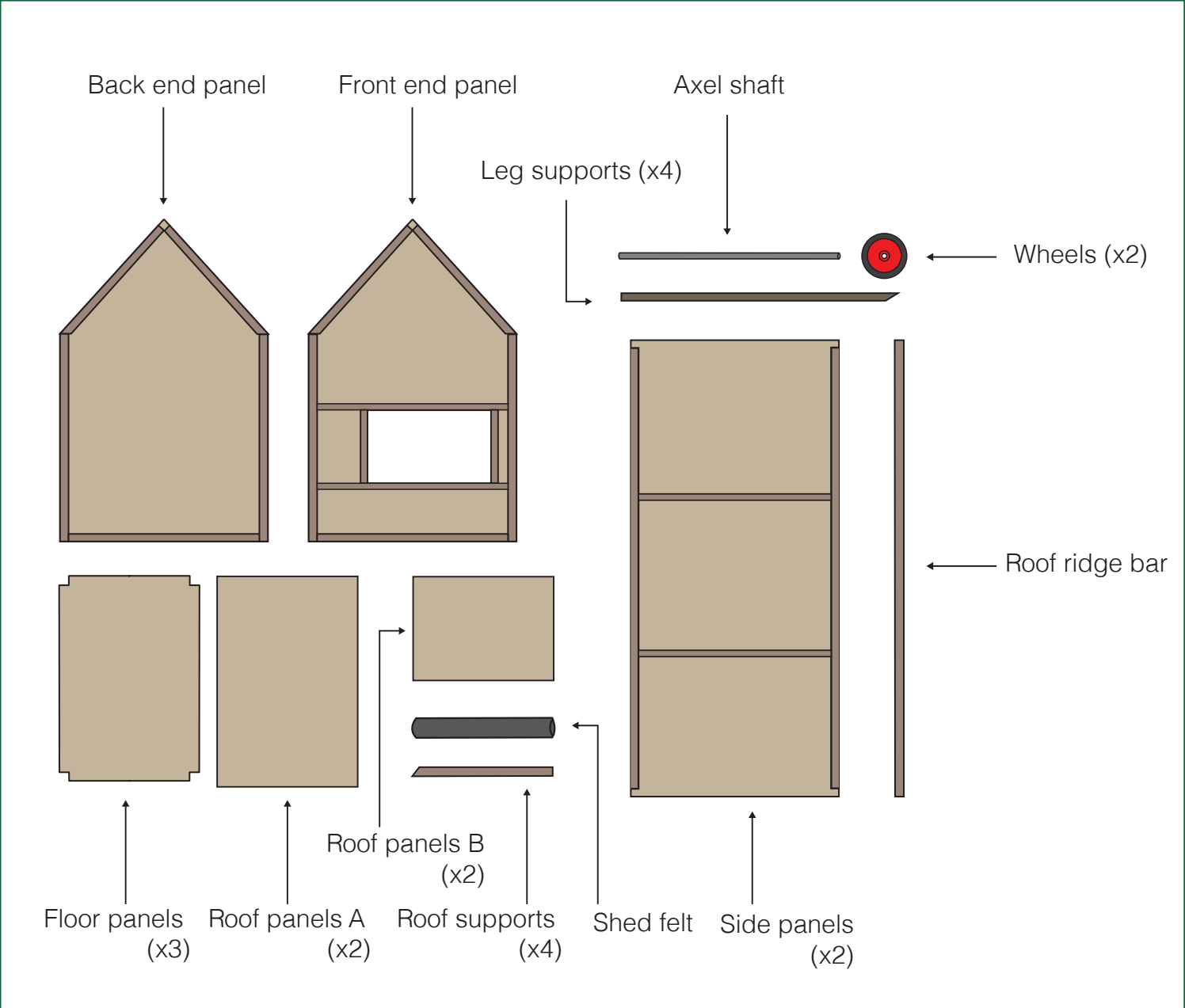


Rev.	Details	Drawn Chkd.	Date
Project			
213465 Barn at Duntisbourne House Duntisbourne Abbots			
Title			
Annotated Site Plan			
			
AA Environmental Ltd Units 4-8 Cholswell Court Shippon Abingdon Oxon OX13 6HX T: (01235) 536042 F: (01235) 523849 info@aae-ltd.co.uk www.aae-ltd.co.uk			
Scale	Date	08.03.22	Drng. No.
NTS	Drawn	JDT	Chkd.
		ARB	Rev.
Figure 1			

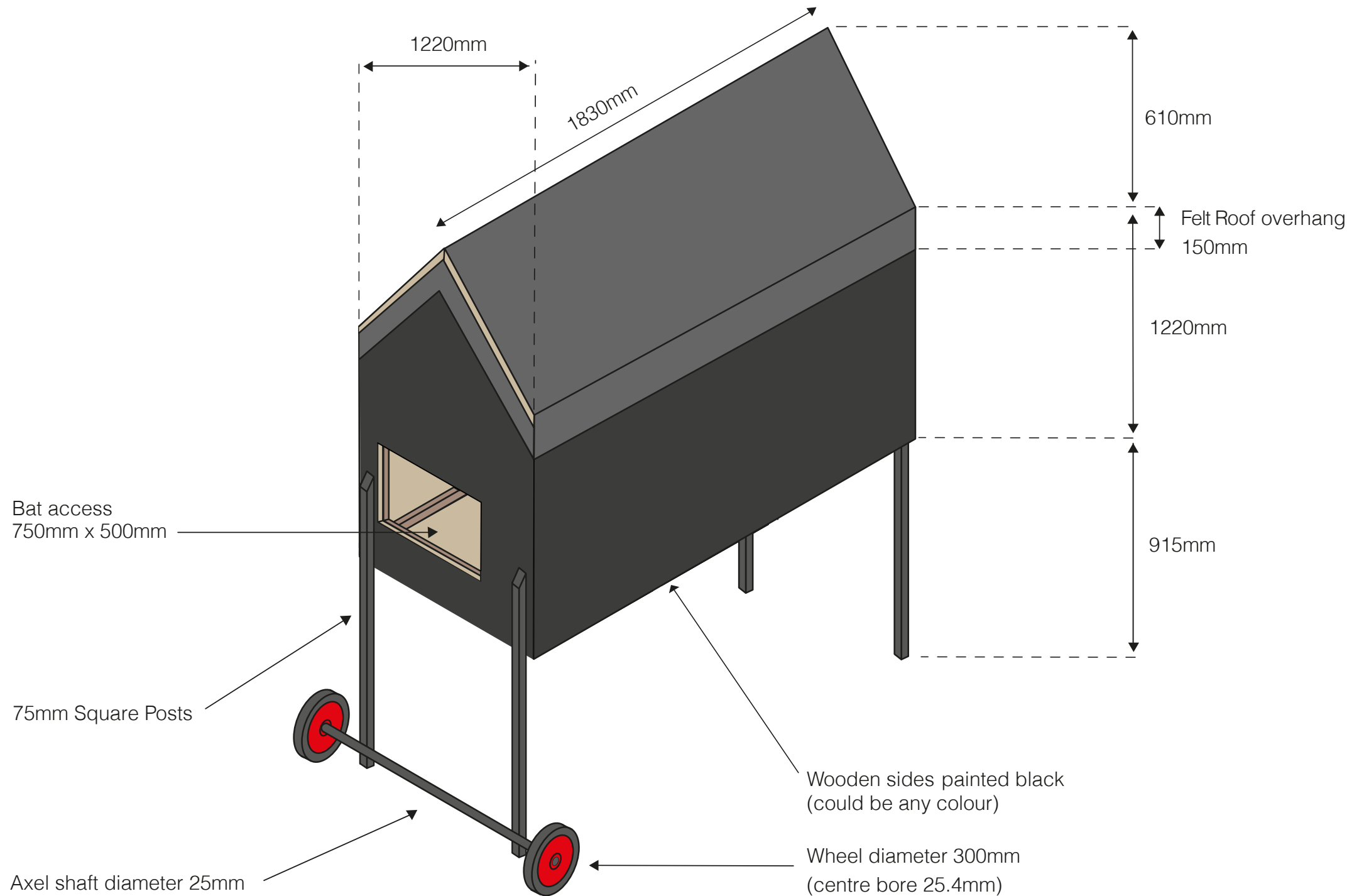
## **Appendix A**



# Cathedine Night Roost Design



# Cathedine Night Roost Design



## **Appendix B**

# TOOLBOX TALK: BATS

## Did you know?

- Bats are the world's only flying mammal.
- There are 17 species of bat known to be breeding in the UK, 6 of which are endangered or rare and 6 are classed as vulnerable.
- Bats can be found across the country in urban and rural locations.
- They are often sighted at dusk as they leave their roost, flying around hedgerows, woodland and waterbodies, feeding on insects.
- Throughout the year bats will often change their roost, depending upon the season.
- Usually a pregnant female will only have one baby a year, this makes colonies vulnerable to population decline.
- During the winter bats hibernate and may not wake up, even if disturbed. Therefore it's important not to work on sites with bats during these months.
- Bats may not use the same roost throughout the year, however they are legally protected with or without a bat occupying them.

## Identification

- You may find bats in any number of places, they tend to prefer dark, quiet spots with good shelter, such as holes and cracks in trees, roofs and walls of buildings, under bridges, old tunnels and in caves.
- Signs of bat presence include discarded moth wings, staining around crevices and small mouse-like droppings which crumble easily.

## Legislation

- All bats and their roosts are protected by UK and European Law. This makes it **illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats** or obstruct access to, damage or destroy their roosts and protects important feeding areas from damage or disturbance.
- Under law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

## Site Controls

- There is always a **risk** that bats, as they move between different roost sites and occupy new roosts, could be encountered during site works.
- **If any bats are encountered during works the following controls must be applied to avoid breaking the law:**
  1. If bats are discovered/suspected works must stop **immediately** with any bat left in-situ and AAe immediately contacted (contact details above).
  2. If any injured bats are found during the works AAe would care for them and where possible be released in the same location once recovered.
  3. During works staff must wear gloves in case of accidental contact with bats.
  4. Any roof tiles will be lifted straight up, rather than being rolled over, minimising the risk of harming bats which may be sheltering underneath.
  5. Areas must be fully checked for any bats or their evidence prior to filling any gaps and repointing any brickwork.
  6. Any lighting must be installed must avoid illuminating vegetation and or bat boxes/access points.

These controls have been put in place to protect all site operatives from breaking the law. You're not expected to be able to identify bats or their presence so remember, **if in doubt shout and contact the relevant person.**

## Key Contacts

AA Environmental Ltd, Units 4-8 Cholswell Court, Shippon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6HX

Tel: 01235 536042



Brown long-eared bat.



Lesser horseshoe bat in rail tunnel.



Common pipistrelle bat.