

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT REPORT

At

Hill Top Farm
Mappleton
East Riding of Yorkshire
HU18 1XR

For

Caroline Basham

Date: 22nd February 2023

Reference no: CE1297

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

Curtis Ecology was instructed by the client, Caroline Basham, to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment on an outbuilding located within the curtilage of Hill Top Farm, Mappleton, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU18 1XR. The survey is required to inform a proposed planning application, which is to be lodged with the local planning authority, in this case the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, for the conversion of the outbuilding into a dwelling, along with associated works. Both verbal and electronic instruction was given, with no plans/drawings provided.

The Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken on the 17th February 2023, which is an appropriate time of the year for this type of survey. During the Preliminary Roost Assessment, there were features identified within the study building, in the external walls and roof structure which have the potential to provide roosting opportunities, especially for crevice dwelling bat species, bearing in mind that a Pipistrelle bat species can quite easily squeeze into a 15 – 20mm gap.

As a result of the desktop study and observations made during the daytime buildings assessment, the study building has been assessed as having Moderate potential for bat habitation,

It is recommended that nocturnal surveys are undertaken on the study building during the bat activity survey season May – mid September 2023, to enable an appropriate scale of a mitigation plan to be prepared, which will require approval by the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Planning Authority prior to any of the proposed works being undertaken.

If any additional information gathered during the recommended nocturnal surveys indicates the requirement for a Bat Mitigation Licence, then this can only be applied for from Natural England, once planning permission for the proposed development has been obtained from the local planning authority

It should, however, be remembered that bats are a highly mobile and secretive species, their absence during a survey of this type undertaken at this time of the year does not preclude them from being present at other times of the year.

Two historical Barn swallow nests were present in the western room of the study building, therefore recommendations have been proposed in Section 7.2 of this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION.

Curtis Ecology was instructed by the client, Caroline Basham, to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment on an outbuilding located within the curtilage of Hill Top Farm, Mappleton, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU18 1XR. The survey is required to inform a proposed planning application, which is to be lodged with the local planning authority, in this case the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, for the conversion of the outbuilding into a dwelling, along with associated works.

1.1 Site Description.

The application site is found at the northern periphery of Mappleton village, with the study building being centred on Grid reference TA2250 4415. Hill Top Farm is comprised of the study building, farmhouse with garden, a mix of agricultural buildings and a children's nursery. The immediate surrounding habitat is a mix of residential properties to the south, a caravan site to the north, which is still under construction, intensively farmed agricultural land to the west and the B1242, small grass paddocks and the North Sea to the east. The wider landscape beyond the village is dominated by intensively farmed arable land.



Figure 1. Aerial view of the study site location within the wider landscape

© Google Earth.

1.2 Proposed Works.

It is understood that the development proposal relates to the conversion of the outbuilding into a dwelling, along with associated works.

1.3 Survey Objectives.

The aim of the Preliminary Roost Assessment are as follows: -

- Perform a desktop study and data/record search for pre-existing records and data from third party repositories prior to the site survey.
- Determine the potential for bats and to search for evidence of their occupancy and signs of usage using a number of survey methods.
- Assess the survey results and evaluate any potential impact of the proposed work upon any bats which might be occupying any of the study buildings and immediate surrounding habitat.
- To produce a report detailing findings, the likely approach to mitigation and any recommendations for the proposed work.

2.0 SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1 Desk Study.

A desk study was undertaken with records being obtained from the following third-party repositories, the North & East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre with reference to the East Yorkshire Bat Group and a review of the Multi-Agency Geographical Information of Conservation (MAGIC) and Google Earth. The search area is a 2km radius from the centre of the study building located at Grid reference TA2250 4415.

2.2 Buildings Assessment.

The buildings were subject to a visual daytime inspection for evidence of and potential for bat species. The survey methodology will be undertaken as recommended by the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: *Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edition 2016)* and Natural England Standing Advice Sheet - *Bats (April 2012)*.

The visual survey involves assessment for: -

- An assessment of holes/crevices in the building structure.
- Slipped, lifted and or badly fitted tiles.
- The presence of roofing felt or any form of internal roof lining.
- Signs of droppings on walls, windowsills, floors, roof spaces and below any suitable roosting features.
- Wing fragments of butterflies and moths on the floor/walls below beams and other internal structure.
- Scratch marks on beams, potential entrance and exits holes and any other internal structures.
- Dead bats
- Oil staining – the bat fur may leave an oily residue on surfaces
- Tracks in any dust
- Odour – certain bat species can have a distinctive odour, species such as soprano pipistrelle and noctule can have a pungent odour from urine and oily fur.
- Suitable foraging and or commuting habitat within close proximity to the study site, which would include woodland, shelter belts, hedgerows, ponds, watercourses and domestic gardens connected to one another.

2.3 Survey Equipment.

The following equipment when required was used during the building survey assessment:

- Clulite CB2 one million candle power torch
- Close focusing binoculars
- Dart Ridged See-Snake Endoscope
- Petsl Tikka Plus 2 head torch
- 3.6 m telescopic ladders
- FinePix S5600 digital camera
- Thermohygrometer

2.4 Weather Conditions.

Table 1 - Weather conditions at the time of the Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey date	17 th February 2023
Wind speed	20mph west
Cloud cover	90%
Rainfall	None
Temperature	13°C
Humidity	71%

2.5 Survey Personnel.

2.5.1 Daytime Building Assessment.

The buildings assessment was undertaken in suitable weather conditions and at an appropriate time of year on the 17th February 2023 by the following personnel:

Roger Curtis FdSc who has 12 years survey experience and holds the follow Natural England licences; - Bats – WML-CL18 class licence 2015-12148-CLS-CLS

Roger is also a committee member of the East Yorkshire Bat Group and County Bat Recorder.

With assistance from Charlie Foxton who has undertaken numerous dusk & dawn surveys as well as assisting with building assessments. Charlie is currently working towards a Natural England Level 2 class bat licence.

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1 Desktop Study.

3.1.1 Figure 2. Pre-existing Site Designations



Our Ref: E07081
Your Ref: CE1297
On behalf of: Curtis Ecology
Date: 16/02/2023
Search area: 2km from TA225441

NEYEDC Site Data Search

Internationally Designated Sites

The following internationally designated site boundaries were searched:

- Ramsar sites published May 2017, revised October 2020
- Special Areas of Conservation published July 2017, revised May 2021
- Special Protection Areas published January 2019, revised June 2021

The following internationally designated sites are in or partly within the search area, and are shown on the accompanying map.

Designation	Name or location of site	Grid reference in relation to the search area
Special Protection Area	Greater Wash	Seaward part of the search area, centred on TA233446

Nationally Designated Sites

The following nationally designated site boundaries were searched:

- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty published January 2017, revised August 2020
- National Nature Reserves published April 2017, revised December 2022
- National Parks published August 2016, revised February 2019
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest published January 2019, revised December 2022

There are no nationally designated sites in or partly within the search area.

Locally Designated Sites

The following locally designated site boundaries were searched:

Local Nature Reserves published April 2017, revised December 2022

There are no Local Nature Reserves in or partly within the search area.

East Yorkshire LWS (Local Wildlife Site)

Version: East Yorkshire LWS v8.2, February 2022

The following East Yorkshire LWS are in or partly within the search area, and are shown on the accompanying map.



Our Ref: E07081
 Your Ref: CE1297
 On behalf of: Curtis Ecology
 Date: 16/02/2023
 Search area: 2km from TA225441

Site Name	Site Ref	Grid Reference	Status
Hatfield Wood	TA2040-02	TA215428	Historic LWS
Rolston Hall	TA2040-01	TA217449	Deleted LWS



Our Ref: E07081
 Your Ref: CE1297
 On behalf of: Curtis Ecology
 Date: 16/02/2023
 Search area: 2km from TA225441

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Reserves published January 2019

There are no Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Reserves in or partly within the search area.

Priority Habitats

The following site-based habitat boundaries were searched:

Ancient Woodland Inventory published July 2013, revised January 2020

There are no woodlands identified on the Ancient Woodland Inventory in or partly within the search area.

Priority Habitat Inventory published December 2022

The following areas of priority habitat are in or partly within the search area and are shown on the accompanying map

Habitat type	Location description
Deciduous woodland	Several polygons throughout the search area.
Maritime cliff and slope	Coastline at Mappleton

The relevant 2km Designation & Habitat maps are illustrated in Appendices 1,2 & 3 of this report.

3.1.2 Bat Records.

Bat records were obtained from North & East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC) with reference to the East Yorkshire Bat Group.

There was a total of 1 historical bat record returned from the third-party repositories. The record relates to a grounded Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrelleus*, in 2007, located approximately 0.45km south of the study building.

3.2 Daytime Building Survey.

The study building is single storey with a mix of solid brick and breeze block walls, with a pantiled roof overing. The east gable is attached to the Village Hall.

Plate 1. Looking along the north elevation of the study building, with the village hall at the far end.



The walls are in reasonable condition with the western end of the north elevation having been rebuilt in the recent past. The remainder of the walls have superficial decay of the brickwork in several places, along with several deeper holes in the mortar line along eaves level on the north elevation.

In the north elevation are four timber framed glazed windows, which are a reasonable fit to the surrounding brick and blockwork. Two timber framed pedestrian doors are also in the same elevation, both of which are in reasonable condition.

However, the window above the western door is not glazed. A single glazed timber window is also found in the south elevation, with only a small gap noted between the top of the frame and header bricks above. Timber fascia boards along the majority of the north elevation are again a tight fit to the brickwork, as is the timber lintel above the blockwork to the eastern end of the north elevation.

Internally the building is divided into two rooms, by a full height brick wall. The brickwork in the smaller western room has one or two missing bricks in the dividing wall, otherwise the remainder appear to be in good condition. There is no roof void in this section of the study building.

The walls in the eastern room are lined internally with fibre cement clad panels which appear to be in good condition. A ceiling of the same panelling runs the length of the eastern room creating a void above, however only the most eastern part of the void could be accessed.

The roof structure is comprised of a series of A framed timber trusses, with timber purlins, rafters and a central ridge board. A mix of traditional bitumastic roofing felt, reinforced plastic roof membrane and breathable roof membrane are present in the accessible sections of the roof, it is presumed that roof membrane will also be present in the inaccessible void area.

Externally the roof is covered with pantiles, with several tiles lifted and/or slipped to all roof elevations. The ridge tiles have several areas of missing bedding mortar, predominantly along the south elevation, along with a missing ridge tile at the base of the north hip on the west elevation.

There was historical evidence of bat habitation at the time of this assessment, however from the observations made the study building has been assessed at this stage as having Moderate potential for bat habitation for the following reasons:

- Lifted and slipped pantiles to all elevations.
- Missing bedding mortar under the ridge tiles.
- Roofing membrane present
- Several holes in the internal brickwork
- No access to most of the roof void over the eastern section.

Plate 2. Looking at the south elevation of the study building.



Plate 3. Looking at the west gable of the study building.



Plate 4. The interior of the western room.



Plate 5. Example of the interior of the remainder of the study building.



Plate 6. The accessible section of the roof void.



4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SURVEY RESULTS.

4.1 Constraints on Survey Information.

- The study buildings were fully accessible during the daytime assessment, apart from the majority of the roof void over the eastern room.
- There were no constraints on the third-party data searches.

4.2 Constraints on Equipment Used.

- There were no constraints on the equipment used during the building assessment.

4.3 Potential Impacts of Development.

4.3.1 Designated Sites

There is one Internationally Designated Site found within the 2km search area. The Greater Wash, a Special Protected Area is located approximately 90m to the east of the study building.

There are no Nationally Designated Sites found within the 2km search area.

There are no Local Nature Reserves found within the 2 km search area.

There are two Non-Statutory sites within the search area, the nearest of which is Rolston Hall, a Deleted Local Wildlife Site, which is located approximately 0.9km to the north west of the study building.

Given the nature of the small development proposal and its location, within a working farm, it is reasonable to consider that any short- or long-term negative impacts are unlikely to occur upon any of the site designations by the proposed development if it were to proceed.

4.3.2 Roosts

There were several features identified within the structure of the study building to varying degrees, which have the potential to provide roosting opportunities, especially for crevice dwelling bat species, bearing in mind that a Pipistrelle bat species can squeeze into a 15 – 20mm gap quite easily. Therefore, as a result of the observations made during the daytime buildings assessment, the study building has been assessed as having Moderate potential bat habitation.

There was a total of 1 historical bat record returned from the third-party repositories. The record relates to a grounded Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrelleus*, in 2007, located approximately 0.45km south of the study building.

Any potential impacts on bat species, which could result from the proposed development cannot be fully assessed from the findings of this Preliminary Roost Assessment alone. Therefore to assess any possible impacts and to determine the level of mitigation which may be required, along with any requirements for a Bat Mitigation Licence, it is recommended that nocturnal surveys in the form of dusk /emergence and dawn/re-entry survey is undertaken during the bat activity survey season, generally taken to be between May and mid-September 2023.

It should be remembered that bats are highly mobile and secretive species, their absence during surveys of this type undertaken at this time of the year does not preclude them from being present at other times of the year.

4.3.3 Habitats.

The nearest Priority Habitat is along the cliff tops, listed as Maritime Cliff and Slope, which is located approximately 90m to the east of the study building. The Priority Habitat is separated from the study building by the B1242 road and small grass paddocks. therefore, given the small scale of the proposed development and its location within Hill Top Farm, it is not anticipated that there would be any short- or long-term negative impacts upon this Priority Habitat if the proposed development were to proceed.

The habitats within the immediate surrounding area are considered at this stage to offer Low - Moderate foraging capacity for several bat species.

4.3.4 Nesting Birds.

Two historical Barn swallow nests were observed in the western room of the study building. Without suitable mitigation the conversion of this building would result in the destruction/loss of the existing nest sites. Therefore, to address these findings and to enable both the Continued Ecological Functionality and to maintain the Favourable Conservation Status of this bird species recommendations have been proposed in Section 7.2 of this report.

5.0 LEGISLATION.

5.1 Bats.

All species of UK bats are statutorily protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and through Schedule 5 (Section 9) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This combined legislation makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture bats.
- Deliberately disturb bats in such a way as to significantly effect:
 - a. the ability of that species to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young
 - b. the local distribution on the species
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb or obstruct access to the resting place of bats.
- Damage or destroy breeding sites and resting places of bats even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time.
- Possess, transport, sell, barter or exchange any part of, or derived from a bat whether dead or alive.

5.2 Nesting birds

All wild birds are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to:-

- Deliberately kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst in use or being built.
- Take or destroy an egg or eggs of any such wild bird.

The breeding bird season runs from 1st March to 31st August.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019):

174. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and steppingstones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation and
- Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

175. When determining planning applications, local authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:

- If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.
- Development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments, should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of specific scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can be secured measurable net gains for biodiversity.

176. The following should be given the same protection as habitat sites:

- Potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Sites of Conservation;
- listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
- Sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitat sites, potential Special Protected Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

177. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plan or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site

ODMP Circular 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

- The presence of a protected species is a ‘material consideration’ when a local planning authority is considering a development proposal. (*Paragraph 98 Circular 06/2005*), when a planning authority is considering a development proposal and as such where impacts upon a protected species are likely to occur from a proposed development, surveys must be undertaken and provided to support a planning application.
- Paragraph 99 Circular 06/2005 states;

‘It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before making the decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances, with the result that the surveys are carried out after planning permission has been granted’.

- Where there is a reasonable likelihood of protected species being present and affected by a development the surveys should be completed and any necessary measure put in place, through conditions and / or planning obligations before the permission is granted.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) also lists the Bat as a species of principal importance under Section 41 and Section 40 requires every public body in the exercising of its functions (in relation to Section 41 species) to ‘have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the propose of conserving biodiversity’; therefore making the Bat a material consideration in the planning process and requiring a detailed survey before planning permission can be granted.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS.

7.1 Bats

Subject to observations made from the results of this Preliminary Roost Assessment undertaken on the 17th February 2023, it is recommended that nocturnal surveys in the form of dusk/emergence and dawn/re-entry surveys will be required during the bat activity survey season, between May and mid-September, prior to any conversion works being undertaken.

The results from any additional nocturnal surveys along with existing information obtained during the Desktop Study and Preliminary Roost Assessment will confirm any requirements for a Bat Mitigation Plan, which will require approval from East Riding of Yorkshire Council, prior to any conversion work on the study building being undertaken.

The additional survey work will also be required if the combined results from all the survey periods indicate that bat roosts are in fact present within the study building and if so, then a Bat Mitigation Licence will be required from Natural England. This type of licence can only be applied for once planning approval has been obtained from the LPA and work on the proposed conversion, can only commence once such a licence has been approved by and obtained from Natural England.

7.2 Nesting Birds.

Mitigation Strategy for Nesting Birds

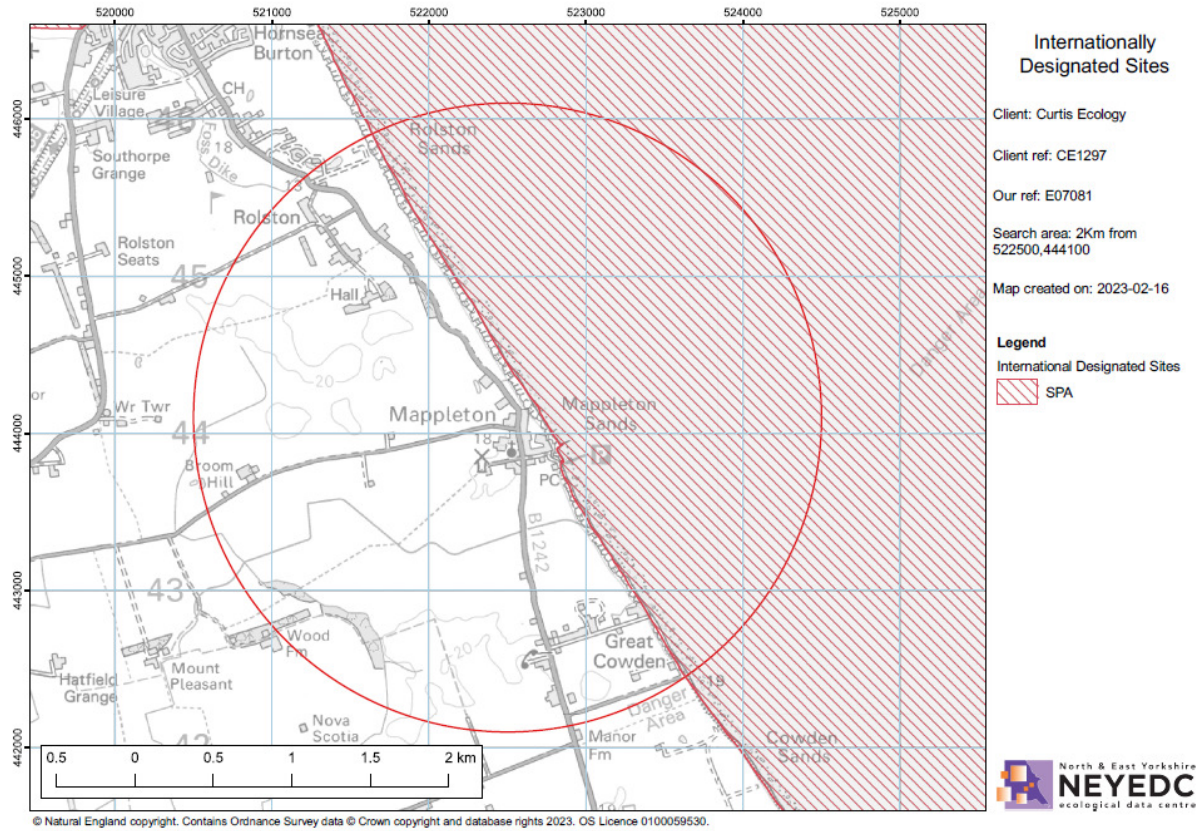
1. No further Breeding bird survey work is required.
2. Conversion works on the study building should preferably be undertaken outside the bird nesting period 1st March – 31st August inclusive. However, if this is unavoidable then this building will need to be checked by a suitably qualified ecologist, just prior to any conversion works being undertaken. If any active nests are identified, then they will remain untouched until the nest has been naturally abandoned or the young have fledged.
3. Prior to the commencement of the conversion works on the study building, the following nest boxes will be installed in a suitable location within the curtilage of Hill Top Farm
 - 3 x Woodstone Swallow Nest Bowls or woodcrete equivalents.

8.0 REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

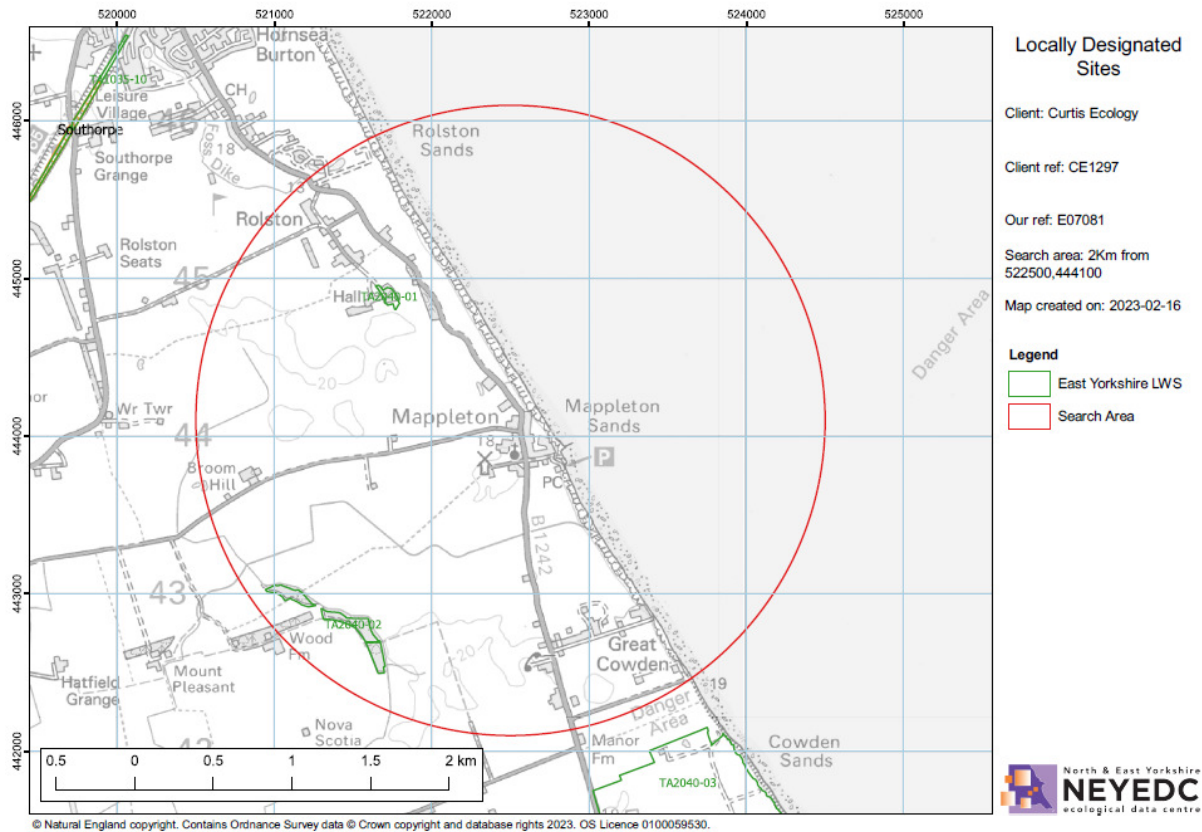
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9.0 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1. Internationally Designated Sites Map 2km



9.2 Appendix 2. Locally Designated Sites Map 2km.



9.3 Appendix 3. Priority Habitats Map 2km.

