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Ecological Impact Assessment and Bat Survey

**THE BOTHY, EMBLETON TOWER, EMBLETON,
NORTHUMBERLAND**

SUMMER 2023

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Disclaimer:

Ecology surveys are carried out in good faith, to the relevant professional guidelines. Where variation from these guidelines is necessary, this is outlined in the report. Any comments regarding condition of buildings or trees are in relation to the use of the building/tree by bats and birds and should not be considered as a building survey or arboricultural opinion on the condition of those features.

The client should be aware that the mitigation recommendations in ecology reports are often translated directly into planning conditions, and as such these should be studied closely and agreed with any contractors in advance of site works commencing.

Mitigation recommendations should be clearly marked on the Architect's Plans submitted with any planning or other consent.

Contents

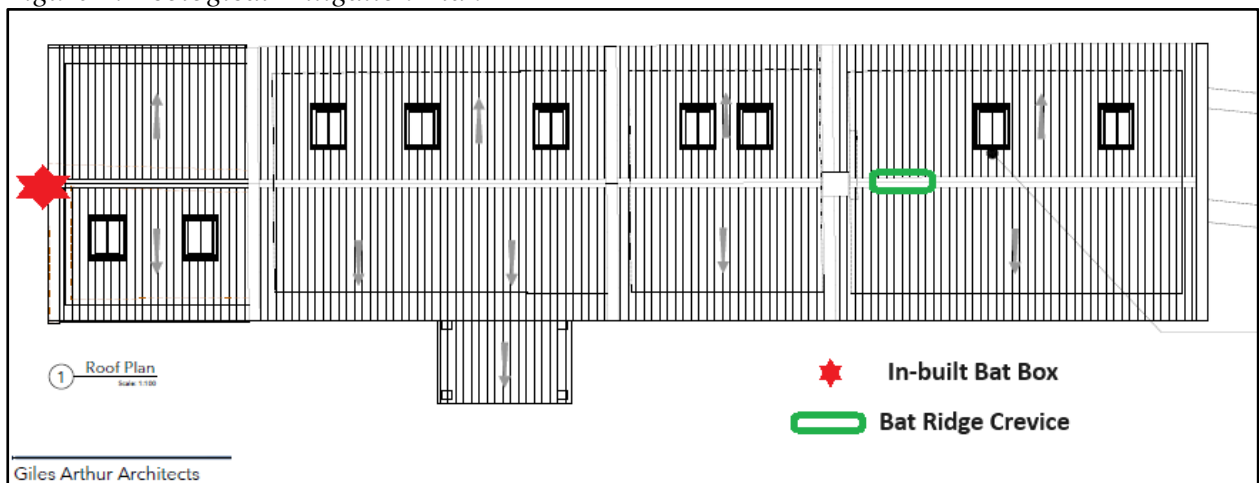
Summary	4
1. Introduction.	5
2. Relevant Policies and Legislation.	6
3. Methodology	7
3.1 Scope of the Assessment	7
3.2 Desktop Survey.	7
3.4 Assessment.	9
4. Baseline Ecological Conditions	9
4.1 General	9
4.2 Designated Sites	9
4.3 Habitats	10
4.4 Species and Species Groups	10
4.4.1 Desktop Search	10
4.4.2 Habitat description	11
4.4.3 Bats	11
4.4.5 Amphibians	13
4.4.6 Invasive Species	13
5. Photographs of the Site	14
6. Description of Proposed Development.	16
7. Assessment of Impacts	17
7.1 Constraints	17
7.2 Site Based Impacts.	17
7.3 Impacts on the SSSI.	18
8. Mitigation and Enhancement.	18
8.1 Pollution Prevention	18
8.2 On Site Mitigation	18
8.3 Mitigation Summary	19
8.4 Enhancement	19
8.5 Monitoring	20
8.6 Conclusions	20
9. References	20
APPENDIX 1. LEGISLATION RELATING TO PROTECTED SPECIES	21
APPENDIX 2. SURVEY DATA	22
APPENDIX 3. BAT METHOD STATEMENT FOR CONTRACTORS	23
Identifying roosts	23
MITIGATION FEATURES	26

Ecological Impact Assessment for The Bothy, Embleton Tower, Embleton, Northumberland

Summary

- An ecological survey was requested primarily for bats and birds for The Bothy, Embleton Tower, Embleton, Northumberland by Giles Arthur Architects on behalf of the owners.
- The Bothy, Embleton Tower, is situated on the southwest side of Embleton. The immediate area has some good potential for feeding bats due to a wooded area to the west of the house and which links along hedgerows to further foraging areas that are present along Embleton Burn which has plantations and woodland on the banks 1km to the south. Surrounding the village the agricultural land consists of improved grassland and arable land with boundaries of hedges, walls and fences.
- The building surveyed is stone built outbuilding with a pitched pantiled roof.
- The proposals are to convert the building as an annex to the house.
- Inspection results of the exterior of the building affected by the proposals, identified no traces or evidence of bats. The building had a pitched pantiled roof with torching. Please see photographs for details. Due to the crevices/cracks in the masonry and wall tops, the site was considered moderate risk of roost potential. Two dusk and one dawn survey were carried out.
- Known bat activity in the area within 2km of the site are maternity roosts of Pipistrelle sp. 2+km to the southwest and 300m to the north (1994) and Brown Long-eared and Natterer's roosts 2+km to the southwest plus an occasional Pipistrelle 45kHz roost 2+km to the east. A small Pipistrelle 55kHz roost is known 190m to the northeast. A small maternity roost of Pipistrelle 45kHz and occasional whiskered/Brandt's are known 750m to the south along with foraging Pipistrelle 55kHz and Noctule bats. Foraging Daubentons also known 600m to the southeast.
- The surveys confirmed no bat activity in the property during the June and July surveys.
- The occasional bat however may be present in any suitable crevice at any time of the year in small numbers. Timing of the works to avoid the hibernation period will ensure that the works has as little negative affect on bat conservation status as possible.
- Mitigation in the form of one in-build bat box and bat ridge crevice will be provided.
- No evidence of nesting/roosting birds was noted around the building. Any nesting bird species though will be allowed access to the nest until the young have fledged.
- A contribution to the Coastal Mitigation Scheme may be required.

Figure 1. Ecological Mitigation Plan



1. Introduction.

The inspection was carried out and reported by Ruth Hadden BSc an experienced Ecologist and Licensed Bat Surveyor.

Figure 2. Survey area of the site.

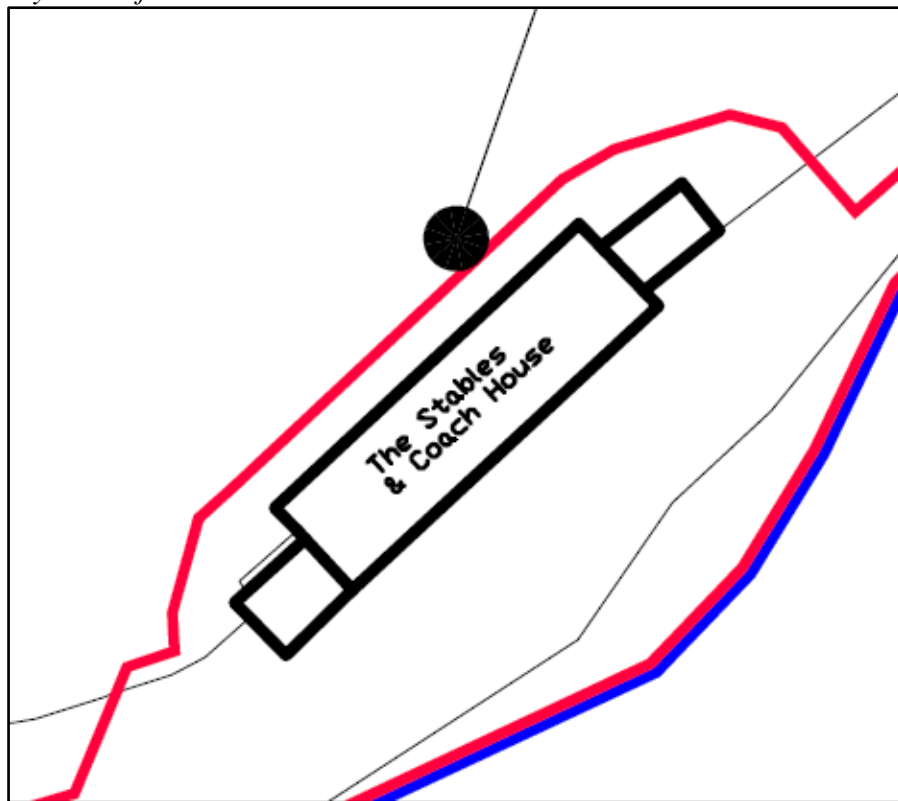
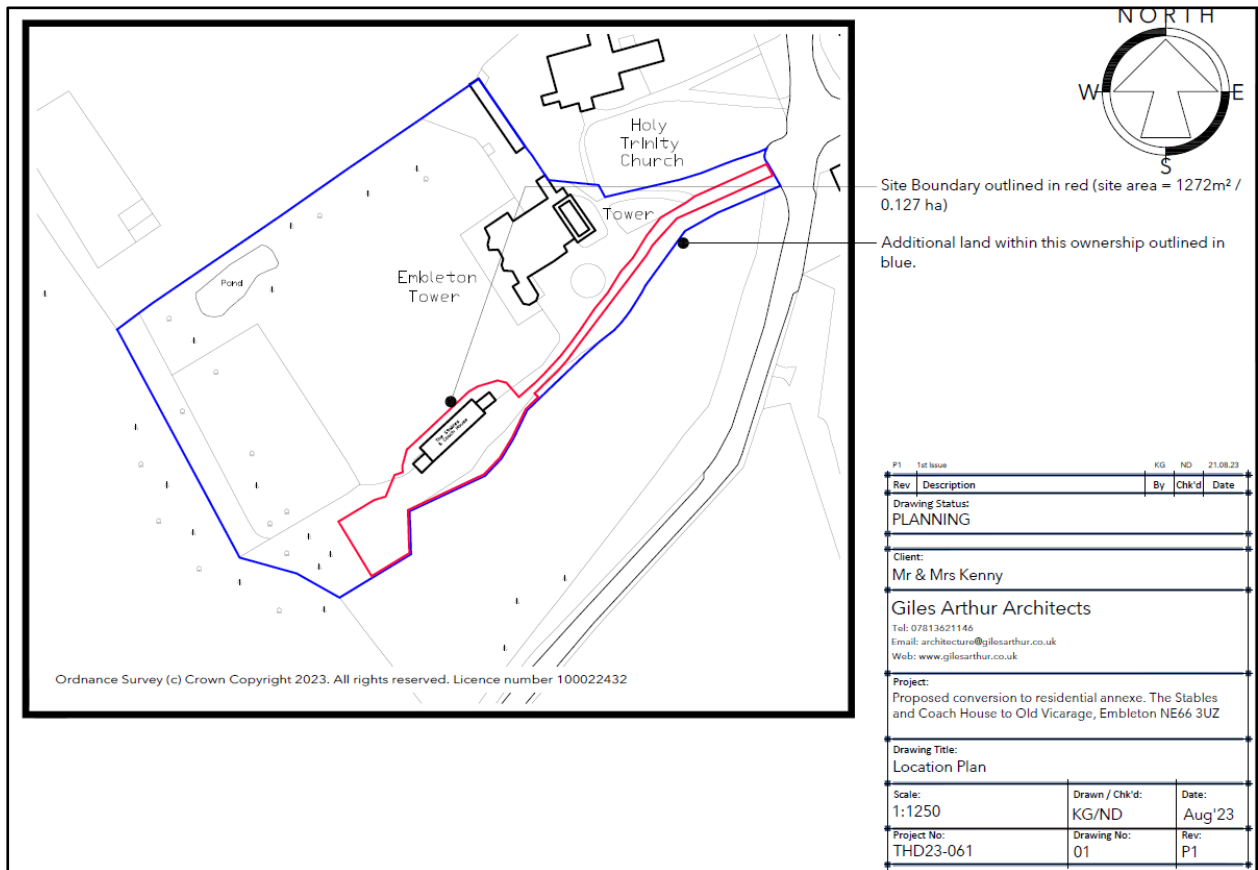


Figure 3. Location of site.



2. Relevant Policies and Legislation.

Under Section 25 (1) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) local authorities have a duty to take such steps as they consider expedient to bring to the attention of the public the provisions of Part I of the Wildlife & Countryside Act, which includes measures to conserve protected species.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) places a Statutory Biodiversity Duty on public authorities to take such measures as they consider expedient for the purposes of conserving biodiversity, including restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states “*When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*

a) 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;” (paragraph 175).

ODPM Circular 06/2005/Defra Circular 01/2005 states that the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when considering a development proposal that could harm the species or its habitat.

Appendix 1 details legislation relating to applicable species.

Section 41 of The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal

importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions. This includes planning decisions.

2.1 Designated Sites

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) citations are for special features of importance to nature conservation. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are nationally important sites protected under laws including The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. LPAs must consult Natural England on planning applications that might affect SSSIs. Operations that could damage special interests require consent by Natural England. It is an offence for any person to intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy any of the features of special interest of an SSSI, or to disturb wildlife for which the site was notified.

3. Methodology.

3.1 Scope of the Assessment.

The zone of influence of this development is defined as being the site itself and habitats to the immediate boundaries within 2km.

The assessment has included consideration of:

- designated sites
- habitats and species of principal importance for conservation of biodiversity
- protected species, namely bats.

3.2 Desktop Survey.

Natural England's Magic on the Map website was accessed for details of any designated wildlife sites within 2km.

The Environmental Records Information Centre North East (ERIC) data search has been restricted to bats, as this is the major constraint to any destructive building works.

Natural England's Magic on the Map and OS Explorer 1:12500 maps were used to assess the distance to habitat features close to the site.

3.3 Site Survey

The survey area covered the buildings only within the red line boundary as shown within Figure 2 and included searching for signs of any wildlife using the site with the key aspects listed below.

The survey included an assessment of habitats on site for use by bats following the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edition, 2016) and Natural England's definitions except where indicated. The survey effort at the site has taken account of the recommendations of the BCT Good Practice Survey Guidelines, taking proportionality into account and the proposals.

Field Survey for Bats and Birds

Visual Inspection

A close inspection of the building was made in good light, and by torch where required. The exterior and lofts of the building was examined as far as was feasible for signs of bats: droppings, urine streaks, clean cobweb-free areas on the ridge boards or crevices and potential roost exit holes. All external and internal crevices were checked using a torch and possible roosting sites were noted. Crevice loving bats can be difficult to find especially when bats are present between the roofing felt and slate/tiles. Emergence surveys were therefore used to check for the presence of bats missed during the visual inspections. Beneath ledges the ground was examined for feathers, pellets and birdlime that could indicate occupation by barn owls.

Emergence Survey

As dusk fell 2 surveyors, each using visual observations and bat detectors (Echo Meter Touch), and two-way radios, carried out the evening emergence surveys, covering all aspects of the buildings. Bat detectors convert bat echo-location signals into audible sounds, enabling the identification of some species, and aid the monitoring of the number of bats present. Two-way radios help to determine the emergence and flight paths of a bat seen by surveyors around the site and allow the bat activity of the whole site to be understood, whilst at the site.

Surveyors are on site for at least quarter of an hour before sunset and up to 1½ hours after sunset or until darkness falls as reduced visibility does not allow bats to be seen emerging from the building being surveyed. After this time any bats picked up by detector, cannot be guaranteed to have emerged from the building in question, but confirms if additional species are present in the area or not. If bats or a maternity colony is present the bats are counted until no bats have left the roost for 10 minutes for as long as it takes.

Re-entry Survey

A dawn survey was also carried out with 2 surveyors. For a dawn survey, surveyors are on site one and a half hours before sunrise until a quarter of an hour after sunrise.

Timing and Weather Conditions

Survey	Date	Timings	Weather
Inspection	7 June 2023	Externally and internally (40 mins).	Fine and dry
Emergence	7 June 2023	9.30pm – 11.15pm (Sunset 9.45pm)	Fine, cloudy and still. 11-10°C
Re-entry	10 July 2023	3.05am – 4.55am (Sunrise 4.38am)	Fine, clear, still. 11°C

Personnel

Ruth Hadden – Bat Consultant since 1996, Class Survey Licence CL20 2015-13665-CLS-CLS (Bat Survey Level 4). Licensed to handle bats and enter known roosts since 1986. Qualifications BSc Joint Honours Zoology & Plant Biology, Newcastle upon Tyne. MCIEEM

Ben Hadden – Class Survey Licence WML CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2). Registration number 201514223-CLS-CLS. 19 years of experience. Qualifications MSc Ecological Consultancy, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Francesca Dearden 2 years of experience

3.4 Assessment.

The assessment has been conducted according to the *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine*, CIEEM, September 2018. Impacts are considered for during construction and occupation.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Reports (PEAR) which CIEEM guidelines¹ states can be used to support a planning application where it can be determined that the project would have no significant ecological effects, no mitigation is required, and no further surveys are necessary. PEARs though can also provide;

- the results of initial ecological surveys associated with a proposed development
- identify further ecological surveys necessary to inform an EcIA
- identify ecological constraints to a project
- make recommendations for design changes
- highlight opportunities for ecological enhancement.

4. Baseline Ecological Conditions

4.1 General

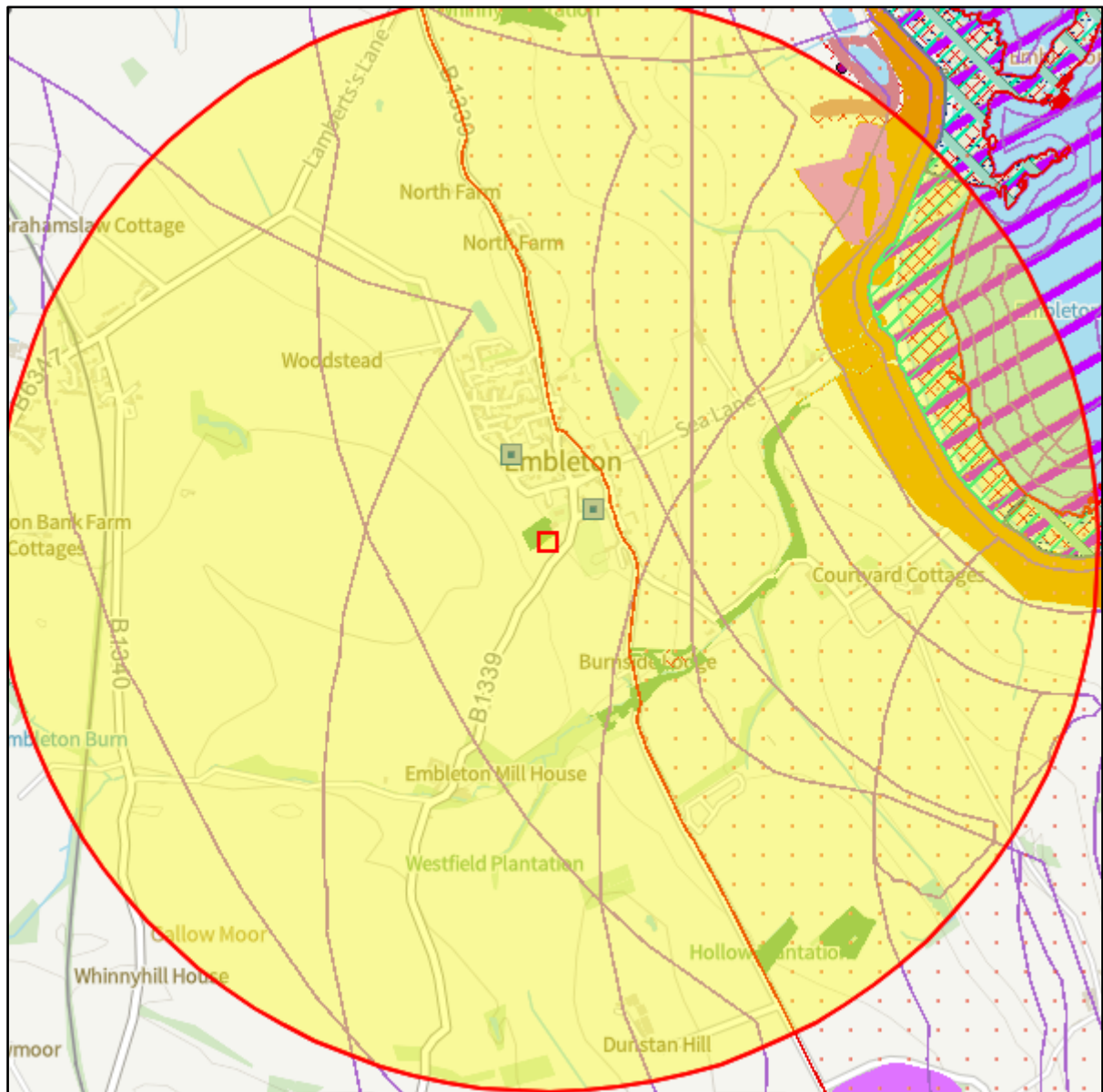
The building surveyed is located at NU230223 as shown below.

4.2 Designated Sites

There are several statutory designated sites within 2km of the site. The Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Northumberland Marine Special Protection Area (SPA), Northumbria Coast SPA, The Northumberland Coast Ramsar and Northumberland Shore Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are located 1.5-2km northeast of the site. The development site falls within the impact risk zones for SSSI's in the wider area.

Figure 4. Designated Sites and Priority Habitats within 2km of the site (from magic.defra.gov.uk)

¹ *Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing Second Edition* December 2017



4.3 Habitats

Figure 4 shows BAP Priority Habitats, within 2km (listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006). These habitats are mainly deciduous woodland, lowland fens, coastal sand dunes, habitats with no main type and good quality semi-improved grassland.

4.4 Species and Species Groups

4.4.1 Desktop Search

Records from the Environmental Records Information Centre North East (ERIC) show results from within 2km of the site for bats. There are two granted European Protected Species licence for bats and none for great crested newts within 2km. There is one pond shown on Magic within 500m without a commuting barrier, however it no longer exists.

4.4.2 Habitat description

The Bothy, Embleton Tower, is situated on the southwest side of Embleton. The immediate area has some good potential for feeding bats due to a wooded area to the west of the house and which links along hedgerows to further foraging areas that are present along Embleton Burn which has plantations and woodland on the banks 1km to the south. Surrounding the village the agricultural land consists of improved grassland and arable land with boundaries of hedges, walls and fences.

The area has reasonable potential for feeding bats, as the site is wooded with feeding corridors to further afield for bats. Potential roosts are restricted to the village, the scattered buildings in the area and any suitable mature trees.

The site consists of a single storey stone built outbuilding surrounded by hardstanding to the southeast along the wooded track and garden to the west. The garden is well wooded however some trees have been recently cleared to the north. The aerial maps show the building well shaded and partially obscured by trees.

4.4.3 Bats

Pre-existing information on the species at the site.

There are no known pre-existing records for the site. A small roost of *Myotis* bats is known in the main house (2017) (R Hadden).

Status of species in the local/regional area.

Known bat activity in the area within 2km of the site are maternity roosts of *Pipistrelle* sp. 2+km to the southwest (2006) and 300m to the north (1994) and Brown Long-eared and Natterer's roosts 2+km to the southwest (2010) plus an occasional *Pipistrelle* 45kHz roost 2+km to the east (2013). A small *Pipistrelle* 55kHz roost is known 190m to the northeast (1985-1999) A small maternity roost of *Pipistrelle* 45kHz and occasional whiskered/Brandt's are known 750m to the south (R Hadden 2018) along with foraging *Pipistrelle* 55kHz and *Noctule* bats. Foraging *Daubentons* also known 600m to the southeast (2019). (ERIC North East. A full data set available upon request).

Locally and regionally, the Common *Pipistrelle* is the most common bat. Both *Pipistrelle* 45kHz and 55kHz bats are frequent in northern England, although *Pipistrelle* bats are the most abundant species, they are thought to have declined by 70% between 1978 and 1993 (National Bat Colony Survey). Since 1997 monitoring by the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) has shown that bat numbers seem to be steady with small fluctuations up or down depending on the species and survey type carried out. The Brown long-eared bat is occasional with colonies much smaller in numbers than the *Pipistrelle*. *Daubenton's*, *Natterer's* and *Whiskered/Brandt's* bats are also occasional but widespread in Northumberland with an average colony size being about 35 adult bats. The *Nathusius' Pipistrelle* is a rare bat, has migratory habits and has been proved to fly across the North Sea from Bristol to Holland and has occasionally been recorded in Northumberland throughout the season.

There are two granted European Protected Species licences for bats in Embleton 350m to the northwest, for *Pipistrelle* 45kHz (2019) and 200m to the northwest for *Pipistrelle* 55kHz bats (2020).

Bats – Daytime Risk Assessment

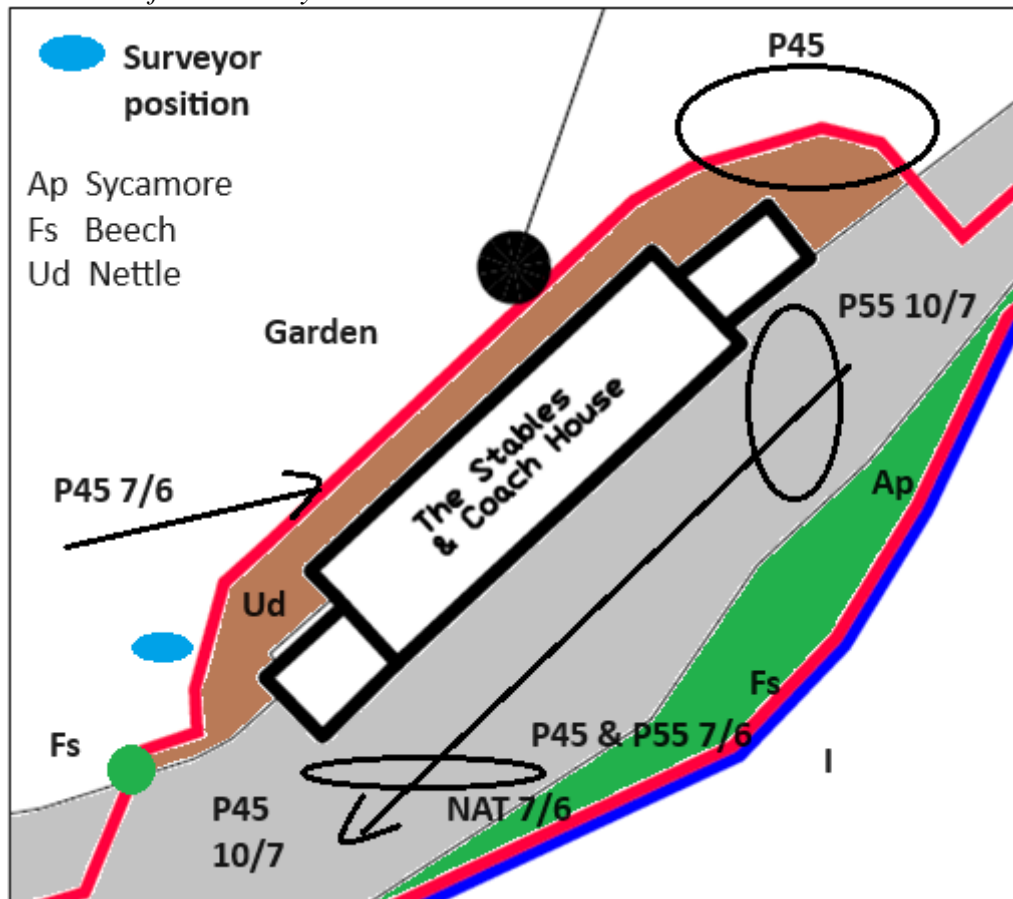
Inspection results of the exterior of the building affected by the proposals, identified no traces or evidence of bats. The building had a pitched pantiled roof with torching. Please see photographs for details. Due to the crevices/cracks in the masonry and wall tops, the site was considered moderate risk of roost potential. One dusk and one dawn survey were carried out.

No potential bat hibernation sites were identified in the building; however, bats may be present in any suitable crevice within the walls.

Bats – Activity Surveys

The surveys confirmed no bat activity within/from the building. Foraging Pipistrelle 55kHz, Pipistrelle 45kHz, Brown long-eared, whiskered/Brandt's, Daubenton's and Natterer's bats were noted near the site. Please see Appendix 2 for further details.

Figure 4. Plan of Bat activity



4.4.4 Bird Assessment

Status of species in the local/regional area.

Notable species in the area consist of Grey Partridge, Lapwing, Tree Sparrow, Yellow Wagtail and Curlew all UK and Northumberland BAP species plus Snipe and Redshank, Northumberland BAP species. (Magic Web Site).

Survey

No evidence of nesting birds was seen on site, however Tawny Owl, Rook, Robin, Wren, Wood Pigeon, Blackbird and Chiffchaff were seen or heard during the surveys.

4.4.5 Amphibians

There are no ponds shown on Magic as being present within 500m of the site and no granted European Protected Species Licences for great crested newts or pond surveys within 2km.

The pond shown on site was drained some time ago and is completely dry and full of tree debris. As there is no standing water on site there is minimal risk that great crested newts are present and will be affected.

4.4.6 Invasive Species

These are non-native invasive species included in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it illegal to release or allow to escape into the wild. No invasive species were noted on site.

5. Photographs of the Site



Northern section

The Bothy, also known as the Stables and Coach House from the southeast.



Southern section



Mono-pitch section at southern end



Southern section from the northwest



From the northeast





Northern section from the north.



Crevices in the masonry



Crevices on the gable wall

Gaps between the pantiles



Central section with ceiling and plastered walls

Interior of the southern section, with bitumen felt on southern aspect.





Pantiles with torching



Latt and plastered section, propped.

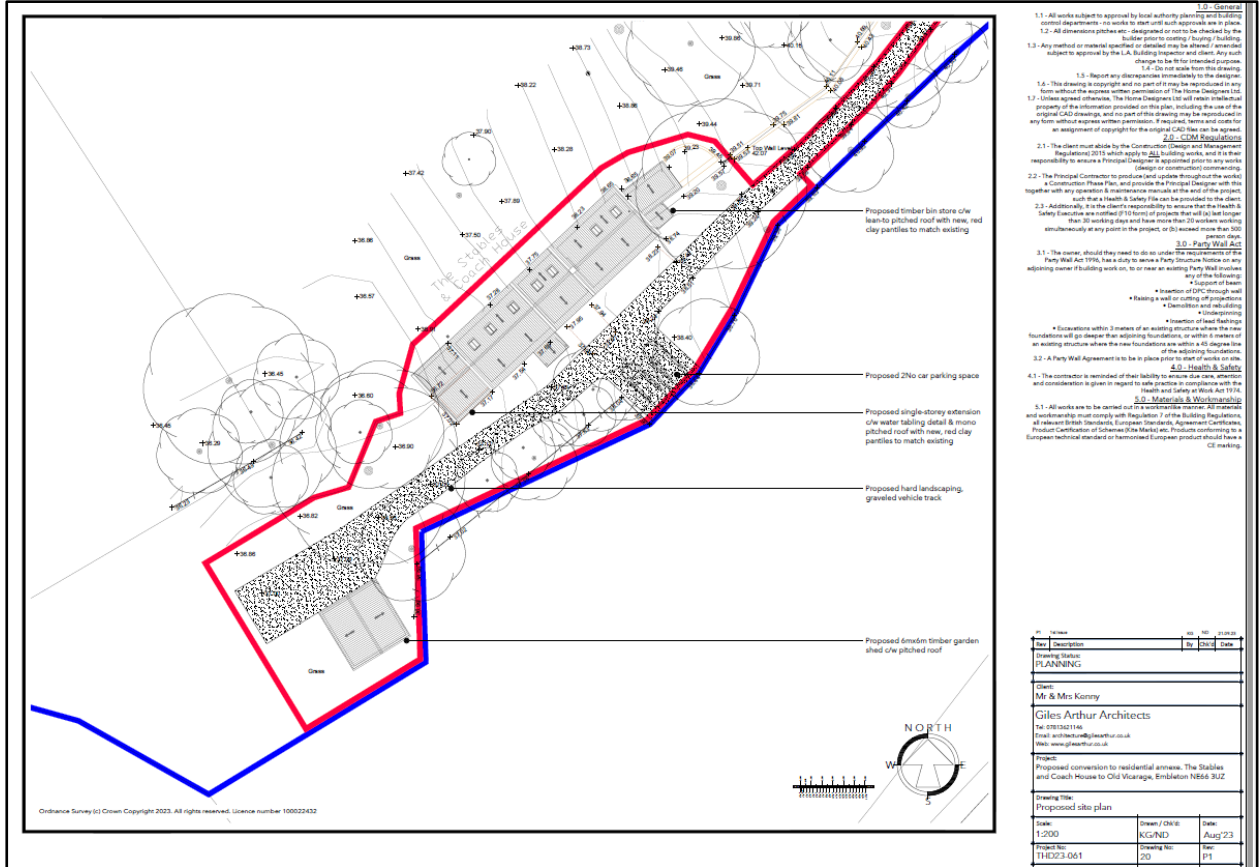


Northern section interior.

6. Description of Proposed Development.

The proposals are to convert the building to create one residential annex.

Figure 5. Proposed Works



7. Assessment of Impacts

7.1 Constraints

No constraints.

7.2 Site Based Impacts.

The building due to be converted has minimal conservation significance for bats as a roost site at present. This assessment takes into account the location of the building and the feeding habitat and shelter within 300m, the results of the inspection and survey, the construction of the building and the potential of the building as a maternity bat roost site.

Pre-activity impacts are negligible with no changes being made to the use of the buildings.

Mid-activity impacts of the proposed works will impact no bat roosts. The works may cause disturbance, injury and death to bats or birds, if no mitigation is carried out in the eventuality of an animal being located during any destructive works.

Site Assessment

The site is considered to have minimal conservation significance for bats and birds.

7.3 Impacts on the SSSI.

The development site does fall within the risk impact zone for the nearby SSSI in the area. As this site falls within 2km of the coast, consideration needs to be given to the impact of increased recreational disturbance to wildlife and bird species that are a main interest feature of the nearby SSSI's and European Sites. Increased recreational pressure on dune grasslands which are similarly protected must also be considered. Northumberland County Council operate a Coastal Mitigation Scheme, which is a financial contribution by the client that will help to compensate for any disturbance the proposals may create. The client may be required to make a commitment to participate.

8. Mitigation and Enhancement.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that the planning system minimizes impacts on biodiversity and provides net gains. The following recommendations will likely be translated into conditions placed on any planning consent. They are intended to reduce the risk of this development to protected species and habitats.

Natural England guidelines on mitigation states timing constraints and like-for-like replacement is a minimum requirement.

8.1 Pollution Prevention

To protect any nearby waterways, measures to be made to ensure that there is no runoff (herbicides, wheel washing, cement washings etc.) either during construction to prevent pollution or sediment issues, or after development. (See Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPG5)) for guidance.

8.2 On Site Mitigation

One integrated Build-in WoodStone Bat Box to be built into the southern gable wall at 500mm below the wall top in the new build section, away from windows and doors. Please see plan below for locations (Figure 6) and Appendix 3 for diagram.

One ridge crevice to be incorporated when the roof is re-laid. Bat access will be created through the mortar fillet to beneath the ridge tiles and above the ridge/sarking board, by leaving an access gap and by ensuring that the ridge tile is not totally filled with mortar. Access through the mortar fillet measuring 20x20+mm will be created leading to a larger gap measuring 400mm long below the ridge tile, a section of split pipe can be used to give access from ridge tile to ridge tile. Please see Method Statement at Appendix 3 for detail.

Wooden beams and timbers will be treated only with 'bat friendly' products, permethrin or cypermethrin as insecticides for example. Further information is available if the contractor requires it.

A traditional bitumen felt (F1) or wood sarking that would give bats some grip will be used in the region of any bat roost potential and not a more modern smooth or breathable roofing membrane (BRM) that may fray and entrap bats. **No BRM (Breathable Roofing Membrane) to be used in any areas where bats could gain access to roof as a result of new roost provisions.**

Any external lights will be set on a motion detector and short timer and be positioned in such a way that they do not shine on any of the bat access positions or the buildings, as this can deter bats. Any external lighting will be designed to meet the minimum recommendations of the Guidance Note 8 - Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night, published in 2023 by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals.

8.3 Mitigation Summary

To maintain bat and bird populations in the area the following will be carried out:-

- A bat and bird Method Statement to be followed during the works on the building.
- One inbuilt woodstone bat box to be built into the south gable wall at 500mm below the wall top in the new build.
- One ridge crevice to be incorporated when the roof is re-laid.
- Any external lighting will be on a relatively short timer, directed away from bat roost access points and flight paths and motion-sensitive only to large objects.
- Any nesting bird species that may be present will be allowed access to the nest until the young have fledged between April and October.

Figure 6. Mitigation Locations

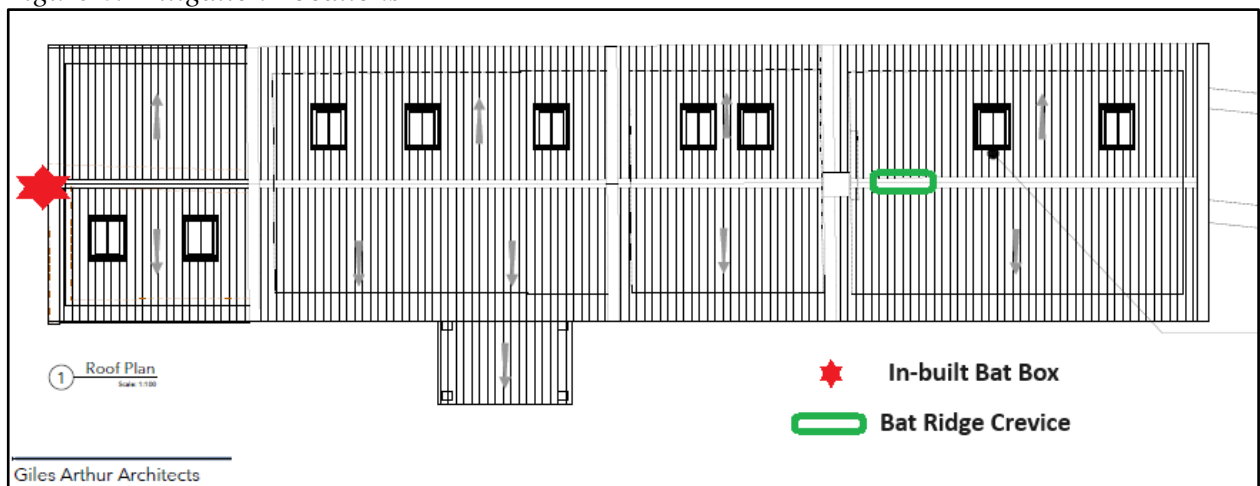


Table 1 Mitigation Summary

Location	Mitigation Type
South Gable	One inbuilt woodstone bat box
Ridge	Crevice below the ridge tiles for bats

8.4 Enhancement

Post construction, landscaping on the site will use locally native species and pollinator friendly species where possible.

In areas to be planted with hedging (such as the site boundaries) native shrubs are recommended for any plantings, these are Elder, Hawthorn, Crab Apple, Dog Rose, Field Maple, Guelder Rose, Honeysuckle and Hazel. A mix of species shown on the proposals will add a net gain to the biodiversity of the site.

8.5 Monitoring

Due to low impact on bat activity on site, by the proposals, no monitoring after the development is completed will be required to assess the success of mitigation. (UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines 2023). Ruth Hadden available to liaise with the owners as required regarding the mitigation.

8.6 Conclusions

- Without any mitigation the proposed works will result in minimal impact on any bat and bird populations that may be present.
- The provision of mitigation in the form of a timing and care will reduce the impact to negligible.
- The provision of one in-build bat box, and a ridge crevice will give a small net biodiversity gain over the existing building and site.

9. References

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Joint Nature Conservancy Council (2004) The Bat Workers Manual. JNCC.
Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

Bat boxes: <https://www.nhbs.com/low-profile-woodstone-bat-box>

Build-in WoodStone Bat Box <https://www.nhbs.com/build-in-woodstone-bat-box>

Barn Owl Box : <http://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/infopage.html?Id=41>

Sparrow Terrace: www.nhbs.com/1sp-schwegler-sparrow-terrace

Swift boxes: <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-cambridge-swift-nest-box>

Bird box: <https://www.nhbs.com/1b-schwegler-nest-box>

Swift box <https://www.nhbs.com/woodstone-swift-nest-box>

Meadow Seed Mix. <https://britishwildflowermeadowseeds.co.uk/products/northumberland-meadow-seed-mix>

APPENDIX 1. LEGISLATION RELATING TO PROTECTED SPECIES

Bats

All bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (Schedule 5). They are also included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation Regulations 2017. The Act and Regulations make it illegal to:

Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (take) bats

Deliberately disturb bats (whether in a roost or not)

Damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 extended the protection given to bats to cover *reckless* damage or disturbance.

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.

Barn Owls

Similarly, the Barn Owl is protected under Part 1 of the Countryside Act 1981 and is listed on Schedule 1, which gives them special protection. It is an offence, with certain exceptions to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (take) any wild barn owl.
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy any wild barn owl nest whilst in use or being 'built'.
- Intentionally take or destroy a wild barn owl egg.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild barn owl whilst 'building' a nest or whilst in, on, or near a nest containing young.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any dependant young or wild barn owls.

Hedgehog

The hedgehog is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (Schedule 6) and is a priority species in the UK BAP and Northumberland BAP.

The Act and Regulations make it illegal to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (take) using certain methods.
- Hedgehogs are closely linked with urban and in particular garden areas and can be commonly found hibernating beneath garden litter.

Biodiversity

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 requires Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) to seek to deliver biodiversity enhancement through the planning system, see paragraphs 9, 109 and 118. In particular Paragraph 109 includes a statement:

The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- 'minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity.'

APPENDIX 2. SURVEY DATA

Table 2 Survey results.

Date	Bat Activity
7 June 2023 9.45pm 9.47-10.08pm 9.53pm 9.59pm 10.12-10.14pm 10.15pm 10.34pm 10.35pm 10.37-11.15pm 10.41pm 10.47pm 10.51pm 10.56pm 10.57pm 11.15pm	Sunset. Pipistrelle 5kHz bats foraging in the garden Pipistrelle 45kHz flew northeast over site. Pipistrelle 45kHz flew southwest Pipistrelle 5kHz bats foraging down the track No bats within the building. Brown long-eared heard not seen Whiskered/Brandt's heard not seen Intermittent foraging by Pipistrelle 55kHz and Pipistrelle 45kHz Natterer's bat flew southwest down the track Daubenton's bat heard on the north side Daubenton's bat heard on the south side Daubenton's bat heard on the north side Brown long-eared social call on north side Survey concluded.
10 July 2023 3.40am 3.50am 4.38am 4.55am	Pipistrelle 45kHz bat foraging on the track south of the bothy Pipistrelle 55kHz bat foraging on track to the northeast of the bothy Sunrise Survey concluded

APPENDIX 3. BAT METHOD STATEMENT FOR CONTRACTORS

This statement should be copied to the site owner, architect, clerk of works and to those contractors whose work may affect bat roosts including those involved in conversion, stone treatment, roofing and building works.

Bats 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.

Legislation

All bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (Schedule 5). They are also included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation Regulations 2017. The Act and Regulations make it illegal to:

Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (take) bats

Deliberately disturb bats (whether in a roost or not)

Damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 extended the protection given to bats to cover *reckless* damage or disturbance.

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.

Similarly the Barn Owl is protected under Part 1 of the Countryside Act 1981 and is listed on Schedule 1, which gives them special protection. It is an offence, with certain exceptions to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (take) any wild barn owl.
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy any wild barn owl nest whilst in use or being 'built'.
- Intentionally take or destroy a wild barn owl egg.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild barn owl whilst 'building' a nest or whilst in, on, or near a nest containing young.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any dependant young or wild barn owls.

Identifying roosts

Pipistrelle the most common bat, favours small crevices and spaces between brickwork, stone and roofing felt. Bats are small mammals and when at rest the bodies are only 4-6 cm long, their fur colour can range from brown to pale and dark grey. When disturbed the bat is likely to be torpid and unable to fly effectively for some minutes, because of this they are vulnerable to injury as they are not fast moving and may fall to the ground, breaking bones or be accidentally crushed. Basically, when material from the roof and tops of the walls is removed any crevices underneath should be checked to ensure that no bat has been disturbed.

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.



Photo showing disintegrated bat droppings beneath coping stones. If examined carefully, in the black dust exoskeletons of insects can be seen shining.

Timing

Any development work involving the removal of the existing roof materials or stonework will be carried out avoiding the hibernation period (November to March inclusive) if possible. Periods of cold weather (below 5°C including night temperatures) will also be avoided if possible as any bats present will be in hibernation torpor and be extremely vulnerable. If torpid bats are encountered and disturbance is unavoidable the bat will be taken into care and fed until suitable conditions for release at the site is possible.

Contractors

All contractors will be aware that bats may be present in the area and could be present within the loft space and may be found torpid in crevices if any. Table 1 below highlights where bats may be found and the recommendations. Any bats found during operations will have the cavity re-covered for its safety and any work in the vicinity will cease. Ruth Hadden to be informed for advice immediately (01661 886562). As only licensed bat handlers can move bats and the contractors are not permitted to handle bats, the bat will be allowed to disperse of its own accord overnight.

Table 1 General Methodology for Extension Works

STRUCTURE	METHOD	INSPECT
Roofs	Remove any ridge tiles, tiles/slates or roof coverings including loose felt by hand, lifting vertically to prevent any bats from being crushed. Removal of any timbers/beams.	Check any crevices underneath the roofing materials including the underside, as it is removed. Check any crevices around the beams as work proceeds.
Walls/Eaves	Expose the wall tops. Remove any gutters. Dismantle any walls required, by hand.	Examine for bat droppings and any wall cavities for bats.
Walls - Pointing	Only point crevices where the full depth can be seen otherwise leave as at present.	Check deep crevices for the presence of bats using a torch.
Windows/doors	Remove windows, doors and frames by hand, where gaps exist around the frames.	Examine any wall cavities exposed. Avoid blocking any external pre-existing gaps.

If a barn owl is found unexpectedly during operations the cavity will be re-covered or protected and work will cease in that area. Ruth Hadden to be informed (01661 886562) immediately for assistance. Any nesting bird species will be allowed access to the nest until the young have fledged between April and October.

Mitigation Summary

One integrated Build-in WoodStone Bat Box to be built into the southern gable wall at 500mm below the wall top in the new build section, away from windows and doors. Please see plan below for locations and for diagram.

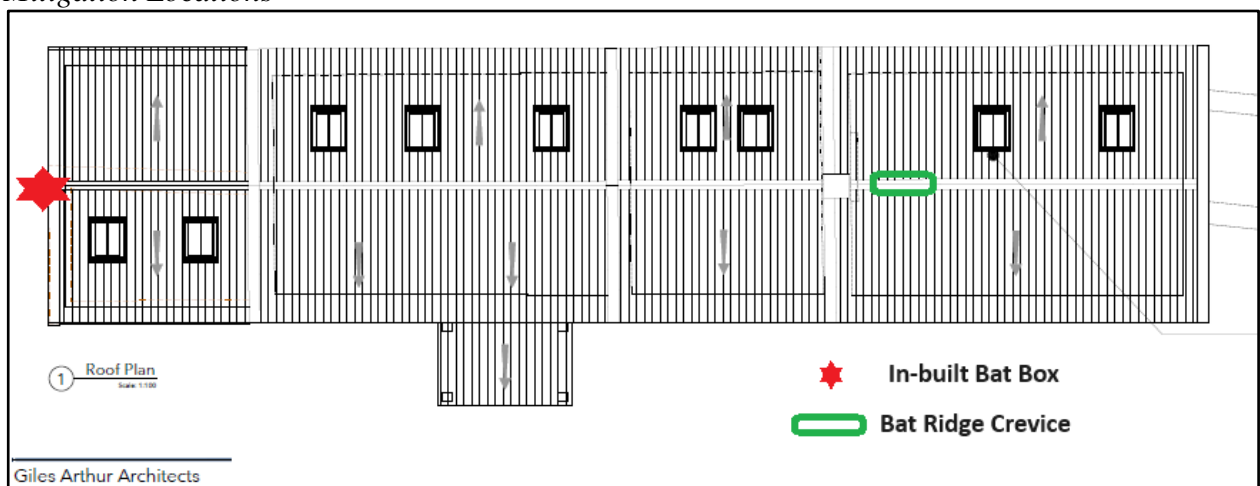
One ridge crevice to be incorporated when the roof is re-laid. Bat access will be created through the mortar fillet to beneath the ridge tiles and above the ridge/sarking board, by leaving an access gap and by ensuring that the ridge tile is not totally filled with mortar. Access through the mortar fillet measuring 20x20+mm will be created leading to a larger gap measuring 400mm long below the ridge tile, a section of split pipe can be used to give access from ridge tile to ridge tile.

Wooden beams and timbers will be treated only with ‘bat friendly’ products, permethrin or cypermethrin as insecticides for example. Further information is available if the contractor requires it.

A traditional bitumen felt (F1) or wood sarking that would give bats some grip will be used in the region of any bat roost potential and not a more modern smooth or breathable roofing membrane (BRM) that may fray and entrap bats. **No BRM (Breathable Roofing Membrane) to be used in any areas where bats could gain access to roof as a result of new roost provisions.**

Any external lights will be set on a motion detector and short timer and be positioned in such a way that they do not shine on any of the bat access positions or the buildings, as this can deter bats. Any external lighting will be designed to meet the minimum recommendations of the Guidance Note 8 - Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night, published in 2023 by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals.

Mitigation Locations



MITIGATION FEATURES

Low Profile Woodstone Bat Box



Build-in WoodStone Bat Box



Sparrow Terrace

