

# Preliminary Ecology Appraisal

## Protected Species Survey (Bats)

(in accordance with BS42020 & 2016 Bat  
Survey Guidelines ).

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**November 2023**

**Location: 112 High Street  
Collingham**

This Preliminary Ecology Appraisal has been prepared following surveys of buildings located at 112 High Street, Collingham, Newark. It has been produced on behalf of Fytche-Taylor Planning Ltd to support a planning application for the proposed replacement of a store, which is to be demolished and replaced with a new dwelling house. This report and the focus of the surveys is to assess the potential for the presence or impact upon protected species.

Project:	112 High St, Collingham.  Planning application to erect 1no. dwelling and detached garage following demolition of storage building.		
Client:	Mr. Bailey		
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Personal Professional Statement for Kate Fytche-Taylor, BScENV HNC(Eng)

Kate Fytche-Taylor is the practices lead environmental consultant preparing reports for various organisations including for architects and developers in supporting planning applications.

Kate’s professional credentials are underpinned by a degree in Ecology and Biology from the University of East Anglia. Kate’s expertise extends across a broad range of specialist natural environment areas, in particular biodiversity, habitat creation, tree and hedgerow assessments and watercourse management.

Kate has developed extensive knowledge and practical experience on a local and national level, including within local government for the Environment Agency.

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of this report

This report has been prepared to provide an accurate and balanced assessment of the likelihood for protected species, or any associated habitats, being harmed or affected by the demolition of an existing storage building located on land to the rear of 112 High Street in Collingham, Nottinghamshire.

In light of the specific nature of the development proposed, whilst other species are commented upon in this report, the primary focus of the survey was to assess the possible presence of bats.

This report is prepared in accordance with BS42020 : 2013 Biodiversity: Code of Practice for Planning and Development and in consideration with the guidance set out in the 2016 Bat Survey Guidelines.

It is also guided by the planning policy requirements of the adopted Newark and Sherwood Development Plan, NSDC Validation Checklist Requirements (2023 Revision) and national planning policies as set out in the NPPF.

BS42020 : 2013 Biodiversity : Code of Practice for Planning and Development; The UK Government's commitment to slow and then reverse a net loss of biodiversity by 2020 in line with the European Biodiversity Strategy and UN Aichi targets, was passed down to local authorities to implement, mainly through planning policy.

To support and regularize the new requirements for development, the British Standards Institution (BSI), a national body in the UK that produces recognized technical standards of a wide range of products and services, published BS 42020. This established a coherent methodology for biodiversity management.

Prior to the current BSI, there had been considerable variation in:

*a) the quality and appropriateness of ecological information submitted with planning applications, and;*

*b) the capacity, consistency and effectiveness of planning authorities and other regulatory bodies when they consider proposals for development or land management that potentially affects biodiversity (BSI, 2019)*

This situation was not necessarily due to insufficient legislation, policy or guidance, or even lack of ecological methods and techniques. It was more a reflection of widespread inconsistency in professional ecological practice, compounded by the difficulty that decision-makers had in distinguishing between high or low quality ecological information and its relevance to an application.

High-quality information is important for:

a) effective decision-making;

b) compliance with statutory obligations and policy requirements;

c) successful implementation of practical conservation and enhancement measures during development; and the achievement of desired outcomes.

BS42020 This British Standard sets out to assist those concerned with ecological issues as they arise through the planning process, in matters relating to permitted development and activities involved in the management of land outside the scope of land use planning, which could have site-specific ecological implications.

The standard has been produced with input from a number of organisations including CIEEM and ALGE and provides:

Guidance on how to produce clear and concise ecological information to accompany planning applications

Recommendations on professional ethics, conduct, competence and judgement to give confidence that proposals for biodiversity conservation, and consequent decisions/actions taken, are sound and appropriate

Direction on effective decision-making in biodiversity management

A framework to demonstrate how biodiversity has been managed during the development process to minimize impact.

## 1.2 Client Terms of Reference

Fytche-Taylor Planning Ltd were instructed by their client Mr Bailey , owner of 112 High Street Collingham and the property, land and buildings to the rear, to prepare a preliminary ecological appraisal and protected species survey to assess the buildings as part of the preparation of a full planning application to erect a new dwelling following the demolition of an existing storage building.

This survey focuses on the ecological potential of the existing building.

The survey and report are compliant with the recommendations and guidance set out within the BS 42020 and should be used to assist in the determination of this application upon submission to the local planning authority.

## 1.3 Timing

The building surveys have been completed prior to and independently of any works taking place in respect of the demolition and construction works that are being proposed. At the time of the surveys the building is visibly in a reasonable state of repair, and appears to be generally sound in terms of roof structure and wall fabrics , albeit with some obvious failings and partial roof damage to one corner – which can be seen in the site photos included at part 6 of this appraisal.

At the time of the surveys, it is apparent that the building is in use as a store and accessed on a regular basis by the applicant. It contains strip lighting and features large glazed window openings in the roof.

#### 1.4 Description of the Development Site

The application site consists of approximately 0.1 hectares located to the rear of 112 High Street within the village of Collingham.

The site is accessed from a driveway off High Street which also serves the rear of 112 High Street and 112A High Street.

Currently the site hosts an existing storage building with domed corrugated roof showing clear signs of structural failure and contains asbestos cladding which sits on a large footprint. To the rear of the building is a yard area and to the north is the dwelling granted under application 19/00755/FUL (The Granary Barn, 112A High Street).

The site is located within a residential area and is surrounded by residential properties to the north, south and west.

To the east lies paddock land and hard standing from a previous commercial enterprise and had been historically used by William Bailey feed supplies as a storage and distribution centre for animal feed products. Land to the east of the site is also defined as the Collingham Main Open Area.

#### 1.5 Summary of Findings

The site surveyed principally comprises the detached storage/outbuilding situated at the rear of 112 High Street, Collingham, centered at NGR SK83148 62020. The building is a large asbestos clad structure with hard standing to the frontage and the site boundary abutting its rear elevation.

An internal and external inspection of the building was completed on the afternoon of 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

The findings confirm that a Phase 1 Habitat Survey is not recommended. The full site area subject of this application (and that inspected) is classed as 'Buildings' and it does not contain any significant natural habitat areas.

The survey therefore concentrated on the potential presence of protected species only, specifically bats. This is considered to be appropriate in this instance since the application concerns the demolition of an existing building only and requires no further significant building works outside of the general built footprint of the existing building.

No notable ecological constraints have been identified associated with the buildings or surroundings based on environmental searches of public data referenced in the preparation of this appraisal.

## 2.0 Status of the Site

### 2.1 Local Planning Authority (LPA)

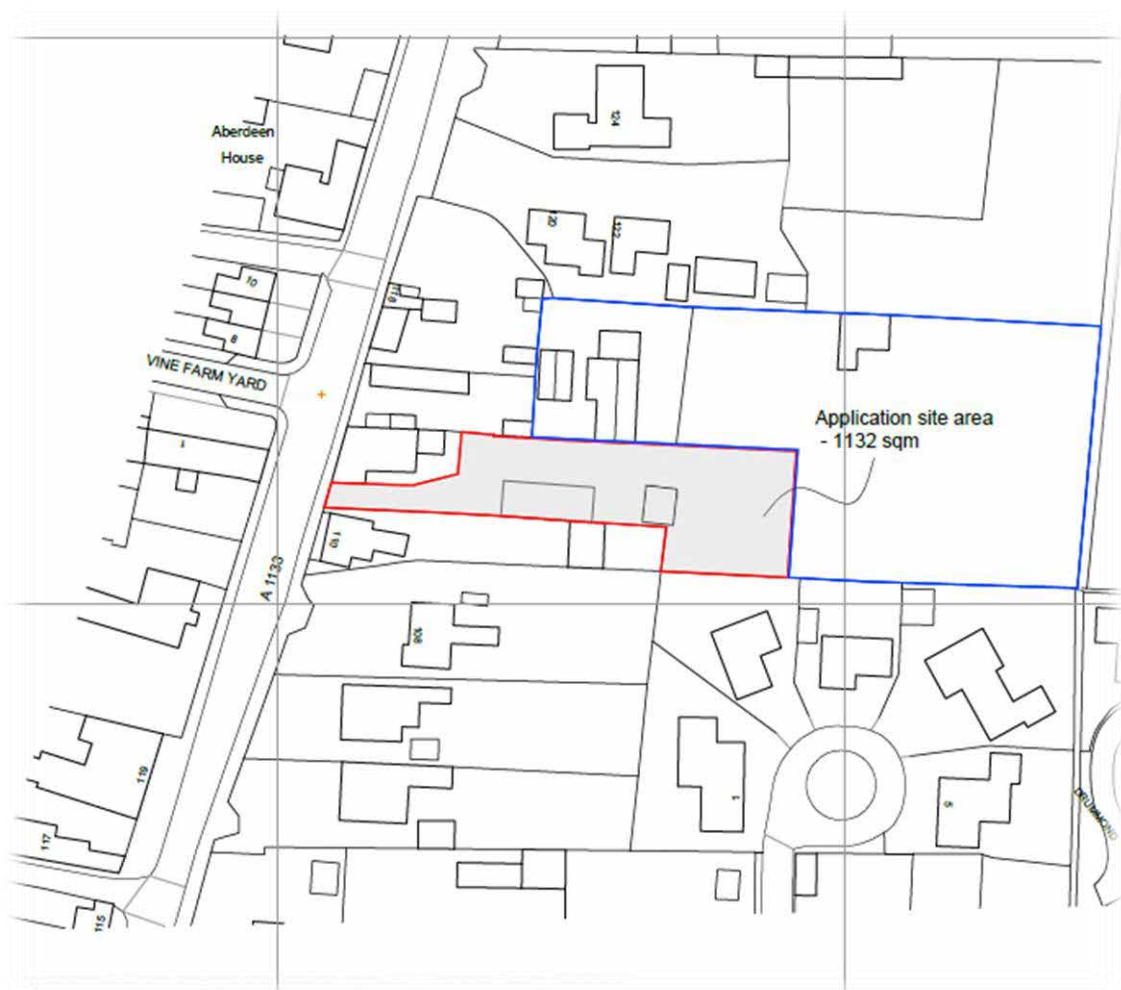
The LPA is Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC).

### 2.2 Searches

It was confirmed by searches of the NSDC databases that the site and land adjacent to the site is not within any form of environmental designation. It is situated within the Collingham Conservation Area.

## 3.0 Site Location Plan

### 3.1 Site Location Plan (not replicated here to scale – see drawing ref. 407-COL-1507-01)



## 4.0 Survey Methodology

### 4.1 Method of Survey

The on-site survey was carried out by Kate Fytche-Taylor and Rachel Gordon on the afternoon of 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023. All observations were made from ground level and where possible, from elevated positions utilizing an extending ladder. It was conducted in dry and clear weather conditions with good natural light. An appraisal of the external elevations of the building was conducted using binoculars and torch light to assess potential openings or features of interest.

The survey was carried out in accordance with *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition)*. This publication aims to provide good practice guidelines in relation to designing and undertaking bat surveys; analysing the data collected and writing survey reports.

[Reference: Collins, J. (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*. 3rd edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London].

A detailed visual inspection of the building was conducted to assess the presence of habitats together with any signs of physical evidence of protected species using the site. The inspection included the scrutiny of the fabric of the buildings to identify possible features or openings with the potential to provide either shelter or foraging space for bats.

Within the UK, the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) together with the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 protect all species of bat. As such, the regulations make it a criminal offence to:

*Intentionally kill, injure or take a bat*

*Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a bat*

*Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a bat*

*Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose*

The date of the survey and site inspections (early September 2023) fell within the optimum period to search for bat activity; however, it is noted that for the purposes of a preliminary survey, this can be carried out at any time of year and is usually considered to be wholly suitable for submitting as part of a planning application. In the event that a survey identifies that the building *could*, or *does*, show signs of hosting a roost, then further bat activity surveys will be recommended - if so, these must be carried out between the months of May-September.

That is not the case here, and no further surveys are considered to be necessary.

Since the survey location comprises a building and hard standing, and there is considered to be no reasonable potential for species other than bats to be present, it is concluded that a full Phase 1 Habitat Survey is not required in this instance. As such, the scope of this appraisal should appropriately focus on the potential for bat habitats only given the demolition of existing roof space (in line with new NSDC validation checklist requirements).



The inspection included a search of the building exterior and also the internal roof structure searching for evidence of bat activity (and at the same time, whilst not expected for a storage building in active use, for nesting birds). Floors, roof space, doors, walls and the ground around the base of walls were inspected for signs of bat activity although evidence such as droppings may only be retained in covered and protected external areas.

#### 4.2 Validity of Survey

The results of an inspection are only applicable for a limited period of around 12 months; any further inspections should be made periodically on a basis commensurate with the level of risk or following sudden or extreme weather conditions. The consultant is not responsible for events that happen after the date of the report or due to factors that were not apparent at the time of the inspection or due to factors unpredictable at the time of inspection.

#### 4.3 Survey Schedule

An assessment of the survey area has identified the following potential for protected species to be present:

Species	Possible within 2km	Suitable habitat on site / evidence of presence	Likelihood of being present on site	Further work and / or Mitigation required
Birds inc nesting sites	Yes	Existing building is not generally accessible to birds and therefore would not provide nesting locations.	None observed to be present within the building interior.	An inspection prior to works starting is recommended if works commence in nesting season.
Reptiles	Yes	No – Buildings are in use and not optimal habitat for reptiles.	Negligible potential for reptiles to be present within buildings or surrounding land.	No further surveys or mitigation measures are recommended.
Amphibians	Yes	No – Buildings are in use and not optimal habitat for reptiles.	Negligible potential for amphibians to be present within buildings or surrounding land.	No further surveys or mitigation measures are recommended.
Bats	Yes	Building displays some very minor features but it is both in use and not typically a suitable location for roosting bats.	No evidence found. No evidence of any roosting activity on any part of the building.	No further surveys or mitigation measures recommended.
Badger and larger mammals	No	No – Building is in use and not optimal habitat for badgers or larger mammals.	None.	No further surveys or mitigation measures are recommended.

## 5.0 Findings

### 5.1 Survey Findings

The site area is classed as a 'Building' and therefore in accordance with the guidance there are no significant natural habitat areas. The survey therefore concentrated on the potential presence of protected bat species.

The building itself is generally in a good state of repair with the exception of some visible cracks in the asbestos cladding and a minor, partial collapse to a part of the roof structure. Externally, the building is clad in asbestos sheeting and includes a number of glazed window openings.

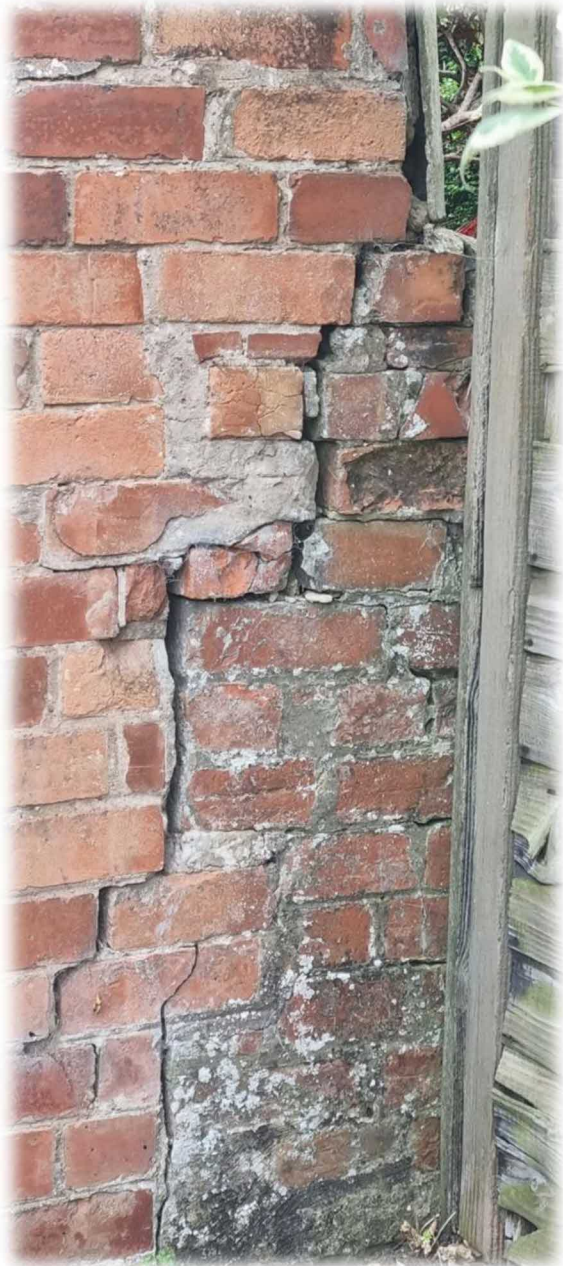
The inside of the building is dry and generally in a good state of repair and used for the storage of a mix of building materials and timber. It is not considered to be the form of building, and nor does it have potential to be whilst in regular use, where a bat habitat would generally be expected to be naturally located.

The roof fabric and external cladding does not offer a suitable environment for the formation of covered roosts, and although the structural failure has resulted in a small opening in one corner of the building, the survey resulted in zero indication of any other bat activity, such as foraging.

It is confidently concluded that there are no bats present within this building, nor is there any likelihood that it has been a habitat for bats at any time.

## 6.0 Site Photos (taken 05/09/23 during inspection visit to property)









## 7.0 Conclusion

The application site was surveyed on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

This appraisal identifies that there is no requirement for a more detailed Phase 1 Habitat Survey and that the potential for the presence of any species other than bats is negligible to nil.

Under typical circumstances this is not a location or form of building where a bat survey would generally be expected, however in line with new NSDC validation checklist requirements, and as a result of the application proposing the demolition of a building (and therefore loss of an existing roof space) an appropriate assessment has been completed.

Having duly completed a survey in accordance with BS42020 : 2013 Biodiversity : Code of Practice for Planning and Development and in consideration with the guidance set out in the 2016 Bat Survey Guidelines, it is confirmed that no evidence of bat roosts or bat habitat was identified anywhere within the site.

Ordinarily, a building with low roost potential would be subject to an activity survey to confirm that bats are not present using the building for roosting purposes unless there is a justification why such a survey is not required. In this instance the fabric of the building with asbestos cladding does not provide any reasonable opportunity for habitat formation, so whilst bats might be able to gain access to the building interior, the absence of evidence of such activity is considered conclusive in this instance.

There are no cavities or voids where bats could effectively hide away in this building without leaving some evidence. In this instance, due to the lack of features and lack of evidence, surveys to consider further bat activity are not considered necessary.

If, during any conversion works to the building, any activity is seen – or even suspected – the guidance in Appendix 1 (*The Procedure to follow for applicants and their builders if bats are unexpectedly discovered during work*, advice offered by the Bat Conservation Trust) should be followed. This is considered highly unlikely, but is included here for best practice.

[END].

## Appendix 1 – Procedure to follow for applicants and their builders if bats are unexpectedly discovered during works

Note: The following advice is offered by the Bat Conservation Trust and can also be found online here: <https://www.bats.org.uk/advice/im-working-on-a-building-with-bats/ive-found-a-bat-during-works#:~:text=We%20recommend%20that%20you%20pause,any%20bats%20or%20their%20roosts.>

Sometimes bats can show up unexpectedly while carrying out building works. If you or your contractors find a bat (or bats) during building work, there's no need to panic – but you do need to take the situation seriously. We recommend you follow these three simple steps:

1. Pause all works
2. Make sure the bat is not in danger
3. Seek advice about the works

### FAQS

Am I in trouble if I find bats during building work?

While it is illegal to disturb a bat roost, you will not be in trouble if you act responsibly as soon as the bats are found. We recommend that you pause all work immediately and seek advice from your SNCO or an ecological consultant.

The aim of the various advice services is to help you continue with your work legally while reducing the chances of accidentally harming any bats or their roosts.

I only saw one bat! Is that really a roost?

Yes, a roost is defined in law as any place a wild bat uses for shelter or protection. The number of bats doesn't matter. Neither do factors like the age of the building or how long the bats are likely to have been there. Every roost is important, and bats rely on a number of roosts in lots of locations if they are going to survive. Protecting the roost you found, no matter the size, is an important contribution to bat conservation

The bat flew away / disappeared, can I carry on with work?

A roost is protected by law whether bats are present in it or not. We strongly recommend putting the work on hold until you've had advice.

Can I work on another part of the building while I wait?

We strongly advise against this until you've had advice. There may be bats in other parts of the building too, or work you do in another area may still affect the roost.

I'm a contractor and the owner is pressuring me to carry on with work despite finding bats, what should I do?

We recommend explaining to the owner that both you and they have a legal obligation to seek advice before carrying on with work to a bat roost. If you didn't seek advice and the law was broken, you could be held responsible along with the owner. The penalties can include an unlimited fine and seizure of proceeds and/or equipment. Many bat roosts are saved every year because contractors stand firm and do the right thing.

How do we get this advice?

In many cases, you'll be eligible for free advice from your Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (SNCO). If the work isn't eligible for free SNCO advice, the owner will need to hire an ecological consultant instead.

What should I do with the bat in the meantime?

If the bat is still in the roost, please leave it there. If possible, please gently replace whichever item that was covering it.

If the bat is exposed and cannot be re-covered, or has come out of the area where it was found, please contain it according to our instructions. Your SNCO or an ecologist may be able to help you with the bat when you ring about the works, but if not, please phone the National Bat Helpline on 0345 1300 228. If the Helpline is closed, please check for a regional helpline in your area or take the bat to a local vet.

I can't get through to my SNCO or an ecologist – can I carry on with work?

While the SNCOs service is unlikely to be open 24-hours per day, the roost remains legally protected whether they are open or not. If your SNCO is closed for the day or the weekend, we recommend you put the works on hold until they reopen, or ask the owner to hire an ecological consultant who may be able to respond more quickly.

You can often make a site watertight using tarpaulin or bitumen roofing felt (not non-bitumen roofing membrane); please leave one edge unsealed so any bats underneath can escape if doing this.