



Preliminary Roost Assessment

Prospect House, Newbiggin In Teesdale, Darlington, County Durham, DL12 0TY

Martin Smith

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Industry Guidelines and Standards

This report has been written with due consideration to:

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- British Standard 42020 (2013). Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.
- British Standard 8683:2021 (2021). Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain.

Proportionality

The work involved in preparing and implementing all ecological surveys, impact assessments and measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development. Consequently, the decision-maker should only request supporting information and conservation measures that are relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. Similarly, the decision-maker and their consultees should ensure that any comments and advice made over an application are also proportionate.

The desk studies and field surveys undertaken to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) might in some cases be all that is necessary.

(BS 42020, 2013)

Executive Summary

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Martin Smith to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Prospect House, Newbiggin In Teesdale, Darlington, County Durham DL12 0TY (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for the removal of the garage, with first floor and two storey extensions including conversion of the existing cow byre and barn to residential (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”).

The following is work you will need to commission to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Table 8 of this report.

Feature	Survey Results Summary	Impact Assessment	Recommendations

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1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Prospect House, Newbiggin In Teesdale, Darlington, County Durham DL12 0TY (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for the removal of the garage, with first floor and two storey extensions including conversion of the existing cow byre and barn to residential (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). A plan showing the proposed development will be provided in Appendix 1 when available.

The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting. This has been undertaken with due consideration to the “Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists —Good Practice Guidelines” publication (Collins, 2016). No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author’s knowledge, by any other consultancy.

1.2 Site Location and Landscape Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference NY 91321 28207 and has an area of approximately 0.1ha comprising Buildings, hard standing, scattered trees and hedgerows. It is located to the north of Newbiggin, located north of the river Tees. The wider landscape comprises open moorland with several streams and tributaries, with scattered agricultural land and trees present. A site location plan is provided in Appendix 2.

1.3 Scope of the Report

This report provides a description of all features suitable for roosting, foraging and commuting bats and evaluates those features in the context of the site and wider environment. It further documents any physical evidence collected or recorded during the site survey that establishes the presence of roosting bats. It provides information on possible constraints to the proposed development as a result of bats and summarises the requirements for any further surveys to inform subsequent mitigation proposals, achieve planning or other statutory consent and to comply with wildlife legislation. To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:

- A desk study has been carried out.
- A field survey has been undertaken, including an inspection of built structures, to determine the presence or the suitability of any features which bats could use for roosting and to assess the suitability of the site’s bat foraging and commuting habitat.
- An outline of potential impacts on any confirmed or unidentified roosts has been provided, based on the proposed development.
- Recommendations for further surveys and mitigation have been made, along with advice on the requirements for a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) application if appropriate.
- Opportunities for the enhancement of the site for roosting, foraging and commuting bats have been set out.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

The desk study included a 2km radius review of statutory designated sites with bat qualifying interests and granted EPSL records for bats held on magic.gov.uk database. An assessment of the surrounding landscape structure was also completed using aerial images from Google Earth and OS maps.

2.2 Field Survey

The survey was undertaken by Charlie Moore BSc (Hons) (Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2022-10404-CL18-BAT) on 31st of January 2024.

2.3 Breeding Birds and Other Incidental Observations

The surveyor also made note of any other ecological constraints observed during the survey, notably the likelihood of presence or signs of breeding birds, and the suitability of the site for barn owls.

2.4 Suitability Assessment

The PRA comprised an assessment of each building to be impacted by the proposed development for potential to support roosting bats. The survey was led by an experienced ecologist and was based on current best practice guidelines (Collins 2023). All features that are likely to be impacted by the proposed development were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. The surveyor systematically surveyed all features suitable for bats and signs of bat activity.

The PRA included a visual inspection (including the use of binoculars and torches where required) of the exterior and interior of each building for evidence of bat use (e.g. droppings, scratch marks, staining and sightings). Factors considered whilst undertaking the PRA comprised internal conditions, presence of features suitable for use by roosting bats, proximity to foraging habitats or cover and potential for disturbance. Notes were made relating to relevant characteristics of features providing potential access points and roosting opportunities for bats. Table 1 below details the rationale for determining bat roost value of buildings subject to the PRA.

Table 1: Rationale for assigning bat roost value.

Assigned Bat Roosting Potential	Description/ Rationale
Confirmed roost	Evidence of roosting bats within the building.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/ stable hibernation site.
Medium	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, condition and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status, such as maternity and hibernation.

Low	A building with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/ stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
None	No habitat features likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/ suitable shelter at all ground. Underground levels.

2.5 Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the features on site in the context of their suitability for roosting bats, this does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This survey provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of bats being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on site and in the local area, the ecology and biology of bats as currently understood, and the known distribution of bats as recovered during the desk study. Bats are highly mobile creatures that switch roosts regularly and therefore the usage of a site by bats can change over a short period of time.

A search for historical bat records has not been undertaken. As the site is a confirmed roost, bat records are needed. This report will be updated with biological records data (BRD) at a later date.

The loft space of B1 was not boarded, and so a safe route to access the internal area could be identified. Therefore, bat evidence may have been missed.

The interior of the shed (B3) was not accessible at the time of survey. The interior was viewed through a missing windowpane – therefore, bat activity within this building could have been missed.

No proposed development plans were available at the time of writing this report and therefore a detailed impact assessment could not be made. This report should be updated once the plans are available.

These limitations have been taken into account during the evaluation of the site and requirement for further surveys and mitigation.

3.0 Results and Evaluation

3.1 Designated Sites

No statutory designated sites with bat qualifying interests were identified within 2km of the site.

3.2 Historical Records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. EPSL records for bats are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Granted EPSLs for bats within 2km of the site

EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Impacts allowed by licence	Distance from site
2019-40637-EPS-MIT	Brown long-eared bat and common pipistrelle	Damage of a resting and breeding site	600m to the south


3.3 Field Survey Results

The weather conditions recorded at the time of the survey are shown in Table 3. The results of the field survey are detailed in Table 4 and illustrated in Appendix 3.

Table 3: Weather conditions during the survey

Date:	31-1-24
Temperature	4°C
Humidity	87%
Cloud Cover	100%
Wind	25mph
Rain	None

Table 4: PRA Results

Feature	Description	Photographs
<p>Bat foraging and commuting habitat</p>	<p>The site is surrounded by grassland and agricultural field, with a strip of woodland to the west. Hedgerows and tree lines are present throughout the landscape, which provide suitable commuting and foraging habitat for bats. The river to the east will also provide good foraging and commuting habitat for bats.</p>	

Site -
overview

The site is comprised of a dwelling with supporting amenity grounds and has 3no. individual buildings present onsite.

The main dwelling (B1) is a two-storey house with a pitched and gabled roof constructed from stone tiles. The brickwork of B1 is constructed from stone bricks and is rendered on the southern aspect. The brickwork and roof appear in good condition, with no suitable gaps observed that could be utilised by bats.

B2 is an L shaped cow byre constructed to the west of B1 and has as single-story section connected to a two-storey section to the far west with a separate hay loft. It is constructed in a similar fashion to B1, although has several gaps present in the brickwork that have been man made to facilitate the entrance and exit of small birds, such as swallows and house martins.



<p>Site - overview</p>	<p>Pictured opposite is B3, a small single-story shed to the north of the site and is constructed in a similar fashion to the other buildings onsite.</p>
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B1

B1 is a two-storey dwelling that appears in good condition. Present on the northern aspect is a small lean to, that is likely to have been constructed after the original building to house the bathroom.

Generally, the doors, windows and walls appear in good condition with no suitable gaps that bats could use observed on the external areas of B1.

The roof of B1 is also in good condition, with two slipped tiles observed on the northern and southern aspects. Slipped tiles are present on the northern elevation but as the tiles are still present, no roosting opportunities are available. Bats could utilise these features to access the gaps between the roof tiles and internal roof lining. The gable ends and the eaves seem to appear in good condition with no roosting features.



B1	<p>The internal loft space of B1 is constructed from wooden beams and is insulated with a mix of bitumen felt and plastic lining.</p> <p>The lining and beams both appear in good condition with no suitable gaps that could be used by or indicate bat use. Furthermore, the wall ends also appear in good condition with no suitable sections of missing pointing that bats could exploit.</p>	 A photograph showing the interior of a loft space. The ceiling is composed of several parallel wooden beams. Below the beams, there is a layer of insulation, likely bitumen felt and plastic lining. In the foreground, a stone wall is visible, constructed from irregular, grey and brown stones. The lighting is somewhat dim, with a bright spot on the right side of the image.
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B2

B2 is an L shaped single-story structure with a two-storey cow byre to the western extent. It is constructed in a similar fashion to B1, with similar materials.

Generally the condition of B2 is fair, with several suitable roosting features identified during the survey, including missing and slipped tiles and gaps in the brickwork.



B2

The exterior of B2 features several purposefully constructed gaps in the wall (red), likely to facilitate entrance and exit of birds, including swallows and house martins. Furthermore, several gaps in the pointing of the brickwork have also been identified that could be suitable for crevice dwelling species of bats to access the interior of the building.

The interior of B2 is entirely open, with no enclosed loft space. The roof is constructed from timber beams and is unlined. The condition of the beams appears to be good, however there are several gaps between fittings that could be suitable for use by bats.



B2

Two large piles (>500 individual) of droppings have been identified within the interior of B2, in the two-storey cow byre section. Both piles are located approximately a metre from each other (one atop the hay loft and one adjacent on the ground floor), and so are likely from the same roost. Directly above the piles of droppings, on the ridge beam, is an area of white staining (blue), consistent with urine staining. Furthermore, a lack of cobwebs was identified within this locality, indicating recent disturbance.

A sample has been taken from the site, and DNA analysis shows these droppings belong to Natterers bats. No individual bats were identified within the interior of the building at the time of survey.

Furthermore, several birds' nests have also been identified within the interior of B2, consistent with swallows.



B3


B3 is a small, single-story outbuilding that was not accessible at the time of survey. The internal area was view from a missing windowpane on the southern extent of the site (red).

Two sections of missing mortar have been identified around the ridge tiles that bats could use to access the space between the roof tiles and the lining. The gable ends and bargeboards appear in good condition with no gaps present for roosting.

The brickwork appears in good condition.

The windows and doors are in poor condition with a missing pane identified that bats and birds could utilise to access the internal area of B3.



<p>B3</p>	<p>The roof of B3 is constructed from wooden beams and is lined with bitumen felt. An accurate assessment of the internal areas for bats was not possible due to a lack of access.</p>	
<p>Site – suitability assessment</p>	<p>B1 has moderate suitability for bats, due to two slipped tiles identified that could give access to the space between the tiles and lining. If bats are utilising these features, evidence thereof would be almost impossible to identify without aid of an emergence survey.</p> <p>B2 is assessed to have high habitat value and is a confirmed roost of Natterers bats, which by the number of droppings present, is likely to be of considerable size. It is located on the ridge beam of the two-storey section of the cow byre, as denoted by the droppings and urine staining.</p> <p>B3 has low suitability for bats, due to the presence of two suitable areas of missing mortar around the ridge tiles that bats could utilise to access the ridge beams.</p>	

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations

Taking the desk study and field survey results into account, Table 5 presents an evaluation of the value of the site for bats and also details any other ecological constraints identified such as nesting birds in relation to the proposed development which will comprise for the removal of the garage, with first floor and two storey extensions including conversion of the existing cow byre and barn to residential.

Table 5: Evaluation of the site for bats and any other ecological constraints

Building	Survey Summary	Results	Impact Assessment	Recommendations	Biodiversity Enhancement Opportunities ¹
Roosting bats (B1)	B1 has moderate suitability for bats, due to two slipped tiles identified that could give access to the space between the tiles and lining. If bats are utilising these features, evidence thereof would be almost impossible to identify without aid of an emergence survey.		The proposed development will result in the renovation and repairs to this building. This could result in damage or destruction of any bat roosts present and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats.	Two bat emergence and re-entry surveys are required during the active bat season (optimal May to August, suboptimal September) to confirm presence or likely absence of a bat roost in the building. Both of the surveys should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. Infra-red cameras should be used as an aid. Surveys should be a minimum of two weeks apart. Two surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building. If bat roosts are confirmed in the building one additional survey may be required to characterise the roost and to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission.	To be confirmed upon completion of the surveys.
Roosting bats (B2)	B2 has a confirmed roost of Natterers bats, which by the number of droppings present, is		The proposed development will include the renovation of this building, and so will likely result in the destruction of the bat roost present.	Three bat emergence and re-entry surveys are required during the active bat season (optimal May to August, suboptimal September) to characterise the roosts present. At least two of the surveys	As above.

¹ The Local Planning Authority has a duty to ask for enhancements under the NPPF (2021).

	<p>likely to be of considerable size. It is located on the ridge beam of the two-storey section of the cow byre, as denoted by the droppings and urine staining.</p>		<p>should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. Infra-red cameras should be used as an aid. Surveys should be a minimum of three weeks apart. Four surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building.</p> <p>An EPSL application to Natural England will be required. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission.</p> <p>A Material Changes Check will be required within three months of the EPSL submission, if no survey work has been undertaken within that period. Biological records data will also need to be obtained to inform the application.</p>	
<p>Roosting bats (B3)</p>	<p>B3 has low suitability for bats, due to the presence of 2no. suitable areas of missing mortar around the ridge tiles that bats could utilise to access the ridge beams.</p>		<p>One bat emergence or re-entry survey is typically required during the active bat season (optimal May to August, suboptimal September) to confirm presence or likely-absence of a bat roost in a low value building.</p> <p>As this building was not accessible during the time of the PRA, an extra survey is required to mitigate the lack of access and give a better overall understanding of bat presence/activity within this building.</p> <p>Infra-red cameras should be used as an aid, and these surveys need to be a minimum of three weeks apart.</p> <p>Two surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building.</p> <p>If the absence of a bat roost cannot be determined during the first visit, then further surveys will be required.</p> <p>If bat roosts are confirmed in the building two additional surveys may be required to characterise</p>	<p>As above.</p>

			the roost and to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. Surveys should be a minimum of two weeks apart. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission.	
Foraging and commuting bats	Hedgerows and scattered trees could be used by local bat populations for foraging and commuting. These could also be used by bats dispersing from nearby roosts outside of the site.	<p>The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats.</p> <p>The proposed development could include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.</p>	<p>A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light spill on to hedgerows and trees should be avoided. • Use narrow spectrum light sources to lower the range of species affected by lighting. • Use light sources that emit minimal ultra-violet light. • Avoid white and blue wavelengths of the light spectrum to reduce insect attraction and where white light sources are required in order to manage the blue shortwave length content they should be of a warm / neutral colour temperature <4,200 kelvin. • Not use bare bulbs and any light pointing upwards. The spread of light will be kept in line with or below the horizontal. • Light spill will be reduced via the use of low-level lighting used in conjunction with hoods, cowls, louvers and shields. Lights will also be directional to ensure that light is directed to the intended areas only. • External lighting will be on PIR sensors that are sensitive to large objects only (so that they are not triggered by passing bats) and will be set to the shortest time duration to reduce the amount of time the lights are on. 	None.

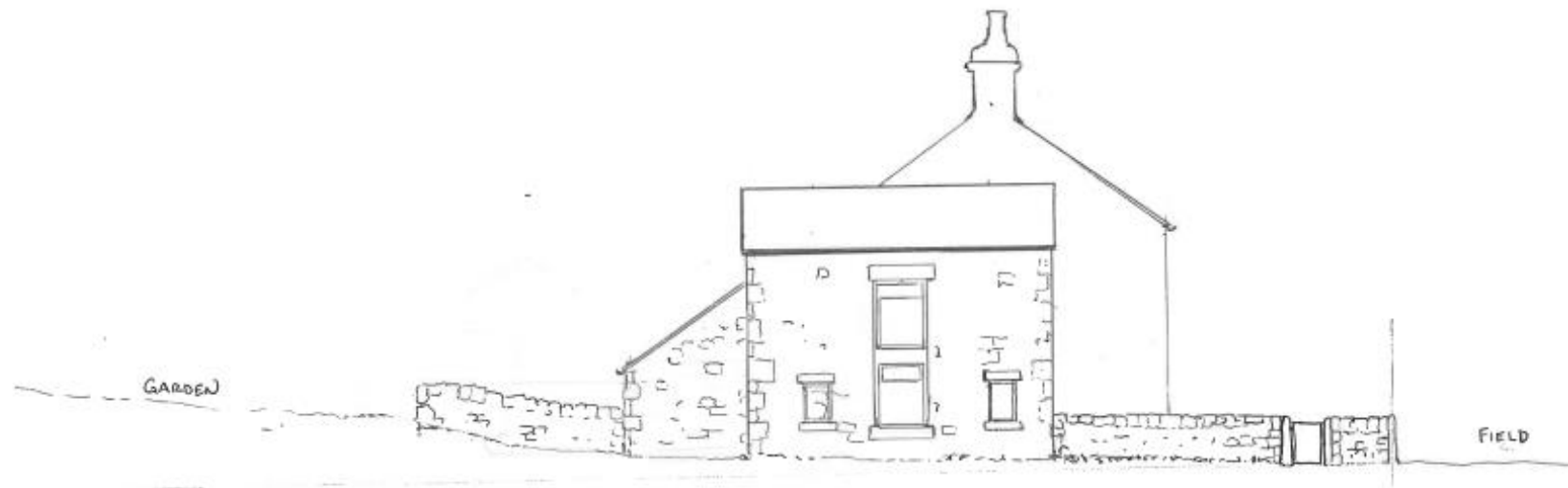
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wall lights and security lights will be 'dimmable' and set to the lowest light intensity settings. There are several products on the market that allow the control of the light intensity and the duration that the lights are on. All lighting on the developed site will make use of the most up to date technology available. 	
<p>Nesting birds (B2 and B3)</p>	<p>B2 has several nests consistent with swallows and house martins present on the inside – furthermore, there are also several small man-made gaps present in the brickwork to support small birds.</p> <p>B3, due to the missing windowpane has some suitability for birds.</p> <p>The site has negligible suitability for schedule 1 species of birds due to a lack of suitable features.</p>	<p>The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.</p>	<p>Works should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the buildings should be undertaken immediately, by qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged.</p>	<p>The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes on mature trees around the site boundaries or on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g.</p> <p>Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) Or a similar alternative brand.</p> <p>Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole.</p> <p>Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.</p>

Other ecological constraints	None identified.	N/A	N/A	N/A
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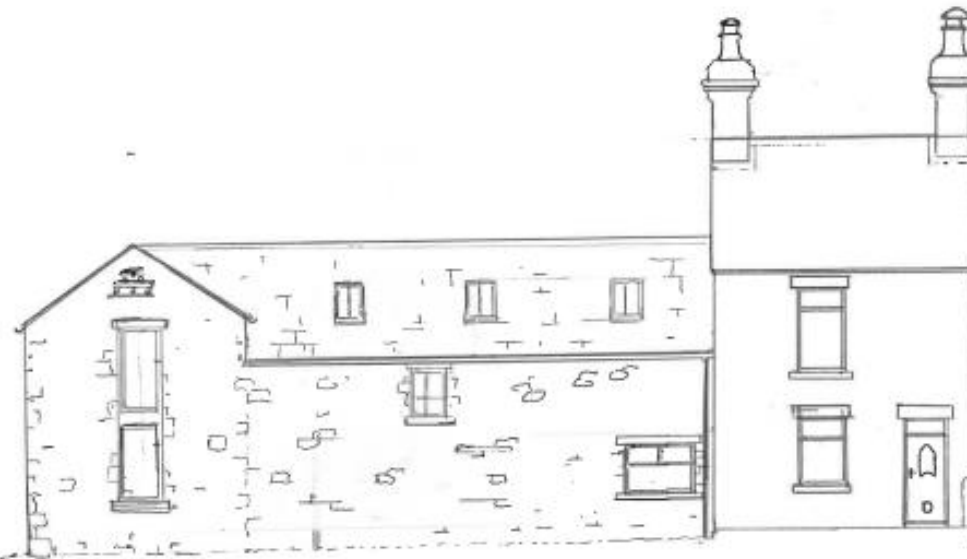
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Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan

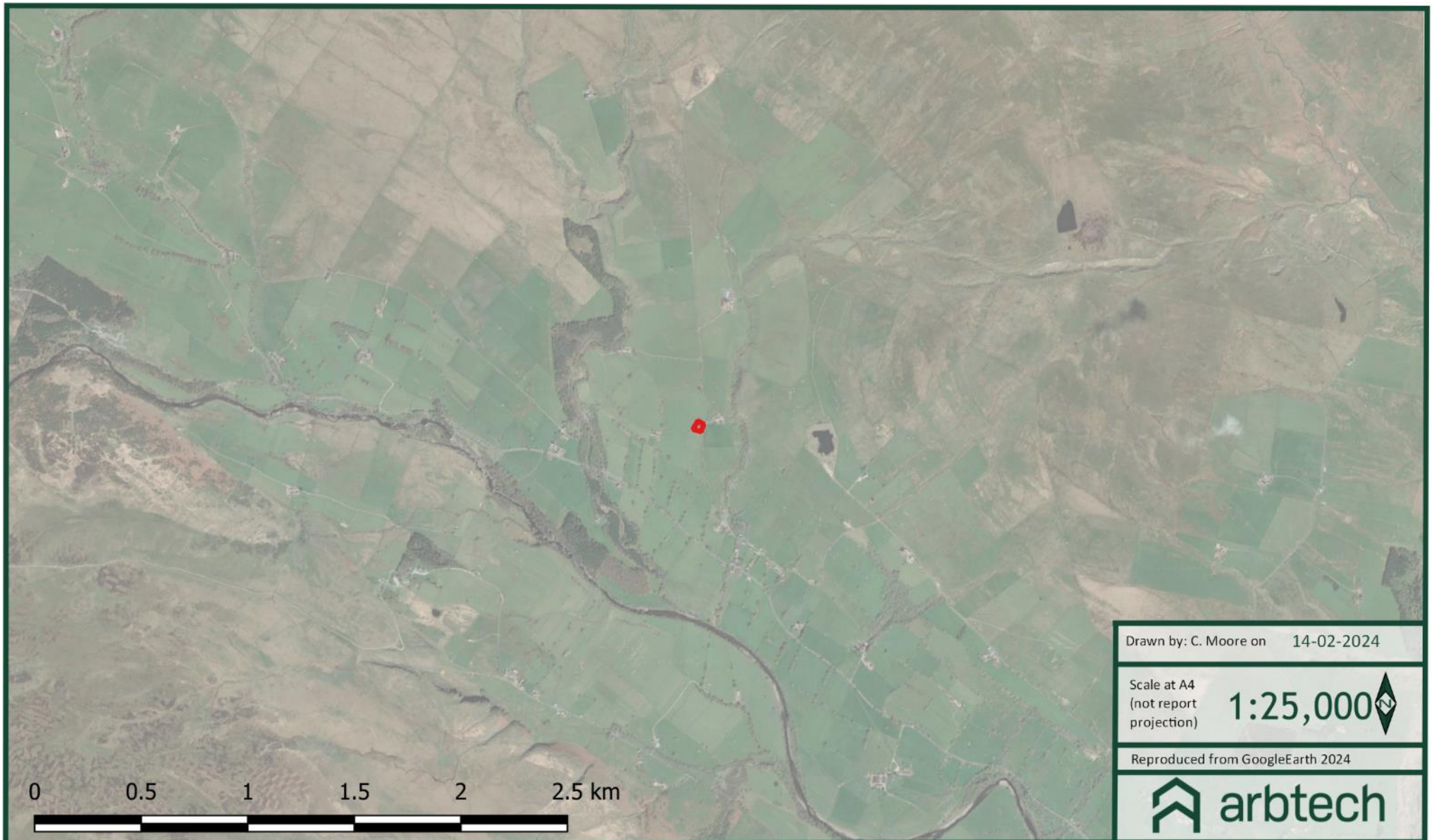


PROSPECT HOUSE		
NEWBIGGIN IN TEESDALE DL12 0UD		
PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION		
DRAWING N° PHEX 32		
SCALE	DRAWN	DATE
1:100	M SMITH	19.11.23



PROSPECT HOUSE		
NEWBIGGIN IN TEESSDALE DL12 0UD		
"PROPOSED" SOUTH ELEVATION		
DRAWING N ^o PHEX 22		
SCALE	DRAWN	DATE
1:100	M. SMITH	19-11-23

Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3a: PRA Plan



Appendix 4: Legislation and Planning Policy Related to Bats

LEGAL PROTECTION

All species of bat are fully protected under *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 2.

Regulation 43: Protection of certain wild animals - offences

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if they:

- (a) Deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species,
- (b) Deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species,
- (c) Deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or
- (d) Damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1) (b), disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely—

- (a) To impair their ability:
 - (i) To survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - (ii) In the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
- (b) To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Bats are also protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 5. Under this Act, they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection
- Selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development. The Framework specifies the need for protection of designated sites and priority habitats and species. An emphasis is also made on the need for ecological infrastructure through protection, restoration and re-creation. The protection and recovery of priority species (considered likely to be those listed as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006) is also listed as a requirement of planning policy.

In determining a planning application, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by ensuring that: designated sites are protected from harm; there is appropriate mitigation or compensation where significant harm cannot be avoided; measurable gains in biodiversity in and around developments are incorporated; and planning permission is refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including aged or veteran trees and also ancient woodland.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Biodiversity Duty

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'.

Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of 'principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity'. This list is intended to assist decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications. A developer must show that their protection has been adequately addressed within a development proposal.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by Natural England will be required for works likely to affect a bat roost or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above (e.g. survive, breed, rear young and hibernate). The licence is to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficiency/success to be monitored. The legislation may also be interpreted such that, in certain circumstances, important foraging areas and/or commuting routes can be regarded as being afforded *de facto* protection, for example, where it can be proven that the continued usage of such areas is crucial to maintaining the integrity and long-term viability of a bat roost (Garland & Markham, 2008).

There are 17 species of bat breeding in England and Natural England issues licences under Regulation 55 of the Habitats Regulations to allow you to work within the law.

Licences are issued for specific purposes stated in the Regulations, if the following three tests are met:

- The purpose of the work meets one of those listed in the Habitats Regulations (see below);
- That there is no satisfactory alternative;
- That the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status (FCS) in their natural range

The Habitats Regulations permits licences to be issued for a specific set of purposes including:

1. include preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of over-riding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;
2. scientific and educational purposes;

3. ringing or marking; and,
4. conserving wild animals.

Development works fall under the first purpose and Natural England issues bat mitigation licences for developments.

EUROPEAN PROTECTED SPECIES POLICIES

In December 2016 Natural England officially introduced the four licensing policies throughout England. The four policies seek to achieve better outcomes for European Protected Species (EPS) and reduce unnecessary costs, delays and uncertainty that can be inherent in the current standard EPS licensing system. The policies are summarised as follows:

- Policy 1; provides greater flexibility in exclusion and relocation activities, where there is investment in habitat provision;
- Policy 2; provides greater flexibility in the location of compensatory habitat;
- Policy 3; provides greater flexibility on exclusion measures where this will allow EPS to use temporary habitat; and,
- Policy 4; provides a reduced survey effort in circumstances where the impacts of development can be confidently predicted.

The four policies have been designed to have a net benefit for EPS by improving populations overall and not just protecting individuals within development sites. Most notably Natural England now recognises that the Habitats Regulations legal framework now applies to 'local populations' of EPS and not individuals/site populations.