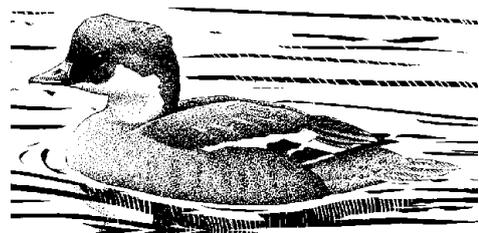


Bat Survey to
Spring Grove Gardens
Paul Lane
Mirfield
HD5 0PU

16th May 2023



John Gardner
Wildlife Photographer | Bat Ecologist
32 Nostell Lane, Ryhill, Wakefield,
West Yorkshire WF4 2DJ.
01924 229800 mobile 07887 627005
www.wildscenes.com
e: john@wildscenes.com



1. Summary

- 1.1 A bat scoping survey has been carried out on outbuildings at Spring Grove Gardens, Paul Lane, Mirfield to determine if the buildings are being used or have potential to be used by roosting bats. The survey is required as part of a planning application condition and was undertaken during the optimal time for bat occupancy and therefore aimed to establish the presence or absence of bats in the building. The application seeks to demolish the buildings and replace with a new build residential dwelling.
- 1.2 There are two outbuildings adjacent to the main house and they stand facing each other. The walls are constructed from single thickness blockwork, and both are open fronted and have a single slope to the roof. One roof is covered with pressed steel sheeting and has a suspended ceiling, while the other has a covering of Marley modern slates over traditional felt which has decayed and fallen away leaving just the tile covering. The lower section of this roof has also collapsed leaving a large opening and allowing light ingress. The buildings are open-fronted and are mainly used for storing goods, though one section is still used for stabling.
- 1.3 The buildings were checked for active bird nests, but none were found. There is no evidence of use by barn owls or swallows and these species are considered absent from the site.
- 1.4 Given the blockwork walls and single thickness tiles or sheeting to the roof, both buildings display a lack of potential roosting features and have been assessed as being of '*negligible*' value to bats. It is considered very unlikely that bats would roost in these buildings and there is no evidence of use by bats. The buildings are not considered essential to species survival and there are no statutory constraints to the development of this site from the presence of bats. No further survey work is required.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 A bat scoping survey was carried out to outbuildings at Spring Grove Gardens, Paul Lane, Mirfield HD5 0PU (NGR SE183198) to determine whether bats have or are using the building as a roost site. The site was also checked for the presence of nesting birds.
- 2.2 The current proposal seeks planning permission for demolition of buildings and replacement with new build dwelling.
- 2.3 The survey took place at a time considered to be the optimal period for bat occupancy aimed to establish the following:
- The presence or absence of bats using the buildings by undertaking a scoping survey.
 - Identify any potential roosting features (PRFs).
 - Determine if activity surveys are required.
 - Provide an impact assessment of the development on bats.
 - Define mitigation proposals where required.
 - Assess the requirement for a protected species licence.
 - Assess the building for use by nesting birds.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 The site was surveyed in accordance with BCT best practice guidelines and surveyor experience by John Gardner, a surveyor with 43yrs field experience in searching for bats and is registered to use the Class Survey Licence WML CL20 (Level 4). The licence number is 2015-15656-CLS-CLS.
- 3.2 The interior and exterior of the buildings were inspected during daylight using torches, binoculars and an endoscope. All normal signs of bats were looked for including bats, dead baby bats, bat droppings, prey remains, scratching and staining of entry and exit holes.
- 3.3 The buildings were assessed for their degree of potential to support roosting bats including assessing the building design, construction, materials, and condition. This combined with an assessment of the location of the site and the surrounding habitat in terms of bat suitability allows an assessment to be made as to the potential of the building to support bats. Factors such as the proximity of good foraging areas (woodland, water bodies) and features that link the site to the wider surrounds such as linear features (hedgerows etc) were also considered.
- 3.4 This report sets out the findings of a daytime scoping carried out to the above site on Tuesday 16th May 2023. The report highlights the ecological constraints and opportunities associated with the proposed works and appraises the potential impacts. Appropriate actions to ensure the protection of bats are identified and mitigation measures detailed where appropriate.

4. Survey constraints

- 4.1 There were no constraints to the survey.

5. Site Description

5.1 The site consists of a detached dwelling with large outbuildings and is located in an area that offers excellent foraging habitat and potential roosting sites in buildings and nearby woodland. The site is surrounded by woodland, pasture and water courses and the number of bats present locally is likely to be high and of several species. The site is connected to the wider landscape by a series of linear features.

Figure 1. Site location plan

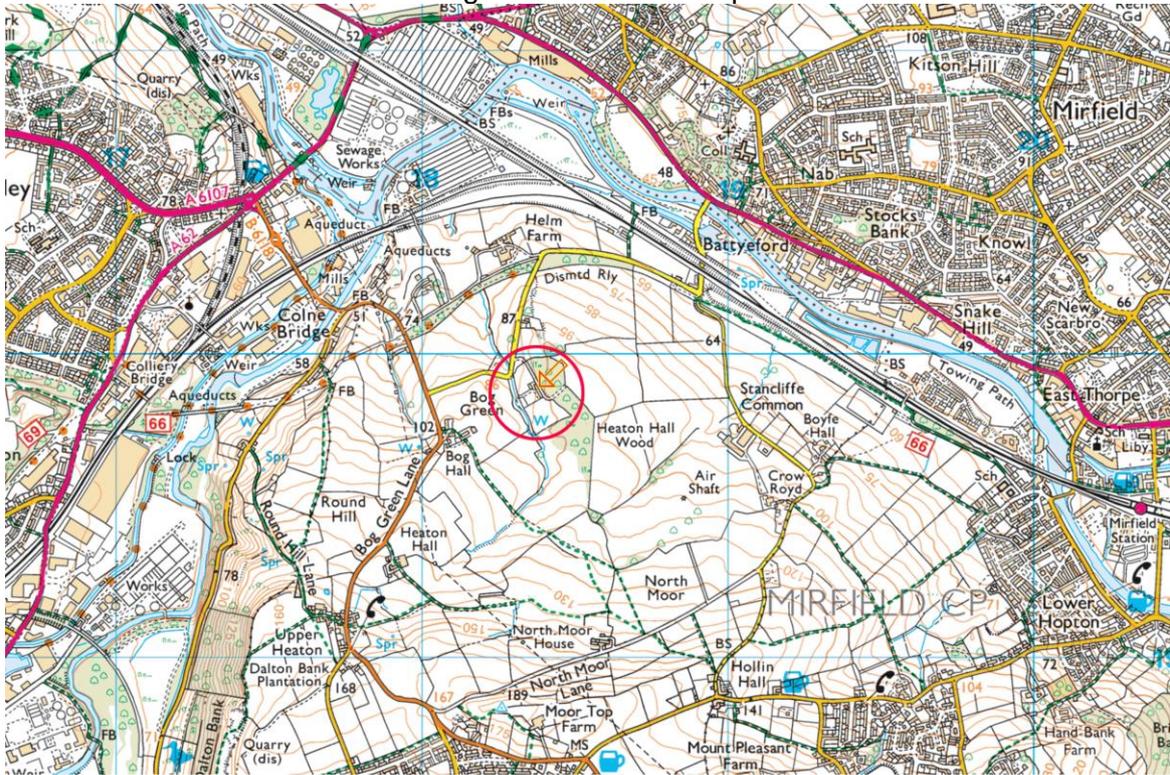


Figure 2 Aerial view of the site, surrounds and specific buildings surveyed.

6. Desk Study

The buildings have been assessed as being of negligible bat roost potential and require no further survey work and it is highly unlikely that any bat records exist relating directly to this site. Therefore, no data searches have been undertaken or are required at this time. Furthermore, the zone of impact does not extend beyond the site footprint and will have no impact on any bat roosts that might be within this area. Previous surveys in this area have identified roosts of pipistrelle and brown long-eared at Helm Farm around 1km north of the site and noctule are recorded in this area.

7. Activity surveys

7.1 No activity surveys were carried out as the buildings are assessed as being of negligible roosting potential.

8. Survey results

The buildings surveyed are two large open-fronted storage buildings which face each other and are adjacent to the main house.

The building on the north side of the yard is constructed from breeze block which has been entirely rendered and offers no wall cavity, structural gaps or external features that would allow bats to roost. The roof has a shallow slope and is covered with pressed steel sheeting which is single thickness and unlined and has translucent light panels. There is no attic void that is likely to support ridge dwelling species though there is a shallow suspended ceiling in this building. There was no access into the small space between the ceiling and the steel roof covering. The fascia is a skirt fabricated from the same steel sheeting as the roof and where it laps the walls, the gaps were checked and found to be virtually all covered with cobwebs. There were no droppings adhered to the walls which are pale coloured and would show droppings easily.



Photo 1 Showing various aspects of north range

The building on the south side of the yard is constructed from breeze blocks but is not rendered like the other but nonetheless lacks a wall cavity and has no structure cracks. There is no fascia on this building and the roof is fixed to wooden beams that offer no potential roosting sites. The shallow pitched roof is covered with a concrete tile that is tightly interlocking and offers no

access points. The tiles had a traditional felt lining and this has all but disintegrated and there is no roof void or ridge section that would support bats. The lower section of the roof has fallen away allowing light ingress into the building interior. There was no evidence of bats and no evidence of nesting birds.



Photo 2 Showing various aspects of south range

Both buildings have been assessed as being of negligible roosting potential.

9. Interpretation and analysis

The site lies in an area that is likely to support good numbers of bats and several roosts are known from this locale. However, the buildings are assessed as being of negligible due to the limited number and diversity of roosting sites. The walls are constructed from blockwork and have no wall cavity or structural gaps and the roofing on both buildings is a single covering without ridge section or roof void. There are no decorative wooden features that would allow bats to roost and there is no evidence of the buildings being used as a night shelter or feeding

perch. There are no droppings adhered to walls and no accumulations of droppings on stored good, though the buildings are full of stored goods making a thorough search difficult.

The site backs on to woodland with large mature trees and there is the main dwelling adjacent to the survey buildings which appears to offer great roosting potential. Open fronted buildings with single thickness roof coverings such as these are rarely used by bats and these buildings appear incapable of supporting a nursery roost.

The buildings are not considered essential to species survival and are not considered likely to support roosting bats.

10. Impact assessment

The buildings have been assessed as being of *negligible* roosting potential and demolition works are unlikely to have any impact on bats or the local bat population. There will be no loss of existing roost sites and no loss or fragmentation of habitat caused by the development. Including permanent bat roosts or bird nesting features would increase the site's biodiversity potential.

11. Mitigation and Compensation

The buildings have been assessed as being of *negligible* interest to bats and, consequently, there is no requirement for a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) and no compulsory mitigation is required. Including permanent bat roosting features may be beneficial and could increase the site's potential to support roosting bats. As the buildings are close to woodland, a bat box scheme could be included within the trees along with a nestbox scheme to assist nesting birds.

Timings

- There are no timing constraints from the presence of bats.

Compensation

- Inclusion of 6 Schwegler flat bat boxes 1FF should be located in the woodland to the rear of the site and located above 3m and mixed on SW and SE aspects. Alternatively, a Schwegler bat wall system 3FE could easily be incorporated into the structure on the west or south elevations to provide a discrete permanent bat roosting feature.
- Consideration should be given to a selection of bird nesting boxes in the woodland to provide a range of nest sites to hole nesting species such as titmice and starlings. Wooden bird boxes can be bought or easily made and there are plenty of plans available online or at the BTO website.

12. Conclusion

The buildings have no obvious potential roosting features (PRFs) and bats are unlikely to be present in the buildings given the lack of PRFs but there is high quality foraging habitat available in the surrounds and provision of bat boxes either in the new dwelling or in the local woodland are likely to be successful. There are no statutory constraints to the development of this building from the presence of bats and no further survey work is required.