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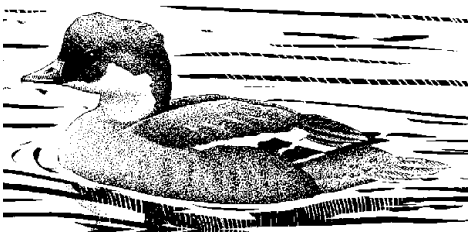
Bat Survey to
Kirkgate Surgery
Kirgate

Birstall
WF17 9HE

7th October 2021



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1. Summary

1.1 A bat scoping survey to Kirkgate Surgery, Birstall has been carried out to establish the likelihood of the property being used by roosting bats ahead of proposed extension work. The survey was undertaken outside the optimal time for bat occupancy but still aimed to establish the likelihood of bats in the building. The application seeks permission to extend the building on the north elevation adding a single storey extension.

1.2 The preliminary roost assessment survey was carried out on 7th October 2021 and established that a bat roost is present on the NW corner of the building. The roost is located high up, just below the eaves, where a gap exists between the stonework of the north wall and the render on the west wall.

1.3 The building is a detached stone building with a pitched roof that has a Marley modern tile. There is a small, single-storey hipped extension on the south elevation and the south gable has a covering of UPVC. The roof is sound, and all ridge tiles are present and without gaps to the mortar and the soffits are all sealed to the walls. The stone walls do not have gaps or crevices and the walls of the fire escape on the north elevation have a cement render. Superficially there appears to be little potential roosting opportunities but a bat roost was located on the NW corner of the building. There are good numbers of droppings adhered to the render on the west wall and the droppings lead back to a gap between the stonework and the render in the very top of the NW corner. There is also staining to the render caused by the bats entering the hole.

1.4 The scoping survey established that bats are present on site and the presence of droppings adhered to the walls indicate that the roost has been actively used in the current season. Normally when a bat roost is present and works are planned which would directly affect the bat roost, further survey work and an application for a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) is required before any works are permitted. However, the current application is for a single storey extension projecting from the base of the north elevation which will have no direct impact on the existing roost if precautionary measures are adopted.

1.5 In order to avoid impact to the bat roost and to protect and maintain the roosting opportunity, a method statement has been prepared (section 11). The actions in the method statement will avoid the need further survey work and will ensure the existing bat roost is retained post works.

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2. Introduction

2.1 A bat scoping survey was carried out to Kirkgate Surgery, Kirkgate, Birstall WF17 9HE (NGR SE219262) in accordance with the Planning Authority's request, to determine whether bats have or are using the property as a roost site.

2.2 The current proposal seeks to extend the building on the north elevations.

2.3 The survey took place at a time considered to be outside the optimal period for bat occupancy, therefore, the survey aimed to establish the following:

- the likelihood of bats using the building by undertaking a scoping survey
- determine if activity surveys are required
- identify any potential roosting areas
- 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 by John Gardner, a surveyor with 40yrs 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 exterior of the building was inspected during daylight using torches and binoculars. 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 building was assessed for its 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 bat scoping survey carried out to the above property on Thursday 7th October 2021. 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 that would affect the overall conclusions and recommendations made herein.

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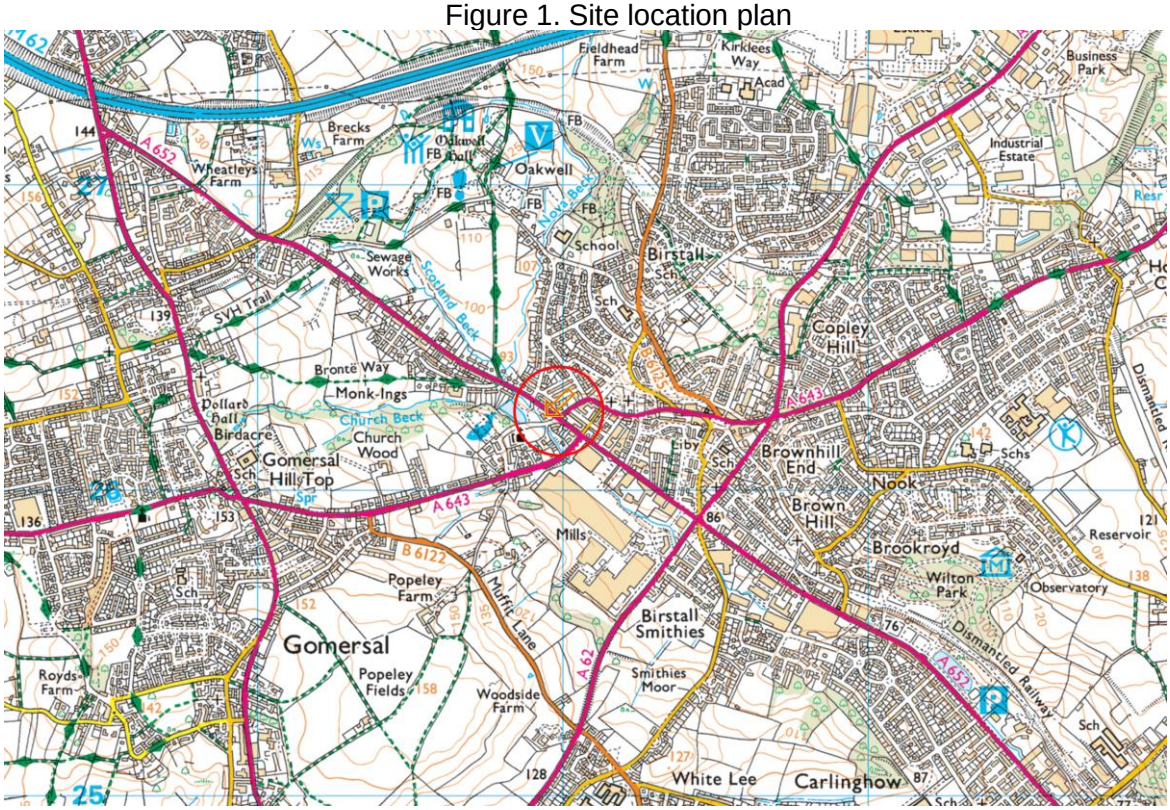
5. Site Description

5.1 The site consists of a detached stone building located close to woodland, ponds and Scotland Beck. The foraging habitat is considered excellent, and the local bat population is known to be healthy. The site is connected to the wider landscape by linear features.

Figure 1. Site location plan



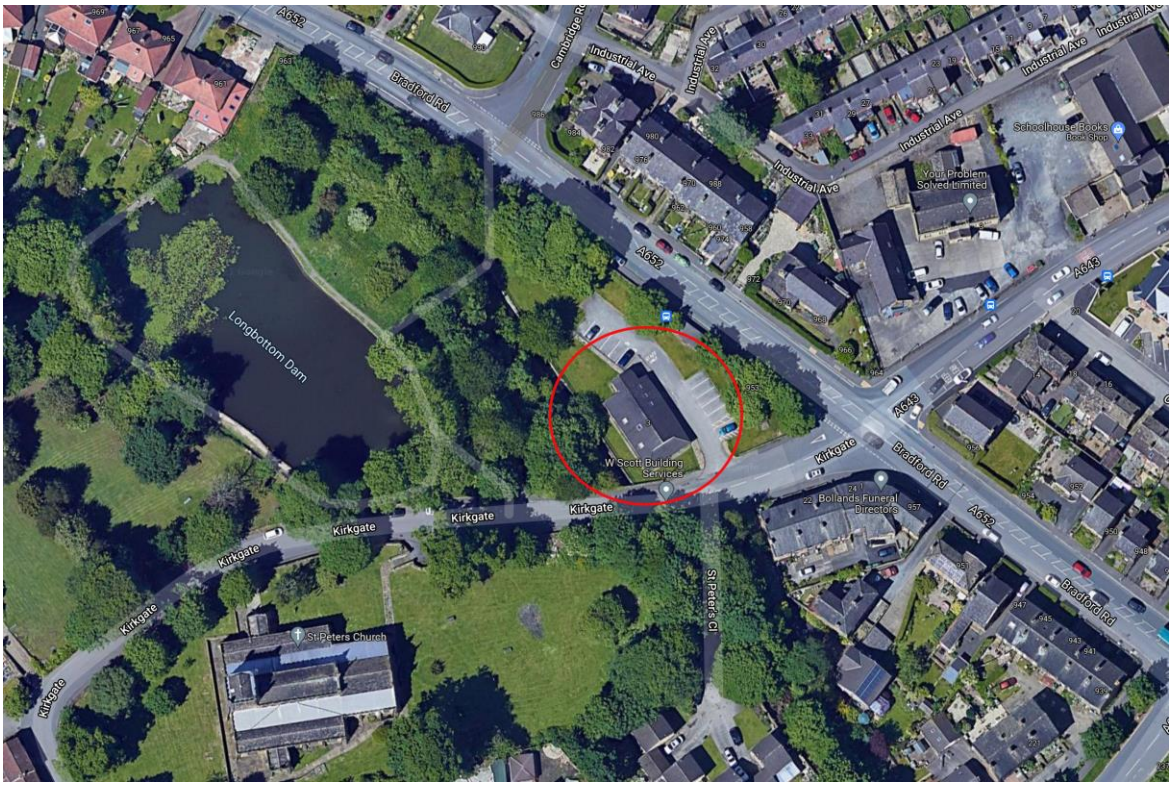


Figure 2 Aerial view of the site, surrounds and buildings surveyed

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6. Desk Study

No desk study was carried out as this survey established the presence of a bat roost and therefore supersedes all other historical data. Furthermore, the zone of influence is such that there will be no impact beyond the site footprint. Previous surveys in this area have noted a healthy population of common species of bats.

7. Activity surveys

7.1 No activity surveys were conducted due to the time of year which is outside the optimal period for bats in buildings.

8. Survey results

8.1 The daylight survey

The building is a detached building located in excellent foraging habitat with Scotland Beck running along the west boundary. There are mature trees and open water within 200m and the habitat is considered to be of high foraging value to bats.

The roof is pitched and runs north to south and has a covering of Marley modern tiles which are tightly interlocking and offer no potential roost sites. The ridges are all in situ and are well bedded without gaps to the mortar. The main roof space is used as habitation and there are several Velux windows in the roof and therefore the attic void is only small and unlikely to be of interest to brown long-eared bats. The roof is edged with plastic verge covers which, combined with the tiles, offers little roosting opportunity. The north gable has deep soffits which appear to be sealed to the walls and the south gable is covered with a UPVC wood effect finish and has limited or no roosting potential.

The north end of the building houses a fire escape stairway and forms a protruding tower of which the east and west elevations are cement rendered. The render on the west facing elevation is peppered with bat droppings which lead up to the very NW corner of the building where there is a gap where the stone and the render meet. This is almost not visible from the ground, but the droppings lead straight to it and there is dark staining on the render at the entrance. This is a classic spot for common pipistrelle bats which is most likely the species roosting here, though potentially Daubenton's could be a candidate too given the proximity to the beck and the fishing ponds.

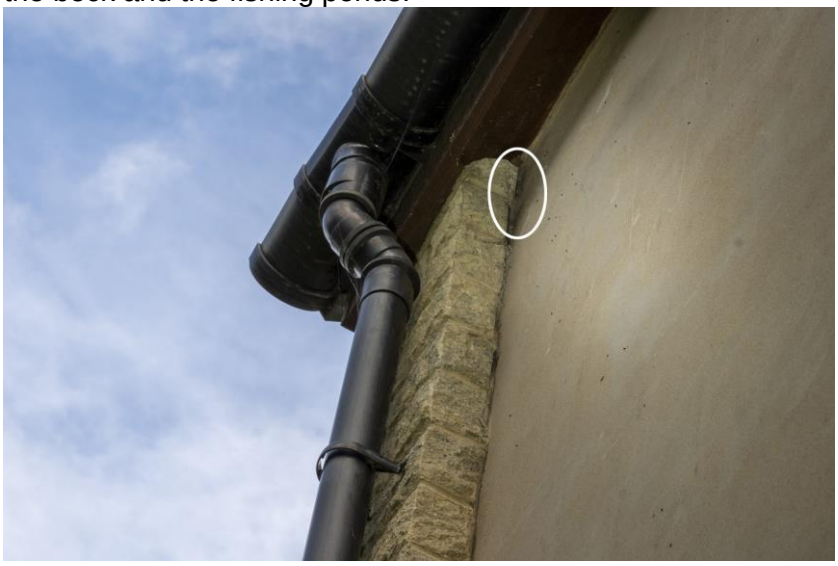

Plate 1 Location of bat roost

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The building, therefore, is a **confirmed** bat roost despite the low number and variety of potential roosting sites.

9. Interpretation and analysis

The daytime scoping survey established that bats are roosting in a gap in the stonework high up on the NW corner of the building. There are droppings adhered to the walls and dark staining around the entrance of a gap which is about 150mm x 50mm where the rendered west wall meets the facing stone of the north wall. This is a classic roost site favoured by common pipistrelle bats. There are plenty of droppings adhered to the walls which indicates that the roost was in use at some point during the current season. It is not possible to determine if this was a nursery roost or is used by a small number of non-breeders, though nursery roost is more likely. It is also not possible to determine the species of bat without DNA analysis of the droppings or by observing the emergence at the appropriate time of year when catching in a static net would also be possible. It is most likely to be common pipistrelle though two other species can't be ruled out.

Normally, the discovery of a roost would require further survey work to gather data in support of an application for an EPSM licence but in this case, a licence is not required as the proposed works are not likely to result in damage or harm to either the bats or the roost. The impacts are discussed in section 10.

10. Impact assessment

The current application seeks to add a single storey extension to the north elevation of the building which is below the roost and on a slightly different elevation. There are no plans to disturb the roof or to alter in any way, the area where the bats are roosting. Therefore, there will be no direct impact to the bats and bats will be able to continue using the roost site if they return. There is a possibility of indirect disturbance due to noise and vibration caused by drilling, tying in of walls and general groundworks. This can be easily mitigated for and carried out when the bats are least likely to be present which would be between late September to March and this would provide a large enough window to complete the works that would involve potential disturbance i.e. works that directly affect the existing walls. With precaution, there will be no impact to the bats or the roost.

11. Mitigation measures

The roost is not likely to be disturbed by the proposed alterations apart from indirect actions caused by drilling and hammering. There will be no direct impact on the roost and so the following method statement should ensure that no bats are harmed and no disturbance to the roost is caused

Work	Specification
Timing of the works to minimise risks	The works to tie into the existing walls will be undertaken between October to the end of March inclusive. This will reduce the likelihood of bats being present during the works.
Measures to provide alternative roosting sites	The following mitigation measures will be strictly adhered to: • Prior to commencement of works, a Schwegler Universal summer bat house 1FTH will be erected • The bat box will be positioned on the SW corner away from the proposed works and be placed high up under the eaves • The box will remain in situ for at least three years to provide both an alternate roosting site and an increase in roosting opportunities

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General measures	All contractors to be made aware of the location of the bat roost and instructed to avoid any works in that area. No alteration or modification of the bat roost will take place unless an EPSM licence has been applied for and granted.

12. Conclusion

The building clearly has a bat roost located in the NW corner at the eaves. The bats are roosting in a gap between the render and the stone facing to the NW corner. The proposed works are unlikely to directly impact the bat roost as the works are limited to a single storey extension on the north elevation. By following the method statement herein, works should be able to progress without damaging the roost and the roost will remain in perpetuity or until such times that further survey work has been done and a EPSM licence has been obtained for any such works. A bat box will be erected on the opposite corner of the building to provide alternative roosting sites and to increase the site's roosting potential.

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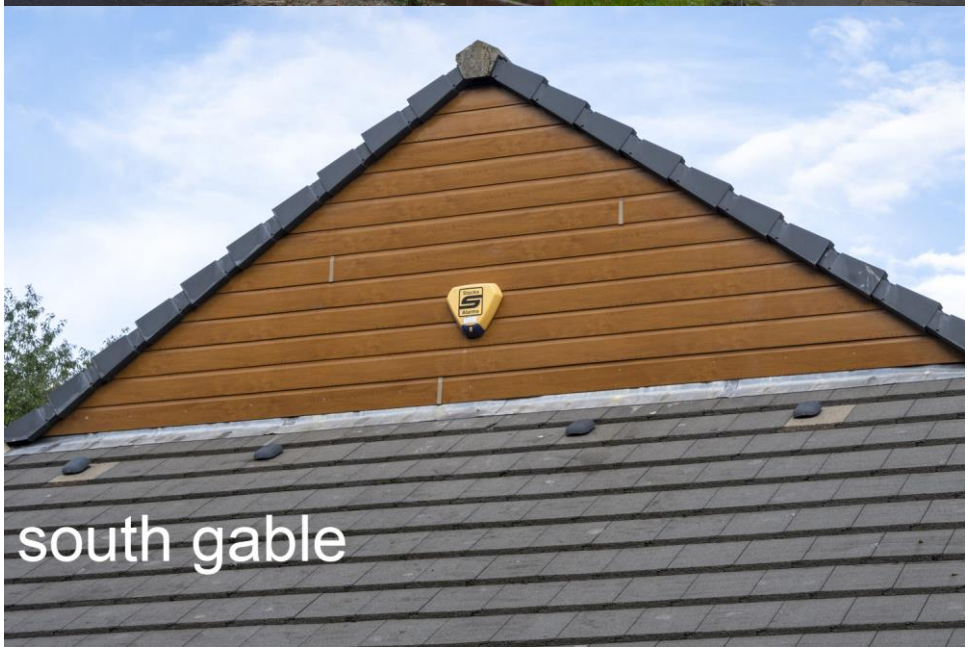
Appendix 1: site photographs



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east elevation


bat roost location
north elevation

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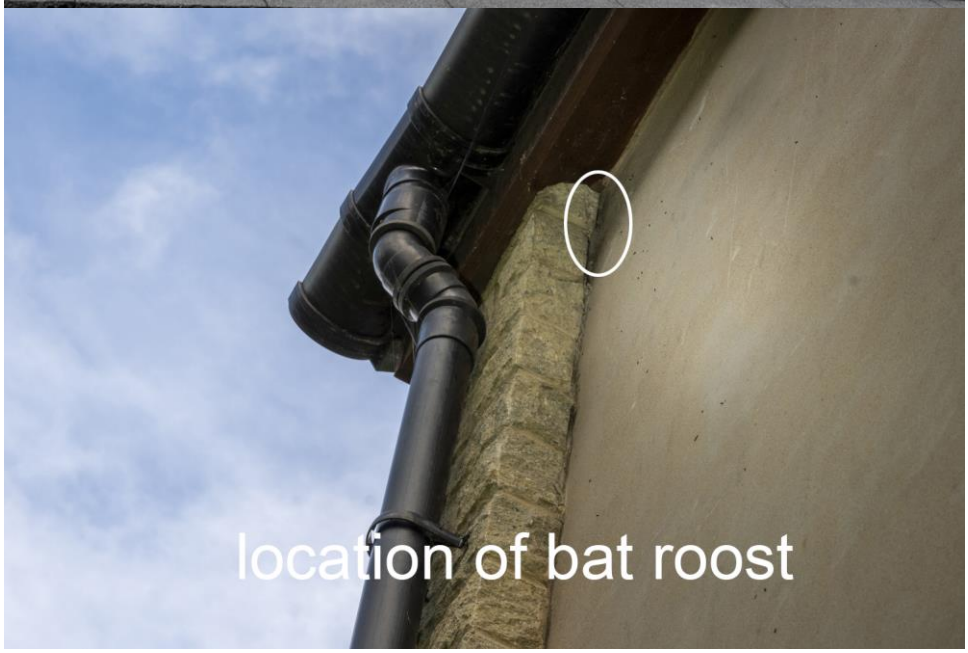
roof detail


location of bat roost