

Newsome Centre, Huddersfield

Preliminary Roost Assessment

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1. Summary

- 1.1.1 A preliminary roost assessment of the Newsome Centre in Huddersfield was commissioned by Ben Walters of One 17 Design, on behalf of the client, on 20th August 2025. The Newsome Centre comprised the former St. John the Evangelist Church.
- 1.1.2 The survey was undertaken to inform proposals to extend the existing flat roofed extension at the northwest end of the former church.
- 1.1.3 The bat survey works carried out comprised a preliminary roost assessment, undertaken on 21st August 2025.
- 1.1.4 No historic bat roost records were received in relation to the Newsome Centre.
- 1.1.5 No evidence of roosting bats was recorded from the surveyed building, with the structure considered to display a moderate level of bat roost suitability. It was however noted that no more than a negligible level of bat roost suitability was recorded from the existing flat roofed section of the Newsome Centre, or from the adjacent northwest gable. Only these sections of the building will be impacted by the proposed scheme.
- 1.1.6 No further survey effort is necessary, providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works are to commence after this date, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey.
- 1.1.7 Works should proceed with caution and vigilance for unexpected bat presence, as single bats can roost almost anywhere. If bats are subsequently discovered, work should cease, and further be advice sought without delay.
- 1.1.8 The Newsome Centre was located in an area of higher quality bat foraging habitat and consequently new external lighting should be avoided where possible, but if necessary, be of a bat friendly design.

2. Introduction

- 2.1.1 A preliminary roost assessment of the Newsome Centre in Huddersfield was commissioned by Ben Walters of One 17 Design, on behalf of the client, on 20th August 2025. The Newsome Centre comprised the former St. John the Evangelist Church.
- 2.1.2 The survey was undertaken to inform proposals to extend the existing flat roofed extension at the northwest end of the former church.
- 2.1.3 The bat survey works carried out comprised a preliminary roost assessment, undertaken on 21st August 2025.
- 2.1.4 The site was located at the junction of Jackroyd Lane and Newsome Road South in the Newsome area of Huddersfield, c. 1.9 km south of the town centre.

3. Habitat Assessment

- 3.1.1 The surveyed building comprised a former church with an associated graveyard and lawn to the northeast. The graveyard had a high level of tree cover and it was expected to be well used by foraging bats. Although the former church curtilage was largely surrounded by residential housing, other higher quality bat foraging habitat was also present locally including two former mill ponds 120 m north of the site and a woodland block 175 m northwest of the site.
- 3.1.2 The site was expected to support a higher than average density of bats for a site in Huddersfield and it was expected to be used by a moderate variety of species.

Table 1. Location and habitat table

Name and address: The Newsome Centre, Jackroyd Lane, Newsome, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD4 6QU			
OS Grid Ref. SE 14427 14633		Altitude. 163 m	
Local Planning Authority: Kirklees Council			
Features on site and adjacent to site			
Feature	On site	Adjacent	Comments
Buildings	✓	✓	Church grounds were surrounded by residential housing
River			River Holme 860 m northwest of site.
Standing water			Former mill ponds 120 m to north.
Bridges tunnels and culverts			Associated with course of River Holme.
Trees	✓	✓	The graveyard associated with the Newsome Centre has a high level of tree cover.
Woodland	✓	✓	
Grassland	✓	✓	Lawn immediately north of Newsome Centre

Figure 1. Location plan



Figure 2. Drone image of area immediately surrounding building in August 2025



3.2 Aims

3.2.1 The survey was conducted to help determine the following:

- The presence/absence of roosting bats.
- Bat roosting areas and access/egress points into the structure.
- The presence/absence of nesting by birds.
- The level of bat roost potential associated with the structure.
- The number and species of bat roosting within the structure.
- Identify further survey work or mitigation requirements.

4. Methodology

4.1 Data Consultation

- 4.1.1 Bat records for locations within 2 km of the site were requested from West Yorkshire Ecology and West Yorkshire Bat Group.
- 4.1.2 A search of the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside website was also undertaken to identify historic European Protected Species licences obtained for locations within 2 km of the site.

4.2 Field Survey

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 4.2.1 The following personnel conducted the preliminary roost assessment on 21st August 2025:
- Robert Bell (MCIEEM; Bat Survey Class License WML-A34-Level 4, 2016-25236-CLS-CLS)
- 4.2.2 The following activities were carried out during the surveys in compliance with relevant Bat Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2023):
- A brief inspection and assessment of the site and habitats present to within 300 m.
 - An extensive examination of all parts of the building both inside and out to record structural features and condition and to record features that may be suitable for roosting bats. Particular attention was paid to any crevices or gaps in walls, lintels, gaps between beams and joists and to the possibility of finding droppings stuck to walls, floors or other surfaces, or insect remains below beams, among a number of other factors. All signs indicative of a bat roost presence including live or dead bats, droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and staining were recorded.
 - An assessment of the building's bat roost potential (negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed roost).
- 4.2.3 In addition, signs of bird nesting were recorded.

4.2.4 The following equipment was used or at hand during the survey:

- Clulight
- Binoculars
- Endoscope
- Ladders
- Camera
- Drone (DJI Mini 4 Pro)

4.3 Survey Limitations

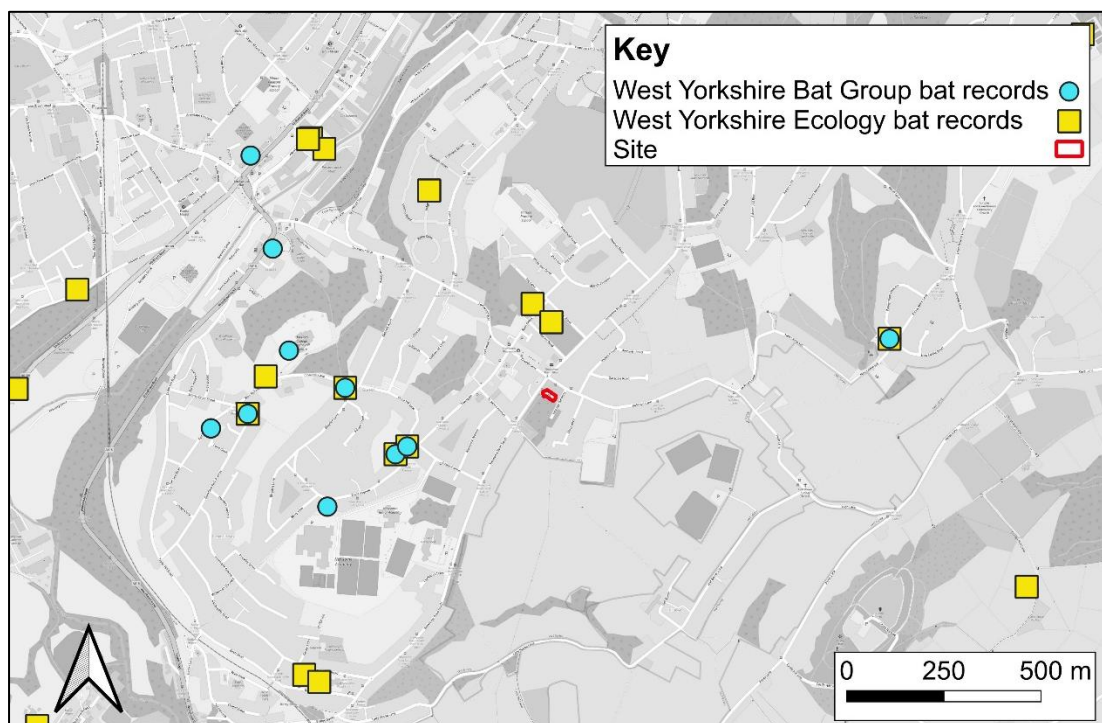
4.3.1 No significant survey limitations were encountered.

5. Results

5.1 Data Consultation

- 5.1.1 A total of 37 bat records were provided by West Yorkshire Bat Group, with 96 records provided by West Yorkshire Ecology. No bat records related to the site itself (Figure 3).
- 5.1.2 Bat species positively identified in the provided records comprised common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*, whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. Other records were attributed to either an unidentified *Pipistrellus* species or an unidentified bat species.
- 5.1.3 The closest records to site comprised common pipistrelle and Natterer's bat field records, collected in 2007 from former mill ponds 120 m north of the site. The closest confirmed roost record comprised a common pipistrelle maternity roost (93 bats), recorded in May 2000, from a location 780 m west of the site.

Figure 3. Bat records close to site



- 5.1.4 Three European Protected Species mitigation licences have been issued for locations within 2 km of the site. These licenses are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. Bat European Protected Species mitigation licences issued for locations within 2 km

Species listed on the licence	What does the licence cover?	Distance from site (km)	Direction
Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat	Destruction of resting places	1.35	Northeast
Common pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place/s	1.40	North
Common pipistrelle	Destruction of resting place/s	1.80	North

5.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 5.2.1 No signs of roosting bats were recorded from the surveyed building, with the structure considered to display a moderate level of bat roosting suitability. It was however considered that negligible bat roost suitability was associated with the flat roofed extension and adjacent northwest gable of the former church.

Description

- 5.2.2 The Newsome Centre comprised the former St. John the Evangelist Church, constructed c.1872 (Plates 1-4). The building had solid stone walls with a nave, chancel, north aisle, vestry and porch on the southwest elevation. A flat-roofed single-storey extension had been constructed on the northwest gable with a stone bellcote at the apex of this gable. The church had a dual-pitched Welsh-slate covered roof, with a single-pitch roof over the north aisle and a separate dual-pitched roof on the porch. The main roof had stone ridge tiles with coping on the gables. A parapet was present around the edge of the flat roof on the northwest extension. Windows across the church were single-paned and leaded, with Perspex covers over the majority of windows.

Plate 1. Northeast elevation of The Newsome Centre



Plate 2. South corner of The Newsome Centre

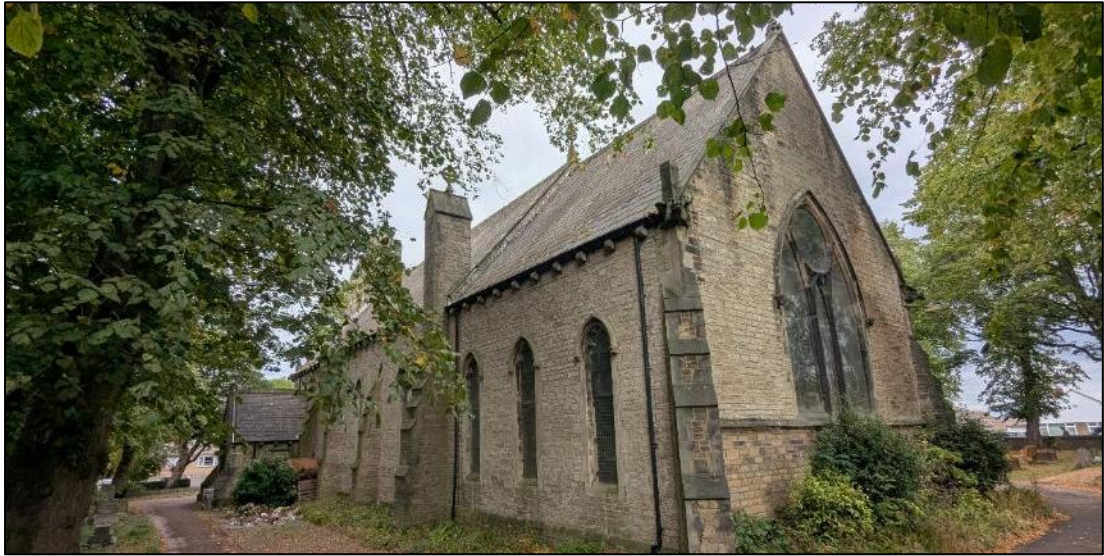


Plate 3. West corner of The Newsome Centre, with flat roofed extension adjoining the northwest gable



Plate 4. Roof of The Newsome Centre



External inspection

5.2.3 No evidence of bat roosting was recorded from the exterior of The Newsome Centre, however, the building supported a range of potential bat roosting locations which comprised the following:

- Missing ridge tile bedding mortar (Plate 5).
- Potential access onto wall plate on northeast and southwest elevations of main church, and onto northwest and southeast elevations of porch.
- Gaps of up to 3 cm behind flat backed cast iron gutters (Plate 6) .
- Occasional lifted and slipped slates (Plate 7).
- Crack in wall between southeast end of north aisle and northeast elevation of church (Plate 8).

5.2.4 An air vent in the wall of the single-storey flat roofed extension was found to be inaccessible to bats.

Plate 5. Gap in ridge bedding mortar



Plate 6. Gap behind flat-backed cast iron gutter



Plate 7. Lifted roof slates on north aisle roof



Plate 8. Crack in wall between southeast end of north aisle and northeast elevation of church



Internal inspection

- 5.2.5 The main roof void of the church was c. 2.5 m high, with the sarking lined roof suspended on a ridge beam, open trusses and rafters (Plate 9). No insulation was present and no evidence of bats was noted. The main void supported a high density of cobwebs.
- 5.2.6 A second 1.5 m high roof space was present above the vestry, with the roof in this area recently renewed and lined with a breathable roofing membrane.

Plate 9. Main roof void



Plate 10. Looking northwest from former chancel



6. Assessment

6.1 Summary and Evaluation of Findings

- 6.1.1 No evidence of roosting bats was recorded from the surveyed building, with the structure considered to display a moderate level of bat roost suitability.
- 6.1.2 It was however noted that no more than a negligible level of bat roost suitability was recorded from the existing flat roofed section of the Newsome Centre, or from the adjacent northwest gable. Only these sections of the building will be impacted by the proposed scheme.

6.2 Legislation and Policy Guidance

- 6.2.1 Bats receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 6.2.2 It is an offence to:
- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat.
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection or obstruct access to any such place.
 - Damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat.
 - Possess a bat (live or dead), or any part of a bat.
 - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
 - Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (dead or alive), or parts of parts.
- 6.2.3 The Convention on Biological Diversity, signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, requires member states to develop national strategies and to undertake a range of actions aimed at maintaining or restoring biodiversity. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the Convention.
- 6.2.4 In England & Wales, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, “to have due regard, as far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”. It notes that “conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat”. Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein’s *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* bats are included as priority species within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. At a more local level there are Local Biodiversity Action Plans for smaller geographical areas which may cover a greater or lesser range of bat species.

The National Planning Policy Framework for England was revised in 2024. This document states that plans should ‘promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity’.

6.3 Further Survey, Recommendations and Enhancements

- 6.3.1 No further bat survey is considered necessary prior to the extension of the flat roofed section of the Newsome Centre, providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works commence after this time, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey works to be undertaken.
- 6.3.2 The Newsome Centre is located within good bat foraging habitat. Many bat species show a strong aversion to artificial light. Therefore, it is advised that new external lighting around the building is avoided so far as reasonably possible. Where lighting is necessary, then it is recommended that it is subject to passive infra-red sensor activation only, in order reduce the times of operation. New lighting should be designed to avoid any illumination of the building and adjacent vegetation. It is advised that any new lighting be low height, low output, directional and of a warm colour tone (ILP, 2023). Decorative uplighters should be avoided.
- 6.3.3 If in the future, consideration is being given to re-roofing the former church. Prior to undertaking re-roofing works further nocturnal survey will be required to determine bat roost presence/absence, with such survey only able to be undertaken during the bat activity survey season (May to August). Any future re-roofing work of the Newsome Centre should make use only of bat friendly roofing membrane (Appendix 2).

6.4 Conclusions

- 6.4.1 The Newsome Centre was considered to display a moderate level of bat roost suitability. It was however considered that the section of the building to be impacted by the proposed development displayed no more than a negligible level of bat roost suitability.
- 6.4.2 No further survey effort is necessary, providing works commence within 24 months of the survey date. If works are to commence after this date, then Middleton Bell Ecology should be contacted to determine the requirement for update survey.
- 6.4.3 Works should proceed with caution and vigilance for unexpected bat presence, as single bats can roost almost anywhere. If bats are subsequently discovered, work should cease, and further advice sought without delay.
- 6.4.4 The Newsome Centre was located in an area of higher quality bat foraging habitat and consequently new external lighting should be avoided where possible, but if necessary, of a bat friendly design.

7. References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust.

ILP (2023) Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night. Institute of Lighting Professionals and Bat Conservation Trust.

Appendix 1. Proposed Elevations

Notes

Do not scale from drawing, use figured dimensions only.
All dimensions must be checked and verified on site prior to commencement of work and architect to be notified of any discrepancies.
This drawing is intended to permit overall scheme proposals only and cannot be used for construction purposes without further information.

Rev.		Drawn	Checked	Date
A	Additional rooflight added to North East elevation, General notes updated.			23.05.24
B	Construction details and information added. Detail references added. General notes added.			16.07.24

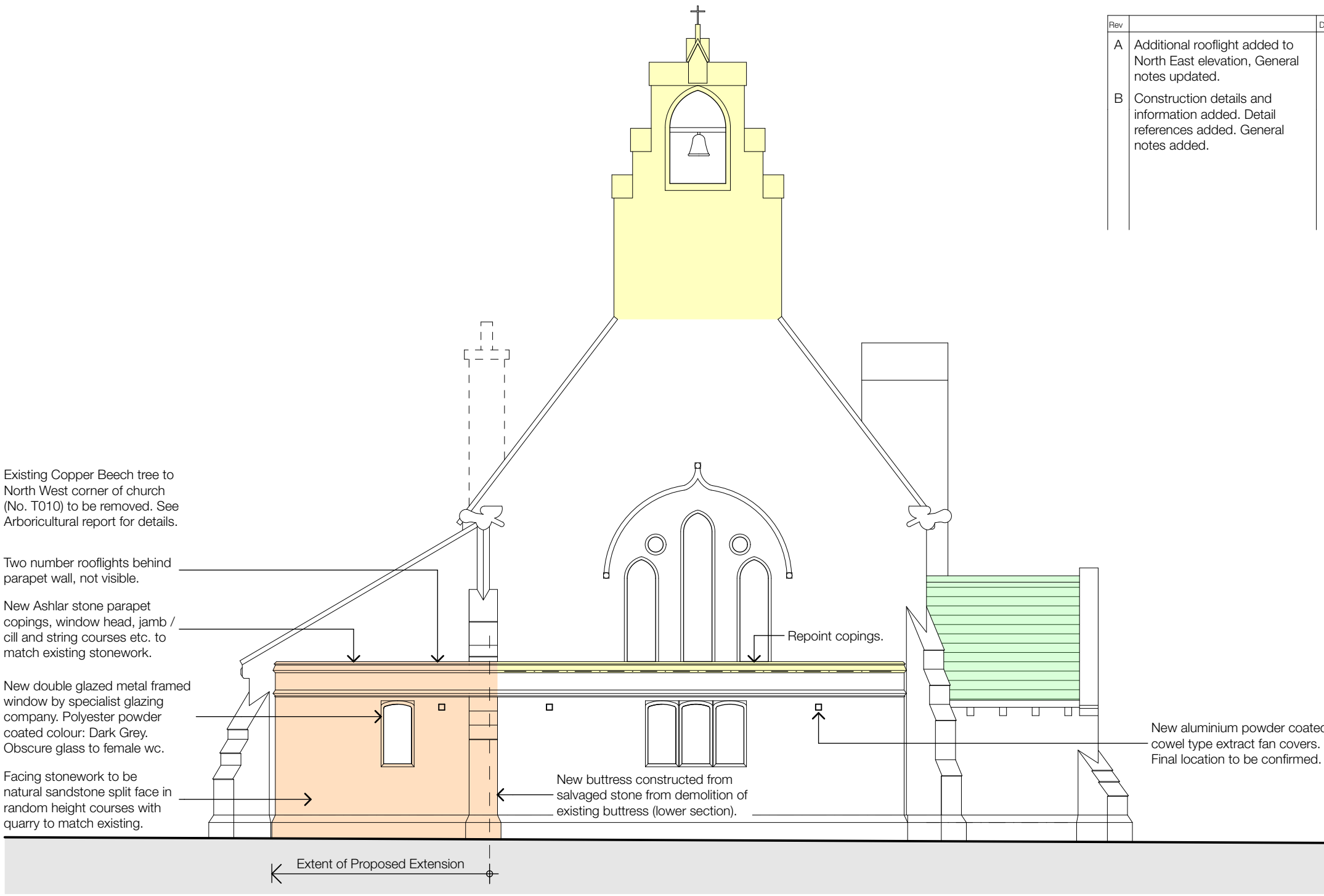


Proposed North East Elevation 1:100

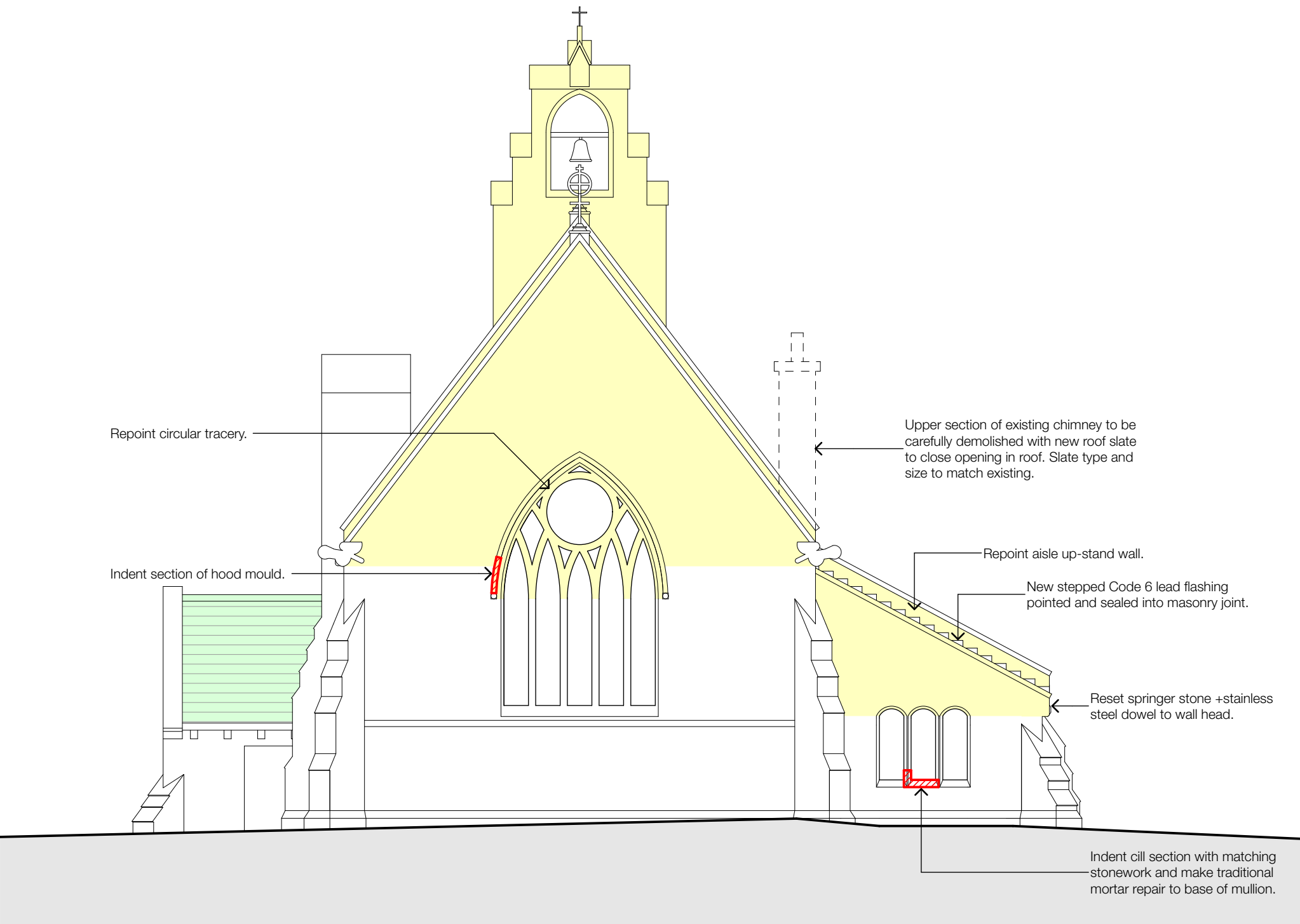
Legend :	
	Rake out all joints of masonry + ashlar dressing and repoint in NHL based mortar as per specification.
	Re-roof as per specification. Allowance for 40% replacement slate to match original quarry, course size and thickness.
	Dismantle all undersized and defective cast iron gutters + fall pipes and replace with heavy duty extruded aluminium to minimum sizes specified.
	New extension in matching stonework and detailing.
	New indent detail stonework replacement.



Proposed South West Elevation 1:100



Proposed North West Elevation 1:100



Proposed South East Elevation 1:100

Job Title Newsome Centre, Huddersfield.	
Client Ward Councillors	Company AD
Status Preliminary	Scale & A1 1:100
Drawing Proposed Elevations	Date March 2024
Drawn	Checked
Drawing No. 3390 (0-) 07	Revision B

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Appendix 2. Bats and Roofing Membranes

Standard roof membranes can cause the death of significant numbers of bats. Traditional bitumen coated roofing felt is recommended where roosting bats are expected to be present.

The problem

Non-bitumen coated membranes used below roof slates and tiles present a significant problem for bats. Over time, strands are pulled away from the surface of these materials as bats crawl over them. These fuzzy strands are very strong and can tangle and trap bats, sometimes causing the death of bats over multiple years¹.

One example we have encountered comprised a pipistrelle roost which formed in a building extension constructed in 2009. Over the course of just 13 years the roofing felt degraded to the extent that it trapped and killed more than 10 bats. Fortunately, the problem in this roost was identified and remedial work was undertaken to replace the roofing membrane in 2022.

Plate A2.1. Four dead pipistrelles tangled in breathable roofing felt



Although a new roof might be considered to lack potential bat access points, that is often not the case. Roofs covered with stone slates almost always have gaps large enough to be accessed by bats, this is often also the case where imitation stone slates are used. On older buildings the uneven roof timbers and/or building design also often results in gaps on wall tops and between slates. Even on new builds it is often possible for bats to access potential roosts via features such as dry verge capping. Some bats can access a space no wider than a biro pen, therefore it is not surprising that they can find their way into most buildings.

Safe roofing membranes (and membranes behind cladding)

The best roofing membrane option for areas where bat roosts are expected is traditional Type 1F bitumen coated hessian backed roofing felt. Bitumen coated roofing felts have been widely and safely used as a secondary weather barrier since approximately the 1950s/1960s. Wooden sarking has also been used for many decades and if appropriately treated, is safe for

¹ Wearing S. Essah E., Gunnel K. & Bonser R. (2013) Double jeopardy: the potential for problems when bats interact with breathable roofing membranes in the United Kingdom. Architecture and Environment

use in bat roosts, or where bats could be, present. Most commercially available products come pretreated but if required, a list of suitable timber treatment products are listed on the government website². Wooden sarking also has the benefit of adding additional insulation and is usually breathable.

There are breathable membrane products which have passed a test known as the snagging propensity test. The test attempts to replicate the wear and tear which results from bats crawling over the membrane. At the time of writing (to our knowledge) two products have passed the test and are accepted for use in bat roosts by Natural England: SIGA Majcoat 200 SOB Diffusion and TLX BatSafe^{3,4}. Although both have passed this test, it is unclear how they would fair over a long timeframe, and particularly within larger bat roosts. For this reason, we do not recommend that they are used for known bat roosts, and particularly for large (maternity roosts). However, they may provide a much needed option for roofs where future bat use cannot be ruled out, sarking boards are not an option, and a breathable solution is required.

Additional considerations

In recent years a fairly substantial proportion of the lofts we have surveyed which had existing breathable felt, were found to have been damaged by wasps (Plate A2.2). In these situations, the wasps appear to have chewed holes in the felt and formed nests in the holes. This doesn't appear to be a problem associated with the traditional bitumen coated roofing felt. Obviously, any holes within roofing felt would be likely to significantly reduce its functionality as a secondary weather barrier. Where bats or birds do come into contact with breathable roofing membranes, they can damage the membrane causing it to leak and they can also significantly reduce the breathability of the felt in that location.

Plate A2.2. Damage to a breathable roofing membrane adjacent to a wasp nest



Traditional bituminous Type 1F roofing felt is a non-breathable product and therefore ventilation is required. This can be achieved, even in buildings with vaulted ceilings, but requires some consideration during the design stage. Products to increase the ventilation within roofs where bituminous Type 1F felt has already been installed are also available but should not be considered as the primary ventilation option.

² Accessible at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bat-roosts-insecticides-and-timber-treatments/timber-treatment-products-suitable-for-use-in-or-near-bat-roosts>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bats-apply-for-a-mitigation-licence#full-publication-update-history~:text=Use%20of%20safe%20roofing%20membranes>

⁴ TLX BatSafe requires all joints and cut edges to be taped in order to prevent the fraying of bare edges.