

Bat Scoping Survey to

Hopton Cricket Club

Woodbottom Lane

Mirfield

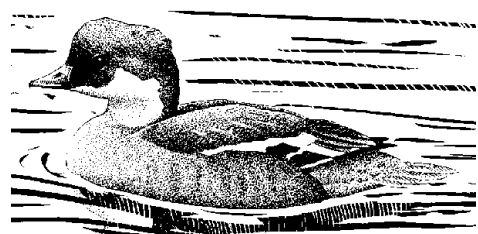
W14 8HE

3rd April 2025



John Gardner

Wildlife Photographer | Bat Ecologist
32 Nostell Lane, Ryhill, Wakefield,
West Yorkshire WF4 2DJ.



1. Summary

- 1.1 A bat scoping survey has been carried out to Hopton Cricket Club, Mirfield, to determine if there are features that have any potential to be used by roosting bats and whether bats are present or likely to be present. The survey has been requested as part of the planning application process and was undertaken outside the optimal time for bat occupancy and therefore aimed to establish the *likelihood* of bats in the building. The application seeks to add a small rear extension.
- 1.2 The site consists of a small, detached clubhouse with hipped slate roof and solid brick walls and is located in a rural area close to excellent habitat. The building is constructed from brick with an English bond and, therefore, has no wall cavity. The roof has large blue slate and is in very good condition with no missing or slipped tiles and no failed mortar to the ridges of hip joints. The deep wooden soffits are tight to the walls and there are no decorative wooden features that would provide potential roosting sites.
- 1.3 There are other buildings locally which will offer roost potential and an extensive stretch of woodland to the east that will provide many roosting opportunities. The site is connected to the wider landscape by a series of linear features. Bats of a local provenance will be widespread and represent several species.
- 1.4 The building has a very limited number and diversity of potential roosting features (PRFs) and is assessed as having **negligible** value to bats. The absence of PRFs mean it is very unlikely that bats would use this building and incorporating a permanent roosting feature in the proposed extension could increase the site's appeal to bats.
- 1.5 There are no statutory constraints from the presence of bats and the project is low impact to bats in the area. It is very unlikely to result in harm to bats or loss of roosting sites and there is no requirement for further bat survey work.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 A bat scoping survey was carried out to Hopton Cricket Club, 18 Woodbottom Lane, Mirfield WF14 8HE (NGR SE212185) 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 the small outdoor toilet block and to replace with a small rear extension incorporating larger restroom facilities.
- 2.3 The survey took place at a time considered to be just outside the optimal period for bat occupancy aimed to establish the following:
- The likelihood 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 45yrs 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 building was inspected during daylight using torches, binoculars, a Zeiss DTI 3/35 Gen 2 thermal scope and an endoscope where possible. 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 daytime scoping survey carried out to the above site on Thursday 3rd April 2025. 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 small clubhouse located in a rural area very close to good foraging habitat to the east. There are other residential dwellings close by that offer greater roosting potential and the site is connected to the wider landscape by linear features. Bats of a local provenance are likely to be widespread and represent several species.

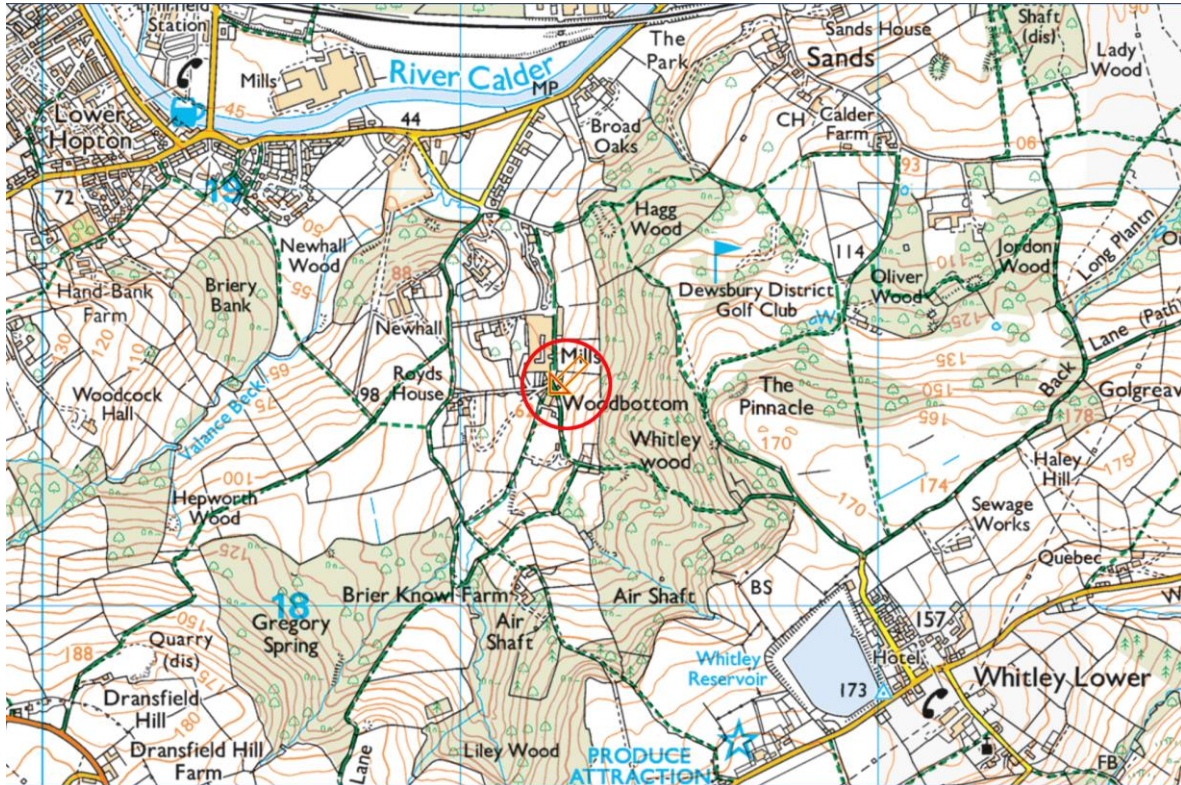


Figure 1. Site location plan

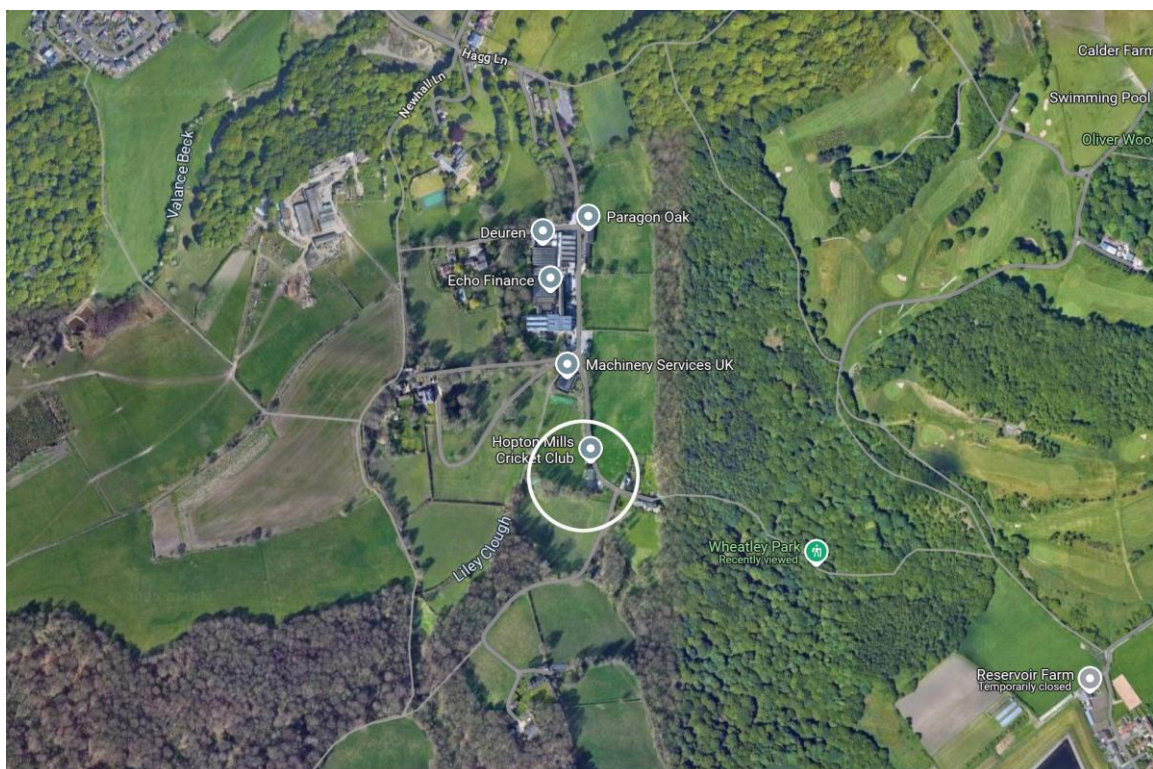


Figure 2 Aerial view of the site, surrounds and specific buildings surveyed.

6. Desk Study

Bats will definitely be present around the site but there are no records relating directly to the site as it has not been surveyed previously. The building is assessed as being of negligible interest to bats and the works are confined to a small section of the footprint, therefore, a data search has not been undertaken nor is one required.

7. Activity surveys

7.1 No activity surveys were carried out during the present survey as the survey was conducted outside the optimal period.

8. Survey results

Scoping survey

The site comprises a small clubhouse located in a rural area close to Wheatley Park and its extensive mature woodland. The cricket fields have scattered mature trees to the boundary. The walls are constructed from brick and are English bond and therefore have no wall cavity. The walls are sound and in good condition and have no structural cracks or other features that would allow bats to roost.



Photo 1 showing all elevations

The hipped roof is constructed from large blue slate and is in very good condition without any slipped or missing tiles. All ridge and hip-ridges are present and well bedded and there were no gaps or sections of failed mortar. The internal section is lined with wooden planks and there is no light ingress at the ridge. The lightweight false ceiling prevented access to look for scattered droppings or discarded prey remains, but it seems unlikely that bats would access the roof void given the condition of the roof.



Photo 2. Showing roof and very sound ridge sections.

The deep soffits fit close to the walls and offer little in the way of entry points. All soffits were searched easily with a powerful lamp and there was no evidence of use by bats and very few points which offer roost sites.



Photo 3 showing the soffits and English bond walls

There are two small outbuildings that will be taken down as part of the project and these are considered to have no value to bats.



Photo 4 Showing small external buildings

9. Interpretation and analysis

The building has no obvious potential roosting features for reasons set out above. The roof tiles are all sound and there are no sections of failed mortar along any of the ridge sections. The walls are English bond and have no cavity and the soffits fit close to the walls. A thorough inspection did not reveal any evidence of use by bats and the deep overhang provides enough shelter such that at least some droppings would adhere to the walls at the eaves. There was also a good deal of cobwebs over sections of the eaves. The limited number and diversity of PRFs suggest that bats have not used the building.

10. Impact assessment

The building has been assessed as being of negligible interest to bats and surveyor experience in conjunction with the assessment of the site suggests there will be no direct impact to local bats. The proposed small rear extension will not cause loss of roost sites or fragmentation of habitat and the work is to be confined to a small section of the footprint of the site and will have no impact beyond this regardless of where the nearest roost is located.

11. Mitigation and Compensation

There will be no loss of potential roosting sites from the works and the building is regarded as being of negligible interest to bats. Consequently, there is no requirement for a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML). The addition of a permanent roosting feature just below the eaves should be considered and will create a biodiversity net gain. A Schwegler 1FTH summer bat box could be placed on the south facing elevation (indicated below).



Photo 4: Possible location of a bat box

12. Conclusion

A bat scoping survey carried out to the clubhouse at Hopton Cricket Club, Mirfield determined that the building offers negligible bat roosting potential and there was no evidence to suggest use by bats. The works are very unlikely to affect bats and will not result in loss of roosting features or fragmentation of habitat. A permanent roosting feature has been specified to be put in place at the end of the works. There are no statutory constraints due to the presence of bats and no further survey work is required.

Appendix 1: Surveyor experience

Surveyor experience – John Gardner

The primary surveyor has been surveying for bats for over 40 years and holds a Class Level 4 licence. Since surveying for bats in Wakefield, he has found roosts of over 7 species of bats including the first record of *Nathusius' pipistrelle* for West Yorkshire. Prior to his starting bat surveying in Wakefield, only a single occurrence of *Leisler's bat* was known from South Yorkshire,

but extensive surveying in the 80s in Wakefield established that this species is widespread and common. The survey effort in Wakefield with this species resulted in a total rewrite of the UK distribution maps for Leisler's bat. A bat box scheme run at Bretton Country Park resulted in a nursery roost of over 80 Leisler's bats in 2 boxes and was visited by Durham Bat Group and others for experience. Long term roost monitoring of common pipistrelles was carried out and the results have been used in international papers by Dr John Altringham. He continues to survey for bats when not commissioned to survey for planning applications.