



RED HOUSE, OXFORD ROAD, GOMERSAL.

OS REF: SE 20753 26233.

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT.

Ref No: 250141.

Date: 30th January 2025.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page Number
1. INTRODUCTION.	3
2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.	4
3. SURVEY RESULTS.	6
4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.	17
5. RECOMMENDATIONS.	18
6. REFERENCES.	21
Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.	22
Appendix II. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.	24

1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. An application is being prepared for the conversion of the four buildings into residential dwellings off Oxford Road, Gomersal.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd was therefore commissioned to carry out a bat survey of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. The preliminary roost assessment was carried out on 20th January 2025, and this report outlines its findings and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.4. Appendices I and II of this report provides additional information on bats, nesting birds and the protection afforded to them and is designed to assist the reader in understanding the contents of this report.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. The buildings were thoroughly checked internally and externally for potential bat roosting sites by looking for the following signs: -

- * Holes, cracks or crevices.
- * Bat droppings.
- * Prey remains.
- * Staining on external walls.

2.2. Unless otherwise stated, all lofts were accessed and inspected using a high-powered torch and where necessary an endoscope.

2.3. A thorough external inspection was carried out from ground level for any gaps or openings in the roof and ridge tiles, behind soffits and fascia's and in the walls of the structure for suitable roost access points and field signs to indicate possible use by bats.

2.4. All windowsills, walls and the ground around the structure were checked for signs of bat droppings or staining to indicate possible use by bats. Where necessary, ladders were utilised to gain access within the limits of health and safety.

Any access constraints encountered are outlined within the following report.

2.5. All survey work was carried out in line with Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)*, with an assessment of the buildings suitability for roosting bats made in accordance with these guidelines.

2.6. The monitoring was carried out by James Campbell MCIEEM. Since 2003 James has had experience in a professional capacity as a Wildlife Consultant carrying out Ecology Surveys, Phase 1 Habitat Surveys and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Surveys and is a full member of CIEEM. James holds licences with several licensing bodies including:-

- Natural England Survey Licences in respect of badgers, bats, water voles, great crested newts, white clawed crayfish and barn owls.
- Nature Scot Licences in respect of bats and great crested newts.
- Natural Resources Wales Licences in respect of bats and great crested newts.

He has also successfully completed numerous courses run by CIEEM, BCT and FSC regarding protected species and in carrying out Phase 1 Habitat surveys and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Surveys. He is also confined spaces trained, qualified to NVQ

Level 2 in tree climbing and aerial rescue and has successfully completed the FISC Flora Identification Assessment and achieved Level 3.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

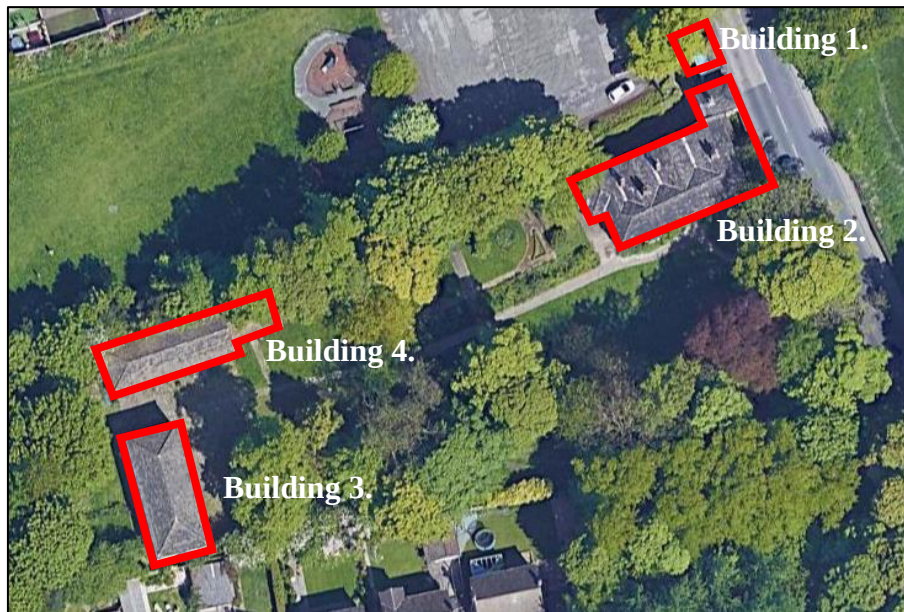
3.1.1. A data search request was submitted to the West Yorkshire Bat Group for records of bats and bat roosts within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.2. West Yorkshire bat group returned fifty-two records of four bat species. The closest record is approximately 700m to the north of the survey area and is described as a field record. The closest confirmed roost record is of a vesper bat roost in a residential property approximately 670m to the northeast of the survey area.

3.1.3. A copy of the data search results can be provided to the client upon request but should not be placed into the public domain.

3.2. Site Description.

3.2.1. The survey area comprises four buildings, which are located in the centre of Gomersal. The surveyed buildings are shown below by the red outlines.



3.2.2. The immediate surrounding area comprises arable land to the east and dense residential dwellings to the north, south and west.

3.2.3. There are areas of woodland and connective hedgerows leading to the east of the survey area.



3.3. Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.3.1. Building 1.

3.3.1.1. Building 1 comprised a single storey brick and stone toilet block. The brick and stone were in a good condition with no gaps or crevices and the windows and doors were tight fitting and all in situ. There was a metal grill over both doors leaving a sheltered area before the doorway into the building. The photograph below shows the southern and western elevations of the building.



3.3.1.2. The roof of the building was hipped with a plastic roof lining. The plastic roof lining was in a good condition and there was wooden sarking underneath the plastic roof lining. All the stone roof tiles had been removed only leaving several of the stone ridge and hip tiles. The photograph below shows the southern elevation of the roof.



3.3.1.3. Internally the rooms were open to the rafters as shown in the photograph below.



3.3.1.4. There was no access for bats inside the building. However, there could be potential for individual bats to roost between the plastic roof lining and the wooden sarking.

3.3.1.5. The building was thoroughly inspected for potential for roosting bats and for any field signs such as droppings, staining or feeding remains. No such field signs were identified.

3.3.1.6. The results of this survey found a very small number of features that provided potential roost features for bats. However, the features are not assessed as being suitable for large numbers of bats or maternity roosts, and no access points inside the building were identified. However, the features identified may provide roosting opportunities for very low numbers of bats in the summer months. Therefore, the building is assessed to provide **low potential for low numbers of summer roosting bats**.

3.3.1.7. The building has no visible access inside for hibernating bats and is therefore assessed as providing **negligible potential for hibernating bats**.

3.3.1.8. The building provides some small features which could be used by nesting birds, including the overhanging roof in the doorway.

3.3.2. Building 2.

3.3.2.1. The surveyed building was a two-storey brick and stone building with a small cellar with access internally and no external access. The photograph below shows the southern elevation of building 2 on the left and the small cellar on the right.



3.3.2.2. The brick and stonework were in a good condition with some small gaps and crevices. The photograph on the left below shows two weep holes above the ground floor window lintel and the photograph on the right shows the damaged flashing above one of the bay windows. This could allow access for solitary bats to roost during the summer months.



3.3.2.3. The windows and doors were tight fitting and all in situ. However, one of the doors to a storage room on the ground floor was louvred. This could allow access for bats to access the room. Although, this is a regularly used room where all the building services are located. The room doesn't maintain a warm temperature and will allow draughty conditions to cool the services.

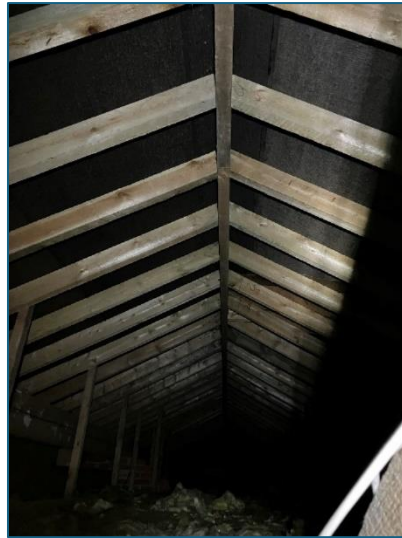


3.3.2.4. The roof of the building was hipped and ridged with numerous gable ends finished with tight fitting coping stones. The entire roof could not be inspected due to the height and construction so features may have been missed. There were also guttering and fall pipes at the eaves, which were tight fitting with no access into the loft space or the wall cavities.

3.3.2.5. The roof was lined with a tight-fitting hessian and bitumen liner and covered with stone roof tiles, stone ridge and hip tiles. The photograph below shows the southern elevation of the roof of building 2.



3.3.2.6. There were several loft spaces due to the construction of the building. The loft spaces were all small, shallow with no access for bats.



3.3.2.7. The building was thoroughly inspected for potential for roosting bats and for any field signs such as droppings, staining or feeding remains. No such field signs were identified.

3.3.2.8. The results of this survey found a very small number of features that provided potential roost features for bats. However, the features are not assessed as being suitable for large numbers of bats or maternity roosts, and no access points inside the building were identified. However, the features identified may provide roosting opportunities for very low numbers of bats in the summer months. Therefore, the building is assessed to provide **low potential for low numbers of summer roosting bats**.

3.3.2.9. The building has limited access inside for hibernating bats. The only access inside the building is into the room with the louvre doors, which is therefore assessed as providing **negligible potential for hibernating bats**.

3.3.2.10. The building provides some small features which could be used by nesting birds under the eaves and in the room with the louvre doors.

3.3.3. Building 3.

3.3.3.1. The surveyed building was a two-storey stone building. The photograph below shows the eastern and northern elevation of building 3.



3.3.3.2. The stonework was in a good condition with no gaps or crevices.

3.3.3.3. The roof of the building was hipped and covered with stone roof tiles, stone ridge and hip tiles. Internally the roof is open to the rafters and boarded between the rafters. It is not known if the roof is lined. However, it is likely due to the age of the roof. The photograph below shows the internal elevation of the roof.



3.3.3.4. There was also guttering and fall pipes at the eaves, which were tight fitting with no access into the loft space or the wall cavities.

3.3.3.5. The windows and doors were tight fitting and all in situ. There will be no access for bats through any of the windows or doors.

3.3.3.6. The building was thoroughly inspected for potential for roosting bats and for any field signs such as droppings, staining or feeding remains. No such field signs were identified.

3.3.3.7. The results of this survey found no features that will provide potential roost features for bats and no access points inside the building were identified. Therefore, the building is assessed to provide **negligible potential for summer roosting bats**.

3.3.3.8. The building has no access inside for hibernating bats. Therefore, the building is assessed as providing **negligible potential for hibernating bats**.

3.3.3.9. The building provides no features suitable for nesting birds.

3.3.4. Building 4.

3.3.4.1. The surveyed building was a single-storey stone building. The photograph below shows the southern elevation of building 4.



3.3.4.2. The stonework was generally in a good condition. However, there was a missing stone in the northern elevation of the building leading into the wall cavity. The photograph below shows the area of missing stone.



3.3.4.3. The roof of the building was a ridge with three gable ends. Internally the roof is open to the rafters and boarded between the rafters. It is not known if the roof is lined. However, it is likely due to the age of the roof. A large amount of the stone roof tiles had been removed only leaving approximately 30% of the stone roof tiles, stone ridge and hip tiles. The photographs below show the western elevation of the roof on the left and the eastern elevation of the roof on the left.



3.3.4.4. The photograph below shows the internal elevation of the roof.



3.3.4.5. There was also guttering and fall pipes at the eaves, which were tight fitting with no access into the loft space or the wall cavities.

3.3.4.6. The windows and doors were tight fitting and all in situ. There will be no access for bats through any of the windows or doors.

3.3.4.7. The building was thoroughly inspected for potential for roosting bats and for any field signs such as droppings, staining or feeding remains. No such field signs were identified.

3.3.4.8. The results of this survey found several features under the remaining roof tiles and the missing brick in the north of the building that will provide potential roost features for bats. However, no access points leading inside the building were identified. Therefore, the building is assessed to provide **moderate potential for summer roosting bats**.

3.3.4.9. The building has no access inside for hibernating bats. Therefore, the building is currently assessed as providing **negligible potential for hibernating bats**. It should be noted that the hibernation assessment maybe altered if summer roosting bats are identified during the dusk emergence surveys recommended in Section 5. This is because known roosts are taken into account in the assessment, in accordance with the good practice guidelines.

3.3.4.10. The building provides some small features which could be used by nesting birds, including underneath the remaining roof tiles.

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. Building 1 was assessed as having a **low potential for summer roosting bats**. Therefore, the proposed demolition of this building will have a high impact on roosting bats if they are present. However, the building was assessed as having **negligible potential for hibernating bats** and will therefore have no impact on hibernating bats.

4.2. Building 2 was assessed as having a **low potential for summer roosting bats**. Therefore, the proposed demolition of this building will have a high impact on roosting bats if they are present. However, the building was assessed as having **negligible potential for hibernating bats** and will therefore have no impact on hibernating bats.

4.3. Building 3 was assessed as having a **negligible potential for summer roosting bats**. Therefore, the proposed demolition of this building will have a no impact on roosting bats as they will not be present. The building was also assessed as having **negligible potential for hibernating bats** and will therefore have no impact on hibernating bats.

4.4. Building 4 was assessed as having a **moderate potential for summer roosting bats**. Therefore, the proposed demolition of this building will have a high impact on roosting bats if they are present. However, the building was assessed as having **negligible potential for hibernating bats** and will therefore have no impact on hibernating bats. Although this assessment is subject to change as explained in Section 3.3.4.9.

4.5. The site is located in an urban location, with some potential for foraging and commuting non-light sensitive bat species. The proposed works will not cause any loss or fragmentation of bat foraging or commuting habitats.

4.6. All of the surveyed buildings will provide potential nesting opportunities for birds. The nesting bird season extends from March to August each year. Therefore, if the works are carried out within this timeframe could have a negative impact on nesting birds if they are present.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. Building 1, 2 are assessed as having low potential and building 4 is assessed as having moderate potential for roosting bats according to the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Good Practice Guidelines'. Therefore, it is recommended that one dusk emergence survey is carried out on building 1 and 2 and two dusk emergence surveys carried out on building 4 during the bat activity season, which extends from May to August inclusive, to determine whether bats are using the building to roost. The surveys need to be carried out at least three weeks apart.

5.2. If during the survey, bats are found to be using the buildings to roost, then further surveys will be required to inform a mitigation strategy, which will need to be submitted with the planning application. This would also include carrying out hibernation surveys. A Natural England European Protected Species licence will also be required to cover the proposed works, which can only be applied for once planning consent has been issued. If no bats are found during the surveys, then no further surveys or licencing will be required. I

5.3. It is recommended that where possible the proposed works to buildings 1, 2 and 4 are carried out outside the nesting bird season. Where this is not possible, it is recommended that they are immediately preceded by a nesting bird survey to identify if there are any nesting birds present. If any active nests are found, a buffer zone around them should be left and no works should be carried out that will disturb the nest or prevent the birds from accessing to and from the nest, until the young have fledged.

5.4. To satisfy the NPPF requirements to provide enhancements on the site, it is recommended that an integrated bat box is provided in any of the buildings. This should ideally be south facing and located at least 4m above ground level. In addition, it is recommended that one pair of integrated swift boxes is also provided in any new building. This should ideally be east facing, away from the prevailing winds and the roads, and at least 3m above ground level.

Prepared by:	
James Campbell MCIEEM.	Date: 30 th January 2025.

Checked by:	
Alexandrea White BSc(Hons) MSc ACIEEM MIEEnvSc	Date: 5 th February 2025

6. REFERENCES.

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. 2017. ***Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Second Edition***. CIEEM, Hampshire.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. 2017. ***Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing, Second Edition***. CIEEM, Hampshire.
1981. ***Wildlife and Countryside Act***. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69> (accessed 18/02/16)
2000. ***Countryside and Rights of Way Act***.
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>.
2017. ***The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations***.
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents/made>.
2012. ***National Planning Policy Statement***.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- Anon. 1995. ***Biodiversity: the UK Steering Group report. Vol 2: Action Plans***. HMSO, London.
- Collins J. (ed.) 2023. ***Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologist: Good Practice Guidelines***. 4th ed. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- English Nature. 2004. ***Bat Mitigation Guidelines***. English Nature, Peterborough, UK.
- BTHK 2018. ***Bat Roosts in Trees – A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-Care and Ecology Professionals***. Exeter: Pelagic Publishing.

Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.

Ecology

There are currently 18 species of bat residing in Britain, 17 of which are known to breed here. They are extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

All appear to be diminishing in numbers, probably due to habitat change and shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet.

As their diet consists solely of insects, bats hibernate during the winter when their food source is at its most scarce. They will spend the winter in hollow trees, caves, mines and the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly the pipistrelle (the commonest and most widespread British bat) can quickly adapt to man-made structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

Surveys

During walkover surveys, bat roosts can be identified by looking for:

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices within any building, tree or other structure.
- Bat droppings along walls, window cills, or on the ground.
- Prey remains, such as insect wings.

Further investigations can be made using endoscopes, by carrying out aerial inspections of trees or by conducting bat activity surveys during dusk and dawn over summer months.

Legislation

Bats are protected under Appendix II and III of the Bern Convention (1982), Schedule 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (some species under Annex II), Annex II of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) and EUROBATS agreement. Numerous species are

also listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) making them species of principal importance.

All bats and their roosts are therefore protected in the UK. This makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any bat, to interfere with any place used for shelter or protection, or to intentionally disturb any animal occupying such a place.

The UK has designated maternity and hibernacula areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) under the Habitats Directive. Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan also includes action for a number of bat species and the habitats which support them.

Where development proposals are likely to affect a bat roost site, a licence is required from Natural England.

Appendix II. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.

Ecology

The nesting season will vary according to the weather each year but generally commences in March, peaks during May and June and continues until September. It is also worth remembering that some birds nest in trees and scrub but others are ground nesting or prefer man-made structures or buildings.

Surveys

Nesting bird surveys search for potential nest sites in vegetation, buildings etc. Potential nesting sites are observed over a suitable period of time for bird movements or calling male birds that would indicate the presence of a nest. The presence of a nest can be identified from the field signs without the necessity to see the nest itself, thereby avoiding any disturbance of the nests. The best way to avoid this issue is to plan for vegetation clearance to be carried out outside the bird-nesting season.

Legislation

Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part 1. -(1) Of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - kills, injures or takes any wild bird; takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Part 1. -(5) of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturbs young of such a bird, he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the above by inserting after “intentionally” the words “or recklessly”.