

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Survey Report



Tyler
Grange

Stock Nook Barns,
Heywood
25th July 2022

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Summary

- S.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Limited on behalf of Kathryn Greenhalgh. It sets out the findings of the Preliminary Roost Assessment of Stock Nook Barns, Dr's Fold Lane, Heywood (centred at OS Grid Reference SD 84839 08593), hereinafter referred to as the 'site'. The site is subject to a planning application for the conversion of the barns into residential units.
- S.2. The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the ecological importance of the site for bats, the potential impact of the proposed development, required mitigation and recommendations for further survey.
- S.3. The four buildings on site were categorised as providing between 'Low' and 'Moderate' bat roosting potential.
- S.4. As the proposal may result in the destruction of a shelter place used by bats (a European Protected Species), in line with best practice guidance (Collins, 2016), the buildings on site should be subject to further nocturnal bat survey, in order to assess whether the buildings contain bat roosts or places of shelter. Should the buildings support bat roosts, mitigation to avoid impacts upon the roosts will be required. Should that not be possible, a Natural England licence will be required to allow alterations/ demolitions to proceed lawfully.



Section 1: Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Limited on behalf of Kathryn Greenhalgh. It sets out the findings of the Preliminary Roost Assessment of Stock Nook Barns, Dr's Fold Lane, Heywood (centred at OS Grid Reference SD 84839 08593), hereinafter referred to as the 'site'. The site is subject to a planning application for the conversion of the barns into residential units.
- 1.2. The site location is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

Figure 1.1: Site location, (Aerial Imagery Google© 2022)



- 1.3. This report assesses whether the buildings on site are likely to provide suitable bat roosting habitat, what the impacts of the development will be on bats, describes details of any mitigation of impacts required and provides recommendations for ecological enhancement on site.
- 1.4. The purpose of this report is to:
 - Describe the actual or potential bat issues and opportunities that might arise as a result of the site's future development; and,
 - Where appropriate, makes recommendations for mitigation of adverse effects and ecological enhancement, to ensure conformity with policy and legislation listed in **Appendix 1**.

Section 2: Methodology

Scope of Works

- 2.1 The surveys followed standard methodologies set out in the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell, Jones, 2004), the Bat Workers Manual (Mitchell-Jones and McLeish, 2004) and Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016) and comprised:
- Desk Study – reviewing online records of bat roosts or presence within the local area gathered from MAGIC;
 - Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) – ground-level external and internal building inspection survey to assess potential of the building on site to support roosting bats.

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA)

- 2.2 An internal and external inspection of the buildings was undertaken on 28th April 2022 by Mr Dale Mortiboys and Miss Bethany Phythian; Mr Mortiboys is an experienced field ecologist who is a member of CIEEM and Natural England bat licence holder, Miss Pythian is an experienced field ecologist who is a member of CIEEM.
- 2.3 The weather conditions for the survey were overcast and cool. The wind was calm, and the temperature was 13.5°C.
- 2.4 A detailed internal and external inspection of the buildings at the site was undertaken to determine the presence of live or dead bats, signs of bat use and features that may support bat roosting directly or allow access to features further within the structure of the building.
- 2.5 This survey followed standard methodologies outlined within Bat Survey for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines (Collins 2016), Bat Workers' Manual (3rd Edition) (Mitchell-Jones, A.J. and McLeish, A.P., 2004) and Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Mitchell-Jones, A.J., 2004).
- 2.6 The potential of the building to support roosting bats was categorised against the criteria described in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Roost Assessment Criteria (adapted from Collins, 2016)

Suitability	Roosting Habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on-site likely to be used by roosting bats.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation). A tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.



Suitability	Roosting Habitats
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status roost type.
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for long periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection conditions and surrounding habitat.

Survey Limitations

- 2.7 Bats use a variety of roosts, ranging from maternity, mating or swarming and hibernation roosts, containing many individuals, to mating or night-time feeding roosts containing few individuals or single animals. Bats also tend to be nomadic (although are faithful to certain favoured roosting sites), spending variable lengths of time in a variety of roosts. As a result, even with the considerable survey effort it is possible that small transient roosts of bats may have been missed, although these tend to be less important to bats and so this should not affect the evaluation and recommendations made.
- 2.8 The weather was optimal during the PRA surveys and sufficient confidence is therefore placed in the results obtained.

Quality Control

- 2.9 All ecologists at Tyler Grange Group Ltd are members of CIEEM, or are working towards membership and act under the direction of members, and abide by the Institute's Code of Professional Conduct.



Section 3: Survey Results and Assessment

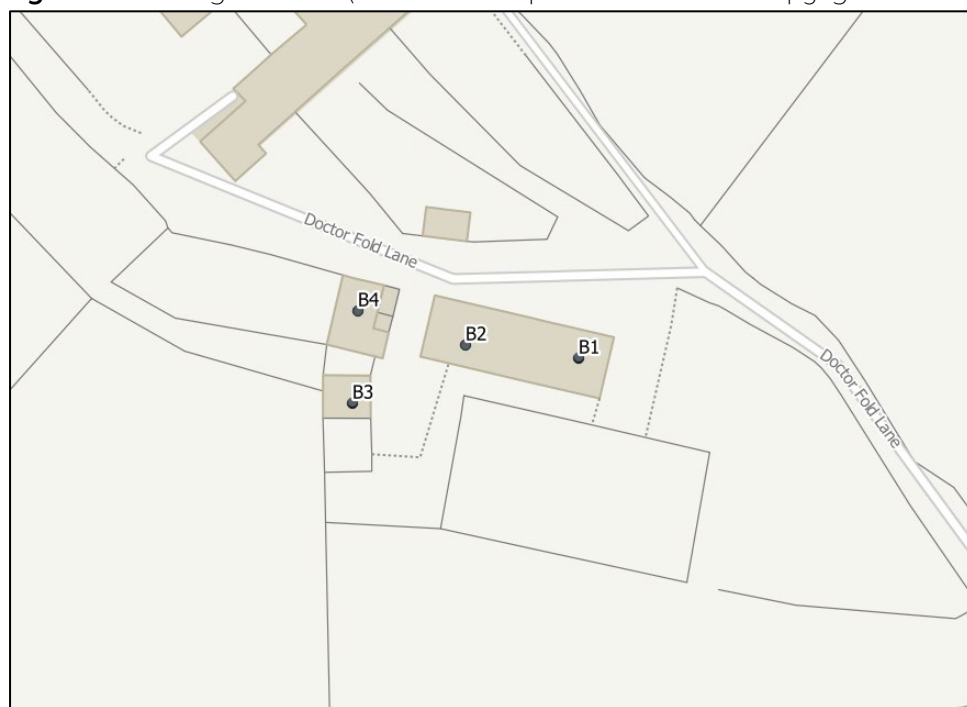
Desk Study

- 3.1. The desk study for bat records on the wider area revealed one recent bat licence application within 2km of the site. The record relates to a single common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* bat roost, from 2020, where an application for a licence to allow the destruction of a resting place was granted (2020-48009-EPS-MIT). The roost was located approximately 0.55km north-east of the site, within a structure/ building.
- 3.2. As the application site wholly contains buildings, with gardens/ surrounding land not included, bat activity and/ or foraging habitats are not considered as part of this assessment.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 3.3. The site contains four buildings, see **Figure 3.1** below for the assigned building numbers.

Figure 1.1: Building Numbers (Contains OS Open Data © Crown copyright and database right 2022)



- 3.4. Building B1 comprises a small, single-storey structure, constructed of breeze-blocks with a slate hipped roof. There are small windows, with wooden sills flanking the sides of the building, with wooden bargeboards underneath the plastic guttering. B1 has bitumen covered roof, with a modern wooden frame. The structure appears to be in-use as a stable for horses.
- 3.5. Building B2 comprises a larger, two-storey structure, composed of redbrick with a tiled pitched roof. There are uPVC windows on the first floor, with large wooden panels covering sections of the second floor on the northern aspect, and corrugated metal panels covering sections of the



southern aspect. B2 has wooden bargeboards with wooden lintels. The inside of the building was not accessible, this has been taken into consideration for the grading of the structure.

- 3.6. Building B3 is a single storey structure composed of redbrick with a pitched, tiled roof. The tiles on the gable-ends have concrete capping, with wooden bargeboards present along the northern and southern aspects.
- 3.7. Building B4 is a single storey structure composed of redbrick with two pitched sections of tiled roof. There are small wooden framed windows and wooden stable doors on each aspect of the building. B4 has wooden bargeboards on most aspects of the building. The interior of the building is open, and used as horse stables.
- 3.8. Overall, the buildings were considered to be of 'Low' and 'Moderate' bat roosting potential (BRP) and are summarised in **Table 3.1**. No direct evidence of bats, such as droppings, were recorded during the PRA.

Table 3.1: Results of preliminary bat roost assessment

Feature Reference	Description of Potential Roost Features	Feature Photograph
Building 1	Gaps between lifted tiles, throughout roof. Cavities formed by the lifted tiles, only large enough to support individual or low numbers of bats. Large gap along wooden bargeboards around all aspects, leading into the stable. Interior of the stables largely unsuitable for roosting bats due to the openness, creating a poor heat profile for roosting. Although wooden frames could form suitable feeding perches. Low Potential for Roosting Bats	 

		
Building 2	Gaps in lifted tiles, the structure did not appear to be vaulted, and therefore gaps could lead to a loft void. Gaps in mortar between brickwork, with some large gaps on the eastern gable-end, potentially leading to an enclosed loft void. Gaps along wooden bargeboards and rotten wooden lintels, which could lead to an enclosed loft void. Overall, the features present could lead to an enclosed loft void which would provide a suitable habitat for larger numbers/ more species of bats. Moderate Potential for Roosting Bats	 



Building 3	Gaps between lifted tiles throughout roof. Cavities formed by the lifted tiles, only large enough to support individual or low numbers of bats. Vaulted within, with no enclosed loft void. Brickwork and mortar in good condition. Low Potential for Roosting Bats	
Building 4	Gaps between lifted tiles throughout roof. Cavities formed by the lifted tiles, only large enough to support individual or low numbers of bats. Vaulted within, with no enclosed loft void. Gaps and cracks in mortar between brickwork on most aspects of the building. Interior of the stables largely unsuitable for roosting bats due to the openness, with many open doors and windows, creating a poor heat profile for roosting. Although wooden frames could form suitable feeding perches. Low Potential for Roosting Bats	



3.9. In summary, the buildings were graded as:

- **B1** – ‘**Low**’ bat roosting potential;
- **B2** – ‘**Moderate**’ bat roosting potential;
- **B3** – ‘**Low**’ bat roosting potential, and;
- **B4** – ‘**Low**’ bat roosting potential.



Section 4: Implications, Further Survey and Conclusions

Site Proposals

- 4.1. The proposed development will include the redevelopment of the existing structures, converting the barns and stables into residential dwellings.

Implications for Development and Further Survey

- 4.2. Following best practice guidance (Collins, 2016), all buildings/ structures with a 'Low' bat roosting potential should be subject to at least one nocturnal bat roost survey; and, all buildings/ structures with 'Moderate' bat roosting potential should be subject to at least two nocturnal bat roost surveys. Nocturnal bat roost surveys should be undertaken within the optimum time of the year, which is generally regarded as May to August inclusively, during suitable weather conditions.
- 4.3. It is important to undertake such surveys in order to understand whether the buildings are used by bats, and if so, what species and in what numbers. This information would be required to inform any mitigation and/ or Natural England licences which may be required, should the buildings contain bat roosts and the roosts are deemed to be impacted by the proposals.
- 4.4. Therefore, it is recommended that Buildings **B1, B3** and **B4** are subject to **at least one nocturnal** bat roost survey, with **B2** being subject to **at least two nocturnal** bat roost surveys.

Conclusion

- 4.5. The four buildings on site were categorised as providing between 'Low' and 'Moderate' bat roosting potential.
- 4.6. As the proposal may result in the destruction of shelter places used by bats (a European Protected Species), in line with best practice guidance (Collins, 2016), the buildings on site should be subject to further nocturnal bat survey, in order to assess whether the buildings contain bat roosts or places of shelter. Should the buildings support bat roosts, mitigation to avoid impacts upon the roosts will be required. Should that not be possible, a Natural England licence will be required to allow alterations/ demolitions to proceed lawfully.



References

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