



Proposed conversion of a stables building into a residential dwelling

Report Title: Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

Address: Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, BL2 5QR

OS Grid Reference: SD 7633 0958

Issued: 23rd August 2019



Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd
Formby Business Centre
42 Duke Street
Formby
L37 4AT

Tel: 01704 875781
Email: enquiries@tyrer-ecologicalconsultants.co.uk
www.tyrer-ecologicalconsultants.co.uk

Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, BL2 5QR
Inspection & Assessment in Relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

Document Title	Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds
Prepared for	Neil Pike Architects
Prepared by	Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd

Author(s)	Mr. Mark Pritchard
Survey Date	09/08/2019
Reviewed by	Mrs. K. Wilding
Review date	23/08/2019
Approved by	Mrs. K. Wilding
Date of Issue	23/08/2019

Terms of use:

This report has been prepared by Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd with all reasonable skill, care and diligence within the terms of the instruction and permissions granted by the client.

We disclaim any responsibility to the client and others in respect of any matters outside the scope of the above.

This report is confidential to the client.

This report and contents therein are to be used only in conjunction with the Planning Application for which the report has been produced. It must not be used for any other purpose, copied, re-produced or sent to any other party other than the Local Planning Authority Department without the express permission of Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd. Furthermore the data contained herein must not be copied, re-produced or sent to any other party/organisation whatsoever without the express permission of Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd.

Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd will however consider forwarding data that is collected as part of its reports to the relevant wildlife records centre.

Executive Summary

As part of a proposed planning application to affect the Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd carried out a daytime inspection and assessment in relation to bats and breeding birds in August 2019. The survey was commissioned by Neil Pike Architects; proposals involve the conversion of the stables building into a new residential dwelling.

As part of the local authority's planning policies, ecological surveys are generally required prior to planning permission being granted, particularly where a protected species is or may be present that could be affected by the proposals for which the application seeks consent. If additional surveys are required following the initial site visit the report will outline the details of those further requirements.

In accordance with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development* (CIEEM *et al*, 2019), measures have been recommended proportionate to anticipated impacts/net loss to ensure that the proposed development results in a biodiversity net gain.

Bats: Based upon the findings of the survey, the stables building at 55 Bradley Fold is absent of bat roost potential and thus roundly considered to be of 'negligible' bat roost suitability in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016). No evidence of bats was observed during the survey, despite the immediate habitat offering reasonable value habitat to Pipistrelle species, in respect of foraging and commuting. No further surveys are necessary or will be recommended in this instance.

Table 4.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.		
Suitability	Description Roosting habitats	Commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.

In the highly unlikely event that bat(s) are found, or evidence of bat(s), during the proposed work schedule (See Figure 5, section 8.3) then as a legal requirement the work at the site should immediately cease and a bat ecologist contacted for further advice.

Breeding Birds: There are no implications in relation to specially protected bird species such as Barn owl, the building offers no suitability for this species nesting/breeding needs, despite the surrounding habitat offering favourable hunting conditions. There are no recommendations applicable in relation to specially protected bird species. No evidence of old nesting/current breeding by common birds was observed at any point during the survey, there were no nests within or upon the building, or the nearby trees. Though no evidence of breeding birds was observed during the survey, scattered trees immediately surrounding the southern gable elevation, as well as hedgerows on the site generally, could be used for nesting, particularly during the breeding bird season (March - August). It is recommended that any felling/tree management/removal of these features takes place outside of the breeding bird season, in order to avoid any impacts to breeding birds, unless it can be conclusively established beforehand by an ecologist that breeding birds are absent. In some cases a reasonable buffer zone may be able to be established from nests, though this should be judged in consultation with an ecologist on site.

Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, BL2 5QR
Inspection & Assessment in Relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

Biodiversity Net-gain: Enhancement by way of new roost provisions for bats, and nest cups for Swallows could be used as part of the strategy to achieve a biodiversity net gain in accordance with local planning policy and the NPPF. Recommendations are thus included within Appendix II.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction and Reasons for Survey
2. Protected Species & Their Requirements
3. Protected Species in Greater Manchester
4. Survey Methodology
5. Constraints
6. Desk Study Results
7. Field Study Results
8. Conclusions & Recommendations
9. Bibliography

Appendix I: Site Photographs

Appendix II: Biodiversity Net Gain: Enhancement Strategy

1.0 Introduction & Reason for Survey

- 1.1 As part of a proposed planning application to affect the Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd carried out a daytime inspection and assessment in relation to bats and breeding birds in August 2019. The survey was commissioned by Neil Pike Architects; it is understood that proposals involve the conversion of the stables building into a new residential dwelling in the given red line boundary (see Figure 1).

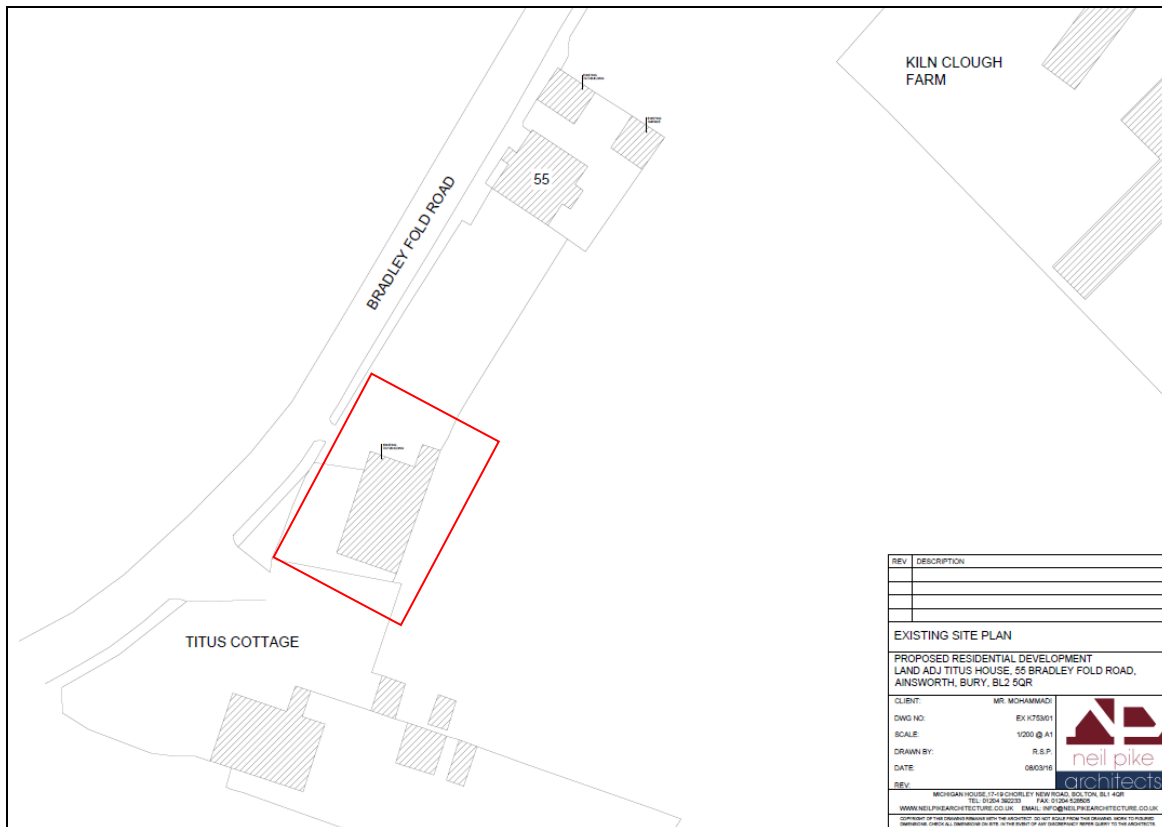


Figure 1 - Existing site plan

- 1.2 As part of the local authority's planning policies, ecological surveys are generally required prior to planning permission being granted, particularly where a protected species is or may be present that could be affected by the proposals for which the application seeks consent. If additional surveys are required following the initial site visit the report will outline the details of those further requirements.
- 1.3 In accordance with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development* (CIEEM *et al*, 2019), measures have been recommended proportionate to anticipated impacts/net loss to ensure that the proposed development results in a biodiversity net gain.
- 1.4 The aim of the inspection was to initially ascertain if the building is of value to bats whilst an inspection for birds would also be carried out; if found to be suitable for bats, or signs of use were observed, then more detailed surveys would be recommended i.e. dusk/dawn emergence/re-entry surveys during the main active season of bats which is May – August.

Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, BL2 5QR
Inspection & Assessment in Relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

If bat/s or their roost/place of rest/shelter will be subsequently affected by the works then a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) would be required to proceed with the development.

- 1.5 The optimum time to investigate buildings for evidence of a bat roost is May – September, however that is not to say they cannot be inspected and assessed outside of that time and frequently the results can be conclusive, which can save time and expense for planning applicants but it should be borne in mind that equally the inspection can be inconclusive.
- 1.6 If evidence was found that indicated breeding birds may be affected by the proposals then recommendations would be made accordingly.

2.0 Protected Species & Their Requirements

- 2.1 All British bats and their **roosts are afforded protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and are listed in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017. When dealing with cases where a European Protected Species (all UK bats) may be affected, a planning authority is a competent authority within the meaning of the Regulation 7 of the 2017 Regulations and therefore has a statutory duty to have due regard to the provisions of the Regulations in the exercise of its functions.
- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has replaced the Planning Policy Guidelines (PPG's). In relation to wildlife, PPG 9 was one of the documents to which Planning Authorities referred to, particularly where a specially protected species is or may be present and will be affected by a development for which a Planning application seeks consent. The aims of the NPPF, in relation to species and habitats, are that it places a clear responsibility on Local Planning Authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to encourage on the consideration that should be given to Protected Species where they may be affected by development. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Circular 06/2005 provides administrative guidance on the application of the law in relation to planning and nature conservation.
- 2.3 This is supported by a guide to good practice entitled 'Planning for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Building in Biodiversity' in which paragraphs 5.34 and 5.35 identify that species such as bats are highly dependent upon built structures for survival and that roosts can be easily incorporated into existing and new developments to benefit these species.

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying principle 175(a), as extracted from the NPPF.

"If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused".

- 2.4 Use of Buildings by Bats
 - a) Summer breeding roost
 - b) Hibernation roost
 - c) Transitional or temporary roost

Roost selection is often closely correlated to suitable foraging habitat within a reasonable commuting distance from the roost and different sites are used depending upon insect densities and abundance, climatic conditions can also affect their ability to successfully forage. All British bats are insectivorous.

**** The term roost is generically referred to as a place that bat/s use for the any of the above reasons, however it should be noted that under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017 (Regulation 43 (d) the term roost is not used but refers to “a *breeding site or resting place of such an animal*” and is afforded legal protection. The roost, breeding site or resting place of bats, which ever terminology is used is legally protected whether or not bats are in occupation.**

- 2.5 All wild birds no matter how common, their eggs, young and nests whilst being built or occupied are protected under both the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act 2006). Any work that would damage an occupied nest, eggs or young of breeding birds must be avoided and any damage to nests that may occur as a result of the development should be outside of the main breeding bird season (March-August) as long as it can be conclusively established by a suitably experienced ecologist that the nest/s is/are no longer in use. On occasions nests can become unoccupied during the main breeding season but the status of the nest/s should be determined by a suitably experienced ecologist before any damage takes place.
- 2.6 Guidance for Local Authorities: Extract from Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Circular 06/2005: *“It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.”*

3.0 Protected Species in Greater Manchester

- 3.1 Up to ten bat species have been recorded in Greater Manchester most of which use built structures, notably occupied residential properties for roosting. The most frequently encountered species is the Common Pipistrelle bat (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*); its abundant status in Greater Manchester is mirrored throughout the UK.
- 3.2 Barn owl (*Tyto alba*) are occasionally found in Greater Manchester where there exists suitable open habitats with tussock-forming grasslands which they use for hunting purposes, whilst they typically may use buildings and tree hollows for nesting or roosting purposes.

4.0 Survey Methodology

Planning Policy

- 4.1 In accordance with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development* (CIEEM 2019) have been adopted whereby appropriate enhancement opportunities have been recommended within the report to ensure that a “biodiversity net gain” is obtained as a key component of the development scheme.

Desktop Study

- 4.2 Prior to a site visit a desktop study was conducted using online resources to obtain information pertaining to any sites afforded statutory (e.g. SSSI) and non-statutory (e.g. LWS) designations within 3.0km of the site boundary. To do so, the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC – provided by Defra) was accessed to gather such information; this particular interactive mapping service was also used to locate any locally granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses (EPSML) to further inform conclusions concerning such species in the context of the study site and its proposed development.
- 4.3 Satellite imagery was reviewed using sources such as Google Earth (© 2019) to determine the nature of adjoining and extending habitats; such information aids in the understanding of how the site might interact with its surroundings ecologically and its value in that context, and how the development may impact at a wider scale.
- 4.4 The *UK Guidelines for Accessing and Using Biodiversity Data* (CIEEM, 2016) stipulates that data searches may not be necessary in the case of ‘*Low impact or small-scale development (e.g. by size, extent, duration of works, magnitude or locality)*’ however this should be judged on a case by case basis. It has been deemed unnecessary to conduct a data search for protected species and designated sites in the vicinity for the reasons stated. Species/habitat information relevant to the application area and its immediate environs was obtained at the time of the survey from the site visit, as well as from the desktop study.

Field Survey

- 4.5 Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016) states: “*The guidelines should be interpreted and adapted on a case-by-case basis according to site-specific factors and the professional judgement of an experienced ecologist. Where examples are used in the guidelines, they are descriptive rather than prescriptive.*”
- 4.6 In context with the above a diurnal inspection and assessment of the building in relation to bats and breeding birds was conducted on 9th August 2019 in dry, warm conditions (16°C) by Mr. M. Pritchard, a protected species licenced ecologist and Qualifying member of CIEEM, who is additionally an accredited agent on the Class 2 Natural England bat licence of Mrs. K. Wilding (CLS-14227). The results, conclusions and recommendations of this report have been assessed by Mrs. K. Wilding, the Director of Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, and her assessment is consistent with that of Mr. Pritchard.
- 4.7 The bat and breeding bird survey was conducted in tandem; a stables building was inspected for potential places that may be of value to bats or breeding birds, and to determine if evidence of use by either group was present; no loft space is present, thus all internal elevations were investigated with the aid of a high powered torch for evidence of bat use, which mainly includes bat droppings, incidental presence, dead specimens and/or prey items - and investigated for evidence of breeding birds - which broadly involves a search for nest materials, presence of pellets, accumulated faeces and dead hatchlings. The surrounding habitat was also considered in terms of general suitability for bats and birds.

Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, BL2 5QR

Inspection & Assessment in Relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

- 4.8 All external elevations were investigated with the aid of high powered torch and close focus binoculars (where necessary), for places that can be used as a means of ingress, potential roost features, nesting places and/or places of rest for both groups.
- 4.9 Scattered trees are present adjacent to the south-western elevation, they were assessed for roost/nesting value for bats and birds which typically involves a search for any cavities, holes (both natural and/or examples such as woodpecker holes), cracks, splits, fissures, loose/lifted bark, knothole/collar features, and for evidence of bird nesting, inclusive of both recent and historic nests.
- 4.10 Criteria for bat roost assessment are based upon the determinants given in the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016) (Figure 2).
- 4.11 The results, conclusions and recommendations are based on a number of factors i.e.
- Practical experience of surveyor(s)
 - Knowledge of bat and bird species relevant to the site location and geographical range
 - Nature of the immediate and surrounding habitat in relation to foraging and commuting opportunities
 - Condition of the building
 - Presence/absence of a loft space
 - Presence/absence of roost potential
 - Value of roost potential – if present

Table 4.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.		
Suitability	Description Roosting habitats	Commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging 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 ^a 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 ^b). 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. ^c	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
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 ^a and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
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 longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^a and surrounding habitat.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

^a For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

^b Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al.*, 2015). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in large buildings in highly urbanised environments.

^c This system of categorisation aligns with BS 8596:2015 Surveying for bats in trees and woodland (BSI, 2015).

Figure 2 - BCT guidelines extract

5.0 Constraints

- 5.1 The daytime survey was conducted at a time when bats are within their active period, at a time when young bats are reaching independence following a period after maternity colonies have formed. As such the survey is within an optimal period when bats/evidence of bats are/is highly likely to be encountered where bats are present, particularly where bat droppings/evidence are/is sheltered, such as inside buildings, beneath features.
- 5.2 Birds which commonly rely upon buildings and structures such as House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*), Swift (*Apus apus*) and House Martin (*Delichon urbicum*) are within their breeding season (March-August inclusive); as such, active nesting behaviour is easier to identify. Where buildings are being/have been used by nesting birds then evidence of nesting is likely to be present (i.e. - old/new nests).
- 5.3 Due to the presence of broadleaf tree foliage, a full view of the south-western gable elevation was not achievable; semi-mature scattered trees cover the full extent of the gable elevation, however a full assessment of its material condition, construction nature and general suitability for roosting bats and nesting birds was achievable in conjunction and comparison with the rest of the building, which held no such observational constraints, as such the presence of the foliage is considered only a minor constraint.
- 5.4 Having considered the constraints in the context of the site, the anticipated impacts and the survey findings, there were no significant issues that would hinder the gathering of ecological information on site on which to base sound conclusions and recommendations.

6.0 Desk Study Results

- 6.1 The stables is located in a rural setting in the building footprint of 55 Bradley Fold and Titus Cottage, adjacent to Bradley Fold Road in Ainsworth, Greater Manchester, approximately 3.6km to the west of Bury town centre.

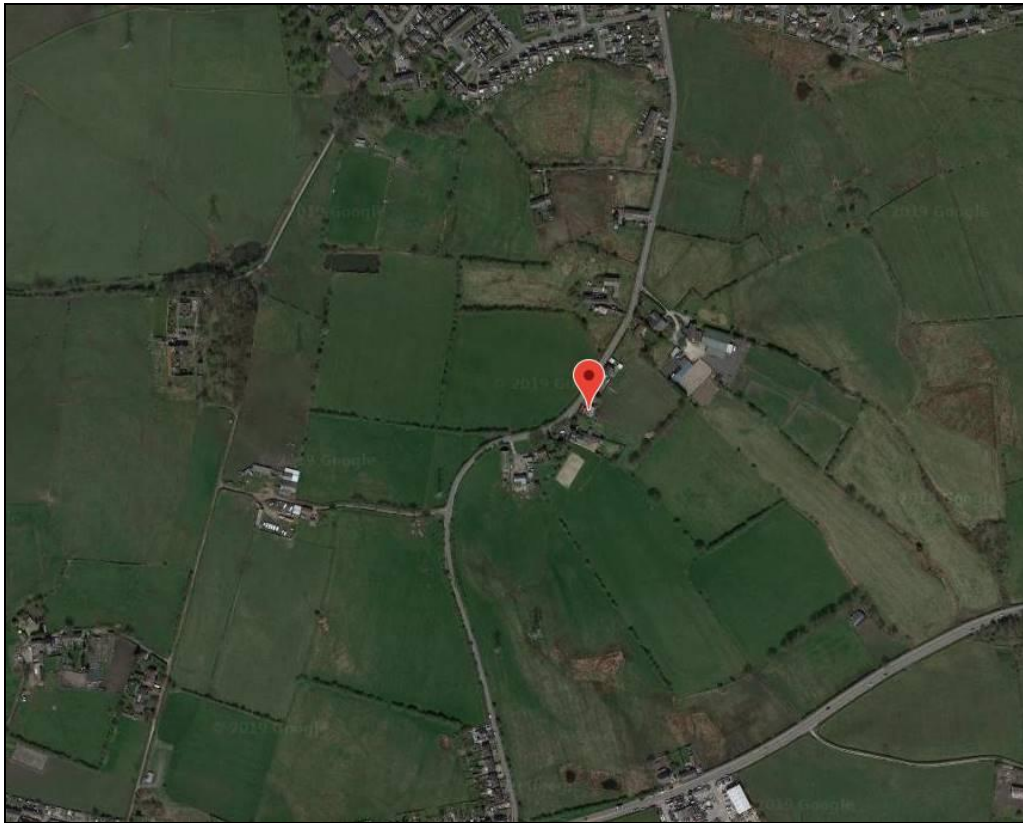


Figure 3 - Location of the stables observed topographically (Source: Google Earth 2019)

- 6.2 The immediate habitat is dominated by grazed pastures, arable grasslands and silage fields with areas of small unmanaged wildflower meadow, tall/ruderal habitat, mature hedgerows and scattered trees present occasionally. Farms with associated structures are located within 100metres to the south-west and north-east.
- 6.3 The progressive landscape to all directions features consistent, continuous areas of grazed pasture, agricultural arable and silage grassland meadows separated by hedgerows featuring scattered trees. Several open water reservoirs are present to the west and south-west, whilst ditch systems can be found to the east; the extending landscape gradually features lowland fen and marsh to the south.
- 6.4 No designated sites feature within 2.0km; no EPSML have been granted within 2.0km.
- 6.5 Accumulated site-circumferential environs, as described, offer a reasonable level of connectivity value for bats and birds subject to presence, most notably the Common Pipistrelle bat which is the species most commonly associated with rural environments.

NB: Where quality habitat is present close to buildings then the percentage use of those buildings, by bats, increases given that roost opportunities are available and vice versa.

7.0 Field Study Results

Bats

- 7.1 The barn, proposed for conversion, is a detached, single-storey, rectangular agricultural structure, actively used for sheltering farm animals such as horses. The building is formed by breeze-blocks (lower) and single sheet timber (upper) with internal corrugated asbestos panelling and steel shutters; the roof is singular pitched with a corrugated asbestos roof featuring perspex sun screens occasionally; a small porch features to the northern gable. In respect of building use and condition, the structure appears to be in reasonable condition for the purposes for which it has been designed and utilised over recent years, with no obvious signs of damage, vandalism or significant disrepair.
- 7.2 Internally no lofts or upper/mezzanine floors exist, the barn is otherwise spacious of approximate dimensions 14.00 x 9.50 x 4.50 metres (L x W x H), is draughty due to space between the timbers and is illuminated due to the perspex in the roof. Cobwebs are present but by no means abundant. The internal conditions are unsuitable for the breeding requirements of Brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) bats, this a species which prefers a large, dark, warm, spacious loft which permits unrestrictive free flight for breeding, though the interior could be used by this genus of bat for purposes outside of breeding, for example, occasional use or purposes as a 'feeding station'. No evidence of Brown long-eared bats was observed anywhere within the barn; the surrounding habitat is part-suitable for this species foraging/commuting requirements.
- 7.3 The roof of the barn offers no underfelt or roof-lining such as bitumen felt or BRM, and the generalised features of the barn are highly limited in respect of niche caveats or otherwise suitable crevice/ingress potential. The presence of underfelt, or equivalent materials lined against a roof cover, can provide opportunity for crevice dwelling bats (such as the *Pipistrellus* genus) whereby bats will roost between the two materials provided external opportunities permit them to do so. The building interior is devoid of such features as to support a bat roost, and no evidence of bats was observed.
- 7.4 During the external inspection the materials that form the building were examined, and offer no bat roost suitability, absent of features that could be utilised by bats for roosting. Where gaps do exist they are superficial and exposed, otherwise far too minute to offer even the smallest of UK bats (*Pipistrellus* sp.) any means of shelter.
- 7.5 Based upon the findings of the survey, the stables building at 55 Bradley Fold is absent of suitable roosting features thus interpretive as 'Negligible' bat roost suitability in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016).
- 7.6 There are scattered trees in the site boundary which were assessed for bat roost suitability and are roundly absent of roost potential, given an absence of features that include cavities, cracks, holes, splits or fissures which could be utilised by bats for the purposes of roosting. Notwithstanding an absence of roost potential, scattered trees are valuable to bats providing permanent landmarks for commuting, whilst supporting the flying insects that form the staple component of a bat diet - thus foraging value.

Breeding Birds

- 7.7 No evidence of any Schedule 1 listed (Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)) specially protected species such as Barn owl was observed despite the surrounding habitat offering favourable conditions for hunting; the stables has no upper floors or mezzanines, is sealed off from entry by birds and is in active use accessed daily, thus roundly considered unsuitable for this species nesting/breeding requirements.
- 7.8 No evidence of common birds which depend upon structures for nesting was found despite the building being located in a rural setting that likely features species such as Swallows and House Martins. No nests were identified in the trees; however both the trees and hedgerows on site likely support common birds for periods of the year for nesting purposes, and the absence of nest material in this instance does not necessarily mean an absence of nesting birds in trees and hedging.

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

- 8.1 Based upon the findings of the survey, the stables building at 55 Bradley Fold is absent of bat roost potential and thus roundly considered to be of 'negligible' bat roost suitability in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust - Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd ed. (2016) (see Figure 4). No evidence of bats was observed during the survey, despite the immediate habitat offering reasonable value habitat to Pipistrelle species, in respect of foraging and commuting. No further surveys are necessary or will be recommended in this instance.

Table 4.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.		
Suitability	Description Roosting habitats	Commuting and foraging habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.

Figure 4 - Bat Conservation Trust extract

- 8.2 Scattered trees surrounding the building on the southern gable elevation, as described, are equally negligible in terms of bat roost potential, given an absence of typical features that could be used for the purposes of roosting. No further surveys are required at the trees in relation to the proposals and bats, though it should be noted that the trees offer favourable foraging and commuting habitat.
- 8.3 In the highly unlikely event that bat(s) are found, or evidence of bat(s), during the proposed works, or at any other time (See Figure 5 for visual aid) then as a legal requirement the work at the site should immediately cease and a bat ecologist contacted for further advice. If it is deemed likely that bat(s) or their roost(s) will be affected, then a Natural England Mitigation licence is likely to be required to legally commence with the works. Notwithstanding the granting of a licence, works that would affect a roost cannot take place if a maternity colony is in occupation.



Figure 5 - Evidence of bats - droppings, left / Common Pipistrelle bat, right

- 8.4 Installation of new lighting as part of a development scheme that exceeds current levels may have a negative impact upon foraging/commuting bats that could be present in the vicinity, particularly if increased light spillage occurs in areas currently free from illumination. There are several measures that can be used to offset impacts upon bats, where lighting is unavoidable; these include, however are not limited to, the light source used and luminaire design, and accessories to direct light at its intended target. Numerous software programmes are currently available which can be used inform lighting plans, demonstrating how lighting decisions will illuminate a site.

Refer to the Bat Conservation Lighting Guidelines for further information if applicable.

- 8.5 There are no implications in relation to specially protected bird species such as Barn owl, the building offers no suitability for this species nesting/breeding needs, despite the surrounding habitat offering favourable hunting conditions. There are no recommendations applicable in relation to specially protected bird species.
- 8.6 No evidence of old nesting/current breeding by common birds was observed at any point during the survey, there were no nests within or upon the building, or the trees. Though no evidence of breeding birds was observed during the survey, scattered trees immediately surrounding the southern gable elevation, as well as hedgerows on the site generally could be used for nesting, particularly during the breeding bird season (March - August). It is recommended that any felling/tree management/removal of these features takes place outside of the breeding bird season, in order to avoid any impacts to breeding birds, unless it can be conclusively established beforehand by an ecologist that breeding birds are absent. In some cases a reasonable buffer zone may be able to be established from nests, though this should be judged in consultation with an ecologist on site.

Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, BL2 5QR
Inspection & Assessment in Relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

NB: *All wild birds (with only minor exceptions) and their nests whilst being built or containing eggs or dependant young are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is a punishable offence to interfere in any way with an active nest, including disturbance.*

- 8.7 Enhancement by way of new roost provisions for bats, and nest cups for Swallows could be used as part of the strategy to achieve a biodiversity net gain in accordance with local planning policy and the NPPF. Recommendations are thus included within Appendix II.

9.0 Bibliography

- CIRIA/CIEEM, 2019. *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development: A Practical Guide*. London
- CIEEM, 2016. *UK Guidelines for Accessing and Using Biodiversity Data*. Available from: www.cieem.net/data/files/Publications/Guidelines_for_Accessing_and_Using_Biodiversity_Data.pdf.
- Collins, J. (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN - 13 978-1-872745-96-1
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). 2018. *National Planning Policy Framework*. Ministry of Housing & Local Government. London. ISBN: 978-1-4098-5302-2

Appendix I: Site Photographs



Plate 1 - North-western side elevation with northern gable elevation



Plate 2 - Northern gable elevation

Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, BL2 5QR
Inspection & Assessment in Relation to Bats & Breeding Birds



Plate 3 - South-eastern side elevation



Plate 4 - Barn interior



Plate 5 - Internal gable elevation



Plate 6 - Internal gable elevation



Plate 7 - Hedgerow to the north of the building



Plate 8 - Hedgerow to the west of the building



Plate 9 - Immediate habitat to the north

Appendix II: Biodiversity Net Gain: Enhancement Strategy

Bats



Low Profile WoodStone Bat Boxes are manufactured from WoodStone, a breathable and insulating material made from concrete and FSC Certified wood fibres. WoodStone is designed to be robust and hard-wearing, providing a warm and stable temperature for summer bat roosts. The Low Profile WoodStone Bat Box is designed to be attached to the external wall of a building but could also be attached to a tree. The box should be sited at least 3 metres above the ground to encourage bat residence.

Dimensions: (H) 440 x (W) 290 x (D) 90 mm
Weight: 4.7kg

See - www.nhbs.com/low-profile-woodstone-bat-box

Stables at 55 Bradley Fold, Ainsworth, BL2 5QR

Inspection & Assessment in Relation to Bats & Breeding Birds

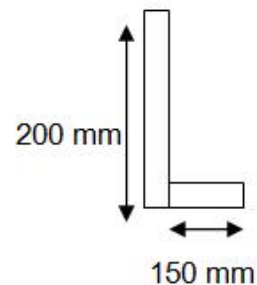
Swallow

Two nest cups could be placed inside a makeshift shelter, to provide nesting provision for Swallow. Swallows are sociable birds but multiple nests should not be placed at less than 1.0m intervals - leaving a distance of at least 60mm between the top of the nest and the ceiling. Artificial swallow nests to be fixed to internal side wall to the same height as the timber beam.



A typical shelter for Swallows (maximum capacity two pairs)

Rough sawn beam (below) fixed to rear wall with a 200 mm clearance from the underside of the roof



Specification: Swallow nest cups x2

Quantity: 2

Timings: Prior to any development, any time during the year

See: www.nhbs.com/no-10-schwegler-swallow-nest

Proposed location: Integrated onto the exterior below open eaves



Shelter should be placed on site, in like for like habitat