

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Davenport Farm Annex
Arthur lane
Ainsworth
BL2 5PW

For
Jenkins Design Services Ltd



Gritstone Ecology

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the report

The report is written by Stewart Bradshaw for Jenkins Design Services Ltd. Stewart carried out a Preliminary Roost Assessment of The Annex at Davenport Farm, Ainsworth, on 22nd June 2023.

1.2. Survey aims

The aim of the survey was to determine the actual or potential presence of bats and the need for further survey or mitigation.

1.3. Surveyor details

Stewart is licensed to disturb, take and handle all species of bats in all counties of England under licence number 2015-15615-CLS-CLS. He has more than 10 years of experience in ecological consultancy, including the planning & preparation of bat surveys, and mitigation licences.

1.4. Reason for survey

The development proposals are for the demolition of the annex and a small outbuilding to allow the construction of a more suitable residential property.

1.5. Site context

The building is located within the curtilage of Davenport Farm, to the east of Arthur Road, Ainsworth, BL2 5PW, GR SJ 75938 10557, approximately 5km east of Bolton Town Centre. The building is in a predominantly rural area surrounded by houses, gardens, and open farmland.

The site includes a detached annex, which was converted from a garage, and a small timber storage shed, set within the grounds of Davenport Farm, with gardens to the front and rear, and areas of hard landscaping.

Habitat within 50m of the building includes; houses, gardens, areas of open green-space, and busy roads.

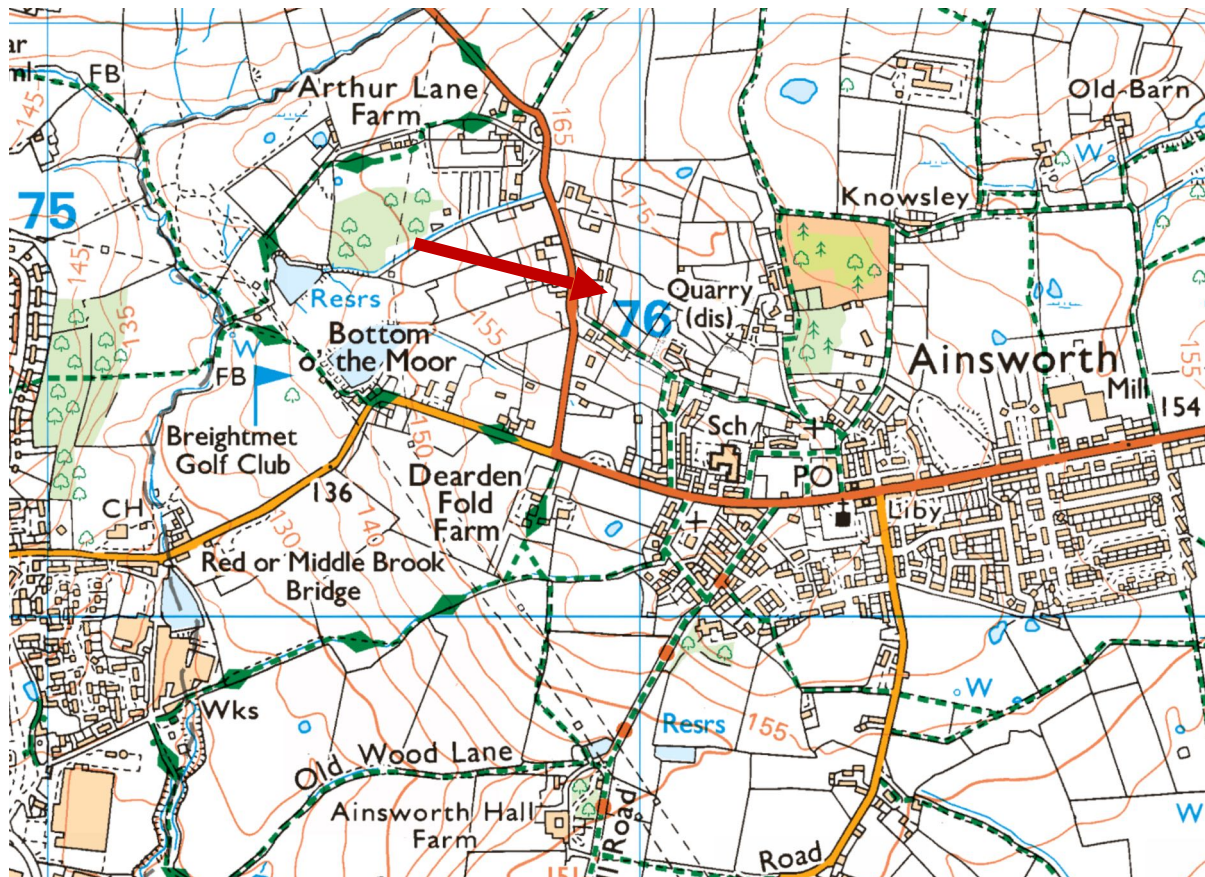
Habitat within 500m includes, housing and busy roads, commercial buildings, linked back gardens, areas of open green-space, watercourses, hedgerows, and mature trees.

Areas of open green space locally, and linked back gardens, potentially provide moderate quality foraging opportunities for bats. Although, the area in general is subject to light and noise disturbance from the road.

The site and surrounding area provide moderate quality foraging, commuting, and roosting opportunities for bats.



1.6. Site location



1.6a – Davenport Farm Annex – site location.



1.6b – Davenport Farm Annex and the outbuilding – aerial photograph.



2. Methods

2.1. Survey timings

The survey was completed on 22nd June 2023. Weather conditions during the survey were bright, warm, and dry, with a temperature of 20°C.

2.2. Desk study

No desk study of the site was undertaken, prior to the preliminary roost assessment, and no other ecological surveys have been carried out in relation to the proposals.

The development has a small footprint, and impacts beyond the site boundary are unlikely. A site-specific investigation was considered more suitable.

2.3. Habitat assessment

The habitat on site and in the surrounding area was assessed using Ordnance Survey mapping, and aerial photography. Habitat features on site, and those in the surrounding area were assessed for their suitability for use by bats during the site visit.

2.4. Building inspection

A systematic search of the exterior of the building was made to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate any evidence of bats such as live or dead specimens, bat droppings, urine splashes, fur-oil staining and or squeaking noises. Bat specimens and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence; the other types are not always the result of bat activity. Sometimes bats leave no visible sign of their presence on the outside of a building (even when they do wet weather can wash evidence away.)

The search included (where present) the ground beneath potential access points, windowsills, window panes, walls, behind peeling paintwork and lifted rendering, hanging tiles, weatherboarding, eaves, soffit boxes, fascia's, lead flashing, gaps under felt, under tiles / slates and in existing bats boxes. Gaps in brickwork and stonework were searched (where present). All evidence of use by bats, or features with the potential to be used by bats was recorded and photographed.

A systematic search of the inside of the building was undertaken to identify potential or actual bat access points and roosting places, and to locate evidence of bats. Bat specimens (live or dead) and droppings are the most reliable type of evidence. Other evidence can include urine splashes, fur-oil staining, feeding remains, squeaking noises, bat fly (Nycteribiid) pupal cases (Hutson 1984) or odour.

Areas inspected include;

Within rooms

- floors and surfaces
- behind wooden panelling
- in lintels above doors and windows
- behind window shutters and curtains
- behind pictures, posters, furniture, peeling paintwork, peeling wallpaper, lifted plaster and boarded up windows
- inside cupboards and in chimneys accessible from fireplaces.



Within roof spaces

- the tops of gable end and dividing walls
- the top of chimney breasts
- ridge and hip beams and other structural timbers
- mortise and tenon joints
- all beams
- the junction of roof timbers, especially where ridge and hip beams meet
- behind purlins
- between tiles and the roof lining (where accessible)
- under flat felt roofs.

The areas listed above were inspected (where present), any additional areas with potential for use were also inspected.

2.5. Equipment

The equipment listed below was available for use during the surveys and was used where required.

Clulite CB2 1,000,000 candlepower torch. Digital endoscope with 5m cable reach. Digital camera with 50x zoom. 8x25 close focussing binoculars, 4m ladders, bat handling gloves, DNA sampling tubes.

2.6. Survey limitations

None. All accessible areas of the buildings were inspected in detail. The survey was completed in June, when bats are active, and external signs of use, such as droppings, are more likely to be evident, if present.



3. Results

3.1. External inspection



3.1a – The front of the annex.

Davenport Farm Annex, Ainsworth, is a modern detached former double garage, which is currently in use. It has a pitched roof, covered with slate roof tiles, and ceramic ridge tiles. A conservatory to the west side has a single pitched roof covered with polycarbonate panels.

Roof pitches face east and west, gables face north and south. Timber fascia boards are fitted at the gables; timber fascia boards and boxed soffits are fitted at the eaves. End tiles at the verges are sealed with cement.

Walls are brick with an insulating cavity, discreet steel lintels are fitted, sills are UPVC; window and door frames are UPVC, all glass is intact.

The building is relatively modern, it is well maintained, and in good condition. Ridge tiles are fixed tightly, there are no damaged or missing ridge tiles. There are no damaged, slipped, or missing roof tiles. Roof tiles are tightly fitted, with no gaps between tiles.

Timber fascia boards and boxed soffits are fitted tightly against the walls gaps are filled with sealant. Walls are in good condition, with no missing mortar or cracks.

There are no features externally which are likely be used by roosting bats, and no evidence of use by bats was present during the inspection.



3.2. Internal inspection



3.2a – The roof void.

The building has a single roof void, which is not used for storage, and accessed infrequently for essential maintenance.

The roof has a timber trussed structure, lined with bitumen felt, and insulated with mineral wool between the ceiling joists. The roof lining is in good condition with no tears, or gaps.

The wall cavity has been filled with insulation and was inspected at the wall plate using an endoscope. There are no gaps at the wall-plate; and there are no gaps which give direct access to the roof void from the outside. Boxed soffits open into the roof void and were inspected from above.

The building has no cellar, and there are no other enclosed spaces which are suitable to be used by roosting bats.

3.3. Timber outbuilding

The timber outbuilding has a pitched roof covered with corrugated bitumen roof sheets. Walls are a single layer of shiplap boards, around a simple timber frame. The building is in daily use as a store for garden tools, and has no internal voids or crevices which are likely to be used by roosting bats.

3.4. Indications of use

No indications of use by bats were present during the survey, either internally, or externally.



3.5. Level of suitability

The annex and outbuilding have **negligible suitability** for use by roosting bats. This is as the building is well maintained, in reasonable condition, and as no indications of use or suitable roosting opportunities were noted during the building inspection.

4. Evaluation

The building is set in an area which, in general, provides moderate quality habitat, for foraging, commuting and roosting bats, and bats are likely to be present locally.

Areas of open green space, and linked back gardens locally provide foraging opportunities for bats, in an area which is subject to little disturbance by light and noise.

Buildings immediately adjacent to good quality habitat are more likely to be used by roosting bats than those further away. However, the building is generally well-sealed, and has no features which are likely to be used by roosting bats.

The area in general is subject to limited traffic noise, and light disturbance from the road, light and other human activity. The road may have a minor impact on the use of the area by foraging bats, although this is likely to be minor.

The building is modern, well maintained, and in reasonable condition. There are no features externally, which are suitable, or likely to be used by roosting bats; the roof void has no gaps which could give direct access to roosting bats, and no evidence of use was found during the inspection.

Minor areas of missing cement at the verges were inspected in detail using an endoscope. These areas are filled with dust and cobwebs, and no indications of use by bats were present.

The lack of any indications of use inside the roof void, such as bat droppings or feeding remains, reduces the likelihood of a significant roost being present. If bats were present inside the roof void, even in lower numbers, some evidence of use would be likely to persist.

Roof and ridge tiles are in good condition; ridge tiles are sealed with cement. There are no gaps between roofing materials which are likely to be used by roosting bats.

Walls are brick with an insulating cavity. The wall cavity has been filled with insulation. Walls are in good condition, with no cracks, or missing mortar which could be used by crevice dwelling bats.

Window and door frames are fixed into the brickwork, gaps are filled with sealant, and offer no suitable roosting opportunities.

Timber fascia boards and boxed soffits at the eaves are fixed tightly against brickwork, with no suitable gaps; wall cavities and boxed soffits open into the roof void, and were inspected from above.

The small gaps between brickwork, roof timbers, and roofing materials, in the roof void were inspected in detail using an endoscope. No droppings were found, and no suitable gaps were present which could give access, or shelter to roosting bats.

Taking into account the habitat surrounding the site, and the features present, the buildings are unlikely to be used by roosting bats and have **negligible suitability** for use.



4.1. Legal and planning context

All species of bats in the UK and their roosts are legally protected by UK and European legislation. The UK the legal protection is summarised as follows:

You will be committing a criminal offence if you:

1. Deliberately* capture, injure or kill a bat
2. Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats
3. Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
4. Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat
5. Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost even if bats are not present at the time

*In a court, 'deliberately' will probably be interpreted as someone who, although not intending to capture/injure or kill a bat, performed the relevant action, being sufficiently informed and aware of the consequence his/her action would most likely have.

5. Impact assessment

The development proposals are for the demolition of the annex and a small outbuilding to allow the construction of a more suitable residential property.

The building has no features which are suitable, or likely to be used by roosting bats and has negligible suitability for use.

The proposed work is unlikely to impact on bats or bat roosts; and, once completed is unlikely to provide any increase in levels of disturbance for bats locally.

6. Required actions

The buildings have **negligible suitability** for use by roosting bats, no field signs of use by bats were found internally or externally during the inspection, and no further survey work is required.



7. References

Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Policy Framework.

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. (3rd ed.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). The Bat Workers Manual. (3rd ed.) JNCC



8. Appendix 1 – Photographs



1 – The front of the annex.



2 – The rear of the annex.





3 – Roof tiles are in good condition with no suitable gaps.



4 – Ridge tiles are laid tightly against roof tiles.





5 – Timber soffits and fascia are fixed tightly against brickwork.



6 – Brickwork and mortar are in good condition with no suitable gaps.





7 – Window and door frames are tightly sealed into brickwork with no suitable gaps.



8 – Verges are sealed with cement minor gaps were checked using an endoscope.





9 – The annex has a single roof void which is not used for storage.



10 – Roof lining is in good condition with no gaps or tears.





11 – The timber outbuilding has a bitumen sheet roof and single layer boarded walls.



12 – The building has no internal voids, or crevices which could be used by roosting bats.

