

Ascerta

Landscape, Arboricultural & Ecological Solutions
for the Built Environment

Bat Roost Assessment

Former Mondi Site
(Site 1)

Holcombe Mill
Bridge Street
Ramsbottom
BL0 0BS

Ref: P.1202.19

October 2023

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A	09/03/2020	Minor amendment
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Ascerta

Mere One, Mere Grange, Elton Head Road, St. Helens, Merseyside WA9 5GG
T: 0845 463 4404 E: info@landscapetreeseecology.com
www.landscapetreeseecology.com

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Bat Roost Assessment

Of

**Former Mondi Site (Site 1)
Holcombe Mill
Bridge Street
Ramsbottom
BL0 0BS**

For

Eccleston Homes Ltd

06 March 2020

Field Work by	Tosha Allen BSc (Hons) ACIEEM, Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons), Lizzie Atkinson MSc CIEEM
Document Author	Liz Kenyon and Tosha Allen
Technical Review	Neil Everett Grad CIEEM Natural England Class 1 Bat licence 2018-37995-CLS-CLS, Lizzie Atkinson
QA Review & Approval	Danielle Wood- Office manager and Ciaran Power – Operations Manager

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Appendix 1 Drawing P.1202.19.08A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

Appendix 2 Data Search Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ascerta has been instructed by Ecclestone Homes to carry out surveys to determine if bats are using buildings as a roost at the land at Former Mondi Site, Holcombe Hill, Bridge Street, Ramsbottom BL0 0BS.

The site was visited on 17th February 2020 by Ms Tosha Allen and Mrs Liz Kenyon, when a daytime external inspection of the buildings took place. The inspections closely followed revised guidelines set out by the Bat Conservation Trust (2016).

An updated visit was undertaken on 7th September 2023 by Liz Kenyon and Lizzie Atkinson.

All the buildings on the site were subject to a preliminary search externally by a suitability qualified ecologist. Close focusing binoculars were used where appropriate to search for signs of bats i.e. staining on barge boards, soffits and more commonly droppings on flat surfaces i.e. window ledges, that would indicate potential roosting sites.

In 2020, building B3 was proposed to be lost and was considered to have **moderate** bat roost potential, with habitats on site providing **high** suitability for foraging and commuting bats with good connectivity to the east of the site within the broadleaved woodland and habitats along the River Irwell. The majority of the trees on the site were assessed to provide **negligible** bat roost potential although, trees within the woodland were not assessed as they will be retained within the proposals.

In 2020, the buildings and chimney on site were subject to nocturnal bat surveys. Common pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from buildings B1 and B2, no bats were recorded emerging or re-entering building B3 and the chimney. The full details are shown within Ascerta report P.1202.19B Nocturnal Bat Surveys and should be read in conjunction with this report.

An updated visit was undertaken on 7th September 2023 by Liz Kenyon and Lizzie Atkinson. Building B1 was assessed to provide low potential for roosting bats. B1 and B2 were assessed to provide high bat roost potential.

In 2023, following a revised layout buildings B1, B2 and B3 will be lost to accommodate the proposals. The chimney will be retained. A nocturnal survey for bats was undertaken at B1 and B2 on 25th September 2023. Six common pipistrelle bats were recorded to emerge from the southern elevation of the building.

The following recommendations are made in order to satisfy current wildlife guidance and legislation including the NPPF and Policy EN6 of the Bury Council Unitary Development Plan (UDP). If followed in full it is considered that bats will not be harmed as a result of the proposals:

1. A minimum of two nocturnal surveys to be carried out at buildings B1 & B2 by Ascerta in 2024 assess for the presence of roosting bats;
2. A minimum of one nocturnal survey to be carried out at building B3 by Ascerta in 2024 assess for the presence of roosting bats;
3. An application to Natural England for the loss of the identified bat roosts in B1 & B2;
4. The production of a Bat Mitigation Statement, to include a Bat Box Plan to support the Natural England Licence;
5. The roof and ridge tiles should be removed using Reasonable Avoidance Measures to ensure no harm to bats that may roost within the property opportunistically over the summer;
6. Mitigation for loss of bat roosting habitat by the installation of bat boxes / bat bricks integrated within new buildings on the site;
7. Retaining the value of the site for foraging and commuting bats by ensuring lighting does not exceed current levels and is sensitive to the needs of bats. Light spill will need to avoid retained and off-site habitats, through the use of lamps fitted with filters or hoods to reduce light spill. Alternatively, sensors installed so that lighting is only activated when required as per advice within the Bats and Lighting in the UK (2018) document;
8. Works to the building / vegetation clearance should occur outside the period 1st March to 31st August to protect breeding birds, unless an ecologist has confirmed that the actions proposed will not disturb bird breeding on the site; and
9. In order to mitigate for the loss of bird nesting habitat it is recommended that new nesting provision should be included within the proposals.

1.0 Introduction

Ascerta has been instructed by Eccleston Homes to carry out a bat survey at the land at Former Mondi Site, Holcombe Hill, Bridge Street, Ramsbottom BL0 0BS (hereafter referred to as the site). The site OS grid reference is SD 793 616.

An external inspection of the buildings on the site was carried out on 17th February 2020 by suitably qualified ecologists Ms Tosha Allen and Mrs Liz Kenyon.

In 2020, the buildings and chimney on site were subject to nocturnal bat surveys. Common pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from buildings B1 and B2, no bats were recorded emerging or re-entering building B3 and the chimney. The full details are shown within Ascerta report P.1202.19B Nocturnal Bat Surveys and should be read in conjunction with this report.

An updated visit was undertaken on 7th September 2023 by Liz Kenyon and Lizzie Atkinson. Building B1 was assessed to provide low potential for roosting bats. B1 and B2 were assessed to provide high bat roost potential. The chimney will be retained.

A nocturnal survey for bats was undertaken at B1 and B2 on 25th September 2023. Six common pipistrelle bats were recorded to emerge from the southern elevation of the building.

This report presents the results of the survey and includes recommendations for further actions where applicable in order to satisfy current wildlife legislation and in order to achieve our client's objectives.

2.0 Objectives

Our client's objectives are to ascertain the potential ecological constraints and opportunities of the site to inform potential future development of 60 residential buildings.

Our objectives are as follows:

- Carry out an external inspection of the buildings on the site;
- Provide recommendations for mitigation measures where current legislation requires;
- Provide recommendations that seek to enhance the ecological value of the site; and
- Provide recommendations to assist our clients in achieving their objectives whilst satisfying current wildlife legislation.

3.0 Relevant Legislation

3.1

European Legislation

The following Directives have been adopted by the European Union and provide protection for fauna and flora species of European importance and the habitats which support them:

- Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive);
- Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive).

UK Legislation

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into national legislation through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (The Habitats Regulations). This provides for the designation and protection of 'European Sites' (SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites, including proposed or potential European Sites) and the protection of 'European Protected Species'.

The key UK legislation relating to nature conservation is the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (W&C Act). This Act is supplemented, *inter alia*, by provision in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act

2000, and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act). Additional species and habitat specific UK legislation includes the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

The Environment Act sets out how the UK will maintain environmental standards following leaving of the EU. The Bill builds on the vision of the 25 Year Environment Plan, with the ambition from the government to leave the environment in a better state than it was when inherited.

The Defra Biodiversity Metric is being implemented to work alongside the Environment Act. This tool calculates potential biodiversity impacts as a result of development and identifies mitigation and compensation requirements to ensure no net loss of biodiversity. In addition, it identifies measures that can be implemented in order to meet Biodiversity gain as a result of development.

Defra released a beta version of the biodiversity metric in July 2019, with the most recent revision in March 2023. This metric is likely to be the default metric used by councils, with the most recent version to be submitted to support a planning application. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 has been published to provide further planning guidance.

Wildlife, biodiversity and ecological networks are referred to in Section 15 '*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*'. The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services, minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Further guidance is provided within Government Circular 06/05: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System*.

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance are listed under section 41 of the NERC Act and are a material consideration in planning decisions. Planners require relevant, up to date information from ecological surveys in order to assess the effects of a proposed development on biodiversity as Councils have a statutory obligation under section 40 of the NERC Act to consider biodiversity conservation in the determination of planning applications. Background information about the lists of priority habitats and species (Species and Habitats of Principal Importance) can be found within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). Although this has been succeeded by the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework', many of UK BAP tools are still relevant. BAPs identify habitats and species of nature conservation priority on a UK (UK BAP) and Local (LBAP scale. Most BAP priority habitats and species have Habitat Action Plans (HAP) and Species Action Plans (SAP) and there are also "grouped action plans" for groups of related species with similar conservation requirements.

Under the legislation at the time of the surveys as summarised on pages 8 and 9 of the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 3rd Edition (2016) it is a criminal offence to:

“To kill, capture, injure or take a wild bat;

- To damage or destroy a place used by a bat for breeding or resting. All offences of this nature are identified within the Habitats Regulations. This offence is unique in that it can be committed accidentally. No element of intentional, reckless or deliberate action needs to be evidenced;*
- To disturb bats anywhere (roosts, flight lines or foraging areas) if levels of disturbance can be shown to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, to rear or nurture their young, to hibernate or migrate or to affect significantly local distribution or abundance;*
- To intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat, whilst it is occupying a place of shelter or protection;*
- To intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used by a bat for shelter or protection; and*
- To be in possession or control of a bat alive or dead (or any part of a bat or anything derived from a bat, although bat droppings are generally considered to be acceptable), or to transport a bat, to sell or exchange a bat or to offer to sell or exchange a bat taken from the wild.”*

3.2 Local Legislation

The site lies within Bury Council and is covered by the Bury Council Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (adopted August 1997). Policy EN6 deals with Conservation and the Natural Environment and is the policy of relevance here. This policy has been taken into account when preparing this report.

4.0 Survey Method

4.1 Bat Survey

The survey methods followed the guidelines set out by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins 3rd Edition 2016).

Table 4.1: Guidelines for assessing Potential Roost Features (PRFs), commuting and foraging habitat within a proposed development site. Guidelines taken from table 4.1 page 35 of the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines – 3rd Edition (2016).

Suitability	Roosting Habitats	Commuting and Foraging Habitats
Negligible	<i>Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.</i>	<i>Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.</i>
Low	<i>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</i>	<i>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.</i>
Moderate	<i>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).</i>	<i>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.</i>
High	<i>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.</i>	<i>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.</i>

^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).

Record Search

The local biological records centre Greater Manchester Ecology Unit was consulted for records of bats within 2km of the site. A review of the designated sites and habitats within 2km of the site has been undertaken using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) and the Natural England websites. Only findings relating to bats are detailed in this report. The full results are given in P.1202.19A *Ascerta preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Former Mondi Site*.

Internal / External Inspection of the Buildings

A daytime external inspection of the buildings and chimney was carried out on 10th February 2020 and updated on 7th September 2023. The buildings and chimney were searched externally looking for signs of bats, including staining on barge boards, soffits and more commonly droppings on flat surfaces i.e. window ledges that would indicate potential roosting sites. Possible bat access points such as loose tiles, cracks and crevices or crawl spaces beneath and / or behind roofing materials such as roofing felt, panelling, soffits and tiles were identified and checked for signs of use by bats, for example droppings, scratch marks and staining. The structures were assessed for bat roost suitability as per Table 4.1 page 35 of the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2016). Structures assigned a suitability of **low** or above may require further inspection if they are to be lost to the development.

Preliminary Roost Assessment Trees

All tree(s) were inspected for Potential Roost Features (PRFs) during the preliminary ecological appraisal of the site in July 2019, an updated inspection was undertaken on 7th September 2023. Features searched for included: Natural or woodpecker holes, cracks / splits in major limbs, loose bark, hollows / cavities, dense epicormic growth, ivy cover, and bird and bat boxes. Where such features were found they were investigated for scratches or staining, bat droppings and smoothing of surfaces around entry points. The trees were assessed for bat roost suitability as per Table 4.1 page 35 of the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2016). Trees assigned a suitability of **moderate** or above may require further inspection if they are to be lost to the development.

Limitations

Due to safety concerns, access to the internal areas of the buildings was not possible at the time of the site visit, however the buildings could be fully examined externally with the aid of close focusing binoculars. Large sections of the roof at building B1 was missing, therefore any potential gaps in remaining sections could not be fully examined from ground level.

Due to health and safety reasons Heras fencing was present around the buildings, small gaps under roof slates and between brickwork could not be fully examined for the presence of bats during the daytime survey. In September 2023, building B1 has been subject to fire damage.

The restrictions regarding access to the buildings are considered to have no limitations to the report conclusions.

The bat surveys in February 2019 and September 2023 were conducted at a time of year when bats are less active. Bats may be found in transition and hibernation roosts either singly, or in small groups. Insect prey is scarce and as Autumn comes to an end and temperatures drop, bats start to use their fat reserves to survive the winter. They will stay in a torpid state and if the temperature drops sufficiently will go into hibernation.

5.0 Survey Results and Evaluation

5.1 Site Description

The site contains a former mill and associated buildings. Habitats present within the site include dense scrubs, broad leaved scattered trees, scattered scrub, tall ruderal, semi natural broadleaved woodland, introduced scrub and a water course. These habitats are presented on plan P.1202.19.03A (**Appendix 1**).

The site lies adjacent to the local high street where shops and industrial mills lie to the north and west. The railway line borders the site to the west. The river Irwell meanders around the site boundary to the east, with a cricket and football ground located south of the site.

The habitats are considered to be of value within the **Zone of Influence** of the site only. Their loss is not considered to adversely affect the local ecology. The broadleaved woodland is expected to be retained, and any loss can be mitigated for so as to ensure no net loss of biodiversity as a result of the proposals.

5.2 Record Search

The biological record search returned multiple records of bat signs and roosts were returned within 2km of the site. Species included bat sp., common pipistrelle, Daubenton's bat, Nathusius's pipistrelle, noctule bat, pipistrelle sp., soprano pipistrelle and whiskered / Brandt's bat. No records of bats within the site were returned.

The closest record was for a pipistrelle sp. signs approximately 45m southwest of the site.

The closest roost to the site is a pipistrelle sp., roost and is located 300m northeast.

Three European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) applications within 2km of the site since 2014 were identified using Magic Maps. These include:

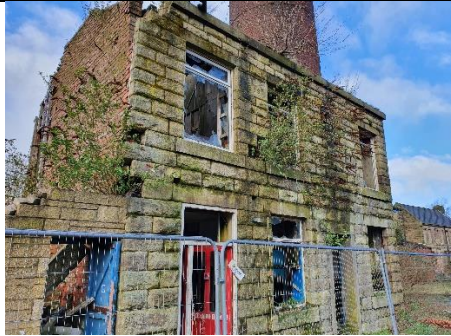
- A license to allow for the damage of a resting place and destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle (2014-5187-EPS-MIT) approximately 630m southwest of the site;
- A license to allow for impact on a breeding site, damage of a breeding site, damage of a resting place, destruction of a breeding site, and destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle (2017-29122-EPS-MIT) approximately 1.2km north of site; and
- A licence to allow the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle (2020-45495-EPS-MIT-2) approximately 1.6km south of the site.

5.3 External Inspection

The weather during the daytime building survey on 17th February 2020 was cool (8°C), dry with $\frac{7}{8}$ cloud cover. There was a force 3 (Beaufort scale) gentle breeze during the survey.

The weather conditions on 7th September 2023 were hot (24 °C) dry and overcast ($\frac{7}{8}$ cloud cover) with calm air (F0 on the Beaufort Scale), therefore appropriate for this type of survey.

These weather conditions were considered suitable for this type of survey.

Building	Photograph
Building B3 is a detached two-story building constructed of brickwork walls and a pitched slate roof. The building has been unoccupied for several years and in a poor state of repair. The eastern elevation of the building, which was formerly the main entrance area has been faced with stone block and cavity wall brick work visible to the southern elevation. Small gaps were visible under the ledges above and below the windows. The windows on the eastern aspect are timber frame and all have broken glass. The doors are also timber, not secure and have broken glass. Gaps were noted within the wooden window frames that may provide potential roost features for bats. To the southern elevation there is a part demolished extension to the buildings, the remains indicate that the section of the building was constructed from solid brick work walls. Visible gaps and areas of missing mortar were visible within the remaining wall of the building and within the areas of demolished walls. The roof was in a very poor state of repair with large areas of the slate roof tiles missing, exposing the pitched roof beams and supports. In the areas where the roof is intact visible gaps were noted along the ridge line and small gaps were visible with the aid of binoculars under the	 B3 Eastern elevation 2020
	 B3 Southern elevation 2020
	 B3 Buddleia around a first-floor window 2020

roof tiles. To the northern and southern aspects of the roof gaps were identified under the flashing. Vegetation including buddleia has colonised in sections of the building, including around door and window frames, short ephemeral vegetation has colonised on the ground floor window frames and moss was noted within the brickwork.

Woodpigeons were noted within the building during the external inspection.

The building was secured by heras fencing and no internal access to the building was available due to health and safety precautions.

No signs of bats were noted during the external inspection, including no evidence of dropping, staining or scratching. Although the building is relatively exposed due to the missing roof, a number of features including the gaps within mortar, gaps surrounding the flashing and gaps within the cavity brick work walling could provide potential roost access points for bats. The building will be lost within the current planning application. The building was assessed to provide **moderate** bat roost potential for cavity and void dwelling species in 2020, following nocturnal bat surveys it was assessed as to provide low potential for roosting bats. In September 2023, the building was assessed to still provide low bat roost potential and a nocturnal survey for bats will be undertaken in 2024 (between May and August) by Ascerta.

If bats are found to using the building as a roost, further surveys will be required and a licence application to Natural England will be required for the destruction of a bat roost.



B3 Visible gaps within stonework 2020



B3 from the northern elevation 2020

Building B2 is a two-storey building constructed from a mixture of cavity and solid brickwork and stone walls with a pitched roof. To the eastern elevation of the building there is a single storey brick extension with a sloped roof. Evidence of a single storey extension that has been demolished to the south elevation of the building was noted. The windows throughout the building were all uPVC frames with missing glass, the windows to the ground floor were all boarded over. The main entrance door is a wooden frame with missing glass panels.

No roof tiles were visible from the external of the building, however the frames from sky light windows were noted.

Buddleia was noted growing from the brickwork throughout the building.

During the external inspection gaps and cracks were noted throughout the stonework, with small missing areas of mortar between the brickwork. A metal supporting beam was visible on the eastern elevation with gaps noted between the frame and brickwork within the walls.

Wood pigeons and crows were noted within the building during the external inspection. A great tit was also noted sheltering under the metal support beam to the eastern elevation.

The building was secured by Heras fencing and no internal access to the building was available due to health and safety precautions.

No signs of bats were noted during the external inspection, including no evidence of dropping, staining or scratching. Although the building is relatively exposed due to the missing roof, a number of features including the gaps within mortar, gaps surrounding the metal support beam and within the stone walling could all provide potential roost access points for bats. In 2020, the building was assessed to provide **moderate** bat roost potential for cavity and void dwelling bats. During the nocturnal survey in 2020, bats were recorded to be using the building as a roost. In



B2 eastern elevation with single storey extension in 2020



B2, demolished section to the southern elevation in 2020



B2 Ground floor boarded up window in 2020



B2 Supporting beam to the eastern elevation in 2020

2023, the building was assessed to continue to provide high suitability for bats, a nocturnal survey was undertaken in September 2023 and two further surveys will be undertake between May and August 2024 by Ascerta.

Building B1 is the most northern structure within the site and is a detached two storey building. The walls of the building are of stonework construction with a pitched slate roof. To the southern elevation of the building there is a demolished extension that leaves an exposed cavity wall with visible gaps within the mortar and sections of missing mortar. The brickwork is in good condition within the main building and all the visible roof tiles were in place, with no noticeable slipped or missing tiles.

Small gaps were visible under the ridge line and under roof tiles. Gaps were also present within the flashing to the northern and southern elevations. To the eastern elevation gaps were noted under the overhanging areas of the stonework. All the windows and doors were boarded over with wooden panels, gaps were noted surrounding boarding at the windows on the eastern elevation.

The building was secured by heras fencing and no internal access to the building was available due to health and safety precautions.

No signs of bats were noted during the external inspection, including no evidence of dropping, staining or scratching. In 2020, the building was assessed to provide **low** bat roost potential for cavity and void dwelling bats. During the nocturnal surveys in 2020, bats were recorded to be using the building as a roost. In 2023, the building was assessed to continue to provide high suitability for bats, a nocturnal survey was undertaken in September 2023 and two further surveys will be undertake between May and August 2024 by Ascerta.



B1 Eastern elevation in 2020



B1 Visible gaps within the ridge line and surrounding flashing in 2020



B1 Visible gaps beneath stone window ledge in 2020

A chimney is present to the north of building B3 and is a solid brickwork constructed building. No windows or doors are present. The brick work is in a good condition, with acceptance to a few visible gaps and cracks with the aid of close focusing binoculars. Ventilation bricks were noted within the lower sections of the chimney. The building will be retained within the proposals and will not require nocturnal surveys for bats within the current planning application.



The daytime building inspections were conducted on 17th February 2020 and 7th September 2023, which is an appropriate time of year for daytime inspections. Collins (2016) recommend that buildings with **high** potential roost suitability should be visited nocturnally a minimum of three times, between May and August, with one visit before the end of September. Buildings with **low** potential roost suitability should be visited nocturnally a minimum of once, between May and August, however if bats are found to be using the building as a roost further nocturnal visits will be required. Bat roost types and active periods are described in Table 3.1 of the Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016).

5.5 Other wildlife

Wood pigeons were noted within B2 and B3, crows were also noted within B2. A great tit was noted sheltering under the metal support beam on the eastern elevation of B2. The site offers habitat for other species throughout and sits within a wider area of good habitat. Recommendations for avoiding harm to other protected species have been made in the report *P.1202.19A Ascerta Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report, Former Mondi Site, Holcombe Mill*.

5.6 Evaluation

Buildings B1 - B3 will be lost within the proposals and provides roost potential for cavity and void dwelling bat species, this however is limited as the buildings area unheated and in a deteriorating state of repair. Due to the openness of the building, it is not suitable for maternity or hibernation roosts, however roosting bats were identified within B1 and B2 in 2020 and in B1 in September 2023. The chimney is being retained within the proposals and requires no further surveys for bats.

Features on the buildings within the site have a potential for supporting bat roosts and bats are known to move roosts often. If works are not begun by May 2025, a further daytime assessment or nocturnal survey may be required to confirm bats are not using the buildings as a roost. An application to Natural England will need to be made with regards to acquiring a European Protected Species licence in order that the bat roosts within B1 and B2 can be destroyed in the appropriate manner.

The buildings and vegetation within site provide bird nesting opportunities and mitigation will be required to ensure no net loss of nesting habitat following development. Breeding birds are protected and should not be disturbed during building works or vegetation clearance. In order to avoid harm to nesting birds, vegetation clearance and building works should not be undertaken during the bird breeding season (between 1st March and 31st August). If vegetation needs to be cleared during this period a nesting bird survey will be required, conducted by a suitably qualified ecologist before works begin. If any active nests are observed during the survey, exclusion zones will be set up and works will not occur in these areas until nesting is completed.

6.0 Recommendations and Conclusions

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made such as to satisfy current wildlife guidance and legislation including the NPPF and Policy EN6 of the Bury Council Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

1. A minimum of two nocturnal surveys to be carried out at buildings B1 & B2 by Ascerta in 2024 assess for the presence of roosting bats;
2. A minimum of one nocturnal survey to be carried out at building B3 by Ascerta in 2024 assess for the presence of roosting bats;
3. An application to Natural England for the loss of the identified bat roosts in B1 & B2;
4. The production of a Bat Mitigation Statement, to include a Bat Box Plan to support the Natural England Licence;
5. The roof and ridge tiles should be removed using Reasonable Avoidance Measures to ensure no harm to bats that may roost within the property opportunistically over the summer;
6. Mitigation for loss of bat roosting habitat by the installation of bat boxes / bat bricks integrated within new buildings on the site;
7. Retaining the value of the site for foraging and commuting bats by ensuring lighting does not exceed current levels and is sensitive to the needs of bats. Light spill will need to avoid retained and off-site habitats, through the use of lamps fitted with filters or hoods to reduce light spill. Alternatively, sensors installed so that lighting is only activated when required as per advice within the Bats and Lighting in the UK (2018) document;
8. Works to the building / vegetation clearance should occur outside the period 1st March to 31st August to protect breeding birds, unless an ecologist has confirmed that the actions proposed will not disturb bird breeding on the site; and
9. In order to mitigate for the loss of bird nesting habitat it is recommended that new nesting provision should be included within the proposals.

7.0 References

Ascerta (2019) *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*

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Appendix 1



KEY

 Potential access points

 Buildings

Ascerta
Landscape | Trees | Ecology
t: 0845 463 4404
e: Info@landscapetreeseecology.com
www.landscapetreeseecology.com

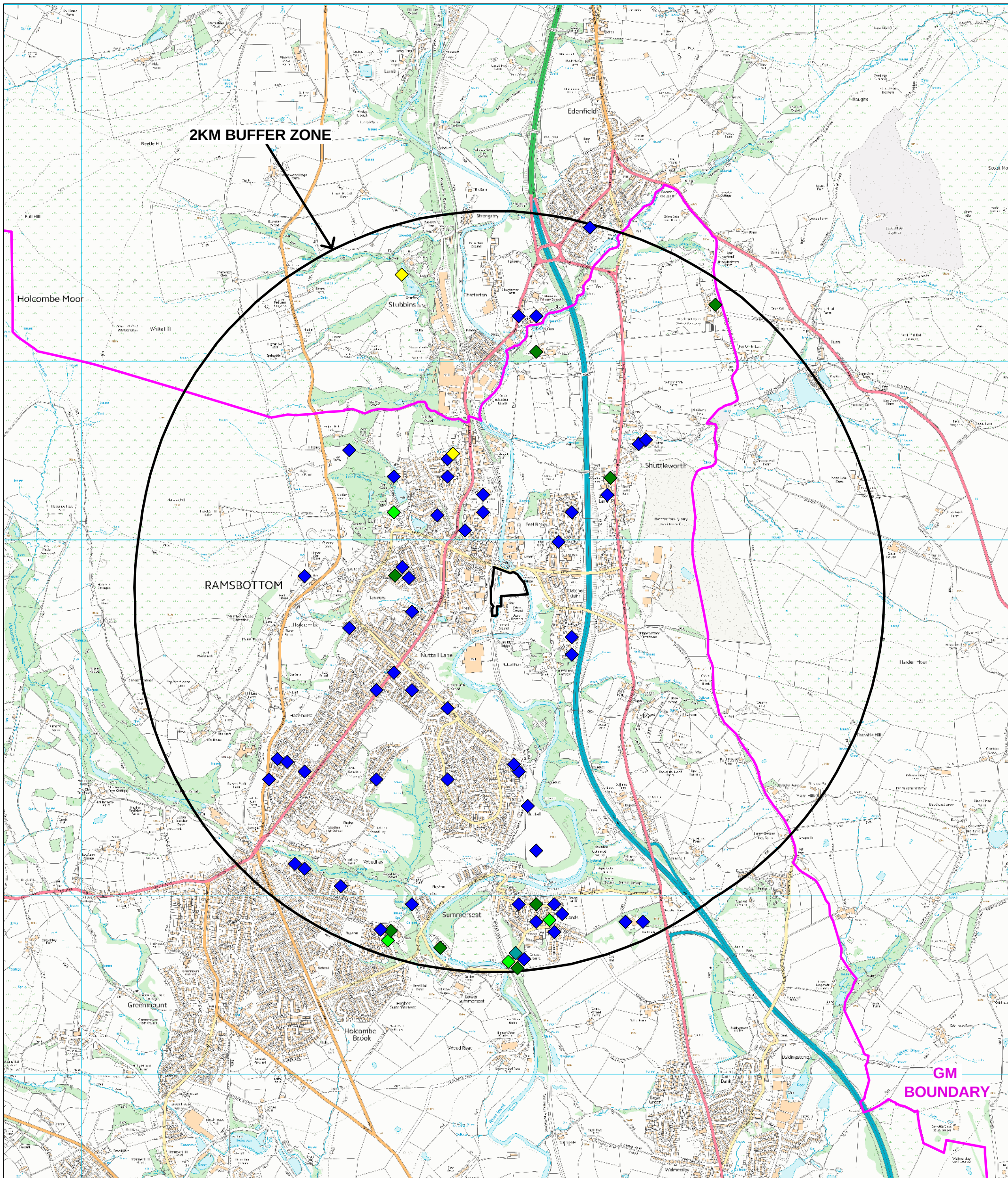
CLIENT:
Eccleston Homes

PROJECT:
Former Mondri Site, (site 1) Holcombe Mill,
Bridge Street, Ramsbottom, BL0 0BS

DRAWING TITLE:
Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

SCALE: NTS@A3	DRAWN BY: TA	DRAWING No: P.1202.19.08
DATE: 17/02/2020	CHKD BY: NE	REV: -

Appendix 2



KEY
BAT ROOSTS

- ◆ BAT SP
- ◆ COMMON PIPISTRELLE
- ◆ PIPISTRELLE SP
- ◆ SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE
- ◆ WHISKERED/BRANDT'S BAT

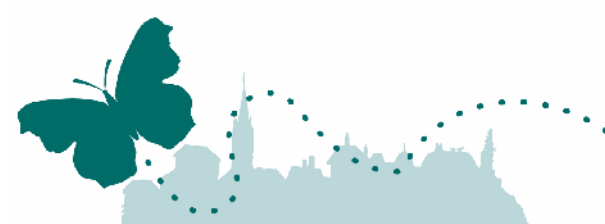
GREATER MANCHESTER ECOLOGY UNIT
ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SD 7939 1675
MONDI HOLCOMBE MILL - MAP 4A

SCALE 1:20,000

BAT DATA COURTESY OF SOUTH LANCS BAT GROUP

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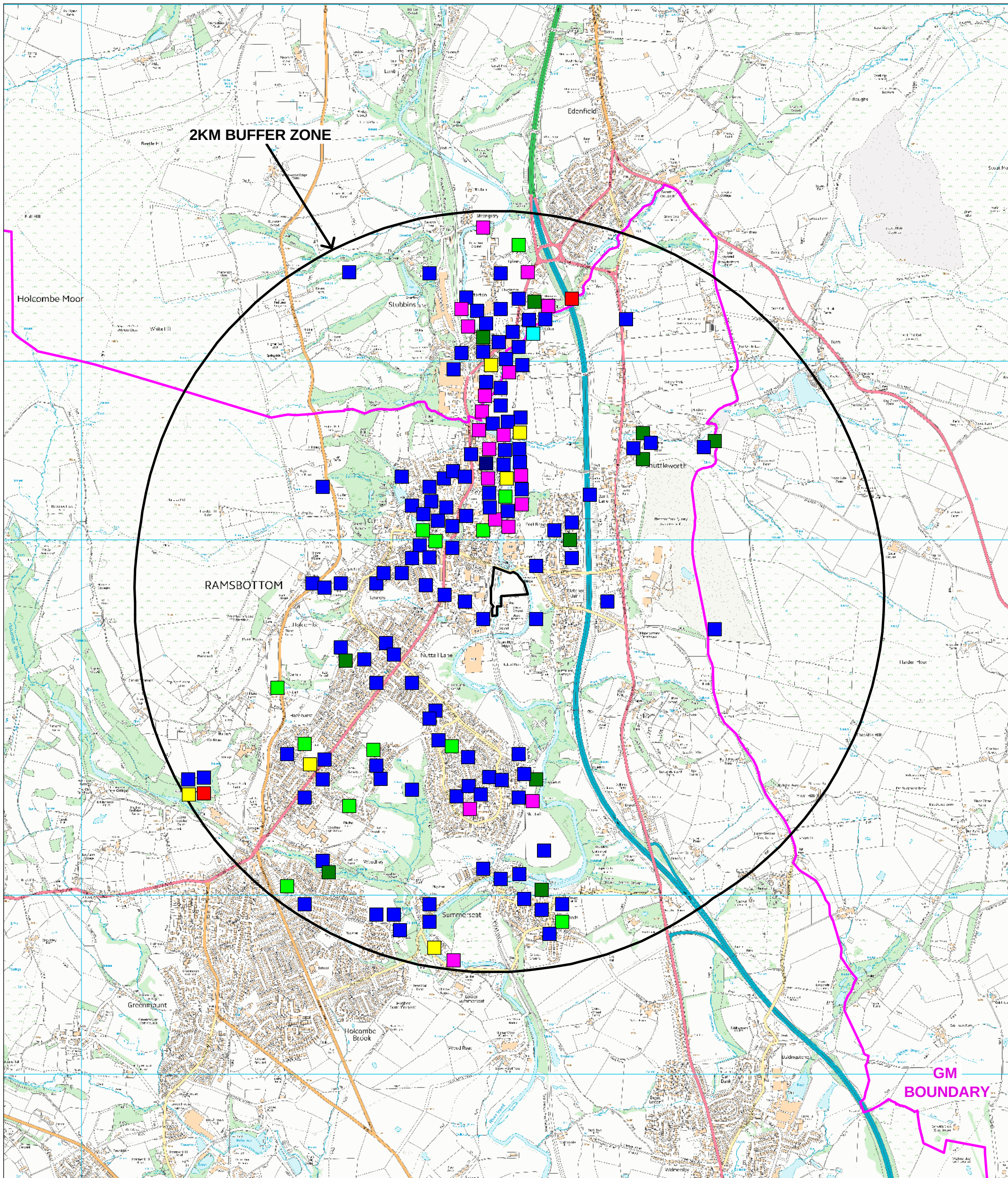
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Greater Manchester
Ecology Unit

Telephone 0161 342 4409
Email: gmeu@tameside.gov.uk

Date Produced: 03/07/2019



**KEY
BAT SIGNS**

- BAT SP
- COMMON PIPISTRELLE
- DAUBENTON'S BAT
- NATHUSIUS'S PIPISTRELLE
- NOCTULE BAT
- PIPISTRELLE SP
- SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE
- WHISKERED BAT

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ECOLOGICAL SEARCH - SD 7939 1675
MONDI HOLCOMBE MILL - MAP 4B**

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**Greater Manchester
Ecology Unit**

Telephone 0161 342 4409
Email: gmeu@tameside.gov.uk

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