

- Protected species survey & licensing
- Habitat survey
- Habitat creation & management
- Arboricultural survey & impact assessment
- Invasive species survey & control
- Management plans

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**Mr & Mrs Abbott,
Abbotts Hall,
Woodhey Road,
Ramsbottom, BL0 9RD.**

Date: 2nd June 2023

For the attention of: Mr. & Mrs. Abbott

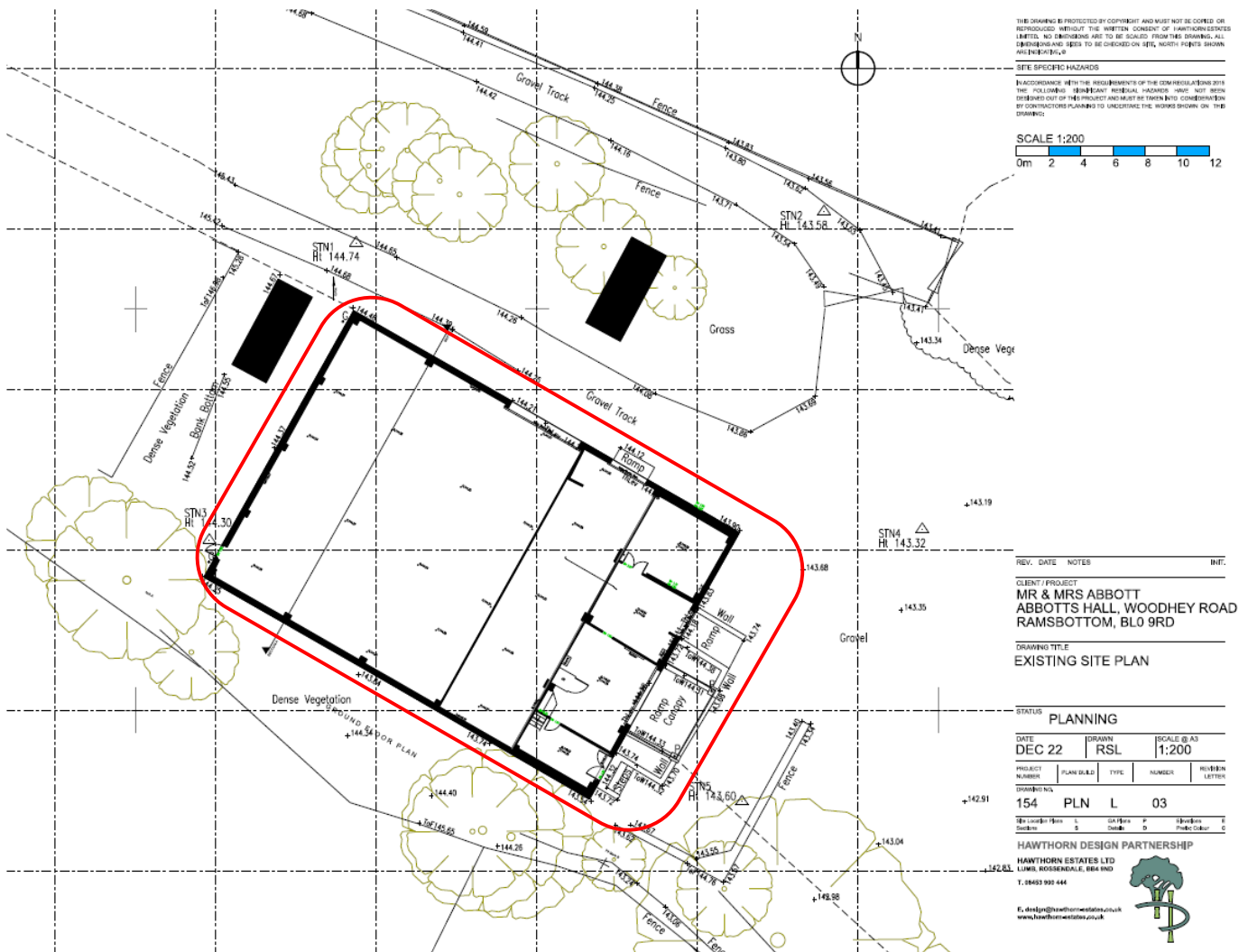
Dear Mr. & Mrs. Abbott,

Re: Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA): ABBOTTS HALL, WOODHEY ROAD RAMSBOTTOM, BL0 9RD.

PENNINE ecological have been commissioned to undertake a PRA at the above property. The purpose of this study is to address any potential issues in relation to bats resulting from conversion of the existing agricultural building to form 3 Class C3 dwellings. The location is shown on the aerial image below.

The PRA was undertaken on May 17th 2023. The sites grid reference is SD 7859 1526. The site location is shown below on a site plan and aerial photograph.





Aerial photograph.

1. Desk Top Study:

A desk top consultation study with Greater Manchester Local Records Centre (GMLRC) was not undertaken for this study.

Non-statutory sites (Sites of Biological Importance, SBI's):

Full details of sites would require a desk top consultation study with Greater Manchester Local Records Centre (GMLRC). However based on GMLRC's mapping app data base there is one SBI approximately 40m SE of the site at its closest point relating to a large area of woodland / stream corridor. There are no other SBI's within 500m of the site.

Statutory Sites:

Details of statutory sites were sought from the Natural England web site search:

<http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

There are no statutory protected wildlife sites within 500m radii of the site.

The West Pennine Moors Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located approximately 1.1Km north west of the site at its closest point;

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1031300>

The Natural England (NE) Impact Risk Zone tool has been reviewed and consultation with NE is not required for the development.

European Protected Species Mitigation Licences:

Details of European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSML) for bats was sought from the Natural England web site search:

<http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

The nearest licence for bats was for common pipistrelle approximately 785m north of the site granted on 01/02/2014 which expired on 01/06/2014.

2. Bat Ecology and Legislation:

Bats are comprehensively protected by European legislation.

All British bats and their roosts¹ 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 and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/579). When dealing with cases where a European Protected Species (EPS) (all UK bats) may be affected, a planning authority is a competent authority within the meaning of the Regulation 7 of the Regulations, that has a statutory duty as the local authority to have due regard to the provisions of the Regulations in the exercise of its functions.

Paragraph 180 of the National Policy Planning Framework (as revised in July 2021) states:

180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) 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;*
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*

¹ 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 and Species Regulations (2019) (EU Exit) (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

- c) *development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁶³ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and,*
- d) *development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*

Use of Buildings by Bats:

- a) Summer breeding roost.
- b) Hibernation.
- 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.

Up to 10 bat species have been regularly recorded in Greater Manchester most of which use built structures, notably occupied residential properties for roosting. The most frequently encountered species is the Pipistrelle bat; its abundant status in Greater Manchester is reflected throughout the UK.

3. Survey Methodology:

A daytime survey was conducted on 17th May 2023.

The building was inspected internally and externally for bat roost potential. The inspection included a search for evidence of bats and potential places / points of internal access that may be of value to bats. The elevations were investigated from ground floor level, with the aid of close focusing binoculars, for places that are frequently used by bats as roosts or as access into roost chambers.

The internal parts of the building were also inspected. It should be noted however that there are no loft spaces associated with the building apart from sealed roof voids at the far south eastern end of the building.

The daytime survey was conducted by Mr. Robert Leatham, who is an experienced ecologist. The results of the survey were discussed with Mr Stuart Macpherson, a highly experienced bat surveyor who holds a Natural England Level 2 Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 **(2021-10079-CL18-BAT)** and is an active member of South Lancashire Bat Group and Derbyshire Bat Group. Mr Macpherson's evaluation of the site and conclusions concur with those of Mr Leatham's.

Constraints:

There are no significant constraints to the survey. All external elevations and internal areas were physically / visually accessible. The sealed roof voids at the far south eastern end of the building were not accessible, however this does not affect the evaluation of the building in terms of bat roost potential.

4. Bat Survey Results:

The building comprises of a lower wall section of approximately 1.8m in height. The wall comprises and internal 'skin' of breeze blocks, a wall cavity and a natural stone outer wall. The upper walls and roof are corrugated steel with no lining or internal insulation, apart from the SE end which is plaster boarded beneath the steel roof.

Potential bat roost features (PRF's) are relatively extensive on all elevations relating primarily to a semi-continuous gap between the top of the lower wall and steel upper walls which exposes / provides potential ingress into the wall cavities. The PRF's recorded are as follows;

North Eastern elevation:

- Semi-continuous gap between the top of the lower wall and steel upper wall which exposes / provides potential ingress into the wall cavity.
- Mortar gap adjacent to a steel roller door.

South Eastern elevation:

- Semi-continuous gap between the top of the lower wall and steel upper wall which exposes / provides potential ingress into the wall cavity.
- Mortar gap adjacent to a steel roller door.

South Western elevation:

- Semi-continuous gap between the top of the lower wall and steel upper wall which exposes / provides potential ingress into the wall cavity.
- Exposed wall cavity around window.

Note, this elevation runs parallel to a tall, mature, unmanaged hedge that lies very close / touches the building in parts.

North Western elevation:

- Semi-continuous gap between the top of the lower wall and steel upper wall which exposes / provides potential ingress into the wall cavity.

Overall these features are defined as having **Moderate bat roost potential**.

Surrounding Habitats:

The site is located in within an area of high quality bat foraging habitats. In the immediate vicinity there are extensive areas of mature woodlands, river corridors and pasture / hedgerows. These extend out into the wider landscape, particularly to the east, north and south.

5. Recommendations:

The property has been categorised as having **Moderate potential** for crevice dwelling bats. It is recommended that a two activity surveys are undertaken. Two dusk emergence surveys are recommended. Each survey must be at least two weeks apart. The surveys are required to establish whether or not bats are using the building and if present how they are using it. The survey will need to be conducted during the main active season of bats i.e. between May – August. Three surveyors will be required to adequately cover the PRF's on each elevation.

Table 7.3 Recommended minimum number of survey visits for presence/absence surveys to give confidence in a negative result for structures (also recommended for trees but unlikely to give confidence in a negative result).		
Low roost suitability	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability
One survey visit. One dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey ^a (structures). No further surveys required (trees).	Two separate survey visits. One dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey. ^b	Three separate survey visits. At least one dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey. The third visit could be either dusk or dawn. ^b

^a Structures that have been categorised as low potential can be problematic and the number of surveys required should be judged on a case-by-case basis (see Section 5.2.9). If there is a possibility that quiet calling, late-emerging species are present then a dawn survey may be more appropriate, providing weather conditions are suitable. In some cases, more than one survey may be needed, particularly where there are several buildings in this category.

^b Multiple survey visits should be spread out to sample as much of the recommended survey period (see Table 7.1) as possible; it is recommended that surveys are spaced at least two weeks apart, preferably more. A dawn survey immediately after a dusk one is considered only one visit.

Following the completion of the bat activity surveys further recommendations will be made in relation to any issues relating to bats and any relevant licensing / mitigation and enhancement for bats.

If you require clarification on any issue, please contact me at the above address.

Yours Faithfully

Robert N. Leatham

Robert N. Leatham, B.Sc. (Hons), P. Dip Countryside Management.

(see photographs on the following pages).

Site Photographs: May 17th 2023



General view of NW elevation.



General view of SE elevation.



General view of NE elevation.



General view of SE/NE elevation.



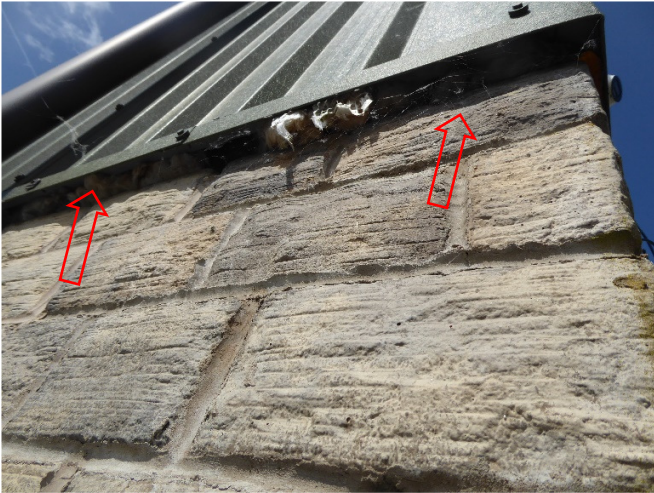
General view of SE elevation.



NE elevation: Hole in masonry leading to wall cavity.



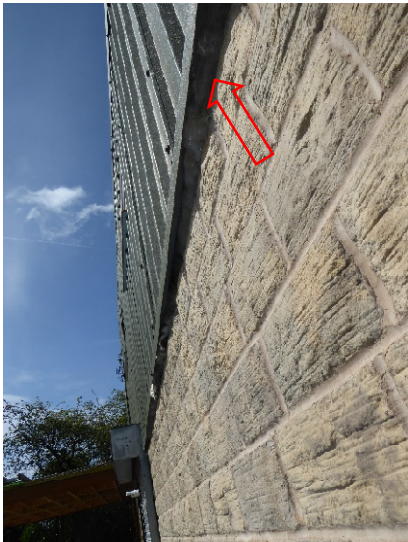
NE elevation: Hole in masonry leading to wall cavity.



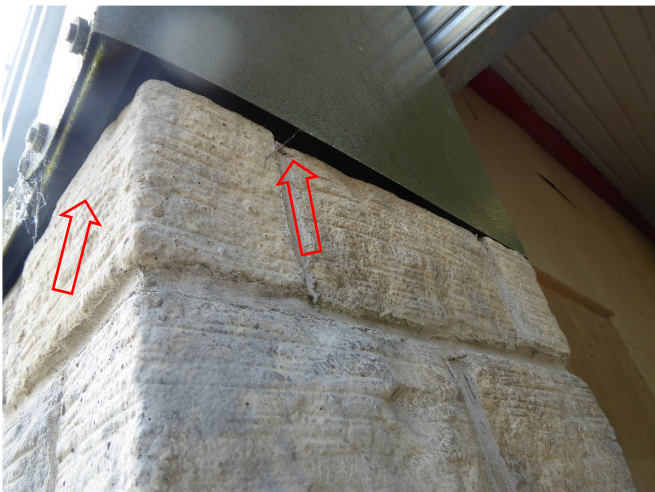
SE elevation corner: Gaps between masonry wall plate and upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity.



NE elevation: Continuous gap between masonry wall plate and upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity.



SE elevation corner: Gaps between masonry wall plate and upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity.



NE elevation: Continuous gap between masonry wall plate and upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity.



SE elevation corner: Gaps between masonry wall plate and upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity.



SW elevation: Localised gaps between masonry wall plate / upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity. Area is very 'cluttered' by adjacent tall mature hedge close to building.



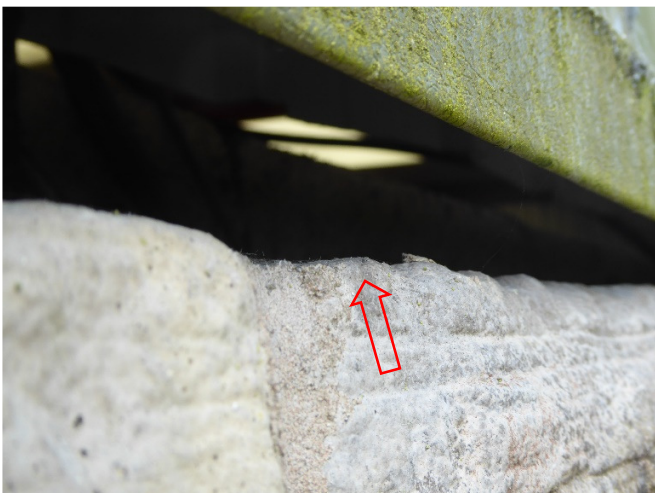
NW elevation: Gaps between masonry wall plate and upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity.



NE / NW elevation corner: Gaps between masonry wall plate and upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity.



NW elevation: Gaps between masonry wall plate and upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity.



NW elevation: Gaps between masonry wall plate and upper steel section walls, leading to wall cavity.



Typical internal area, roof is steel sheeting with no loft space /cavity.



Typical internal area, roof is steel sheeting with no loft space /cavity.



SE end of building where the ceiling is plaster boarded without any access to the roof void / loft.



SE end of building where the ceiling is plaster boarded without any access to the roof void / loft.



Detail showing building wall cavity.



SE end of building where the ceiling is plaster boarded without any access to the roof void / loft.



Typical internal area, roof is steel sheeting with no loft space /cavity.



Detail showing building wall cavity.