BAT ACTIVITY SURVEY RESULTS REPORT

OLIVE MOUNT FARM,
ASTLEY ROAD,
IRLAM

AUGUST 2025

Bat Activity Survey Results Report

Olive Mount Farm,
Astley Road,
Irlam

A report for

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1.0	Luke Pilling QCIEEM	Patrick Leatham MCIEEM	Final report	19/08/2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR SURVEY

PENNINE ecological have been commissioned by Rachel Pike to undertake bat presence/absence surveys of the properties at Olive Mount Farm, Irlam. The surveys were completed to provide updated survey data following surveys completed at the property in 2021 and 2024. Two additional surveys have been completed in 2025.

The survey was undertaken to determine whether the proposals to renovate the property and adjacent barns, would result in adverse impacts to bats which may potentially be roosting within the building.

The results, conclusions and recommendations following the surveys, including any indicative mitigation to inform an application to Natural England for a European protected species mitigation licence (EPSML), where necessary, will be supplied within this report.

In accordance with Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development (*CIEEM et al, 2019*), measures have been recommended proportionate to anticipated impacts to ensure that the proposed development results in a biodiversity net gain.

Information pertaining to bat legislation and planning policy is included in Appendix A.

1.2 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The buildings subject to survey are the dwelling and adjacent barn building at Olive Mount Farm, Astley Road, Irlam, M44 5LU. These are highlighted in red in Figure 1.1. The Dutch barn to the south west of these buildings was reassessed and was confirmed as having negligible bat roost potential as per previous assessments (Pennine Ecological, 2021). The Dutch barn is highlighted in yellow in Figure 1.1.

The Ordnance Survey central grid reference for the dwelling is SJ 70005 96298 and the barn is SJ 69979 96289. An aerial image of the building subject to survey is shown below.

Figure 1.1: Aerial image of buildings at Olive Mount Farm, Irlam.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 SURVEY METHODS

Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn) Collins, J. Bat Conservation Trust (2023) states:-

> **Expertise and professional judgement**
>
> **1.1.3 The guidelines do not aim to either override or replace knowledge and experience.**
>
> **1.1.4 It is accepted that departures from the guidelines (e.g. either decreasing or increasing the number of surveys carried out or using alternative methods) are often appropriate.**
>
> **1.1.5 However, in such scenarios an ecologist should provide evidence of (a) their expertise in making this judgement and (b) the ecological rationale behind the judgement.**
>
> **1.1.6 Equally, it would be inappropriate for someone with no knowledge or experience to read these guidelines and expect to be able to design, carry out, interpret the results of and report on professional surveys, simply by following the guidelines without the ability to apply any professional judgement.**
>
> **1.1.7 Training and experience is necessary to carry out *all of the surveys* described in these guidelines and interpret the survey results appropriately (see para 2.5.1 onwards).**

The survey methods have been determined using the experience of the surveyors and knowledge of the specific nature of the site.

Two dusk emergence surveys were undertaken on the 3rd June and 27th June 2025. This is considered to be within the main active season for bats (April to September inclusive).

The number of surveys and surveyors was adequate relative to the roost potential that was identified for the site i.e., moderate potential and requiring two surveys by six surveyors to monitor potential roost features (PRF's) on the property at any one time.

Surveys were undertaken in good weather conditions and there were no visual constraints. Surveyors observed the roost features for at least 15 minutes prior to sunset and 1 hour 30 minutes after sunset.

The surveyor was aided with bat detection equipment (EMTouch) that would enable surveyors to locate and record high frequency bat calls that are emitted by bats. The surveyor was also aided with an infrared night vision camera (Nightfox Whisker Binoculars) to assist visually observing the features once light levels dropped. The recordings were analysed following the survey to verify field observations.

The survey was completed by the following people:

- Stuart Macpherson BSc (Hons) ACIEEM – Ecological consultant with over 15 years' experience of undertaking bat surveys (preliminary roost assessments, bat activity surveys, and bat transect surveys). Class 2 Bat licence (2021-10079-CL18-BAT). Lead surveyor on these surveys. Lead surveyor for the surveys.

- Patrick Leatham BSc (Hons) MCIEEM – Ecological consultant with over 13 years' experience of undertaking bat surveys (preliminary roost assessments, bat activity surveys, and bat transect surveys). Accredited agent on Stuart Macpherson's bat licence (2021-10079-CL18-BAT).

- Holly Spencer (ACIEEM) – Seasonal ecologist with over six years' survey experience undertaking bat emergence surveys.

- David Scott - Seasonal ecologist with three years' survey experience undertaking bat emergence surveys.

- Luke Pilling – Assistant ecologist with three years' survey experience undertaking bat emergence surveys and preliminary roost assessments.

- Chris Leatham - Seasonal ecologist with two years' survey experience undertaking bat emergence surveys.

- Amber Sheehan - Seasonal ecologist with one years' survey experience undertaking bat emergence surveys.

- Zachary Thomas - Seasonal ecologist with one years' survey experience undertaking bat emergence surveys.

2.2 SURVEY LIMITATIONS

The surveys were undertaken in suitable weather conditions and within the recommended BCT survey timeframes. There are no survey limitations associated with this report.

3. RESULTS

3.1 BAT ACTIVITY SURVEY RESULTS

Survey details including dates, times and weather conditions are provided in Table 3.1 and the results of the dusk surveys provided in Table 3.2. An image of the bat roost location and overview of bat activity encountered for each survey is provided in Figures 3.1 to 3.4.

Table 3.1: Bat Activity Survey Details

Time of Survey	Sunset/Sunrise Time	Date	Weather Conditions
21:16 – 23:01	21:31	03/06/2025	Cloud (oktas): 8 Wind (Beaufort): 1 Rainfall: no rain Start temp: 12°C End temp: 12°C
21:27 – 23:12	21:42	27/06/2025	Cloud (oktas): 8 Wind (Beaufort): 12 Rainfall: no rain Start temp: 22°C End temp: 21°C

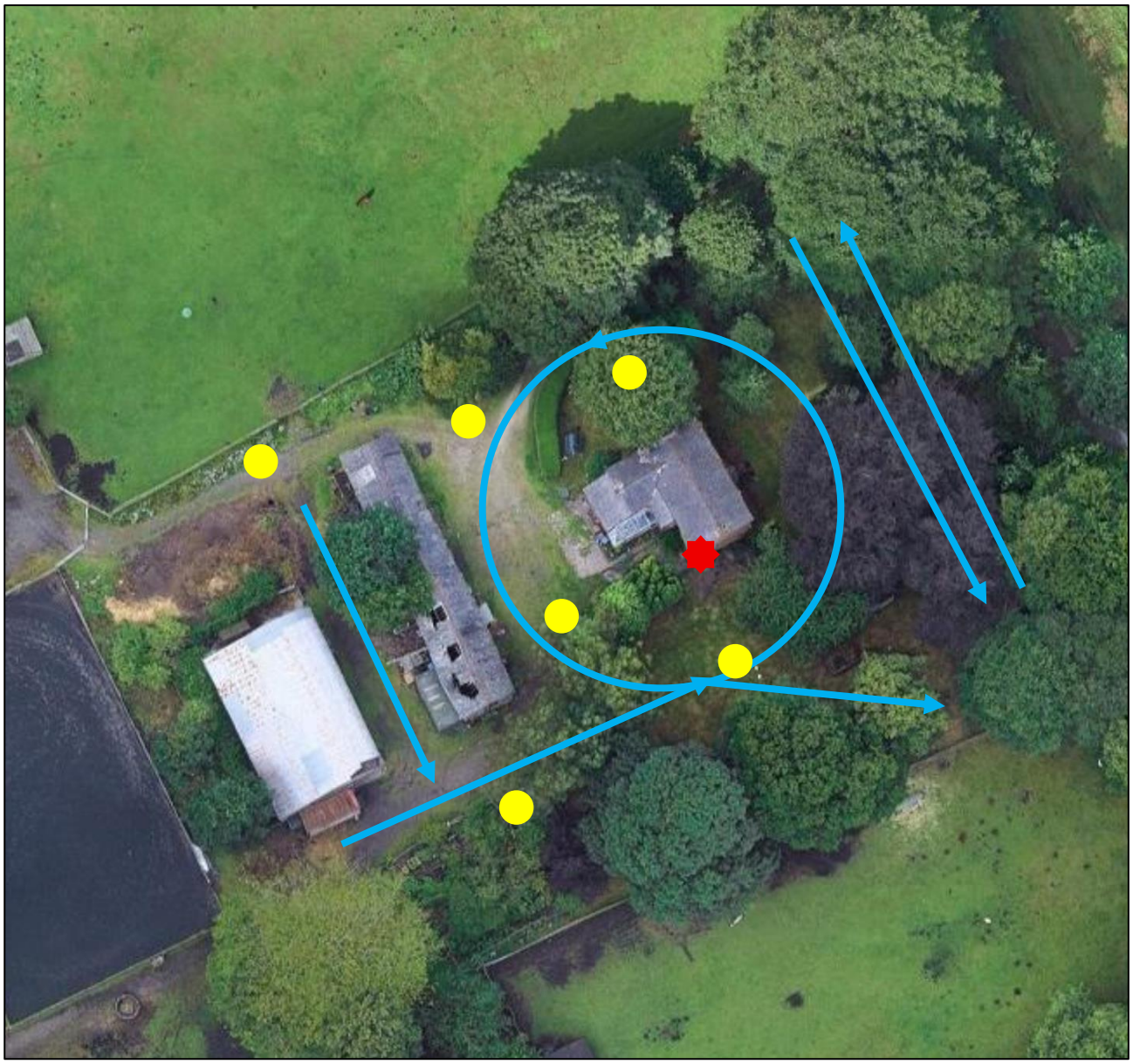
Table 3.2: Bat Activity Survey Results

Survey Results	Time	Species	Activity
Dusk survey 1 03/06/2025	**21:16 – 23:01**	**Summary: 2no. bat emergence. Moderate bat activity.**	
	21:47	Soprano pipistrelle	First bat seen, foraging south of site.
	21:53	**Soprano pipistrelle**	**1no. bat emergence from southern elevation of the dwelling. Fig 3.1, Ref A.**
	22:02	**Soprano pipistrelle**	**1no. bat emergence from southern elevation of the dwelling. Fig 3.1, Ref A.**
	22:02 – 22:36	Common and Soprano pipistrelle	3no. bats foraging around the site. Common pathways around the garden east of the dwelling
	22:19	Soprano pipistrelle	Foraging south of the dwelling.
	22:34	Myotis	Heard not seen.
	22:38	Soprano pipistrelle	Heard not seen.

Survey Results	Time	Species	Activity
	22:53	Common pipistrelle	Foraging south of the site.
Dusk survey 2 27/06/2025	**21:27 – 23:12**	**Summary: 2no. bat emergence. Low bat activity.**	
	21:47	**Soprano pipistrelle**	**1no. bat emergence from southern elevation of the dwelling. Fig 3.1, Ref A.**
	21:53	**Soprano pipistrelle**	**1no. bat emergence from southern elevation of the dwelling. Fig 3.1, Ref A.**
	21:59	Soprano pipistrelle	Foraging around the garden southeast of dwelling.
	22:18	Common pipistrelle	Foraging in trees east of the site.
	22:21	Common pipistrelle	Commuting, flew from west and headed east.
	22:21 – 22:48	Soprano pipistrelle	1no. bat occasional foraging around the dwelling and garden east and south of the dwelling.
	22:34	Myotis	Heard not seen.
	22:49	Noctule	Heard not seen.

Figure 3.1: Bat emergence location point

Figure 3.2: Surveyor Positions and Bat activity across both surveys



Surveyor Positions	
Emergence Location	
Common Flight Paths	

Figure 3.2: 03/06/2025 Visit 1 Dusk Survey Results

Figure 3.3: 27/06/2025 Visit 2 Dusk Survey Results

4. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 BAT SURVEY CONCLUSION

From the surveys undertaken, it can be concluded that the dwelling at Olive Mount Farm is being used by at least 2no. soprano pipistrelle bat for roosting purposes. Based upon the evidence, the dwelling is host to a 'Day Roost' for soprano pipistrelle.

The BCT good practice guidelines describe a 'Day roost' as: "a place where individual bats, or small groups of males, rest or shelter in the day but are rarely found by night in the summer."

The proposals will involve renovations to the building which are anticipated to be damage / destroy the 'Day roost'.

Appropriate mitigation will be required to ensure compliance with current legal legislation and conservation policy. A European Protected Species Mitigation Licence will be required to legally destroy a place that is actively used for breeding, resting, or sheltering by bats.

However, before a licence can be applied for, all planning issues must be resolved. In order that the Local Planning Authority LPA can implement its obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/579), appropriate and proportionate mitigation will need to accompany the planning application which will demonstrate that the "favourable conservation" of the species concerned can be maintained (see below).

From the evidence gained during the surveys, the site is considered to be of 'low' conservation significance for the soprano pipistrelle species[1]. Therefore, the proposed mitigation is proportionate to this assessment. If at any time the assessment of the roost is revised to a higher level, the mitigation will be revised accordingly.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS / MITIGATION

The following procedures and mitigation recommendations are designed to allow the LPA, in association with their ecological advisers, to determine a Planning Application where a European Protected Species has been identified and will be affected by the work for which the Planning Application seeks consent.

In addition, Local Planning Authorities in accordance with the obligations placed upon them by way of their duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/579) have to take into consideration the presence of a European Protected Species before determination of an application where it/they have been identified.

[1] Significance level based on information provided in *English Nature: Bat Mitigation Guidelines, 2004*. Bats and their current status

The LPA need to consider the mitigation in relation to the potential success of a Natural England licence application and/or if in their opinion the mitigation is considered as being appropriate, or if it is over and above what is required; if they determine that the mitigation is appropriate then a Planning Condition should be attached requiring the roost provision to be implemented.

If the LPA consider that the mitigation is over what is necessary but require "enhancement" as part of their Local Biodiversity/Net-Gain Planning Policies this should be included in the terms of Consent. The acting bat ecologist deems the proposed new roost creation as appropriate and not over and above what is required.

Notwithstanding that Planning Consent is granted or equally if the work is undertaken outside of the planning system, whereby projects that do not require planning consent may affect bats or their roost, including disturbance, it does not absolve the applicant, site owner, developer or any other party involved with the work from ensuring that an application is made for a Natural England development licence, to legally undertake work that will affect bat(s) or their roost(s).

If work is undertaken without a licence and bat(s) or their roost(s) is/are affected, then a breach of current wildlife legislation will occur for which penalties are severe.

4.2.1 Summary of Mitigation

The mitigation proposals outlined in this report are seen to be the most productive way forward that will retain long term roosting opportunities for bats.

There will be very localised changes to the garden landscape around the buildings. However, there is not thought to be any significant changes to the adjacent habitats beyond the site boundary and thus impacts to foraging or commuting habitat is anticipated to be minor.

To ensure that bats are not left without a roost while the work takes place, 1no. Schwegler 2F bat box or Schwegler 2FN bat box (or suitable equivalents) will be mounted on a tree within the garden of the site, all of which is under the ownership of the client. It is recommended that any of the mature trees to the south or east of the building are used for the location of the bat box. The box will act as receptors should bats have to be captured and relocated during the work schedule.

The receptor bat box will act as receiver boxes if bats have to be captured by hand and relocated to them by the ecologist during the work schedule; they will be retained permanently post-development to provide permanent roost opportunities for bats.

4.2.2 Assigned Ecological Clerk of Works

At the pre-commencement stage, a suitably qualified ecologist will provide an induction 'toolbox talk' on possible bat presence and present/discuss document features taken from the licence i.e., Licence, Method Statement, Mitigation Figures and Work Schedule to be kept on site for the duration of the work.

Prior to any work being undertaken the presence/absence of bats will be established (as far as is possible) by undertaking detailed investigation of the areas at which bats have been observed using the building; typically, in the south elevation of the building around the security light. The ecologist will supervise careful dismantling of all places that will be removed as part of the proposed work which have been identified as offering roost access or roost potential at the ecologist discretion.

All dismantling of roost features will be undertaken during favourable weather conditions.

Additional lighting which will be installed must be directed away from any bat roost access points, flight paths and foraging areas.

Mitigation proposed is subject to the approval of the Natural England EPS team; all proposed roost provisions outlined hereafter will be dedicated for bats and permanent.

(i) Work undertaken by the Ecologist

Capture / Exclusion

Once an EPSML licence is in place, the contractor will provide a safe means of access to allow the ecologist to investigate the confirmed roost area for bat presence. The ecologist will supervise careful dismantling of all places that will be removed as part of the proposed work which have been identified as offering roost access or roost potential at the ecologist discretion

In addition, wherever opportunities for bats exist in other parts of the buildings and structures the supervised dismantling will extend to these areas at the discretion of the ecologist in attendance. A bat licenced ecologist may need to oversee the works until they are satisfied that there is a low likelihood of bats being present within.

In the event of bat(s) being present, it/they will be removed, placed in a secure box with soft tissue and immediately transferred into the receptor bat boxes that will have previously been erected on a suitable feature. Once it has been established by the ecologist that bat(s) are absent the works will continue to completion.

In the unlikely event that bats are found outside of supervision time, then as legal requirement and conditions of the granted licence work will immediately cease and the ecologist contacted for further advice; contractors must not touch, handle or in any way cause bats to move.

(ii) Work undertaken by the Contractor

A number of viable ingress points and roosting opportunities were identified at Olive Mount Farm, notably including lifted slates and gaps in the eaves which will be lost during the demolition and gaps within the barn structure and also direct access internally to the barn. New roost provision is therefore recommended to be built into the design of the proposed works (to be finalised subject to the provision of development plans during the EPSML application process):

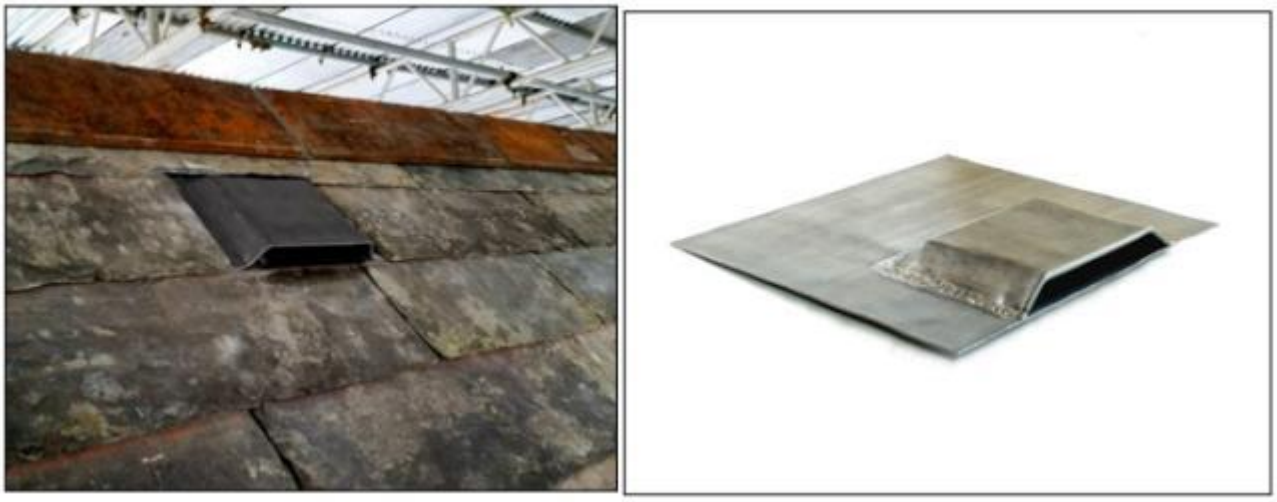
- Multiple bat access points will be integrated into the new buildings;

- As part of this roost creation process it is imperative that traditional bitumen 1F roofing felt will be the chosen underfelt/roof lining as opposed to any breathable roofing membrane (BRM). Modern breathable roofing membranes (BRM) entrap bats through wear and tear in the synthetic polymers used to protect the breathable membrane causing bats harm, injury, and death. Where bitumen 1F felt is not the chosen roof lining for the building, an area of the felt may be instated in a 1m2 area around the access points; however, this must be separated from the rest of the roof space using timber roofing batons to prevent bats moving out of this area.

Bat Access Slates

Lead access slates create an integrated access point within stone or slate tiles. These slates should be positioned where bats have been seen emerging from the roof (Figure 4.1).

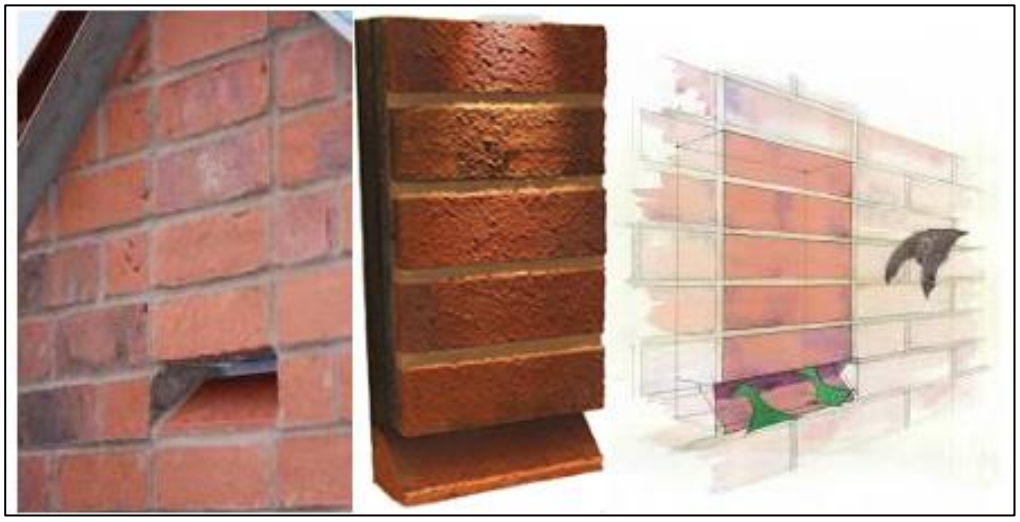
Figure 4.1: Image showing bat access slates



Integrated Bat Boxes

The Habibat Bat Box (Figure 4.2) is a solid box made of insulating concrete with internal roosting space. The box blends seamlessly into brick-built properties and may be incorporated into the fabric of a building. The bat bricks should be placed with the entrance holes at the top, at wall plate level, and on the south-eastern section of any new buildings.

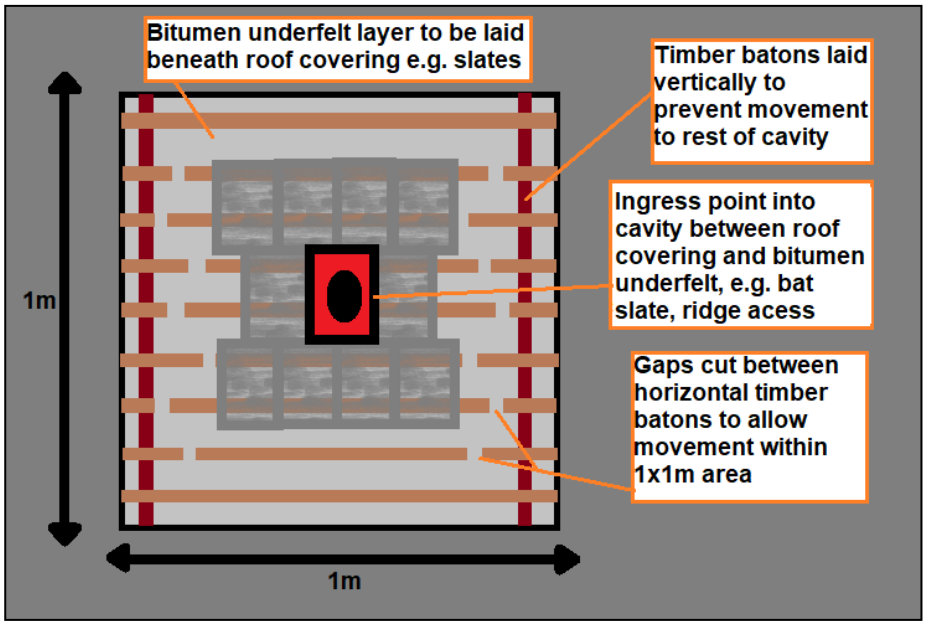
Figure 4.2: Image showing Integrated bat boxes



Traditional Bitumen 1F Roofing Felt

It is imperative that traditional bitumen 1F roofing felt will be used as the chosen local underfelt/roof lining, as opposed to any breathable roofing membrane (BRM) (Figure 8). Modern BRM entrap bats through wear and tear in the synthetic polymers used to protect the breathable membrane causing bats harm, injury, and death. Where bitumen 1F felt is not the chosen roof lining for the building, it is essential that there is no access to areas lined with BRM from the ingress point (i.e. integrated bat box). An area of the felt may be instated in a 1m^2 area around the ingress point; however, this must be separated from the rest of the roof space using timber roofing batons to prevent bats moving out of this area.

Figure 4.3: Layout of felt around an ingress point



4.2.3 Further Design Recommendations

(i) External Lighting

In all cases illumination of peripheral boundary areas should be avoided. Where lighting is required, this must be low level, low intensity and directed downwards away from boundaries. In particular, direct lighting of the northern and eastern boundaries should be avoided. The following principles will apply;

- Where and if lighting is required, this will be directed internally within the site avoiding spillage towards boundary habitats.
- The use of low powered sodium lights or similar will be used and these will be fitted with cowls / covers that prevent lateral light spillage towards boundary habitats.
- Wherever possible and only if required low level (1-1.5m high) bollard lighting will be used.
- If required lights will be fitted with timer controls that minimise the duration of lighting.

Lighting requirements will follow guidance provided by the Bat Conservation Trust; links are provided below.

- Bat Conservation Trust's Artificial Lighting Guidance. Webpage link https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting
- Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK. Webpage link https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/

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Appendix A: Bat Legislation and Policy

Legislation

All British bats and their roosts[2] 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.

The relevant sections of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) make it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy any structure or place which any wild animal specified in Schedule 5 uses for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection.

The relevant sections of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 make it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure, or kill any wild animal of a European Protected Species;
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species; and,
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

Where it is likely that the scheme would result in contravention of this legislation, a bat mitigation licence would be required to allow the works to proceed. As part of this process, the application must meet 'three tests' for licencing under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019. Planning guidance and case law also require the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to address these three tests when deciding whether to grant planning permission. The three tests are as follows:

- Regulation 55 (2) (e) states that a derogation license can only be issued for preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;
- Regulation 55 (9) (a): that there is no satisfactory alternative; and
- Regulation 55 (9) (b): that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

Policy

[2] 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

Section 15, Paragraph 193 of the National Policy Planning Framework (as revised in December 2024) states:

193. 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;

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 reasons 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.

<u>Bats in Greater Manchester</u>

Up to ten bat species have been recorded in Greater Manchester, most of which use built structures (e.g., residential properties, bridges, and culverts) as well as features in trees (e.g., knot holes, woodpecker holes, peeling bark and torn limbs). The most frequently encountered species are the common and soprano pipistrelle bats; their abundant status in Greater Manchester is reflected throughout the UK.