

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Adult Education Centre, Spring Bank, New Mills, High Peak, SK22 4AZ

Client:

Boss Prop Limited

Survey date:

21st May 2025

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion.

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the High Peak Borough Council. The proposal is described as:

“The conversion of two on-site existing buildings into apartments.”

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

Site Location and Context					
National grid reference: SK 00041 85853. Size of survey area: two on-site vacant buildings surrounded by hardstanding – ~0.296ha. On-site habitats: two on-site vacant buildings surrounded by hardstanding. Immediate surroundings are dwellings and gardens with pockets of woodland. High value for foraging and commuting bats. Surrounding habitats (within 2km): deciduous woodland, traditional orchard, good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland meadow, ancient woodland, lowland fens, and open mosaic habitat, as well as watercourses and ponds. High value for foraging and commuting bats. Designated sites: ▪ On-site – None. ▪ Within 2km – Mousley Bottom Local Nature Reserve (LNR) – ~0.67km southwest – (woodland and wetland), Watford Lodge LNR – ~0.72km northeast – (marsh habitat which supports amphibians and birds), and Goytside Meadows LNR – ~0.96km south – (unimproved and semi-natural acid and neutral grassland, marsh/wet grassland, semi-natural broad-leaved woodland, scrub and hedgerow). ▪ Within a 10km radius (bat SACs only) – None.					
Survey Details					
The site survey was undertaken by Jessica Sibley BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist and accredited agent on Class 2 Natural England bat licence: 2024-12491-CL18-BAT, to undertake level 1 activities.					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
22/05/2025	15	66	10	10	None
Executive Summary					
Bats:					

- **B1 and B2:** One bat emergence survey is required during the active bat season (optimal May to August) to establish the presence or likely absence of bat roosts within the buildings.

Nesting birds:

- Commencement of the works should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the buildings should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged.
- Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged.

Survey limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood, and the known distribution of species as recovered during the desk study.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

No proposed development plans were available at the time of writing this report and therefore a detailed impact assessment could not be made. This report should be updated once the plans are available.

PRA Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey. Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.														
See PRA plan in Appendix 1, location plan in Appendix 2, and proposed plans in Appendix 3.															
Summary of Survey Findings	<u>European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) data:</u> A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roost sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There are two EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site as detailed below: <table><tr><th>EPSL reference</th><th>Bat species affected</th><th>Distance from site</th><th>Impacts allowed by licence</th></tr><tr><td>2016-21387-EPS-MIT</td><td>Brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, natterer’s</td><td>~1.2km south</td><td>Destruction of a resting place</td></tr><tr><td>EPSM2012-5300</td><td>Brown long eared</td><td>~1.6km northwest</td><td>Destruction of a breeding site and resting place</td></tr></table> There are no Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated for bats within 10km of the site. <u>Foraging and commuting habitat:</u> Habitats recorded on-site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of developed sealed surfaces, of negligible value for foraging and commuting bats. Gardens, grassland, patches of woodland, treelines, and			EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence	2016-21387-EPS-MIT	Brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, natterer’s	~1.2km south	Destruction of a resting place	EPSM2012-5300	Brown long eared	~1.6km northwest	Destruction of a breeding site and resting place
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scattered trees extend beyond the site adding to vegetated linear features present in the wider landscape. Bats are well known to utilise linear features to aid navigation whilst travelling between foraging resources and roost sites. <u>Roosting habitat:</u> Buildings to be impacted by the proposed development are assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats below. There are a total of two buildings on-site: the main vacant education centre (B1), and one vacant outbuilding (B2). No evidence of roosting bats was identified along or within the on-site buildings.			
B1 - description			Photographs
Summary B1 is a large double-storey vacant stone-built building with a pitched and gabled roof clad in slate roof tiles, with an area of flat roof clad in bitumen. The building will be converted into apartments as part of the proposed works, with loft spaces converted. The building is generally in excellent condition, however, there is gapping along the eaves of the north and west elevations which could support low numbers of bats for roosting along crevices/cavities along the wall tops. There is also slight gapping along the tiles of a section of the west elevation roof structure which could support low numbers of crevice-dwelling species. The building is unlikely to support a maternity or hibernation roost. Based on the features present, suitable for low numbers of void or crevice-dwelling species, the building has low roost value.			
Feature	Materials	Condition/description/suitability	Photograph(s)

Walls	Stone and mortar	Condition/description: No suitable crevices or cavities were recorded along the supporting walls, which were found to be intact and in very good condition. Suitability/access/evidence of bats: No suitable features or evidence were recorded.	
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Roof	Slate and bitumen	Condition/description: The majority of the roof tiles were found to be in excellent condition, with a new roof recently installed in places. However, slight gapping was recorded along a section of the west elevation roof structure which could support low numbers of crevice-dwelling species (e.g., pipistrelles). The mortar along roof verges and flat areas of bitumen roof were found to be intact and in very good condition. Suitability/access/evidence of bats: Space under tiles could accommodate crevice-dwelling bat ingress with roosting opportunities between the roof tiles. Could support low numbers of crevice-dwelling species.	 
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Eaves	Open	Condition/description: Gaps were recorded along the north and west elevation eaves, which could support low numbers of void or crevice-dwelling species for roosting along crevices/cavities along the wall tops. Suitability/access/evidence of bats Provides possible bat access into internal voids and crevices along the wall tops. Could support low numbers of void or crevice-dwelling species.	

			
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Window/ door frames	Wooden	Condition/description: Tight fitting. Suitability/access/evidence of bats: No suitable features or evidence were recorded.	
Internal voids	Timber rafters and ridge beams. Open floor to ridge. Breathable membrane roof lining. Fibre wool insulation.	Condition/description: There are two accessible loft voids within B1, with other areas of the roof structure vaulted or with suspended ceilings. Internal spaces measure approximately ~16-25m long, ~4m wide, floor to ridge height ~1.5m. The roof structures are lined with breathable membrane which appears tight fitting. The void is suitable for void-dwelling species, though no points of ingress or bat droppings were recorded internally of the voids. ❖ Temperature readings: 23.5-29.8°C ❖ Humidity readings: 55.656.6%	

		Suitability/access/evidence of bats: No evidence of roosting bats was recorded within the loft voids, though evidence could be concealed between the roof tiles and roof lining.	
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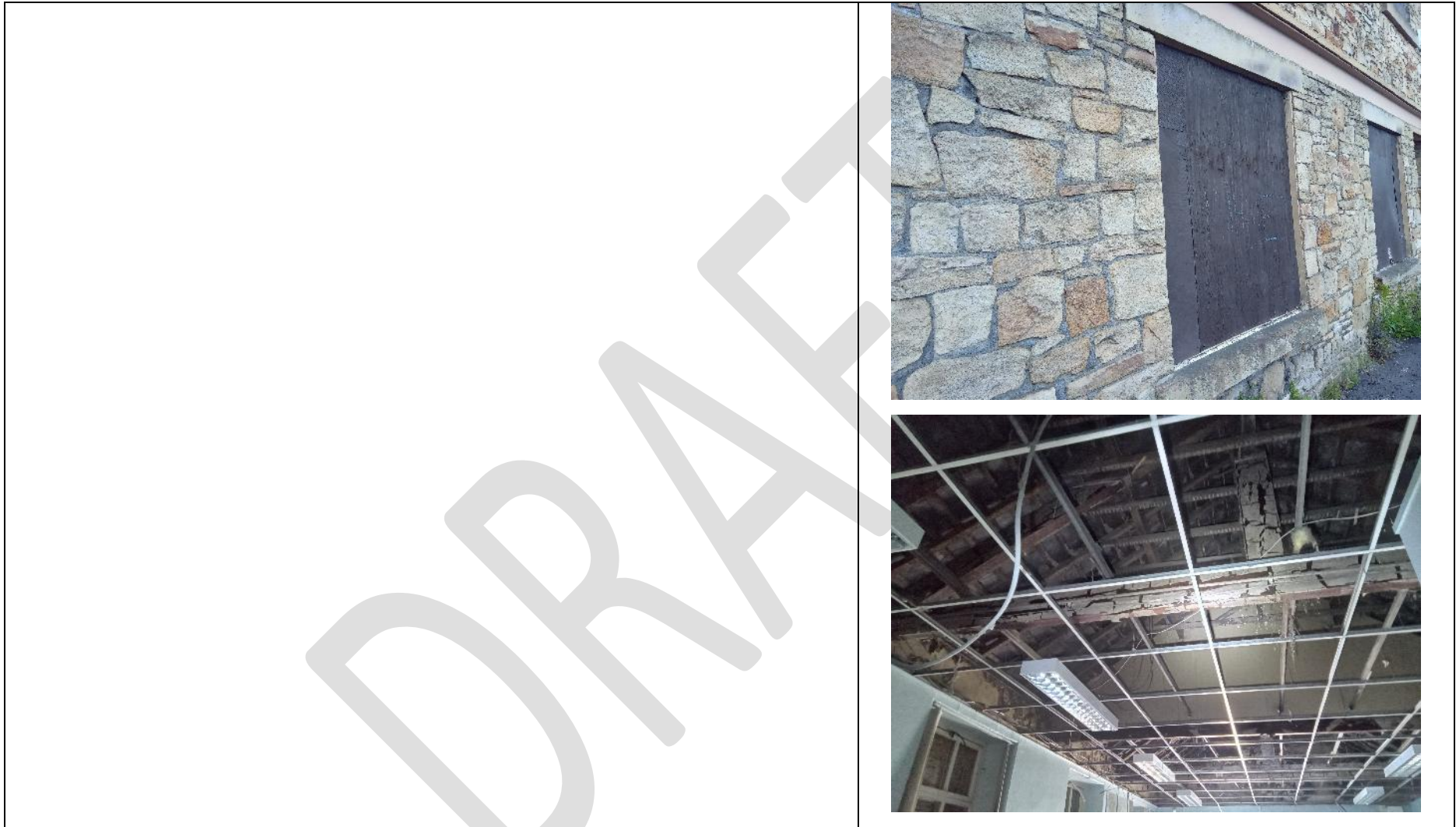
			
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<i>B2 - description</i>			<i>Photographs</i>
<i>Summary</i> B2 is a vacant stone-built outbuilding with a pitched and gabled roof clad in slate roof tiles. The building will be converted into apartments as part of the proposed works. Shallow crevices were recorded along the north elevation supporting wall, which could support low numbers of crevice-dwelling species. Missing mortar along the roof verges of the north and south elevations was also recorded, which could support low numbers of void or crevice-dwelling species roosting along the supporting wall tops. A lifted ridge tile was also recorded centrally of the building, with potential gapping along the eaves of the east elevation, which could support low numbers of crevice-dwelling species (ridge tile), or void or crevice-dwelling species (gaps along eaves). The windows have boarding across which appears tight fitting with no suitable features recorded. The internal void measures			

approximately ~13m long, by ~8m wide, floor to ridge height ~10m. The void is open, with roof tiles unlined. No droppings or other evidence of roosting bats were recorded internally. Daylight spill enters the space via a skylight which could deter void-dwelling species internally of the void. The building is unlikely to support a maternity or hibernation roost. Based on the features present, suitable for low numbers of void or crevice-dwelling species, the building has **low roost value**.







	
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<u>Roosting habitat:</u> B1: The proposed development will result in the conversion of this building into apartments. This could result in the destruction of any bat roosts present and could cause disturbance, death, or injury to bats. B2: The proposed development will result in the conversion of this building into apartments. This could result in the destruction of any bat roosts present and could cause disturbance, death, or injury to bats. <u>Foraging and commuting habitat:</u> The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats. However, the proposed development may include the use of lighting which could spill onto bat roosting, foraging, or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.

<i>Recommendations</i>	<u>Roosting habitat:</u> B1: One bat emergence survey is required during the active bat season (optimal May to August, suboptimal September) to confirm presence or likely-absence of a bat roost in the building. Infra-red cameras should be used as an aid. Seven surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building. If the absence of a bat roost cannot be determined during the first visit, then further surveys will be required. If bat roosts are confirmed in the building additional surveys may be required to characterise the roost and to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. Surveys should be a minimum of three weeks apart. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission., to inform the EPSL application. Biological records data will also need to be obtained to inform the application. B2: One bat emergence survey is required during the active bat season (optimal May to August, suboptimal September) to confirm presence or likely-absence of a bat roost in the building. Infra-red cameras should be used as an aid. Two surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building. If the absence of a bat roost cannot be determined during the first visit, then further surveys will be required. If bat roosts are confirmed in the building additional surveys may be required to characterise the roost and to inform an EPSL application to Natural England. Surveys should be a minimum of three weeks apart. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission., to inform the EPSL application. Biological records data will also need to be obtained to inform the application.
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	<u>Foraging and commuting habitat:</u> No further surveys are required. A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2 <u>Suggested biodiversity enhancements:</u> Enhancements are dependent on the outcome of further surveys.
Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<u>Nesting birds:</u> One house sparrows nest was recorded within B2, and both buildings are considered suitable for nesting for species such as house sparrows and swifts, with anecdotal evidence provided of these species nesting along the on-site buildings. No habitat for Schedule 1 birds was recorded. <u>Barn owls:</u> The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls. <u>Overwintering birds:</u> Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.

<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<u>Nesting birds:</u> The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests. <u>Barn owls:</u> None foreseen. <u>Overwintering birds:</u> None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	<u>Nesting birds:</u> Commencement of the works should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the buildings should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged. Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged. <u>Barn owls:</u> None required. <u>Overwintering birds:</u>

	None required. <u>Suggested biodiversity enhancements:</u> The installation of a minimum of six bird boxes on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. ▪ Vivara Pro WoodStone Swift Nest Box (buildings) ▪ House Sparrow Terrace FSC Nest Box (buildings) ▪ Swallow Nest Bowl (buildings) (Or a similar alternative brand). Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.
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Appendix 1: PRA map

Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan

None were available at the time of writing this report.

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Version control			
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