

Bat Survey Report

Outbuilding at Thorncroft, Lower Hague, New Mills,
SK22 3AP

Mr Keith Povah

Revision A – July 2024



ecology

SITE NAME		LOCATION	
Outbuilding at Thorncroft		Thorncroft, Lower Hague, New Mills, SK22 3AP	
GRID REFERENCE		DOCUMENT REFERENCE	
SJ9849785676		[LM0185]BSR[Outbuilding at Thorncroft]Rev A	
SITE DESIGNATION		LOCAL AUTHORITY	
None		High Peak Borough Council	
	NAME	QUALIFICATIONS	DATE
PRINCIPAL AUTHOR	Louisa Molloy	Consultant Ecologist; BSc (Hons)	17/07/2024
REVIEWED BY	Elizabeth McBride	Consultant Ecologist; BSc (Hons); MCIEEM	17/07/2024

LM Ecology

387 Walkley Bank Road
Sheffield
S6 5AQ

Tel: 07923 334190

louisa@lm-ecology.co.uk

<https://lm-ecology.co.uk>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
B	INTRODUCTION	5
C	SITE AND HABITAT DESCRIPTION	5
D	METHODOLOGY	6
D.1	Desk Study	6
D.2	Field Survey	6
E	RESULTS	8
E.1	Designated Sites	8
E.2	Bats	8
E.3	Nesting Birds	9
F	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	10
F.1	Designated Sites	10
F.2	Bats	10
F.3	Nesting Birds	10
F.4	Compensation	11
F.5	Enhancement	11
G	CONCLUSIONS	12
H	REFERENCES	13

TABLES

TABLE 1 CONSULTED RECORDS ORGANISATIONS	6
TABLE 2 SURVEY DATES, TYPES AND PERSONNEL	6

APPENDIX A

A.1 Location Plan

A.2 Building ID

A.3 Site Images

APPENDIX B

Legislation

A EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1 The purpose of this report is to identify and describe any ecological constraints to the proposals for the site in relation to roosting bats and by association, nesting birds; and to set out avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures to ensure compliance with relevant nature conservation legislation, where appropriate.
- 2 Building 1 has negligible suitability to support roosting bats and can be demolished without any further consideration of this species group.
- 3 Any external lighting needs to be bat friendly and will avoid lighting the tree line to the north of the site. This can be achieved by utilising the advice in the Bats and Artificial lighting at Night Guidance (ILP, 2023).
- 4 Standard reasonable avoidance measures have been included to ensure that nesting birds are protected throughout the demolition work.
- 5 Compensation is not required. However enhancement measures for roosting bats and nesting birds have been recommended.
- 6 All of the mitigation and enhancement measures can be secured by suitably worded planning conditions.
- 7 The results and measures contained in this report are valid for up to two years from the date of publication: July 2024.

B INTRODUCTION

8 LM Ecology was commissioned on 9th April 2024 by Mr Keith Povah to carry out a Preliminary Roost Appraisal (PRA) of the Outbuilding at Thorncroft, Lower Hague, New Mills, SK22 3AP (OS Grid Reference: SJ9849785676). A plan showing the broad location of the site is included in Appendix A as Figure A.1.

9 The survey has been commissioned to support a planning application which proposes demolition of the existing outbuilding and erection of a single dwelling.

10 The purpose of this report is to identify and describe any ecological constraints to the proposals for the site in relation to roosting bats and by association, nesting birds; and to set out avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures to ensure compliance with relevant nature conservation legislation, where appropriate.

11 Legislation relating to designated sites, protected species and habitats is detailed in APPENDIX B. Any legislation relevant to the site is detailed within the body of the report where necessary.

C SITE AND HABITAT DESCRIPTION

12 Building 1 is located in the grounds of an existing dwelling (Thorncroft) accessed via a driveway off Lower Hague (B6101), approximately 1.5km west of the centre of New Mills. It is in a semi-rural setting with a tree-lined railway line running to the north, low density housing beyond this to the north, and to the east and west, and a grassland bordered by the edge of a woodland and the River Goyt to the south.

D METHODOLOGY

D.1 Desk Study

14 Species and site information was requested from the organisations listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Consulted Records Organisations

DATE CONSULTED	ORGANISATION	RECORDS REQUESTED
11/06/2024	Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)	Local Nature Reserves, National Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Important Bird Areas, National Parks, and Ramsar sites from within a 2km radius of the site.
		Granted EPSM licences for bats from within a 2km radius of the site.
	Derbyshire Biological Records Centre (DBRC)	All bat and building nesting bird records from within a 1km radius of the site.

D.2 Field Survey

15 Table 2 lists the surveys carried out by LM Ecology and the personnel who undertook them. Summary methodologies are also provided below.

Table 2 Survey Dates, Types and Personnel

DATE(S)	SURVEY TYPE	PERSONNEL	TIMINGS AND WEATHER CONDITIONS
10/05/2024	Bats – Internal and External Visual Assessment	Louisa Molloy (Consultant Ecologist, BSc (Hons), NE Bat Licence 2016-22694-CLS-CLS)	Start: 10:00 End: 11:00 20°C, no precipitation, wind BF1-2, cloud cover 0%
	Other Protected and Notable Species Risk Assessment		

D.2.1 Bats – Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) – Structures

16 A PRA of a structure involves, where accessible, a detailed and systematic external and internal inspection of the structure to compile information on potential and actual bat entry/exit points, potential and actual bat roosting locations, any evidence of bats, and the number of ecologists that will be required for subsequent surveys (Collins, J (ed.), 2023).

17 Evidence that potential access points are used by bats or that bats are roosting within a structure includes fur oil staining, bat droppings, urine staining, live or dead bats, moth wings (feeding remains), and squeaking noises.

- 18 Assessed structures are then categorised as having High, Moderate or Low suitability to support roosting bats based upon the number and quality of the features present, and the position of the building in relation to the surrounding environs. These categories are allocated irrespective of the presence of a roost. If a roost is confirmed to be present during the PRA then the categorisation still stands (because other roosts may be present but undiscovered) but 'confirmed roost' will be added , e.g. Low - confirmed roost, Moderate - confirmed roost, High - confirmed roost. Where no potential roost features for bats are present, structures will be categorised as having Negligible suitability to support roosting bats.

D.2.2 Other Protected and Notable Species

- 19 The site was searched for evidence of, or features with potential to support, other protected and notable species, limited in this instance to nesting birds.

D.2.3 Limitations

- 20 The 1km radius for the site falls into the coverage of three different biological record centres. As datasets on the peripheries of the areas covered by local record centres tend to be sparse and often dated, and because the largest proportion of radius, including the site location, is covered by Derbyshire Biological Records Centre (DBRC); only records held by this organisation were requested. Due to the low ecological value of the site, this is not considered to pose any limitations to the roost appraisal.
- 21 No other limitations to an effective roost appraisal were present.

E RESULTS

E.1 Designated Sites

- 22 The search of the MAGIC database revealed the presence of seven designated sites within a 2km radius of the site, five ancient and semi-natural woodlands and two Local Nature Reserves (LNR).
- 23 None of the sites are within or immediately adjacent to the site, with the closest being Mousley Bottom LNR located approximately 850m south east. Formerly a landfill site with gas and sewage works, it now supports woodland and a newly created wetland next to the river. Two of the ancient woodlands are located approximately 950m from the site, with the remaining LNR and three ancient woodlands located between 1km and 2km from the site.
- 24 The site falls within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) of at least one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, the proposed development does not match any of the descriptions provided on the online tracker provided by Natural England. Therefore, Natural England does not need to be consulted on the proposed development at this location.

E.2 Bats

- 25 A building ID plan and site images are included in Appendix A as A.2 and A.3.

E.2.1 Biological Records

- 26 DBRC provided two bat records. Both record are of roosts, with the most recent being of brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* from 2012 located approximately 700m northeast of the site. The other record is from 1991 located approximately 100m east/northeast, of an unspecified species.
- 27 It is considered that the low number of records is reflective of under-recording due to the site falling within coverage of three local record centres, rather than a true representation of local bat presence.
- 28 The MAGIC database holds four granted European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licences for bats from within a 2km radius of the site. The closest of these is located approximately 800m north from 2012 for the destruction of a brown long-eared bat breeding site and resting place.

E.2.2 Habitat Assessment

- 29 The site is located close to extensive high-quality bat foraging habitat characterised by low levels of light pollution, including ancient woodlands, watercourses, meadows, and waterbodies. These areas are expected to support a high abundance and diversity of bats. The habitats immediately surrounding the site, namely the tree-lined railway line to the north, provide connective habitat between these wider habitats. However, the site habitats, consisting predominantly of a building, hard surfacing, and a grassy track, are considered

sub-optimal for foraging and commuting bats and are expected only to be suitable to support low numbers of common and widespread species.

E.2.3 Internal and External Visual Assessment

- 30 Building 1 is located to the east of the existing dwelling (Thorncroft). It is accessed from the tarmac drive of this dwelling, which becomes a grassy track until it meets the concrete slab that the building sits upon.
- 31 It is a modern timber-framed outbuilding clad in timber tongue-and-groove panelling. It has a shallow pitched particle board roof covered with bitumen felt, which has been replaced by plastic sheeting where the felt has been damaged. Four timber doors and a number of plastic windows are present on the south elevation. The east and west facing gables have timber barge boards, and a louvred air vent is present on the east elevation. The roof overhangs the eaves on the south elevation and the rafters are boxed in with tongue-and-groove panelling.
- 32 Internally, the building is open to the ridge and the roof is supported by a simple timber frame. The building is separated into four stalls by timber partitions that are as high as the rafter ties, leaving a space of no more than 30cm between the rafter tie and ridge beam, spanning the full length of the building. Part of this space is currently used for storage ladders and other bulky items, and the space above one of the partitions has been fenced with chicken wire. The stalls are cluttered with stored items.
- 33 No evidence of roosting bats was found internally or externally. There are no potential roost features (PRFs) for bats externally: the tongue and groove cladding is in good condition, there are no gaps around the doors and windows, the barge boards on both gables are close-fitting and any minor gaps are cobwebbed, and the boxed-in overhanging eaves are well-sealed. Although the louvre vent on the east gable is wide enough to allow bat access into the building, there are no potential roost features (PRFs) present internally.
- 34 Taking all of the above into consideration, Building 1 is assessed as having negligible suitability to support roosting bats.

E.3 Nesting Birds

- 35 One bird record was provided by DRBC of a swift *Apus apus* from 2014 located over 1km from the site.
- 36 A few bird droppings were present on one of the stall partitions, suggesting that a small bird likely entered the building, probably through the louvred vent on the east elevation, to perch at some point. Although no evidence of nesting activity was observed, there are opportunities for small nests to be built in the roof frame.

F CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

F.1 Designated Sites

37 Due to the scale and nature of the proposals, there are unlikely to be any negative impacts on any of the identified designated sites. As a result, no further consideration is required at this stage.

F.2 Bats

F.2.1 Roosting

38 Survey and assessment have determined that the existing outbuilding (Building 1) has negligible suitability to support roosting bats. As a result, no further consideration of roosting bats is required at this stage.

F.2.1.1 Foraging and Commuting

39 The site habitats are sub-optimal for foraging and commuting bats. However, the site is located immediately adjacent to the south of a tree-lined railway line which provides potential connective habitat for local bats to extensive high-quality foraging habitats in the wider area.

40 It is therefore important to keep this treeline completely unlit, and the external artificial light levels elsewhere as low as possible. Therefore, where external lighting is needed, it will be designed in accordance with the recommendations made on pages 29 & 30 in the Bats and Artificial lighting at Night Guidance (ILP, 2023).

F.3 Nesting Birds

41 There is suitable access for small birds into Building 1 and therefore the potential for nests to be present.

42 The nests of all wild bird species are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it an offence to intentionally take, damage, or destroy the eggs, young or nest whilst it is being built or in use.

43 Therefore, the following reasonable avoidance measures will be put in place to ensure the protection of nesting birds throughout the proposed demolition of Building 1:

- In order to minimise the risk to nesting birds demolition will, where possible, commence outside the main bird nesting season. The main bird nesting season runs from March to August inclusive.
- It may be possible to commence works within the main bird nesting season; however, it will be assumed that birds are nesting in Building 1 unless a recent survey has been undertaken by a suitably qualified person who has determined that nests are not present within the building.

F.4 Compensation

44 As no habitats, roosting, or nesting features are to be lost, no compensation is required.

F.5 Enhancement

45 In accordance paragraph 185 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities, 2023), the following enhancements are recommended:

- 2 x integrated bat boxes to be installed in the south and west elevations of the new dwelling.
- 2 x integrated swift boxes to be installed in the east elevation of the new dwelling.

G CONCLUSIONS

- 46 Building 1 has negligible suitability to support roosting bats and can be demolished without any further consideration of this species group.
- 47 Any external lighting needs to be bat friendly and will avoid lighting the tree line to the north of the site. This can be achieved by utilising the advice in the Bats and Artificial lighting at Night Guidance (ILP, 2023).
- 48 Standard reasonable avoidance measures have been included to ensure that nesting birds are protected throughout the demolition work.
- 49 Compensation is not required. However enhancement measures for roosting bats and nesting birds have been recommended.
- 50 All of the mitigation and enhancement measures can be secured by suitably worded planning conditions.
- 51 The results and measures contained in this report are valid for up to two years from the date of publication: July 2024.

H REFERENCES

Barn Owl Trust, 2012. *Barn Owl Conservation Handbook*. Exeter: Pelagic Publishing.

BSI, 2013. *Biodiversity. Code of practice for planning and development*. [Online]
[Accessed November 2014].

CIEEM, 2017. *Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing Second Edition*, Winchester:
Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management.

CIEEM, 2018. *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland
Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine*, Winchester: CIEEM.

Collins, J (ed.), 2023. *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines
(4th edition)*., London: The Bat Conservation Trust.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities, 2023. *National Planning Policy
Framework*, London: LUHC.

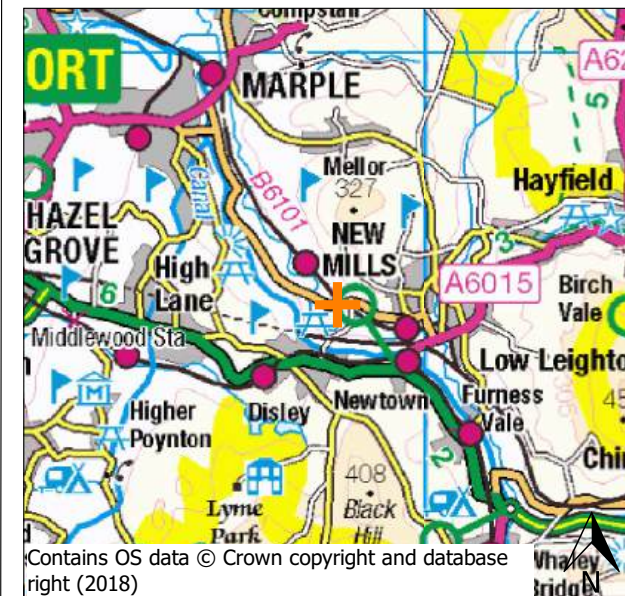
ILP, 2023. *Guidance Note GN08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*, Rugby: Institution of
Lighting Professionals.

Reason, P. & Wray, S., 2023. *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment,
mitigation and compensation for development affecting bats*, Ampfield: Chartered Institute of
Ecology and Environmental Management.

APPENDIX A



Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018)



Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018)

Indicative only
Do not scale from plan

0 1 2 3 km

Legend

 Site location

Project	Outbuilding at Thorncroft, Lower Hague, New Mills, SK22 3AP
Title	A.1 Location Plan
Client	Mr Keith Povah
Date	July 2024
Ref	[LM00185]A.1[REV A]LOC

0 0.5 1 km

Indicative only
Do not scale from plan



E: louisa@lm-ecology.co.uk
T: 07923 334190
W: <https://lm-ecology.co.uk>



Map data © 2015 Google

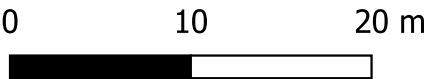
Legend

Indicative redline boundaary

Building and ID

Roof pitch direction

Project	Outbuilding at Thorncroft, Lower Hague, New Mills, SK22 3AP
Title	A.2 Building ID
Client	Mr Keith Povah
Date	July 2024
Ref	[LM0185]A.2[REV A]BID



Indicative only
Do not scale from plan



E: louisa@lm-ecology.co.uk
T: 07923 334190
W: <https://lm-ecology.co.uk>

APPENDIX A.3 – SITE IMAGES



1. South elevation and west gable of Building 1.



2. South elevation and east gable.



3. North elevation.



4. Louvered vent on east gable.



5. Bird droppings on internal partition.



6. Chicken wire installed across roof timbers.

APPENDIX A.3 – SITE IMAGES



7. Items stored in roof timbers, and bulky stored items in stalls.



8. Bulky items stored in roof timbers.



9. Grassy track leading to Building 1.



10. Driveway leading to site from Lower Hague.