

# Eric Bennett Consultancy Ltd

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Protected species survey and advice

5 Lynwood Drive, Carlton, Barnsley, S71 3ES

## **The Huntsman, Aislaby Whitby**

### **Bat Survey**

April 2011.

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23 MAY 2011

### Details of Surveyor

<b>Surveyor</b>	<b>Experience</b>
Mr Eric Bennett	Licensed bat worker since 1988. Licensed by Natural England for all bat species in all counties. NE Licence No: 20110098

### Record of revisions

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
12 April 2011	Original Report



# Report of Bat Survey

## The Huntsman, Aislaby, Whitby.

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The survey was required in connection with proposals for the renovation and extension of the existing public house. The site was located on the main street in Aislaby at O.S. Grid Reference NZ 860087.

### 2 Details of work proposed

- 2.1 The scheme involves the renovation of the main building with demolition of outbuildings to the rear, replaced with a new two-storey extension. Full details are not known but in terms of potential impacts on protected species are likely to involve roof removal and replacement, work to external walls, repair of timber work and remedial timber treatment etc.

### 3 Background to the special protection afforded to bats under UK and EC legislation.

- 3.1 Bats are highly specialised creatures and require a relatively narrow range of suitable conditions in order to sustain a viable population. Bats require an abundant supply of flying insect food in places where they can easily be caught and they need safe and reliable roosting sites, particularly during breeding and hibernation.
- 3.2 Bats are heavily dependent on buildings and trees for their roost sites and, therefore, extremely susceptible to disturbance from human activities ranging from simple maintenance work through major conversion and renovation schemes to building demolition. Development schemes can also isolate bat populations and sever roost sites from favoured feeding areas, by removing hedgerows and trees that bats use as commuting routes.
- 3.3 Bats are susceptible to disturbance and have been known to abandon roost sites after instances of disturbance. The effects of disturbance are more pronounced at different times of year. Serious disturbance during breeding can result in the breeding females being killed or the abandonment and subsequent starvation of dependent young. Repeated disturbance during winter hibernation can result in the death of adult animals from starvation.
- 3.4 The level of protection afforded to bats in UK and European legislation reflects the fact that it is now generally accepted that bats have declined substantially, maybe by as much as 60% over recent years. Most species are declining and vulnerable and all are protected.

### 4 Details of Survey

- 4.1 Daytime survey by a single surveyor.

### 5 Methodology for the survey

- 5.1 A detailed internal and external inspection of the building was carried out to identify potential roost sites and access points and any signs of actual occupation such as droppings, discarded moth wings, staining etc.
- 5.2 A dusk emergence and activity survey was not carried out because of the season..
- 5.3 Assessment of site and surrounding habitats.
- 5.4 Search of existing bat roost records.

### 6 Description of habitats

- 6.1 The site was located on the edge of the village with a mix of arable and open pasture land in the vicinity. Some mature tree cover was present in a property across the road from the site but otherwise limited in the immediate vicinity. A strip of woodland west of the village extended down to the River

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Esk and Sleights and a much larger woodland area was noted approx 1300 metres to the north-west of the site. Overall the site itself appeared quite open and probably exposed to winds from the coast and little shelter.

## 7 Results of daytime survey

7.1 The survey was carried out on 8 April 2011 and the results are set out below.

Ref	Description
A	<p>Two storey public house with stone walls and pitched blue slate roof with the rear roof slope extending over an extension. The front eaves had a course of projecting stone slabs extending approx 75mm from the wall face to support the guttering leaving no potential access points for bats. The east gable was a plain wall with a vertical building joint where the extension was added. This was generally well pointed but with a single very small opening immediately below the roof slates. The rear wall contained a narrow recess with an open passage through the building. The eaves had a timber fascia, generally sealed but one small opening was noted at the head of the passage. The soffit of the passage was well sealed with no suitable openings. No signs of use were found externally. External views are shown in Fig 1.</p> <p>Internally the main loft space was substantially occupied by attic rooms leaving only a low apex loft unsuitable for bats and in any case heavily cobwebbed and with no signs of droppings on the surface of loft insulation indicating that a bat roost was not present. A triangular eaves loft was present under the rear extension but also fairly low and unsuitable for bats. No droppings were found here either. Both of these loft areas are shown in Fig 2.</p>
B	External area between the buildings enclosed with a timber clad wall and roofed with translucent sheets. No potential for bats.
C	<p>Single-storey kitchen extension with stone walls and a blue slate roof. The north wall formed the site boundary and the west gable were finished with concrete parapet copings well pointed with no suitable openings. Externally there were no potentially attractive roost locations for bats. Illustrated in Fig 3.</p> <p>Internally the original plaster ceiling had been removed to reveal a shallow loft approx. 750mm to the ridge, The roof was lined with under-felt. The ridge area and the inside gable walls were cobwebby. No signs were found.</p>
D	<p>Two-storey stone barn with clay pantile roof. The gable walls were finished with copings, well pointed with no suitable openings. The eaves on the south side were covered by a building whilst on the north side a timber fascia well away from the wall and open top and bottom. Externally there were no potentially attractive roost locations for bats. Illustrated in Fig 4.</p> <p>Internally the upper floor was accessed from external steps and was open to the underside of the roof which was closely lined with lath leaving no gaps next to the ridge board. The ridge and gable apexes were very cobwebby. There were no signs of droppings, urine spotting or discarded insect remains present.</p>
E	Small outbuilding with stone walls and part blue slate part concrete tile roof. No interest for bats.

## 8 Results of dusk survey

8.1 A dusk survey was not carried out because of the season.





## 9 Existing local records

9.1 North Yorkshire bat Group has the following records for the area.

Species	Site	Grid ref.	Date	Comment
Unknown	6 Esk Valley, Grosmont	NZ8406	03-Sep-85	Summer roost
Unknown	Woodlands Nursing Home, Woodlands Drive, Sleights	NZ861080	18-Feb-88	
Unknown	65/67 Birch Avenue, Sleights	NZ870073	23-Sep-86	Roost?
Pipistrelle species	5 Orchard Road, Sleights, Whitby	NZ868077	13-Jul-97	Roost
Unknown	Low Newbiggin House, Aislaby, Whitby	NZ8407	17-Jun-02	Maternity roost, 300 bats
Brown Long-eared Bat	The Intake, Aislaby, Whitby	NZ8508	06-Jul-02	Summer roost
Pipistrelle species	The Intake, Aislaby, Whitby	NZ8508	06-Jul-02	Summer roost
Common Pipistrelle	The Old Smithy, Dunsley	NZ858109	21-Sep-07	Feeding
Myotis bat sp.	The Old Smithy, Dunsley	NZ858109	21-Sep-07	Feeding
Noctule Bat	The Old Smithy, Dunsley	NZ858109	21-Sep-07	In flight
Unknown	Sleights	NZ8606	04-Sep-04	Two dead bats
Brown Long-eared Bat	Woodlands Nursing Home	NZ8608	13-Jul-00	
Unknown	Toft House, Aislaby	NZ863089	12-May-05	Roost
Brown Long-eared Bat	117 Coach Road, Sleights, Whitby	NZ866074	15-Aug-01	One bat in loft
Common Pipistrelle	Sleights new bridge	NZ867081	17-Sep-05	Foraging under bridge
Unknown	2 Carr Hill Lane, Briggswath, Whitby	NZ869083	02-Sep-02	Bats inside building
Unknown	13 Carr Hill Lane, Briggswath, Whitby	NZ869086	16-Aug-02	Bat in building
Unknown	45 Iburndale Lane, Sleights, Whitby	NZ870072	02-Aug-01	Summer roost
Unknown	10 The Cliffe, Iburndale, Whitby	NZ873071	02-Aug-08	Bat found in bath
Unknown	Cherry Tree House, 5 Ridge Lane, Briggswath, Sleights, Whitby	NZ873088	15-Sep	

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## 10 Protected species legislation

10.1 Bats and their roosts are fully protected at all times (whether the bats are currently present or not). This protection comes from the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (updated by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000) and the Habitats Regulations 1994 (updated by the Conservation (Natural Habitats) (Amendment) Regulations 2007). Under this legislation it is an offence to deliberately kill, injure, capture or disturb bats or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats as a breeding site or resting place.

10.2 Under the habitats regulations, where bats may be affected by development proposals, a licence is required from Natural England. Published guidelines on the licence procedure indicate that if, on the basis of survey information and specialist knowledge of the species concerned, the proposed activity is reasonably likely to result in an offence then, a licence is required. If, on the other hand the proposed activity is reasonably unlikely to result in an offence, then a licence is not required.

## 11 Evaluation of survey results

11.1 The survey produced no evidence to suggest the presence of a bat roost. Overall the site appeared quite exposed to easterly winds from the coast, particularly the rear elevation and gable of the main building, where the only two potential crevices were noted and unlikely to be suitable for summer breeding roosts

which are usually found in more favourable and sheltered locations. There were no suitable openings in the outbuildings.

- 11.2 Internally the two loft areas in the main building were small and generally unsuitable for bats and no signs of droppings bats were found. The loft in barn C was small and enclosed with no suitable access points. Barn C was similarly small although with slightly more access potential because of the pantiles but no signs were found.

## 12 Site & species status assessment

- 12.1 No evidence to suggest the presence of a bat roost and overall considered unlikely.

## 13 Assessment of Impacts

- 13.1 No negative impacts are predicted.

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Development effect	Scale of Impact			
	Negligible	Low	Medium	High
Destruction of roost site	+			
Temporary loss of roost site during building works.	+			
Modification of roost site	+			
Risk of entombing bats during building work		+		
Risk of killing/injuring bats during roof stripping		+		
Temporary disturbance from building works during breeding season	+			
Temporary disturbance from building works outside the breeding season	+			
Post development interference	+			

## 14 Mitigation guidelines

- 14.1 Mitigation is required to avoid or reduce the impact of development proposals on the population of bats present, either roosting or feeding. Licences are normally required where a roost site is threatened in some way by a scheme, but might also be necessary where the viability of a roost is threatened by the removal of the availability of crucial feeding habitat.
- 14.2 Natural England in their published guidelines (Bat Mitigation Guidelines Jan 2004) defines the key principles involved, i.e. Mitigation involving changes to the scheme or altering the timing of work to reduce or remove impacts and Compensation, the creation of new replacement roosts or habitats.
- 14.3 Natural England also requires mitigation/compensation to be proportionate to the size of the impact and the importance of the population affected and as a principle:
- There should be no net loss of roost sites and that compensation should provide an enhanced resource since the adoption of new roost sites by bats is not guaranteed.
  - The scheme should aim to replace like with like in terms of the status of the site. i.e. male roost, maternity roost, hibernation roost etc.
  - Compensation should ensure that the affected bat population could continue to function as before so attention may need to be given to surrounding habitats.

## 15 Mitigation proposals

- 15.1 In this case since there are no indications to suggest the presence of a bat roost, no formal mitigation measures are required although some simple precautionary measures are recommended in all cases because single male Pipistrelle bats can be found just about anywhere.



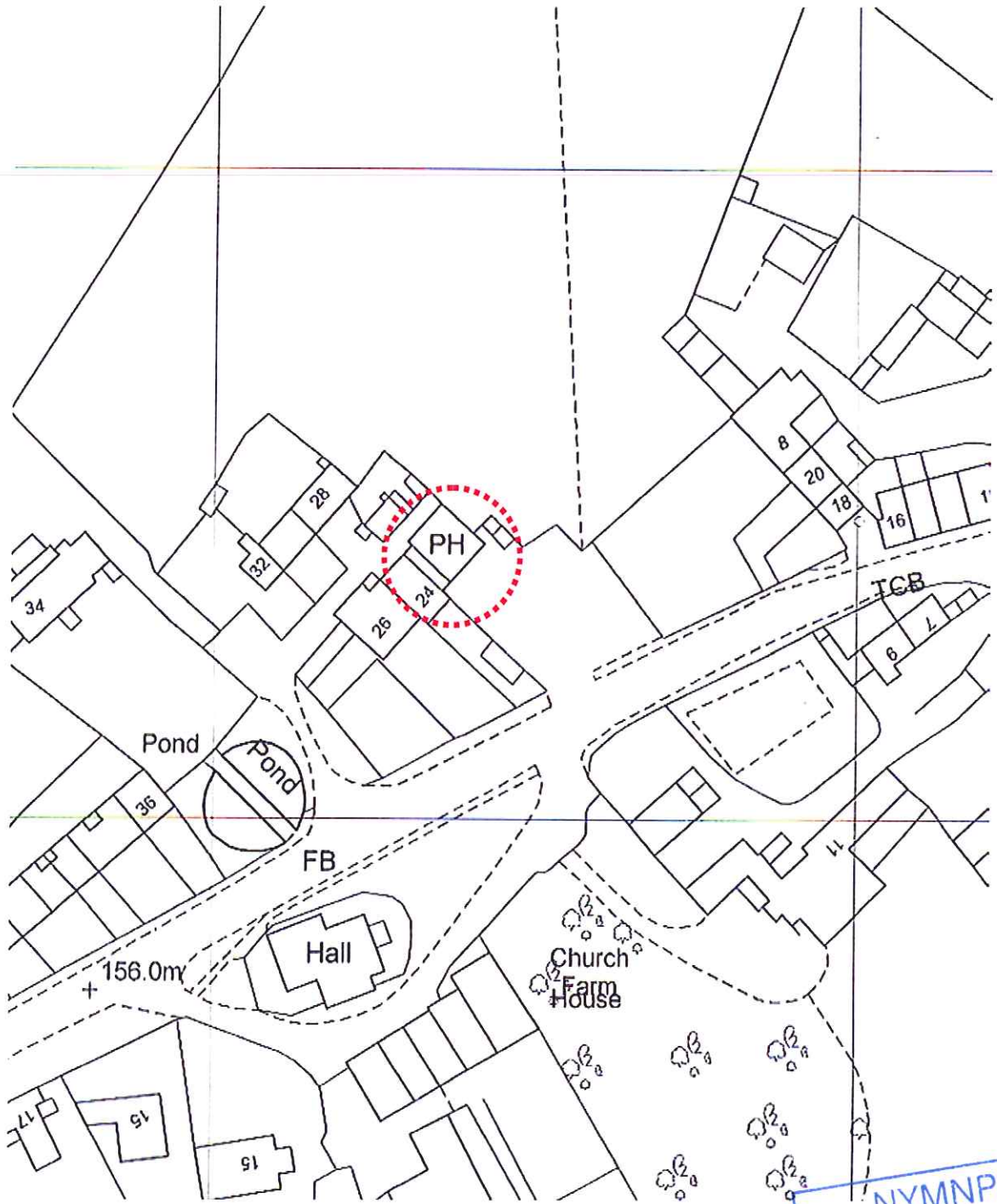
- 15.2 Purely as a precaution care should also be taken during roof stripping lifting rather than sliding ridge tiles and checking beneath for signs of bats. If bats or droppings are found further advice should be sought immediately and work halted in that area.
- 15.3 Any timber treatment should be carried out using only safe Permethryn type chemicals on the Natural England list of approved safe chemicals. The work area should be checked for the presence of bats prior to application (including any mortise joints) to ensure that bats are not directly sprayed with the chemical. Use of new pre-treated timber such as tanalised, is safe provided the treated timber has been allowed to dry before use.
- 15.4 Care should be taken with masonry work and re-pointing walls. Bats will use crevices at any time of year but are more vulnerable during winter hibernation when they are unable to escape when disturbed. At this time they are likely to use sites deep in the rubble filled core of walls, gaining access through open joints etc. The roost site can be a considerable distance from the access point. For this reason where bats may be present this type of work should preferably not be done in the winter months with spring and autumn being the preferred seasons.
- 15.5 During the active season bats are likely to be disturbed by the erection of scaffolding, general building work disturbance etc and move to other sites. Work to crevices should therefore be started after a sustained period of disturbance in that part of the building.
- Shallow crevices where the full extent can be easily seen and that can clearly be seen to be empty may be filled.
  - Any crevices that appear to extend into the rubble filled core of the wall or disappear behind other building stones and cannot be fully seen may be reduced by careful pointing leaving small permanent escape holes approx. 15x30mm in size at regular intervals accessing the core of the wall.
  - Any such crevices that have to be fully filled and where permanent escape openings cannot be retained will need to be checked by a licensed batworker with an endoscope or similar instrument or by dusk emergence observations.
- 15.6 Open joints at eaves level which extend under the edge of roof slates and openings below stone window cills should generally be retained for potential use by bats in the future. These should be identified in advance and clearly marked in order to prevent accidental filling.

## 16 Conclusions & Recommendations

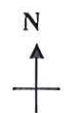
- 16.1 As things stand there is no evidence to suggest the presence of a bat roost and accordingly no need, therefore, to seek a Natural England license. It should be kept in mind, however, that if bats are subsequently discovered or suspected, (droppings appearing in patches on external walls, or audible sounds of scratching or chattering are heard, work should be stopped and further advice sought without delay.
- 16.2 The precautionary measures are recommended.

EM Bennett  
12 April 2011.





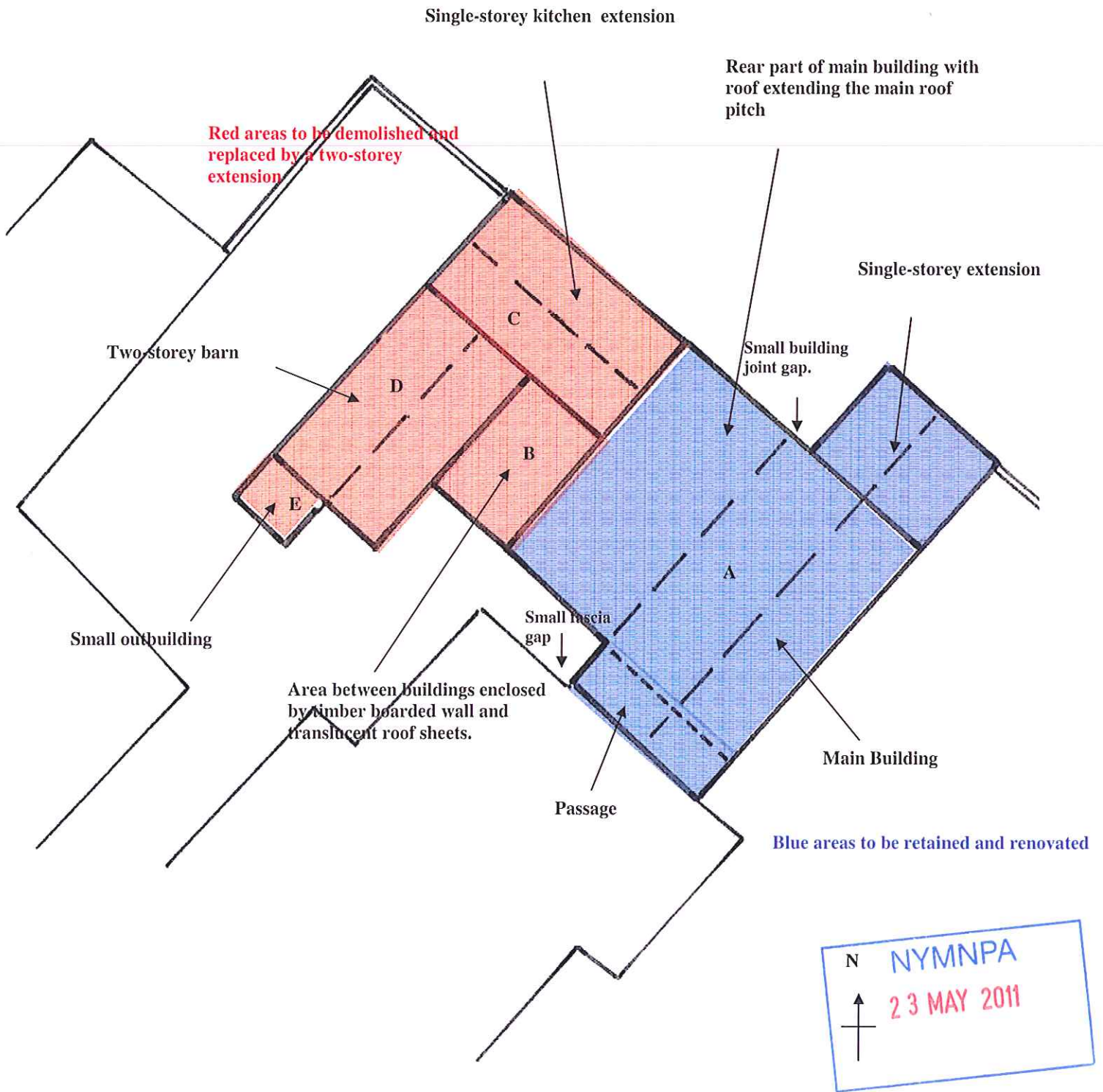
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Not to Scale



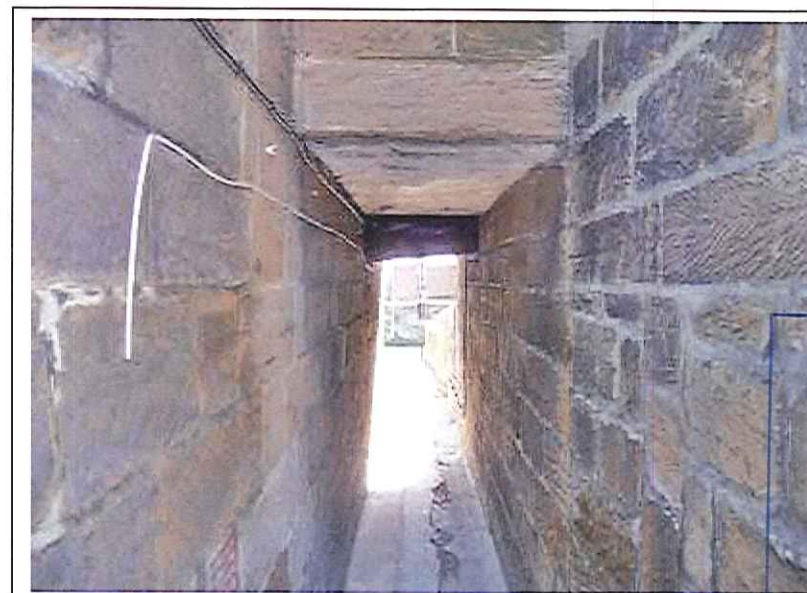


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FIG 1

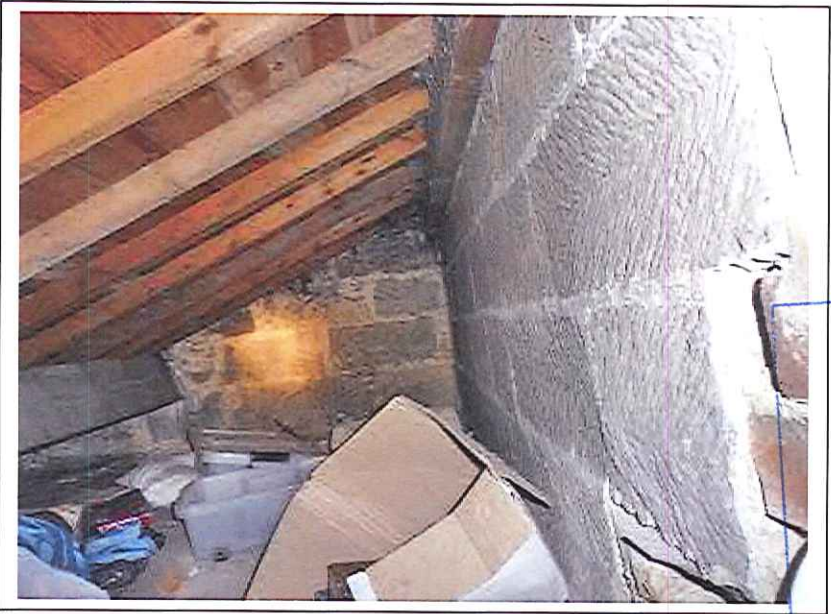


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FIG 2



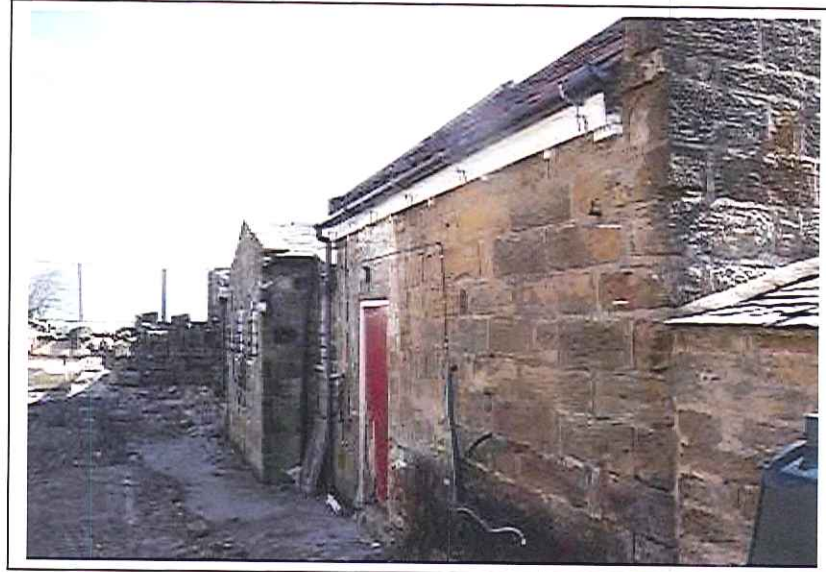
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Barn C

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FIG 3



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Barn D



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FIG 4



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