Craig Williams BSc (Hons) MSc, DIC, MRSB
Technical Manager (Ecology)
Email: cw@arbtech.co.uk
Arbtech Consulting Ltd
arbtech.co.uk

Bat Mitigation Plan

Survey site:

Rockface Works at Hilts Quarry, Crich Derbyshire, DE4 5NL

Client:

MPP Group Ltd

Project:

Slope stabilisation works to include soil nailing and mesh installation

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Introduction/Aims

This report aims to satisfy the following:	
Planning Application with Amber Valley Borough Council [AVA/2025/0651]	
Proposed	*Remedial soil nail stabilisation works at Hilt Quarry, Crich*

Site baseline and location outline

Baseline description

The site comprises an approximately 6.2ha area of land near the centre of Crich, Derbyshire (central grid reference: SK 35244 54262). The site itself is a disused quarry, and the surrounding land use is predominantly residential immediately to the north, west and south, with agricultural land and pockets of deciduous woodland to the southeast and east.

Site Background and scope of report

Background

This Bat Mitigation Plan (BMP) has been prepared for Craig Campbell to outline measures for bat mitigation and enhancement measures and any required management and monitoring at 'Hilts Quarry, Crich Derbyshire, DE4 5NL' (hereafter referred to as 'the site') in regard to the proposed works.

The proposals for the site are described as:

Ground investigation works and potential remedial measures required to stabilise parts of the rockface and soil slopes. Pre-works vegetation clearance of proposed working areas is to be required, while likely remedial works include the installation of active netting on the rockface, soil nailing of soil slopes, and the installation of localised slope face drainage.

The site was subject to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Preliminary Roost Assessment, Ground Level Tree Assessment and night-time bat walkover survey and static monitoring by Peak Ecology in 2024 and 2025. Update night emergence bat surveys were undertaken by Arbtech Consulting Ltd in 2025.

No bat roosts were confirmed during this previous survey work. Please see the previous survey reports for the full details of the development area habitat baseline.

The latest bat emergence survey (Arbtech 2025) concluded the following:

The development will include the application of mesh netting to areas of exposed earth on the slope above the rockface and within Section 6 only and will not lead to the obstruction of potential roost features/access points on the rockface below. Soil nails will be deployed to secure the slope above the rockface, the nails will be approximately 10m in length at the top of the rockface and gradually reduce in size towards the bottom of the slope, with the smallest being approximately 3m in length. The potential roost features/access points are concentrated at the bottom of the rock face and therefore the 3m soil nails installed above these features are not foreseen to cause obstruction to the features or significant disturbance to any bats present during installation. Features are unlikely to be impacted through vibration due to the nature and structure of the rock face, however stabilisation works and site mobilisation works in proximity to features may cause disturbance through noise.

It therefore recommended:

> *Due to the high habitat value of features present across the rockface, there remains some elevated risk that bats could be present during the proposed works, as bats are highly mobile creatures known to switch roosts regularly.*

> *A non-licenced bat mitigation plan should be produced for the site which will ensure protection of any suitable bat roosting features throughout the construction and operational phases of development and prevent any breach of legislation. The mitigation plan will include the details of a toolbox talk to all contractors on site, line soft communication to be established throughout the works to ensure mitigation is suitably in place, exclusion zones to avoid the obstruction to potential roost features due site mobilisation and construction works and measures to reduce disturbance from noise throughout the works. Due to the height and incline of the rock face itself, identified roost features cannot be surveyed by endoscope and therefore all bat roosting features identified within the rockface should be included within the mitigation plan.*

Previously, Peak Ecology concluded the following in regard to the site's maternity/hibernation rooting value:

> *The rockface has a lack of deep, sheltered, dry PRF's that could offer protection for whole colony sized populations, nor would they provide suitable stable and constant temperature and humidity conditions that bats favour for higher conservation value roosts i.e maternity and/or hibernation roosts.*

Photos and descriptions of the 14 designated rock face parcels in the works area can be found in Appendix E, page 31 of the Ground Level Tree Assessment/Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment by Peak Ecology in March 2025.

Report scope

The scope of this report is to provide a mitigation and enhancement plan for bats, to outline the measures that would be used to comply with legislation. It aims to improve the site's intrinsic biodiversity value within the framework of the proposed development, or to propose changes to the plan where appropriate.

This strategy provides bat mitigation and enhancements for the site to inform planning approval prior to the development itself. To help satisfy the approval, the measures covered in this mitigation and enhancement plan will therefore ensure there is an enhancement in biodiversity interest on site.

This is an iterative document and may be superseded by any further findings on site, especially in relation to any taxa found during the development that require a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (ESPML) due to disturbance/roost modification or destruction (e.g. if bats are found during the development and subject to impacts).

The improvement measures shall be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development and retained and maintained in accordance with the approved maintenance provisions for the lifetime of the development.

Author

This report is written by Craig Williams BSc (Hons) MSc, DIC, MRSB Technical Manager (Ecology) at Arbtech Consulting, of over 13 years' experience and named ecologist on over 130 European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) for bats.

Proposed Works

The proposed works fall under permitted development because they involve repairing and maintaining existing safety fencing and stabilising the rockface along the site boundary. This report is therefore necessary to demonstrate that appropriate due diligence has been undertaken regarding potential impacts on designated sites, priority species and habitats identified in the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (formerly the UK Biodiversity Action Plan), as well as species afforded legal protection under legislation such as the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

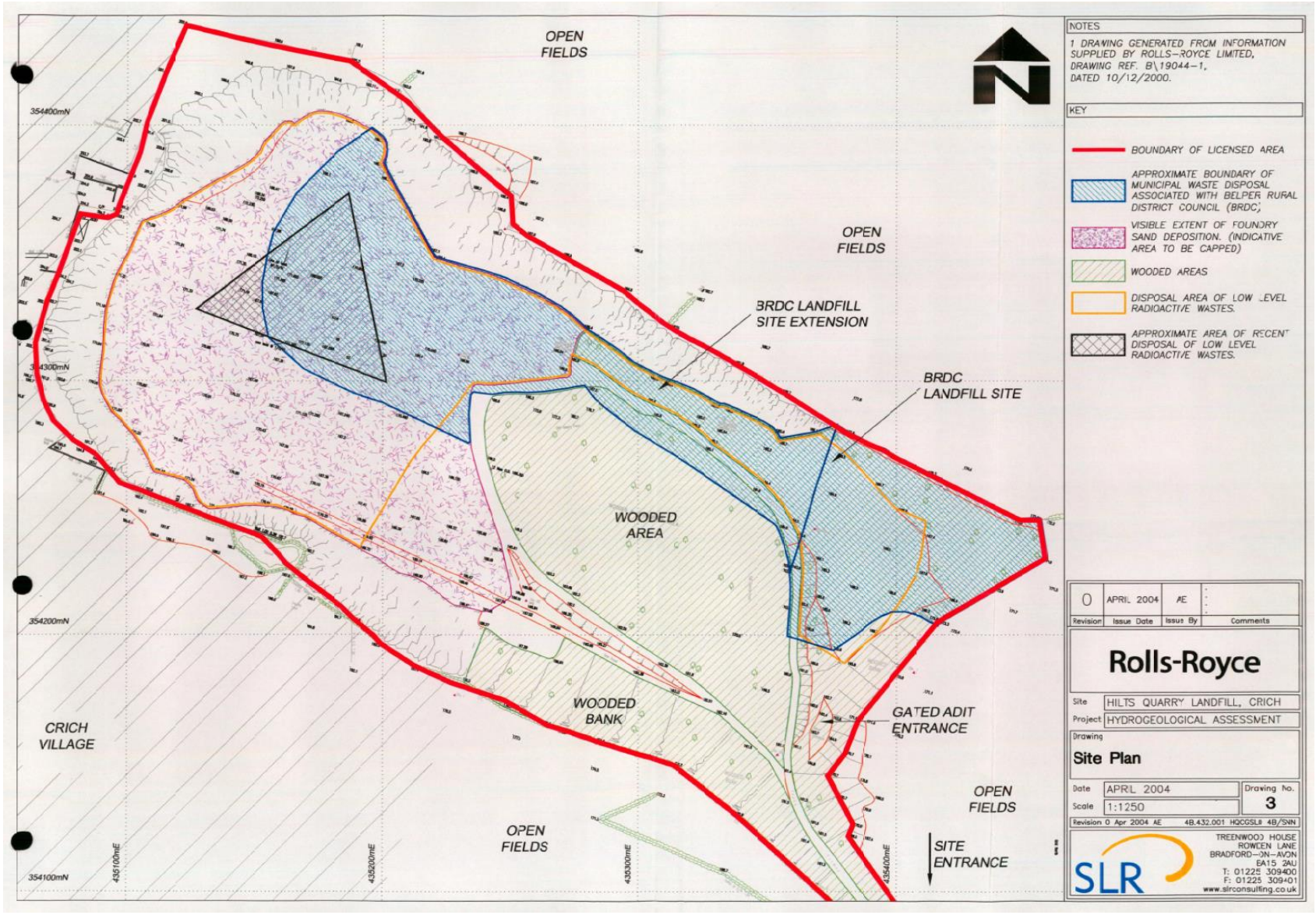

Figure 1: Existing plan



Figure 2.1: Proposed works area plan

Protected species licences required pre-commencement

Mitigation factor	Mitigation steps Creation and management steps with comment
Habitats	
Licences (bats)	Based on the PRA/BERS surveys, an application for an EPSM Licence from Natural England for bats is **not considered necessary** for this development to comply with statutory legislation, based on the current plans and lack of known roosts. If a bat roost is found on site subsequently and is concluded to be disturbed, damaged or destroyed by the proposed works at any point, a licence application must be submitted to Natural England before the development starts.

Bat mitigation measures before and during construction, and enhancement

Work	Specification
Works timing	➢ If possible, the majority of works will occur between November and April inclusive when roosting bats are unlikely to be present.
Specific Works Requiring Ecological Supervision	➢ After consulting with the contractors viewing the rockface from a distance for safety (in order to identify any loose rocks or unstable areas etc), a pre-commencement check will be undertaken on the non-negligible sections of the rockface i.e. sections 2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,12 and 13. This will involve a pre-commencement check by an attending class 2 licenced bat ecologist, looking for bats/bat evidence within the accessible features using a torch, binoculars and endoscope where practical to do so. Any bats or bat roosting evidence would be recorded, and if it is concluded that a roost would be disturbed, damaged or destroyed by the proposed works at any point, works in that location would cease and licence application must be submitted to Natural England before the works can restart. ➢ If a bat is unexpectedly found, it should be transferred into a vivarium by the bat ecologist, who will decide if it is to be placed in one of the installed bat boxes, or taken into care for release at a later date. No other individuals should attempt to move the bat, as not only could this cause injury but there is extremely low, but present chance a bite from a bat may transfer rabies (the ecologist will be vaccinated and trained to handle). ➢ Under no circumstances can any work be carried out to the affected sections without the ecological supervision outlined above having been conducted. All parts of the rockface unaffected by the proposals are to be left as existing and not obstructed in any way, in order to prevent modification to unknown roosts. ➢ There will be no impact upon the connectivity of the site to the surrounding key foraging areas.
Movement of existing bat roost enhancement	➢ An existing box on the fence line in the north-east of the site will be moved further west, outside the site area to an appropriate location on a tree (i.e. 4-5m high, on the southern or western sides of the tree with clear flight paths and out of direct night lighting) after the attending ecologist confirms that there is no presence inside.

New bat roosting enhancements	➢ As site enhancement/emergency roosts for any bats found during works, a schedule of bat boxes will be installed (see figures 3 and 4 below): ➢ <u>General bat boxes</u> • Install 5 woodcrete or ecostyrocrete crevice bat boxes on retained trees on site e.g. Greenwood's Ecohabitats two-crevice bat box • Install 5 woodcrete or ecostyrocrete crevice bat boxes on retained trees on site e.g Greenwood's Ecohabitats medium hollow bat box  

	Figures 3 and 4: Examples bat boxes, Greenwood's Ecohabitats two-crevice bat box and Greenwood's Ecohabitats medium hollow bat box (source: https://www.greenwoodsecohabitats.co.uk/shop) ➢ Bat boxes should be installed 4-5m high, on the southern or western sides of the tree with clear flight paths and out of direct night lighting (as this could disturb bat emergence and re-entry activity). ➢ Thereafter, these enhancement features shall be retained in situ in perpetuity. ➢ See appendix 1 for an example scheme.
Trees of bat value	➢ Trees of bat roosting value (onlyknown outside of the works area) as identified in the ground level tree assessment are to be retained.
On Site Structure and Responsibility	It is the responsibility of the applicant and the contractors to ensure the above measures are carried out. A copy of this document will be kept on site, as well as the contact details for Arbtech Consulting Ltd. All contactors must be made aware of the low chance that bat roosts may be present in roof, which are protected by law. Contractors must not carry out unsupervised work to the rock face. If at any time during the works, bats or other protected species are discovered, all works should cease, and Arbtech must be contacted immediately to provide further advice.
Post-Development inspection	The site will be subject to a post-development inspection to check that there have been no material changes to the bat roosting features across the rockface (see monitoring below).

Monitoring

Monitoring and compliance	
Post-development check	Within 3 months of the completion of the development hereby approved, a 'statement of good practice' letter, to include photographs of the rockface and enhancement measures, signed by the licenced bat consultant who undertook the supervision of the relevant works, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Appendix 1: Bat Mitigation Plan Map



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Version control			
Status	**Issue**	**Name**	**Date**
Final	1.0	Craig Williams, MSc, DIC, MRSB Principal Ecologist	02/01/2026
Update	1.1	Craig Williams, MSc, DIC, MRSB Principal Ecologist	26/01/2026