

Bat and Barn Owl Follow Up Scoping Report

Windy Hills Farm,
Chipping,
PR3 2QR

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Summary

In January 2015 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a follow up survey of Windy Hill Farm, Chipping, PR3 2QR to assess the potential for their use by bats and barn owls.

A daytime survey was carried out on 1st February 2015 as a follow up to previous scoping and activity surveys carried out by Dennis Lambert (Document Reference 1433).

This original survey was carried out on the 11th June 2012 found a single bat dropping within the building but subsequent activity surveys recorded only a single Pipistrelle foraging within the open building whilst 25+ were observed to commute through the site to better feeding opportunities. The survey concluded that Windy Hills Fram was of low significance to bat conservation and no mitigation was necessary to allow development.

As a result of the current survey results:

No evidence was recorded to suggest bats were roosting within any building on site.

No evidence of the use of the site by Barn Owls was found during the survey.

The surveyor does not consider the proposed works are likely to result in a breach of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) therefore the proposed development does not require an EPS Licence (EPSL) to proceed lawfully.

In the unlikely event bats are discovered or disturbed during building renovation, work must be halted until the bat licence holder can attend the site and give further advice as necessary.

Introduction

In January 2015 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a follow up survey of Windy Hill Farm, Chipping, PR3 2QR to assess the potential for their use by bats and barn owls.

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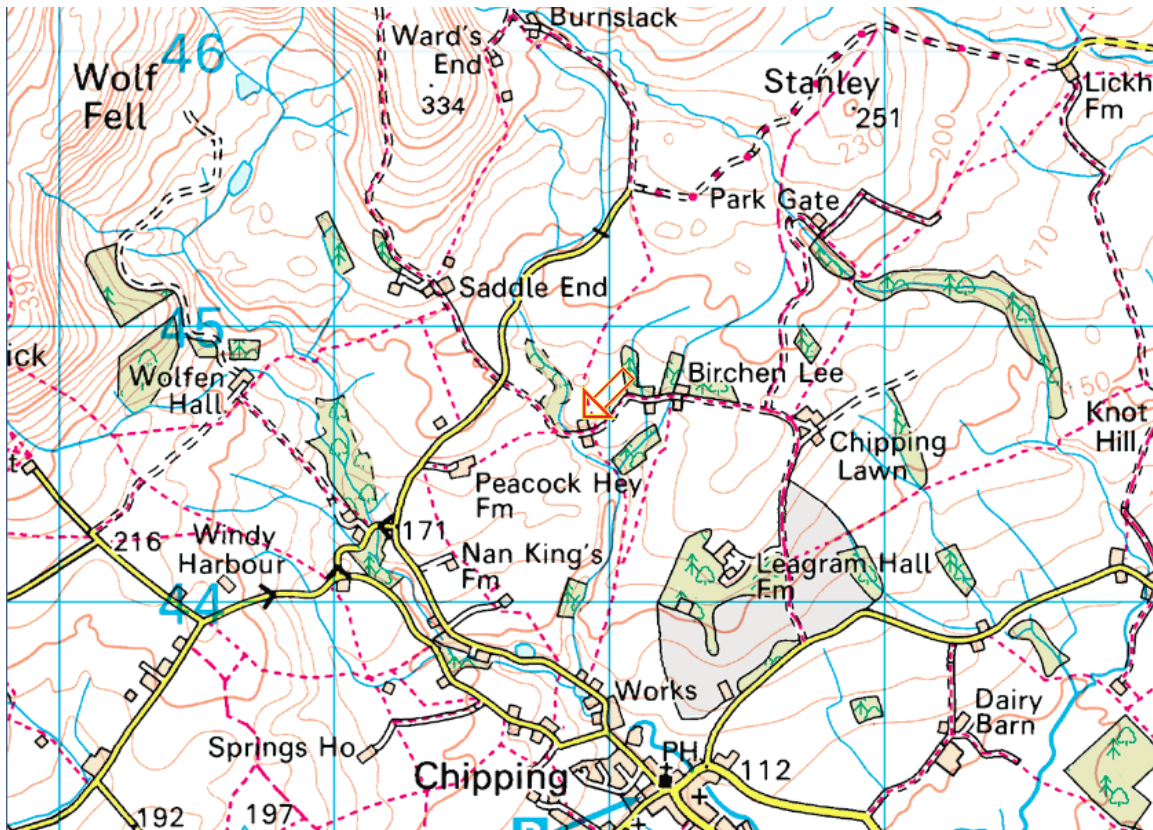
A central grid reference for the site is SD6196044612

Survey and Site Assessment

Objectives of the survey

The survey was carried out to determine current usage by barn owls, bat use of the site and to establish status of the bat species using the site prior to development work being carried out.

Survey site location



Windy Hills Farm is located to the north of the village of Chipping at approximately 150m altitude. A central grid reference for the site is SD6196044612

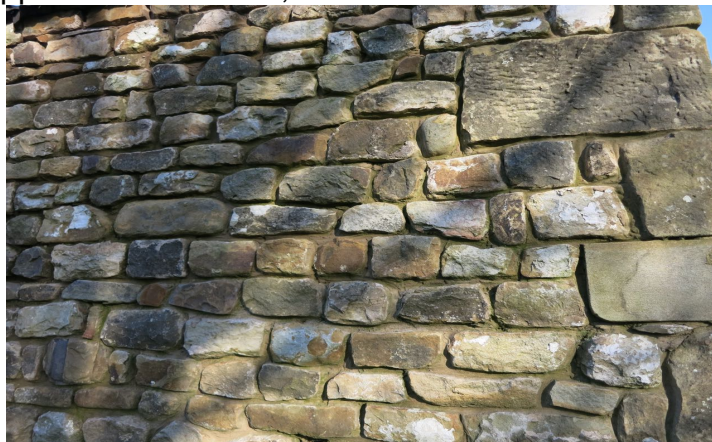
Site/Habitat description

The farm is located within an area of semi improved grassland on the edge of Wolf Fell. Dobson Brook and it's associated deciduous woodland is to the south of the farm and extends northwards to the west. The woodland offers some foraging potential within the wider area.



The farm is a stone built two storey building with a double double pitched roof. The farm is a state of disrepair with roofing slates removed and only underfelt remaining to offer some isolation from the elements.

Pointing between the stone walls remains good with few cracks and crevices to offer roosting opportunities for bats,





Exposed roofing underfelt with slates removed.



Considerable light penetration internally

Pre Existing data on local bat species

From previous surveys and data searches no recorded bat roosts are found within 1km of the site.

However, from personal experience of surveying for and researching bats in the Lancashire area the following species were considered.

Common Pipistrelle – known to roost on sites where suitable foraging habitat is available.

Soprano Pipistrelle – known to roost on sites where suitable foraging habitat is available.

Whiskered/Brandt's – species often found roosting in buildings close to woodland.

Natterer's – a typical upland bat with foraging bats being recorded high on heather moorland. Often roosting in barns.

Long Eared bat – a woodland species which has been recorded foraging over in bye meadows and rough grassland sites. Often roosting in barns.

Field Survey Methodology

Visual inspection

An inspection was carried out to search for and identify potential feeding perches, roosting opportunities and signs of bat use both internally and externally.

Equipment used included:

- [Cluson CB-1 1M candle power lamp
- [SeeSnake CA 300 video endoscope
- [Opticron close focusing binoculars

The visual inspection focussed on searching for feeding remains and bat droppings within the barn and outbuildings.

Crevices and other potential roost sites were investigated for smear/grease marks, lack of cobwebs, urine staining.

In addition an inspection were carried out to assess potential for use by Barn Owl

Evidence searched for included:

- [Feathers
- [Owl pellets
- [Lime
- [Nestling fluff
- [Signs of nesting

Personnel

All surveys were conducted by:

Dave Anderson MSc, Natural England Science, Education and Conservation bat licence holder (NE licence no.20123170) a bat surveyor and ecologist with 20 years experience.

Survey Summary

Survey	Date	Timings
Visual	01.02.2015	1 Hours

Survey constraints

Access to all areas of the barn and associated outbuildings was possible, weather conditions favourable and good visual inspection at ground level was possible.

Access to high beams in the main barn was not possible due to safety considerations. These areas were assessed by binocular.

Results

Visual Inspection

No droppings, feeding remains or signs consistent with roosting bats were observed.

No grease marks/ staining or urine staining were observed where crevices were found.

No evidence of bats using the site were found.

Barn Owl Survey

No evidence of use of the site by Barn Owls was recorded.

Evaluation of the results

No evidence of roosting bats was observed and no accumulations of feeding remains to suggest regular use as a feeding perch in any of the buildings.

Significantly, there is no evidence of a roost or place of hibernation and there are no signs of significant flight within any of the buildings to suggest roosting.

In conclusion the overall conservation significance of the farm house, barn and outbuildings remains 'low' (*Reference: Bat Mitigation Guidelines page 39*).

Conclusion

The surveyor does not consider the proposed works are likely to result in a breach of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) therefore the proposed development does not require an EPS Licence (EPSL) to proceed lawfully if recommended timing of work and enhancements are followed.

Further Recommendations

In the unlikely event bats are discovered or disturbed during roof removal or building renovation, work must be halted until the bat licence holder can attend the site and give further advice as necessary.

E Bibliography

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| Barn Owls and Rural Planning Applications | Barn Owl Trust 2009 |
| Barn Owl Survey Methodology and Techniques for use in Ecological Assessments | Shawyer, C. August 2011 |
| Bat Mitigation Guidelines | Natural England 2006 |
| Bat Survey Guidelines 2 nd Edition | Bat Conservation Trust 2011 |
| Bat Workers Manual 3 rd Edition | JNCC 2004 |

Bats and the Law

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, principally those relating to powers and penalties, have been amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). The CRoW Act only applies to England and Wales.

Section 9(1)

It is an offence for any person to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bat.

Section 9(4)(a)

It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly* damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection.

(*Added by the CRoW Act in England and Wales only)

This is taken to mean all bat roosts whether bats are present or not.

Section 9(4)(b)

It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly* disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.

(*Added by the CRoW Act in England and Wales only)

The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994

Section 39(1)

It is an offence

(a) deliberately to capture or kill any bat

(b) deliberately to disturb any bat

(d) to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any bat.

The difference between this legislation and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the use of the word 'deliberately' rather than 'intentionally'. Also disturbance of bats can be anywhere, not just at a roost. Damage or destruction of a bat roost does not require the offence to be intentional or deliberate.

Barn Owls and the Law

Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)

(1) Subject to the provisions of this Part, if any person intentionally (or recklessly as amended by the CRoW Act, 2000) (a) kills, injures or takes any wild bird; (b) takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while

that nest is in use or being built; or (c) takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird. he shall be guilty of an offence.

(5) Subject to the provisions of this Part, if any person intentionally- (a) disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is at, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or (b) disturbs dependent

young of such a bird, he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act (2000)

Part III Nature conservation and wildlife protection

74 Conservation of biological diversity

(1) It is the duty of (a) any Minister of the Crown (within the meaning of the Ministers of the [1975 c. 26.] Crown Act 1975), (b) any Government department, and (c) the National Assembly for Wales, in carrying out his or its functions, to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biological diversity in accordance with the Convention.

SCHEDULE 12 AMENDMENTS RELATING TO PART I OF WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

1. In section 1(5) of the 1981 Act (offence of intentional disturbance of wild birds) after "intentionally" there is inserted "or recklessly".

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

PART 3, (40): Duty to conserve biodiversity

(1) Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

(3) Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.