

Bat and Barn Owl Follow Up Survey Report

**Cowley Brook Farm
Higher Road
Longridge
Preston
PR3 2YX**

31.10.2016



**Report prepared by:
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Summary

In October 2016 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of the main house and attached barns at Cowley Brook Farm, Higher Road, Longridge, Preston, PR3 2YX to assess the potential for their use by bats and barn owls.

Previous survey work (Batworker – Bat and Barn Owl Scoping Report 25/05/2014) including a daytime survey, use of static detectors in the barns and an evening emergence survey had found no evidence to suggest use of the buildings by barn owls or bat species.

A daytime follow up survey was carried out on 31st October 2016, in order to support plans to develop the property including conversion of the barns and repairs to existing roofs.

No evidence was recorded to suggest bats were roosting within the building.

No bats were observed or recorded using the building for roosting.

No evidence of use by barn owls was observed.

Roost potential is considered to be low.

The surveyor considers survey effort to be reasonable to assess the roost potential of the building and no further survey work is deemed appropriate.

The surveyor does not consider the proposed development and change of use is 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.

Introduction

In October 2016 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of the main house and attached barns at Cowley Brook Farm, Higher Road, Longridge, Preston, PR3 2YX to assess the potential for their use by bats and barn owls.

Previous survey work (Batworker – Bat and Barn Owl Scoping Report 25/05/2014) including a daytime survey, use of static detectors in the barns and an evening emergence survey had found no evidence to suggest use of the buildings by barn owls or bat species.

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Survey and Site Assessment

Objectives of the survey

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

Survey site location



A central grid reference for the site is SD642391

Site/Habitat description

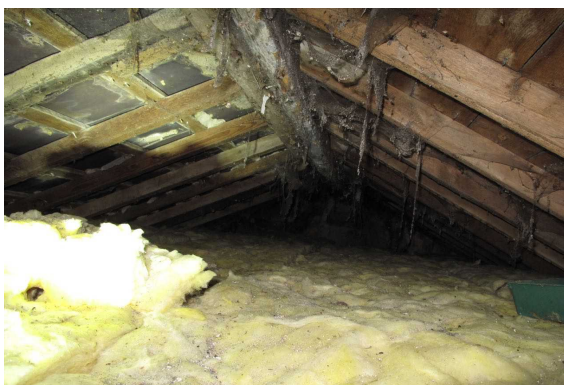


The property is two storey traditional stone built semi detached house with double pitched slate roof, Stonework and rendering is in good condition, and pointing is good with no obvious crevices, gaps or cracks present.





The roofs of the house and barn are in generally good condition with no lifted slates or gaps between slates present, ridge tiles have some pointing missing.



The loft of the farm house is insulated. The slates are unlined and exposed and flight space within the loft is limited. Both loft spaces are heavily cobwebbed.



The adjoining barn roofs are unlined and supported by modern bandsawn trusses.

Overall the building can be considered of low potential for roosting bats.

Surrounding habitat.



Cowley Brook is located in a rural setting with a mixture of semi improved grassland, heather moorland and clough woodland being in close proximity to the site. The clough woodland can be considered high quality foraging potential for bats.

The habitat surrounding the farm can be considered of moderate potential for hunting Barn Owl.

Pre Existing data on local bat species

A search of the East Lancs Bat Group database and MAGIC website revealed no recorded bat roosts within a 1km radius.

From personal experience of surveying for and researching bats in the East 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.

Daubenton's – a species commonly associated with aquatic habitats.

Long Eared bat – a woodland species which has been recorded foraging over in by 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. The visual inspection focussed on searching for feeding remains and bat droppings within the building. Crevices and other potential roost sites were investigated for smear/grease marks, lack of cobwebs, urine staining.

Equipment used included:

- ! Lupine Pico LED torch
- ! SeeSnake CA 300 video endoscope
- ! Opticron close focusing binoculars

Personnel

All surveys were conducted by:

Dave Anderson MSc, Natural England Science, Education and Conservation bat licence holder (2015-15784-CLS-CLS) a bat surveyor and ecologist with 20 years experience.

Survey Summary

Survey	Date	Timings
Visual	31.10.2016	1 Hour

Survey constraints

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

Results

Visual Inspection

No suitable crevices, gaps or access points were observed on the exterior of the building.

No feeding remains or signs consistent with roosting bats were observed either within the building or on external walls and windows.

No grease marks/ staining or urine staining were observed.

Barn Owl Survey

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

Breeding Birds

Evidence of breeding birds, namely Swallow, using the barns was observed.

Evaluation of the results

No evidence of bat activity was recorded either within or outside the buildings.

Due to the unlined nature of the roof slates it is considered that the building is unsuitable for roosting bats, therefore it is the surveyors opinion that no further surveys are needed.

Conclusion

No evidence was recorded to suggest bats were roosting within the building.

No bats were observed or recorded using the building for roosting.

Roost potential is considered to be low.

The surveyor considers survey effort to be reasonable to assess the roost potential of the building and no further survey work is deemed appropriate.

The surveyor does not consider the proposed development and change of use is 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.

Further Recommendations

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

Any works should be carried out at a time guaranteed to have no impact on nesting Swallows.

E Bibliography

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 3rd Edition Bat Conservation Trust 2016

Bat Workers Manual 3rd 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.