

Protected Species Scoping Survey Report

**Outbuildings at Sugar Hill Farm,
Whitewell Road,
Cow Ark, Clitheroe,
Lancashire, BB7 3DG**

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Summary

In May 2018 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of Sugar Hill Farm, Whitewell Road, Cow Ark, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 3DG to assess the potential for its use by bats, barn owls and great crested newts.

A daytime survey was carried out on 21st May 2018 in order to support plans for develop the property including demolition of existing outbuildings.

As the building was assessed as having low potential for roosting bats this was supplemented by a dawn survey carried out on 20th June 2018. A E-DNA test of the adjacent pond was carried out at the same time to assess for presence of great crested newts.

No evidence was recorded to suggest bats were roosting within outbuildings.

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

Roost potential of outbuildings is considered to be negligible.

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

The result of the E-DNA testing of the ponds was negative for presence of great crested newt

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 May 2018 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of Sugar Hill Farm, Whitewell Road, Cow Ark, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 3DG to assess the potential for its use by bats, barn owls and great crested newts.

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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 SD6709544936

Site/Habitat description

The outbuildings are a mix of stone built and timber construction with double pitched stone slate roofs and single skin corrugated metal. Roofs are in good condition with no obvious lifted or missing slates. External walls are well pointed and bargeboards close fitting and well sealed where present.



Overall the buildings can be considered of low potential for roosting bats



Two semi natural ponds are present within the garden in close proximity to both the main house and outbuildings.

Surrounding habitat.



Sugar Hill Farm is located in a rural setting within an area of woodland providing connectivity to the Hodder Valley. Surrounding habitat is dominated by semi improved and improved grassland. Hedgerows on field boundaries provide connectivity to small copses of semi natural deciduous woodland.

Overall foraging potential for bats can be considered high.

Pre Existing data on local bat species

A search of the MAGIC website revealed no EPS licence applications within 1km of the site.

A Brandt's bat roost and a common pipistrelle roost are located within 1km.

However, 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 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. 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

Emergence Survey

Two surveyors were positioned to the east and west of the restaurant and main building to allow good coverage of the site. Anabat Walkabout and Batlogger M full spectrum detectors were used to record any bat activity allowing later species identification.

Great Crested Newt E-DNA

Sampling protocol was followed to collect water from the pond. Samples were sent to and analysed by Nature Metrics following a standardised test.

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. Activity surveys were supplemented with Sharon Anderson, an experienced bat surveyor

Survey Summary

Survey	Date	Timings
Visual	21.05.2018	2 Hours
Dusk Survey	20.06.2018	15 mins prior to sunset to 1.5 hours after
E-DNA	20.06.2018	

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 outbuildings.

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

No grease marks/ staining or urine staining were observed.

Dawn Survey

No bat activity consistent with bats returning to roost was recorded near outbuildings. Sporadic common pipistrelle activity was recorded prior to dawn with bats observed moving north through woodland.

Great Crested E-DNA

Results for presence of great crested newt were negative.

Evaluation of the results

No evidence of bat activity was recorded either within or outside the outbuildings. Given the results, it is considered highly unlikely that bats use outbuildings on site for the purposes of roosting and therefore it is the surveyors opinion that no further surveys are needed.

Conclusion

No evidence was recorded to suggest bats were roosting within outbuildings.

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

Roost potential of outbuildings is considered to be negligible.

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

The result of the E-DNA testing of the ponds was negative for presence of great crested newt

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.

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 3rd Edition | Bat Conservation Trust 2016 |
| Bat Workers Manual 3 rd Edition | JNCC 2004 |
| The effect of a major road on bat activity and diversity,
A Berthinussen & J Altringham | Journal of applied Ecology. 2011 |

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.