METHOD STATEMENT
European Protected Species (Bats)

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

Barn at Newhurst Farm,
Anna Lane,
Bolton by Bowland,
BB7 4NZ

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Report prepared by:
Dave Anderson
Batworker.co.uk
dave@batworker.co.uk
07894 338290

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Executive summary

This Method Statement supports plans for the conversion to a residential dwelling of a barn at Newhurst Farm, Anna Lane, Bolton by Bowland BB7 4NZ.

Proposed work is considered unlikely to affect an existing roosts of natterer's bats with suitable mitigation and timing of works.

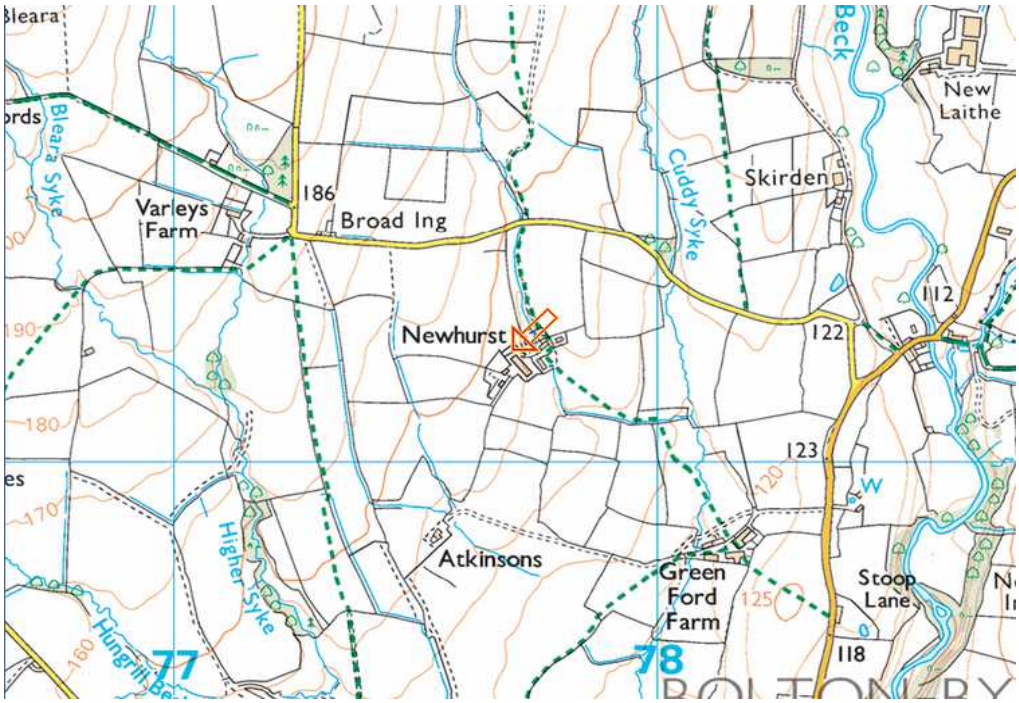
The overall purpose of the Method Statement is to ensure that bats and their roosts are fully protected to ensure the ‘favourable conservation status of the species’.

This Method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to bats; this is most easily achieved through appropriate timing of the works and suitable mitigation being designed into the proposed building.

By following the Reasonable Avoidance Measures that follow the development can take place, ensuring the Continued Ecological Functionality of the site, while avoiding a breach of the Habitat Regulations.

An EPS development licence, supported by further survey work, will be applied for post planning permission being granted, demonstrating that satisfactory mitigation and enhancement works are sufficient to avoid offences being committed under the Habitat Regulations.

Site Location
Barn at Newhurst Farm, Anna Lane, Bolton by Bowland. BB7 4NZ
NGR: SD7769651238



Full details of proposed works covered by the Method Statement.

The proposed development works involve conversion of an existing barn for residential use including internal alterations and re-roofing work.

Survey summary and site assessment

Pre-existing information on the bat species present at this site

Bat record data: records were obtained from Magic, East Lancashire Bat Group and the surveyor's own records. One record of a brown long eared bat maternity roost is located within 1km of the site in Forest Becks.

The property is located in an rural position, with surrounding habitat dominated by semi improved grassland and grazing land. Some hedgerow along field boundaries provides connectivity to the wider landscape.

Overall foraging potential for bats can be considered moderate.

Survey Summary

A preliminary visit on 6th September 2018 identified a small number of bat droppings scattered below the southern internal gable with droppings adhering to the wall suggesting a roost on the wall top below roof slates. Droppings were consistent with Myotis bat species.

A static detector survey of the barn recorded Natterer's bat activity throughout a nine night period with bat activity at times suggestive of bats roosting within the barn. Social calling was recorded in the hour prior to dawn, typical of bats returning to roost.

Personnel on surveys included: David Anderson, an experienced ecologist and bat researcher with 20 years experience of fieldwork and bat ecology, a founder member of the East Lancashire Bat Group and 'Batworker.com', formerly a Natural History Curator and manager of the East Lancashire Biological Records Centre. (Natural England licence No:2015-15784-CLS-CLS, Conservation, Science and Education).

Bats were identified to species level using AnalookW software.

Interpretation of results

The barn provides roosting opportunities for Natterer's bats in low numbers and is unlikely to be a maternity roost based on the number of droppings present. The proposed development will require suitable mitigation to form part of an Natural England EPS Development Licence application once planning permission has been granted.

Further activity survey work will be required to support the licence application and mitigation strategy. At present based on results it is proposed to use two Schwegler bat tubes on the south gable to provide replacement roost features.

Red Circle – Location of roost on wall top southern internal gable.

Red Rectangle – proposed location of Schwegler Bat Tubes.

Impact Assessment

Short-term impacts: disturbance

Low risk: Work should be timed to avoid the activity season. Roof slate removal should be supervised by the bat licence holder.

Long-term impacts:
Roost loss: No impact on a local bat population. The destruction of a bat roost at the property is highly unlikely to impact on the local bat population due to installation of 2x Schwegler 2FR bat tubes into the external southern gable and southwestern wall to provide compensatory roost space to replace existing roost space. The client is happy to retain the roost in the long term.

Long-term impacts:
Fragmentation and isolation: minimal, the impact of the proposed development on local bat species will be insignificant.

Predicted scale of impact
No loss of roosting sites of a common and relatively widespread species.

Method Statement

The overall purpose of the Method Statement is to ensure that bats and their roosts are fully protected to ensure the 'favourable conservation status of the species'. This will form part of the Natural England EPS Licence application.

The Method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to roosting bats; this is most easily achieved through appropriate timing of the works.

No work will take place until an EPS Development Licence has been granted

Timing of works.
Work to existing roofing should take place from October 1st onwards. A visit by the batworker prior to roofing works commencing will confirm absence of bats in the affected area.

Replacement Roost Feature

Schwegler 2FR bat tubes to be installed into the southern gable and south western wall to provide a replacement roost feature.

Scaffolding should avoid areas identified within this document as roost entrances.

No work should commence without contractors receiving a toolbox talk.
All contractors and project managers should be made aware of the legal protection afforded all species of bats in the UK and procedures should be in place to mitigate for the potential impact on bats before any building work is undertaken.

A copy of the Method Statement should be available to site / project managers in advance of any works being carried out.
The existence of a Method Statement helps to establish a defence against prosecution for intentional (WCA), deliberate (Habitat Regulations.) or reckless (WCA) disturbance of bats or damage to roosts. A Method Statement is normally required by the local planning authority to ensure that procedures are in place before the development works are carried

out and will form part of the EPS Licence application.

All work should take place under the supervision of the ecologist.

No post development monitoring is considered necessary.

Accidental exposure of bats - EMERGENCY ADVICE

In the unlikely event of bats or their roosts being exposed or vulnerable to harm, suspend further work in that area. Cover the exposed bats to reduce any further risk of harm and seek advice immediately.

Call Dave Anderson (Batworker) on 07894 338290 (mobile); a site visit will be arranged to assess the situation and recover any bats / safely remove them from site.