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Geoff Marsden  
Farmplus Constructions Ltd  
Shay Lane,  
Longridge,  
Preston,  
PR3 3BT

18 June 2021

EED ref: B

2062

Dear Peter

Re: Preliminary Roost Assessment: Buildings at Wharf Farm, Chipping, Lancashire. PR3 2QE

You have requested a Preliminary Roost Assessment (daylight scoping survey and site assessment) in relation to roosting bats and nesting birds as a condition of a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) for building alterations at the Wharf Farm, Chipping.

The Local Planning Authority is required to take account of the impact of a development on protected species in accordance with current planning policy (National Planning Policy Framework). RVBC requires an appraisal of the likely impact of the proposed development on all bat species that are present or likely to be present at the site, in addition to any mitigation and enhancement measures that may be necessary.

As a consequence of the historical declines in bat populations during the second half of the twentieth century, all bats and their roosts are protected by UK law. The depletion of natural habitats throughout the UK means that some bat species are now more than ever dependent on houses and other structures as roosting sites. It is this dependence that makes them vulnerable to redevelopments that can result in damage or destruction of a roost, particularly maternity roosts, resulting in negative impacts on local bat populations.

Since 2008 bats have been included in the list of UK Biodiversity Indicators which aim to show the response of species to the pressures, changes and threats to our natural and built environment.

The preliminary roost assessment has found no evidence of roosting bat activity or nesting birds (barn owls) within any part of the cowshed.

There are no signs of a bat maternity roost, mating roost or place of hibernation and it is unlikely that bats have ever been present in this building; the proposed alterations are unlikely to result in disturbance to roosting bats or roosting / nesting barn owls. The overall impact of the proposed works is likely to be negligible.

It is recommended the development proceeds without a requirement to obtain a development licence (EPSL) since the proposed demolition works are unlikely to result in a breach of the Habitats Regulations.

Please find a copy of the survey report below.

Yours sincerely

David Fisher

## **PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT – BAT / BIRD SURVEY REPORT**

Wharf Farm, Talbot Street, Chipping, Lancashire, PR3 2QE

**Survey date: 17 June 2021**

### **Introduction**

A preliminary roost assessment is a daylight inspection of the exterior and interior of a structure designed to look for features which are likely to attract bats and wild birds (including barn owls) or provide perching, feeding and roosting. The aim of this survey is to determine the actual or potential presence of bats and wild birds and to assess whether further survey effort is likely to be required.

The broad aim of the survey is to assess the potential value of the site for protected species and to establish whether bats, barn owls and other nesting wild birds have ever been active within any part of the building that is likely to be affected by the proposed development.

From the developer's perspective, the primary objective of a survey for protected species is to ensure that a development can proceed lawfully without breaching the Habitats Regulations.

### **Timing of survey / weather conditions**

The preliminary roost assessment was carried on Thursday 17 June 2021 between 11.20 and 12.20.

The weather at the time of the assessment was mild, dry and bright (min. temperature: 17°C, cloud: 2/8, wind: light very light NNE, rain: nil) providing optimal survey conditions.

### **Personnel**

The inspection was carried out by David Fisher (EED Surveys) an ecological consultant and licence holder.

The surveyor has held a Natural England licence since 1989.

Natural England Class Licence WML-A34 – Level 2 (Registration Number: 2015 – 12106-CLS-CLS)

### **Survey objectives**

Provide a clear and objective assessment of historic or existing evidence of protected species at the property.

Provide a clear assessment of risk to bats and other protected species enabling the Local Planning Authority to reach an informed planning decision.

Determine the likely impact of the proposed development on bat populations and other protected species.

Assist clients in meeting their statutory obligations.

### **Survey methodology**

The survey methodology is designed to determine the likely presence of bats and wild birds at the property.

The survey method may involve a search of any enclosed roof voids to identify potential or actual roost locations, feeding signs and access points. The visual inspection was made using an LED Lenser lamp P7 torch, Swarovski EL 10 x 42 binoculars and images were taken using an Apple iPhone 12 Pro-max camera.

A daylight inspection of the building was undertaken to identify evidence of bats such as droppings and urine spots, odour, bat corpses, bat fly larvae, fur oil staining, feeding remains such as discarded moth and butterfly wings and other insect fragments. The presence of roosting and nesting barn owls normally requires searches for urine splashes, castings, discarded feathers and evidence of nesting material and well-used perches.

The survey methodology follows the recommended guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust - *Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Hundt, L (2012)*, Natural England (*Survey Objectives, Methods and Standards as outlined in the Bat Mitigation Guidelines, 2004*) and Chapter 3 - Survey and Monitoring Methods, (*Bat Worker's Manual, JNCC, Mitchell-Jones AJ and McLeish, AP, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2004*).

Non-invasive survey methods were used to assess the use of the property by protected species.

### **Survey limitations**

The preliminary roost assessment can be undertaken at any time of the year and is not dependent on whether roosting bats are present at the time of the site visit. Roost activity surveys to observe roost emergence / roost re-entry and swarming activity are normally carried during the recommended optimal survey period (April/May to September/October).

Crevice-roosting bat species are able to roost within narrow gaps and cavities, frequently less than 25mm wide; solitary roosting bats are occasionally overlooked during daylight inspections, particularly where bats have gained access to rubble infill walls, cavity walls, box soffits, wall claddings or some roofing materials.

Evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings or staining on external walls and surfaces is frequently removed by the action of wind, in which case the lack of clear evidence does not necessarily imply evidence of absence.

### **Bats in the Ribble Valley**

Ten bat species have been recorded in the Ribble Valley and Forest of Bowland AONB in recent years. Bats are present within a wide range of habitats, both urban and rural, particularly where there are river channels, broadleaved woodlands and conifer plantations and other high quality semi-natural habitats where flying insects and invertebrates are more abundant and roosting opportunities are available.

Although some species are largely dependent on trees and woodland, all locally occurring species are known to rely on built structures for at least part of their life cycle; these include residential properties, barns, agricultural buildings, garages, commercial premises, offices and factories, cellars, bridges and culverts.

All bats are warm-blooded animals and are attracted to warm structures in summer. Contrary to popular belief, buildings constructed since 1970 are frequently used as maternity roosts between May and August when pregnant females gather, sometimes in considerable numbers at suitable sites to give birth to their young.

During late summer and autumn adults and young bats leave their breeding roosts and disperse within the wider district; there is also increasing evidence of seasonal movement and migration by certain species. All UK bat species feed exclusively on insect prey. Hibernation at cooler locations between October / November and March / April is a period of relative inactivity, enabling bats to survive the winter when food is scarce.

### **Proposed works**

1. Removal of the existing triple apex cow shed (figures 1 to 8) and replacement with a new unit - (drawing as shown in ANNEX 1 – Farmplus Construction Ltd, Longridge.)

### **Pre-survey data search**

- (1) European Protected Species (EPS) – ie. locally significant bat roosts or species records within the district.
- (2) Locally, regionally or nationally important wildlife and conservation designations.
- (3) Bat and owl surveys undertaken at this site and other properties within 2km of the site.
- (4) National Biodiversity Network (NBN) terrestrial mammal records (chiroptera) for the 10km grid square.
- (5) Local bat records - East Lancashire Bat Group (ELBG) / North Lancashire Bat Group (NLBG)

(6) Interactive maps: *Natureonthemap* (Natural England) and *Magic.gov.uk*.

Bat species regularly recorded in the 10km grid square SD 64 Chipping / Hodder Valley (Ribble Valley District):

- Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*)
- Whiskered bat (*M. mystacinus*)
- Brandt's bat (*M. brandtii*)
- Daubenton's bat (*M. daubentonii*)
- Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*)
- Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
- Soprano pipistrelle (*P. pygmaeus*)
- Noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctula*)

### **Pre-existing information**

A data search has found no existing records of roosting bats at this property.

**Location of the property** National Grid Reference: SD 623 434 Elevation: approximately 110 metres.

The property is situated on Talbot Street / Green Lane, Chipping on the eastern side of the village adjacent to farmland / open countryside and is outwith the Chipping Conservation Area (Townscape Appraisal Map).

Although a number of bat species are regularly recorded within the village and the wider environment, there are no existing records of roosting or breeding bats at Wharf Farm. The nearest records of breeding bats are close to Chipping Brook, a well-wooded and sheltered watercourse located within 200 metres of the site; there are two historic records of bat nursery roosts of common pipistrelle in buildings at nearby Talbot Street.

There are no designated nature conservation sites immediately adjacent to the property ie. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Biological Heritage Sites (BHS), National Nature Reserves (NNR's), Local Nature Reserves (LNR's) or Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS).

### **Description of the building**

The building comprises a triple apex cowshed (figures 1 to 3); all roofs have rafter-with-purlin construction and are clad in box-alloy panels with skylight panels; the building is well-ventilated with good natural lighting.

The floor aisles and animal cubicles have concrete floors with timber and steel partitions throughout the building and external walls are mostly timber (Yorkshire boarding) providing additional ventilation and light.

There are steel portal doors providing access from the yard on the north-west elevation (figures 2 and 4).

The shed is adjacent to extensive grass ley and open countryside on the south-east elevation (figure 1).

### **Survey results**

There are no signs of any maternity bat roost, mating roost or place of hibernation. Although bats are likely to feed and forage over the property; occasionally bats may enter the large open portal barn on the north side of the building. There are no signs of any activity within the cowshed itself.

There are no records of roosting bats at the property.

The building type is sub-optimal in terms of its suitability to attract roosting bats.

There is no evidence of roosting barn owls and there are no signs of nesting activity by other wild birds.

**A preliminary roost assessment has found no evidence of bat activity associated with any part of the structure.**

## Evaluation of results

The proposed building alterations are unlikely to result in disturbance to roosting bats and therefore the overall impact of the development on protected species is likely to be negligible / low. The conservation significance of the existing property to support roosting bats and nesting barn owls is also negligible / low.

## Impact assessment

Negligible potential	Low potential	Moderate potential	High potential
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Table 1: Potential of the property to support protected species.

## Risk assessment

Negligible Risk	Low risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
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Table 2: The likely risk of causing disturbance to roosting bats during the proposed demolition works.

## Recommendations / mitigation advice

Action	Summary
1. Timing constraints	Not required
2. Further survey effort at this site	Not required
3. Detailed method statement	Not required
4. Licence requirement (EPSL)	Not required
5. Roof works: Removal of roofing materials	<p><b>Extremely low risk / negligible risk of exposing or disturbing roosting bats.</b></p> <p>Roosting bats are very <u>occasionally</u> exposed during removal of roofing materials; highest risk areas are normally beneath roofing felts and under roof tiles, ridge tiles and roof copings.</p> <p>In the very unlikely event of any bats being exposed during the removal of the roof spars, roof panels and copings, the demolition operations in the area should cease until further inspection by a licensed ecological consultant.</p> <p>(For further advice - see note 8 below).</p>
6. Accidental disturbance to bats	<p><b>Seek advice immediately.</b></p> <p>Cover any exposed bats to reduce any further risk of harm. Place the bats in a small dark and very secure box and leave in a cool and quiet place. Wherever possible, building / roofing contractors should try to prevent any bats from flying away in daylight. Call the surveyor for further advice before proceeding, otherwise contact the emergency help line at the Bat Conservation Trust.</p>

7. Legal responsibility	The onus lies with the applicant to ensure that no offence will be committed if the development goes ahead, regardless of whether planning permission has been granted.
8. Emergency advice on bats	<p>EED Surveys - David Fisher (mobile) 07498 364568</p> <p>email: <a href="mailto:earthworksuk@yahoo.co.uk">earthworksuk@yahoo.co.uk</a></p> <p>The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) provides a bat helpline: 0345 1300 228; in an emergency, BCT will call the nearest volunteer bat worker in your area to arrange a free site visit.</p> <p><a href="http://www.bats.org.uk">www.bats.org.uk</a> email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@bats.org.uk">enquiries@bats.org.uk</a></p>
9. Nesting wild birds	No evidence found.

## Summary

The proposed building alterations are **unlikely to cause disturbance to bats** or result in the loss of a bat roost or cause injury or death of a European Protected Species – (Bats) or result in any significant impact on a local bat population.

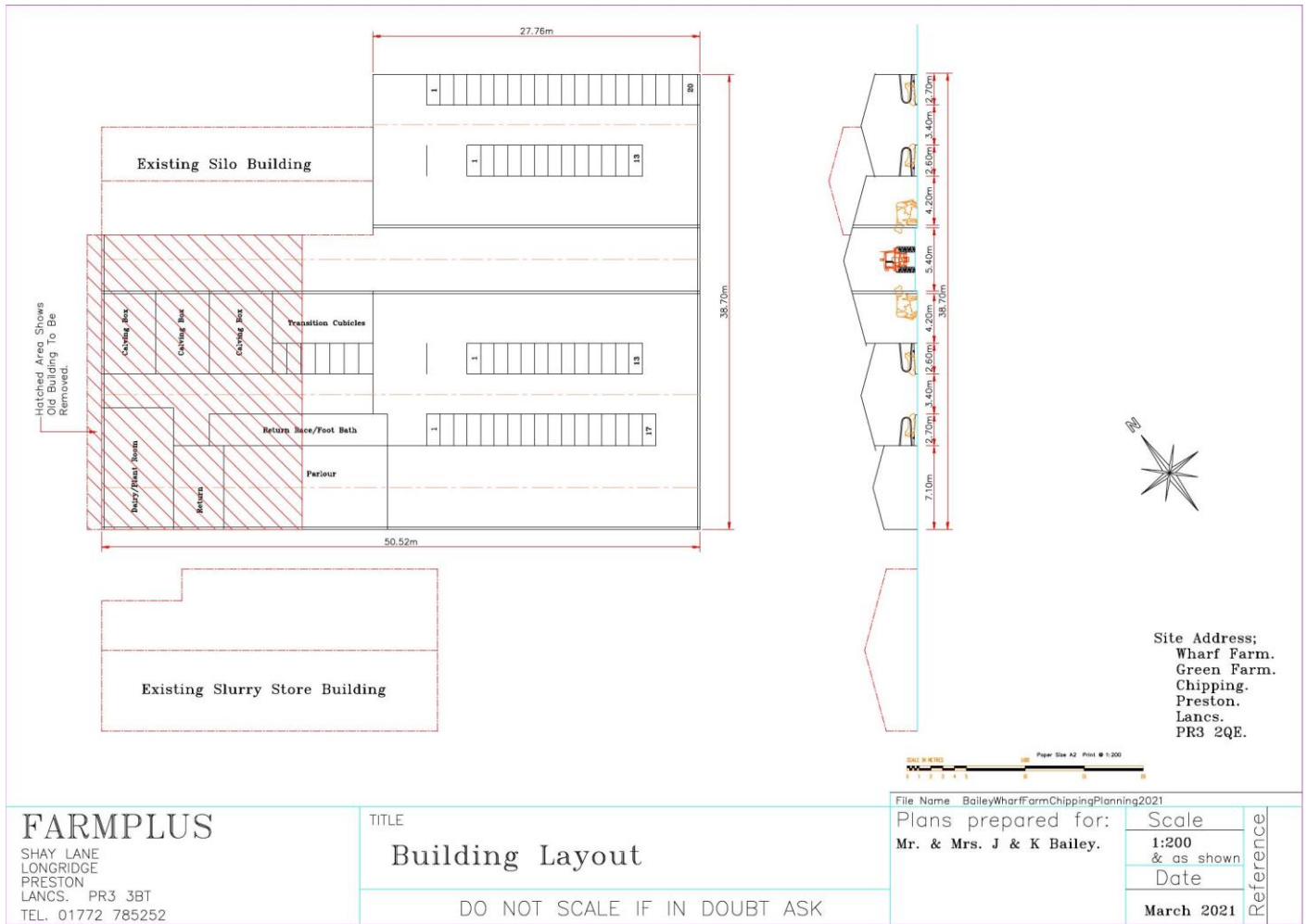
There is no evidence of roosting / nesting barn owls or other wild birds in this building.

**It is recommended the works proceed without a requirement to obtain a development licence (EPSL)** since the proposed development is unlikely to result in a breach of the Habitats Regulations.

Further survey effort at this property is **not required**.

**ANNEX 1:**

**Plan for replacement buildings: FARMPLUS CONSTRUCTION LTD.**



Site Address:  
Wharf Farm.  
Green Farm.  
Chipping.  
Preston.  
Lancs.  
PR3 2QE.

**FARMPLUS**  
SHAY LANE  
LONGRIDGE  
PRESTON  
LANCS. PR3 3BT  
TEL. 01772 785252

TITLE  
**Building Layout**  
DO NOT SCALE IF IN DOUBT ASK

File Name	BaileyWharfFarmChippingPlanning2021		Reference
Plans prepared for:	Mr. & Mrs. J & K Bailey.	Scale	
		1:200 & as shown	
		Date	
		March 2021	



**ANNEX 2:**

Images: Showing existing triple-apex cowshed at Wharf Farm, Chipping (taken 07/06/21)



Figure 1: Panoramic view showing position of shed adjacent to open fields.



Figure 2: north-west elevation



Figure 3: south-east elevation



Figure 4:



Figure 5:



Figure 6:



Figure 7:

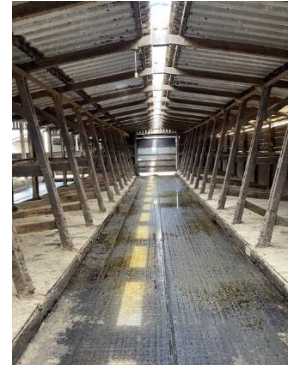


Figure 8:



## ANNEX 3

### Wildlife legislation – Bats and the law

All bat species in the UK receive full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended by the Environment Protection Act 1990). The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the Wildlife and Countryside Act to also make it an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct a place that bats use for shelter or protection. All species of bats are listed on Schedule 5 of the 1981 Act, which makes it an offence to:

- *intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bat.*
- *intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection. This is taken to mean all bat roosts whether bats are present or not.*
- *intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.*

The protected status afforded to bats means planning authorities may require extra information (in the form of surveys, impact assessments and mitigation proposals) before determining planning applications for sites used by bats. Planning authorities may refuse planning permission solely on grounds of the predicted impact on protected species such as bats. Recent case law has underlined the importance of obtaining survey information prior to the determination of planning consent<sup>1</sup>.

*“It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by a development proposal, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.”<sup>2</sup>*

All British bat species are included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, (also known as Habitats Regulations) which defines ‘European Protected Species’ (EPS).

<sup>1</sup> Bat Mitigation Guidelines, AJ Mitchell Jones, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, (2004) ISBN 1 86107 558 8

<sup>2</sup> Planning Policy Statement (PPS9) (2005), Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. ODPM.

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### Protected species (Bats) and the planning process

Our built environment has the potential to have major negative impacts on biodiversity. However, if done sensitively, the development and refurbishment of buildings can, in fact, increase the ecological value of the site.\*

For development proposals requiring planning permission, the presence of bats, and therefore the need for a bat survey, is an important ‘material planning consideration’. Adequate surveys are therefore required to establish the presence or absence of bats, to enable a prediction of the likely impact of the proposed development on them and their breeding sites or resting places and, if necessary, to design mitigation and compensation. Similarly, adequate survey information must accompany an application for a Habitats Regulations licence (also known as a Mitigation Licence) required to ensure that a proposed development is able to proceed lawfully<sup>1</sup>.

The term ‘development’ [used in these guidelines] includes all activities requiring consent under relevant planning legislation and / or demolition operations requiring building control approval under the Building Act 1984.

Natural England (Formerly English Nature) states that development in relation to bats “covers a wide range of operations that have the potential to impact negatively on bats and bat populations. Typical examples would be the construction, modification, restoration or conversion of buildings and structures, as well as infrastructure, landfill or mineral extraction projects and demolition operations”.<sup>2</sup>

\* Designing for Biodiversity, RIBA (second Edition - 2013) <sup>1</sup> Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines, BCT (2007). <sup>2</sup>Tony Mitchell-Jones, (BMG, 2004)

Natural England – North of England offices are located at:

Crewe: Natural England, Electra Way, Crewe Business Park, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 6GJ 0300 060 2922

Kendal: Natural England, Juniper House, Murley Moss, Oxenholme Rd, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 7RL 0300 060 2122

Manchester: Natural England, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Bridgewater House, Whitworth Street, Manche