

# **Bat Survey Report and Method Statement European Protected Species (Bats)**

## **Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures**

**Lees House  
Whitewell Road  
Cow Ark  
BB7 3DG**

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## Executive summary

In August 2021 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of Lees House, Whitewell Road, Cow Ark, BB7 3DG to assess the potential for impact on protected species.

A daytime survey was carried out on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021 in order to support plans to extend the property. The building, when assessed in combination with its location and surrounding habitat, was observed to have high level of bat roost potential, and evidence in the form of scattered droppings within the main loft area confirmed use by roosting bats.

Follow up surveys have been carried out in the form of two emergence surveys to characterise roost type and identify roost entrances used by bats.

No bats were observed using areas of the building likely to be affected by proposed plans, however Soprano pipistrelle bats were confirmed to be using the main house loft space to roost and were observed to be emerging from below the eaves on the west facade of the property. The roost is likely to be a maternity roost.

*"The presence of a significant bat roost (invariably a maternity roost) can normally be determined on a single visit at any time of year, provided that the entire structure is accessible and that any signs of bats have not been removed by others". - Mitchell-Jones, A (2004) Bat mitigation guidelines. English Nature.*

The proposed development does not directly affect the roost or roost entrances, however potential for disturbance is possible if works (specifically roof works) are carried out at a time of year when bats are likely to be present (May to October).

Timing of works offers the opportunity to carry out proposed work without the need for a Natural England EPS Development licence if work can be guaranteed to take place on the roof between October and April.

If roof work is proposed to be carried out with October and April a Natural England EPS Development licence will be needed to cover works likely to cause disturbance.

It is considered that a precautionary approach to development with suitable reasonable avoidance measures with mitigation in the form of timing of works and compensatory bat boxes would be an appropriate approach to roost compensation commensurate with that expected by Natural England for the purposes of licencing should it be necessary.

Compensatory bat boxes (two Greenwood Eco Habitats three crevice boxes) will be placed on site prior to work commencing and will form suitable commensurate mitigation in the event that an EPS licence application is necessary.

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'.

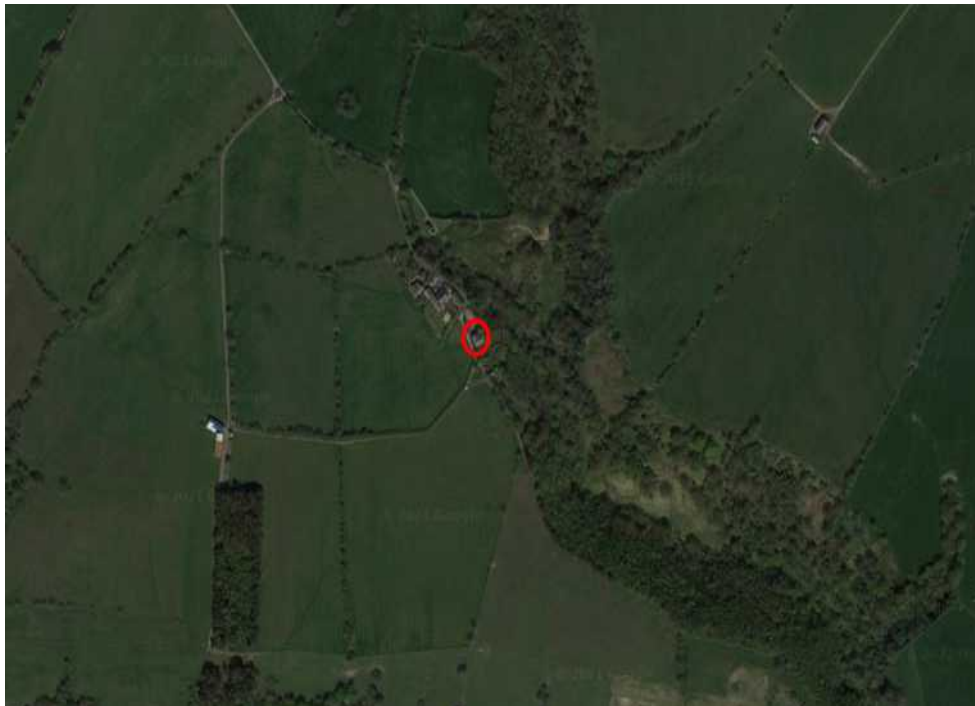
This method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to bats. By following the Reasonable Avoidance Measures and mitigation included in this document the work can take place, ensuring the Continued Ecological Functionality of the site.

### Site Location

Lees House, Whitewell Road, Cow Ark, BB7 3DG  
NGR: SD6683143800



### Surrounding Habitat



The property is located in a rural position with surrounding habitat dominated by improved and semi improved grassland with some hedgerow present on field boundaries to the west. An area of ancient woodland associated with Cow Ark Brook is present to the east of the property, providing connectivity to ancient riparian woodland associated with the River Hodder to the south. Connectivity to the wider landscape is good.

Overall foraging potential for bats can be considered high.

## Survey summary and site assessment

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

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

The surveyor holds records of soprano pipistrelle and Brandt's bat maternity roosts within 1km of the site.

From personal experience of surveying for and researching bats in Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cumbria, 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.

## Survey Personnel.

Personnel on surveys included: David Anderson, an experienced ecologist and bat researcher with 25 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).

## Survey Summary

Survey	Date	Timings
Visual	10.08.2021	1 Hour
Emergence Survey	10.08.2021	3 Hours
Emergence Survey	26.08.2021	3 Hours

## Survey constraints

Access to all areas of the exterior of the building was possible and good visual inspection at ground level was possible. Evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings or staining on external walls and surfaces is frequently removed by the action of wind and rain; apparent absence of evidence is therefore evaluated with caution.

In many situations it is not possible to inspect every locations where bats are present therefore it should be assumed that an absence of bat evidence does not necessarily equate to evidence that bats are absent. Some species such as pipistrelle sp bats are opportunistic and it is possible for individuals to be found during works, even where surveys have had negative results during preliminary and activity surveys.



## Survey Results

### Visual Survey



The property consists of a two storey stone built house with a double pitched stone slate roof., the property has an adjoining garage to the frontage with single pitch slate roof.

External walls are partially rendered and generally well pointed. Gable ends are pointed and well sealed. Soffits and fascia boards are generally close fitting.

Roof slates are close fitting with no lifted, missing or slipped slates. A bituminous roofing felt is present within lofts. Roof timbers are modern and bandsawn.

The property has a single storey conservatory with hipped slate roof present on the western facade.

## Visual Inspection.



Extensive droppings were observed scattered over boarding and insulation within the main house loft, droppings were consistent with pipistrelle bats using the loft, and number of droppings were suggestive of a maternity roost.



## Emergence Survey - 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021

**Start: 20.35 Sunset: 20.52 Finish: 22.25**

**Start temp – 16.6c / Wind Bft0 / 80% clear sky**

An emergence survey on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021 was carried out with surveyors using a combination of Anabat Walkabout, Anabat Scout and Canon XA25 nightshot video camera with Infrared illuminators. Calls were analysed post survey using Anabat Insight software.

Soprano pipistrelle bats were observed to emerge from below the eaves on the western facade of the building. Two myotis bats, most characteristic of Whiskered/Brandts were recorded to emerge. 29 bats in total were recorded, with bats heading south and south east to forage along the edge of and within woodland.

**Emergence Survey - 26<sup>th</sup> August 2021**  
**Start: 20.00 Sunset:20.17 Finish:21.50**  
**Start temp – 14.2c / Wind Bft0 / 100% clear sky**

An emergence survey on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021 was carried out with surveyors using a combination of Anabat Walkabout, Anabat Scout and Canon XA25 nightshot video camera with Infrared illuminators. Calls were analysed post survey using Anabat Insight software.

Soprano pipistrelle bats were observed to emerge from below the eaves on the western facade of the building. 34 bats in total were recorded, with bats heading south and south east to forage along the edge of and within woodland.



*Location of roost entrance on western facade.*

### **Interpretation of results**

Soprano pipistrelle bats were confirmed to be using the main house loft space to roost and were observed to be emerging from below the eaves on the west facade of the property. The roost is likely to be a maternity roost.

*“The presence of a significant bat roost (invariably a maternity roost) can normally be determined on a single visit at any time of year, provided that the entire structure is accessible and that any signs of bats have not been removed by others”. - Mitchell-Jones, A (2004) Bat mitigation guidelines. English Nature.*

The proposed development does not directly affect the roost or roost entrances, however potential for disturbance is possible if works (specifically roof works) are carried out at a time of year when bats are likely to be present (May to October).

Timing of works offers the opportunity to carry out proposed work without the need for a Natural England EPS Development licence if work can be guaranteed to take place on the roof between October and April.

If roof work is proposed to be carried out with October and April a Natural England EPS Development licence will be needed to cover works likely to cause disturbance.

It is considered that a precautionary approach to development with suitable reasonable avoidance measures with mitigation in the form of timing of works and compensatory bat boxes would be an appropriate approach to roost compensation commensurate with that expected by Natural England for the purposes of licencing should it be necessary.

## **Impact Assessment**

Short-term impacts – disturbance Low risk:

Roof stripping where necessary will be undertaken by hand and under supervision.

Long-term impacts - Roost loss: No impact on a local bat population.

Long-term impacts - Fragmentation and isolation:

Minimal risk, 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 and Reasonable Avoidance Measures**

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'. The Method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to roosting bats.

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 where necessary.

No work should commence without contractors receiving a toolbox talk.

All contractors will be made aware of the legal protection afforded all species of bats in the UK and procedures will be in place to mitigate for the potential impact on bats before any building work is undertaken.

Compensatory bat boxes (Two Greenwood Eco Habitats three crevice boxes) will be placed on site prior to work commencing and will be used to house any bats found during works. Bat boxes will remain on site as part of proposed biodiversity enhancement.

**Timing of works** - Roof works should take place between October and April.

**If roof work is proposed to be carried out with October to April a Natural England EPS Development licence will be needed to cover works likely to cause disturbance.**

Roof work will take place following an evening temperature of +5c.

Work to affected roof areas will take place under supervision of the batworker.

Removal of roof slates will be carried out by hand and under supervision where necessary.

Type 1F Bituminous Hessian Backed Roofing Felt should be used in new roof areas.

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

## **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.