SUNDERLAND PEACOCK ARCHITECTS

BAT SURVEY AT -

HIGHER COLLEGE FARM
And ADJACENT LAND
LOWER ROAD
LONGRIDGE
PR3 2YY

DATE AND TIME OF VISIT
9th Sept 2021 7.45 pm

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Overcast , slight south west breeze, 18 C.

REFERENCE NO. 6478

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RICS
The mark of
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SURVEY CARRIED OUT BY: LYNNE RUSHWORTH AssocRICS

UK BAT ECOLOGY

- It is thought that there are 18 native species of bats in the UK, most of which have seen declines in numbers over the last century.
-
- As insect feeding species the preferred habitats include woodland, grassland, agricultural land, wetland and rivers which provide good foraging potential.
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- Bats typically roost close to foraging sites and use linear features such as hedgerows, tree lines and rivers to navigate. It is important to maintain these features, as removal is thought to contribute to the decline in numbers.

- Bats will roost in a wide variety of sites and built structures, including underground structures (caves , bridges) and trees . Types of roost and times of year used.

  Hibernacula - November to March
  Temporary roosts - March to April and August to October
  Maternity roosts – May to August
  Summer roosts – Used by Males and immature females
  Mating roosts – September and October

- Disturbance to a Hibernacula or Maternity roost is the most damaging for any local bat population. The same Maternity roosts are typically used year after year commencing between May to early June and are colonised with mature females and their young, any disturbance can lead to abandonment of the young and loss of the roost will have a significant impact on the bat population.
  Hibernacula roosts typically consist of underground sites caves, cellars etc or buildings which maintain cool and fairly constant temperatures. Bats hibernate (deep sleep , torpor) to survive the winter months when insects are in short supply so they hibernate to conserve energy and survive on their fat stores. Any disturbance which wakes the bats can result in unnecessary use of the energy reserves and thus reduces the chance of survival over the winter months.

THIS SURVEY HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT BY: LYNNE RUSHWORTH WHO HAS COMPLETED THE BAT CONSERVATION TRUST'S 'BATS AND BAT SURVEYS' FOUNDATION COURSE FOR CONSULTANTS, AND 'PLANNING AND PREPARATION OF BAT SURVEYS' COURSE
EMERGENCE SURVEYS ARE CARRIED OUT WITH A SECOND SURVEYOR WITH TWELVE YEARS EXPERIENCE OF ASSISTING ON EMERGENCE SURVEYS

THE BRIEF

In conjunction with the submission of an application for planning approval, this survey was commissioned to identify if bats are currently present in the building, to assess if it has been used in the past or if there is any potential for future use of the building.
All British bats and their roosts are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

BAT LEGISLATION - Summary of offences under the law:

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 to
(a) deliberately to capture or kill any bat
(b) deliberately to disturb any bat
(c) 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.

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.

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.

(2) Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

LIMITATIONS OF REPORT

NOTE: The absence of bats is near impossible to prove. The bats' high mobility means it is virtually impossible to rule out bats using any type of structure for roosting or habitat for foraging or on a flight path.

- External walls and internal rooms inspected from ground level.
- Roof spaces, attics and lofts will only be inspected if safe access is possible.
- Winter surveys will provide limited results. However internal inspection should determine if bats have used the building in the previous year.
- Any building whose structure is considered dangerous can only be inspected from a safe distance.

EQUIPMENT USED ON SURVEY

- 'MAGENTA 5' BAT DETECTOR
- BINOCULARS
- HIGH POWERED TORCH
- LADDERS FOR HIGH LEVEL INSPECTION
- CAMERA

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Change of use of existing farmhouse dwelling into office units and conversion to offices of two number outbuildings within the house curtailage. Construction of units in the field between the house and Lower/ Blackburn road.
Impact of development in relation to potential bat habitat:-
Potential removal or disturbance of existing bat roosts or foraging habitat

TYPE OF BUILDING

The building is a currently occupied dwelling which consists of an original two storey farmhouse which has been extended into the converted attached single storey outbuildings. There is a detached double garage located in the yard area together with a detached store located in the north east corner of the garden.

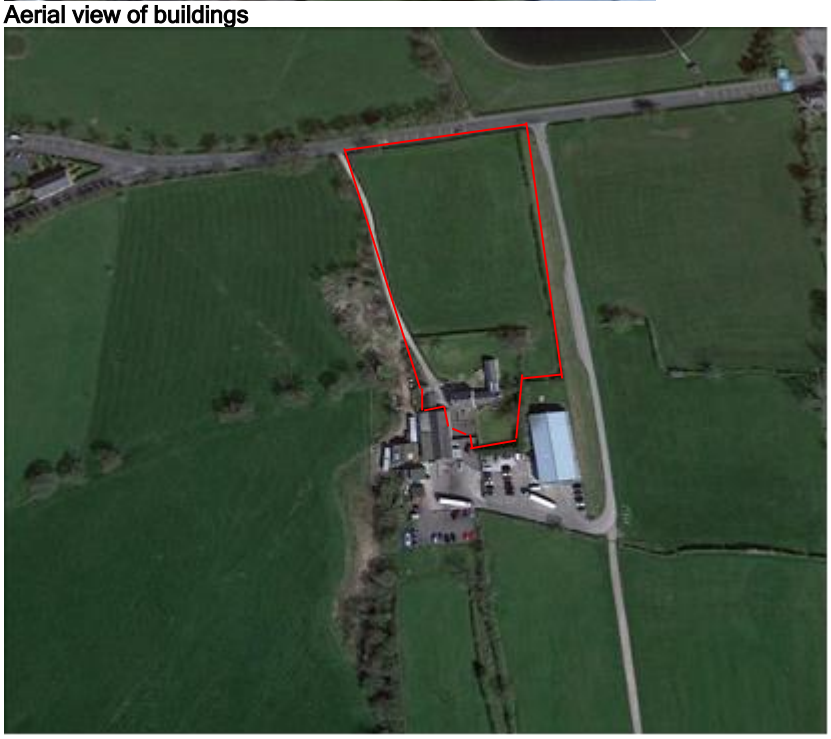

South elevation Farmhouse.


North elevation.


Garage outbuilding


Store building

Aerial view of buildings



Proposed Development site views

North east corner of the site

North west corner and west boundary

View of site looking north

West boundary

East leylandi boundary with gap

METHODOLOGY The survey methodology follows the guidelines published in the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT- Bat surveys, good practice guidelines 2nd Edition)
External scoping survey (Non invasive) carried out by one surveyor to assess if the site has any potential value for protected species and determine if bats are currently or have historically used the building.
Evening emergence survey carried out by two surveyors monitoring all building elevations and field to the front of the house.

AIMS OF THE SURVEY

To ensure the proposed development will not affect any protected species
The survey will ; Identify past ,current or potential use of the site by protected species.
Assess any impact of the proposed development on these species
Outline a mitigation scheme for any species affected by the development (if required)

LOCATION SD:615 372

The farmhouse and its outbuildings are located approx 330m to the East of the main settlement area of Longridge. The site is located 150m to the south of Blackburn road. The field is north of the house positioned between the house and Blackburn road. Directly adjacent to the rear boundary of the house is a commercial/ depot site with a separate access track off Blackburn road.

FORAGING POTENTIAL IN THE LOCATION

The house is located in a garden which extends to the north and south of the buildings, it is mainly laid to lawn with trees and hedgerow forming the boundary. The rear (south) boundary is adjacent to a functioning commercial depot. The north boundary also forms the south boundary of the field (proposed development site). 200m to the north of the site are two reservoirs a further reservoir is 770m to the south west. A tree lined brook flowing in a southerly direction passes within 50m of the house, the trees lining it increase to form a more extensive but still linear wooded area further to the south.

The access roads both to the farm and the commercial site form the west and east boundaries of the proposed development field, all the boundaries are hedgerow. The farm access road also has some broad leaf trees lining the west side. The site is between commute/ forage avenues which are linear and run in a north /south direction to the west and east boundary of the site.

WALL CONSTRUCTION

All the walls are natural random coursed stone. The west elevation of the farmhouse has a painted render finish.

Farmhouse wall

Garage side wall

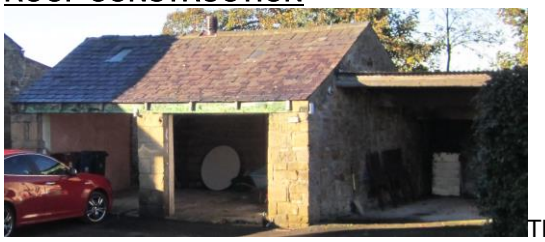
Store wall

Farmhouse west gable

BAT ACCESS POINTS IN WALLS

All the stone walls and pointing are in very good condition both on the farmhouse, garage and store, no cracks or crevices forming any gaps or access points suitable for bats. The rendered gable wall is in good condition with no access points or gaps.

ROOF CONSTRUCTION


The garage roof is a pitched natural slate construction with a couple of glazed lights. There is a car port to the north elevation which has a mono pitch corrugated fibre cement sheet covering.


The store has a mono pitch roof with a corrugated steel sheet roof, the abutments with the wall are pointed.


House roof south elevation


Part house roof north /north west elevation

The house roof is pitched over the main two storey section and the single storey wing. All the roof coverings are natural blue slate, with roof windows in the southern facing pitches. The gutters are fixed to a timber fascia flush to the wall.

BAT ACCESS POINTS IN ROOF

The house slates, ridge slates and flashings are in perfect condition with no gaps however an emergence survey carried out 01/06/17 recorded bat roosts present in the South west and north west corners of the two storey section of the farmhouse,

The store steel sheet covering and pointing appeared to be relatively new both were in perfect condition with no possible access points.

The garage roof slates were in reasonable condition and were generally tight fitting and did not provide any crevices suitable for bat entry. The car port sheet was also in reasonable condition with no holes or gaps. However the interior of the buildings are freely accessible via the door openings.

ROOF SPACE


Garage roof : There is no enclosed roof space, timber trusses, purlins and rafters, rafters boarded out to the underside. Timber structure was easily examined but not possible to fully inspect behind the boarding. Gaps in the boarding were checked for any signs of grease marks, droppings or staining. The result was negative.

Car port roof : There was no enclosed roof space, the sheet was fixed directly to timber purlins. All the structure was easily examined. The space did not provide any potential habitat for bats.

The roof void in the main house is lined out with plaster board to the underside of the rafters to form bedroom accommodation with roof windows. There is no enclosed roof space in the single storey wing the rafters also being lined out with plaster board.

It was not possible to enter the store but external inspection confirmed that there are no possible access points into the building.

		Yes	No
BAT SIGNS, EXTERNAL	SEEN	X	
	DROPPINGS		X
MAGENTA BAT5 DETECTOR RESULT		X	

The exterior of the buildings were examined closely for any dropping or staining evidence on the walls or the ground surrounding them the result was negative.

Emergence survey 09/09/21

At dusk the house was monitored to the north and south of the house, with clear visibility to the store and garage, the access tracks which form the boundaries were also monitored.

At 8.05pm bat activity was detected before any sighting from the trees to the east side of the garden particularly the Oak tree on the boundary. The first sighting was 8.15 pm appearing from the direction of the Oak tree and proceeded to forage in the garden to the east of the house and around the rear yard area adjacent to the neighbouring barn. This activity continued for approx.½ hour, approx 3no bats carried out this foraging activity, the actual emergence location could not be determined as it was not on the site. No bats emerged from any of the buildings on site.

Some minor activity was detected (although not seen) in the trees lining the west side of the west access track.

The current Pipestrelle bat foraging activity is indicated on the aerial photo below together with the results from the 2017 survey.

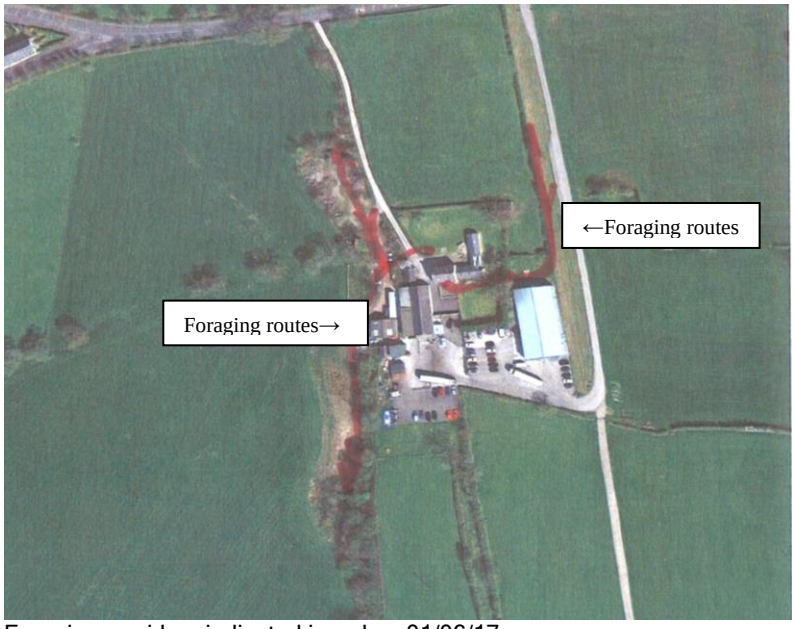
Bats do not generally fly over open land preferring to follow tree or hedge lines, this pattern of activity was confirmed during this survey. All activity was confined to the corridors indicated on the aerial photograph.

The survey continued until it was too dark to see.

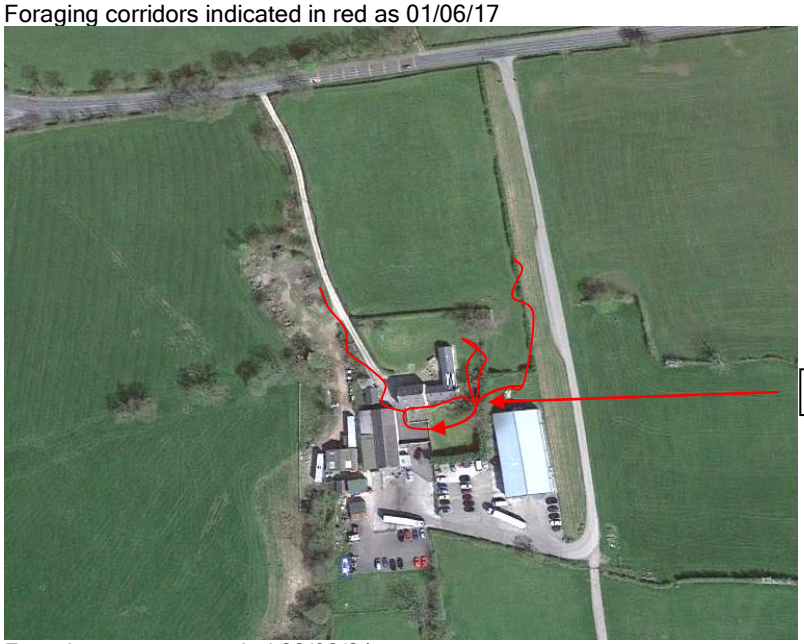
←Historic Emergence point and direction of flight. As of 01/06/17

North elevation

South elevation



Foraging corridors indicated in red as 01/06/17



Foraging routes recorded 09/09/21

		Yes	No
BAT SIGNS, INTERNAL	SIGHTED		X
	DROPPINGS		X
	DETECTOR RESULTS		X
	STAINING/GREASE MARKS		X
	SUSPECT SUMMER ROOST	X	
	SUSPECT WINTER HIBERNACULA		X
	INSECT OR MOTH FEEDING EVIDENCE		X

The interior of the garage and car port had none of the above evidence. The store was not accessible.

CONCLUSION

This latest emergence survey did not record emergence from any of the buildings on site, however the fact that historically there was a significant bat roost present in the two storey section of the Farm house, the building should still be considered as a potential bat roost. The proposed scheme however will not pose a threat to the roost potential as the roof/ eaves of the farmhouse will not be disturbed either internally or externally.
The garage and store room will be affected by a conversion to office space however as they provide sub optimal roost potential and are not used by the local bat population it does not constitute a loss of habitat or foraging potential.
Development on the field will not impact adversely on the bat population, although the proposal involves the removal of some sections of the hedge forming the west boundary of the site (to the east of the track), the gaps are not significant and the tree line to the west of the track will remain as existing, consequently the forage / commute route should not be affected.
The bat population does not traverse the site even via the hedge lines of the garden (north) boundary and the boundary of the field adjacent to Lower Road, however whilst it is not essential to maintain them intact, it is advised to minimise any essential breaks.
As the activity around the oak tree was significant it is important that it is not disturbed , the proposed scheme however will not impact on the tree in any way.

Mitigation is not required however it is an opportunity to enhance the roost potential of the site by incorporating ridge access slates in any buildings adjacent to the west and east boundaries. See illustration overleaf.

Mitigation is not required however an opportunity to enhance the roost potential of the site by incorporating' Kent' Bat boxes on the gables of the proposed units at high level on the elevations adjacent to the west and east boundaries. See illustration overleaf.

The Kent bat box

Simple to construct, self-cleaning and low maintenance.

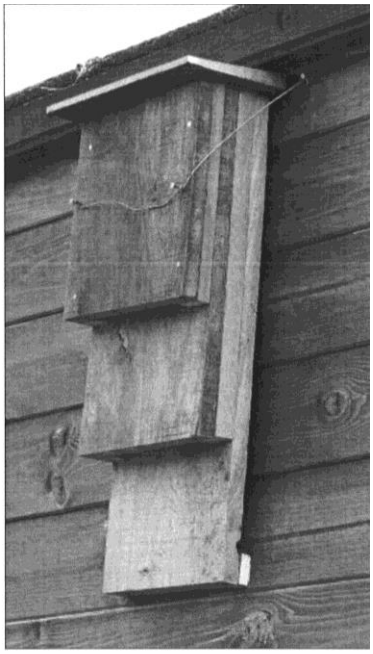
The only critical measurement is the width of the crevices—these should be no larger than suggested. Other measurements are approximate.

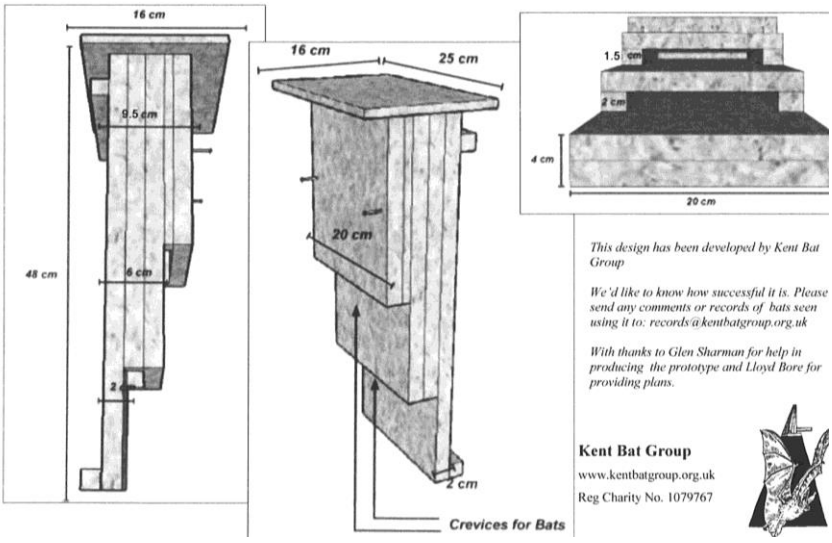
Materials and construction

Box to be made from untreated rough-sawn timbers
Timber should be c,20mm thick
The box should be rainproof and draught-free
Crevices can be between 15 and 25 mm wide
Fixing may be by use of brackets, durable bands or wires

Location

Boxes are best fixed as high as possible in a sheltered wind-free position, exposed to the sun for part of the day.
They can be fitted to walls, other flat surfaces or trees
A clear flight line to the entrance is important





Contractors should be aware of any site lighting during the contract and ensure that it is not directed towards the east and west boundaries.
Any permanent site lighting should be designed to avoid light pollution to the east and west boundaries.

All contractors should be made aware of their responsibilities to protected species and work should proceed with due diligence and in the unlikely event that any bats are discovered work must be stopped immediately and a licensed bat worker must be contacted for advice on how to proceed

RISK ASSESSMENT
(The level of probability that bats are using the property is calculated on the evidence found.)
LOW

NOTES:
The precautions below should be incorporated in the unlikely event that any bats are found to be present in the intervening time between surveys and work commencing on site.
When bats are found to be present in a building:

- A NATURAL ENGLAND licence will be required before any building work is undertaken.
- Pointing work should not be undertaken during winter months as hibernating bats might be entombed.
- Work to roof structure should not be undertaken between late May, June, July and August.
- Small areas of wall could be left un -pointed to encourage potential roosting sites.
- Care must be taken when removing existing roof timbers, and any new timbers or treatment of existing timbers must be carried out using chemicals listed as safe for bat roosts.
- NOTE: The onus lies with the applicant to satisfy themselves that no offence will be committed if the development goes ahead.

If bats are ever found during building work, stop work immediately and contact the Bat Conservation Trust or Natural England.

The Bat Conservation Trust
15 Cloisters House
8 Battersea Park Road
London SW8 4BG
0845 1300 228

Natural England Cheshire-Lancashire Team
Cheshire-Lancashire Team
Pier House
Wallgate
Wigan WN3 4AL

LIVING WITH BATS

- **Bats are not rodents**, and will not nibble or gnaw at wood, wires or insulation.
- **Bats do not build nests** and therefore do not bring bedding material into the roost; neither do they bring their insect prey into the roost.
- **All bats in the UK eat insects**, so they are a great form of natural pest control!
- **Bat droppings** in the UK are dry and crumble away to dust. As a result, there are no known health risks associated with them.
- **Female bats usually have only one baby a year**, so properties do not become 'infested'.
- **Most bats are seasonal visitors** to buildings - they are unlikely to live in the same building all year round, although they are loyal to their roosts and so usually return to the same roosts year after year.
- **Bats are clean and sociable animals** and spend many hours grooming themselves.