

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

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

**Millhouse,
Clitheroe Road,
West Bradford,
BB7 4SH**

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Executive summary

In September 2022 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of Millhouse, Clitheroe Road, West Bradford, BB7 4SH to assess the potential for impact on protected species.

A preliminary bat roost assessment survey was carried out on 27th September 2022. The building, when assessed in combination with location and surrounding habitat was observed to have a low level of bat roost potential.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of building and that the presence of a significant bat roost is unlikely on site.

“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 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.

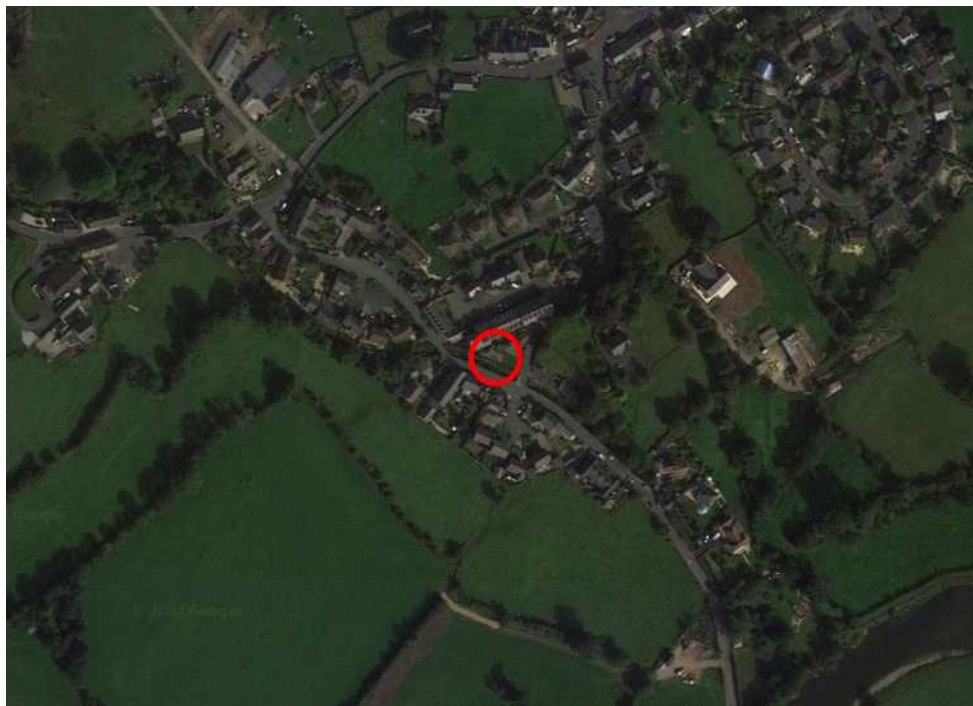
It is recommended that a precautionary emergence survey is carried out prior to works on the main roof to confirm absence of roosting bats. The emergence survey should be carried out between May and August inclusive.

Site Location

Millhouse, Clitheroe Road, West Bradford, BB7 4SH
NGR: SD7440444359



Surrounding Habitat



The property is located in a semi-rural position with surrounding habitat a mosaic of improved and semi improved grassland with some hedgerow and scattered deciduous tree cover present on field boundaries, semi natural deciduous woodland and ancient woodland cover is present to the north. The River Ribble is located approximately 250m to the south east of the property and is linked by Drakehouse Brook which runs adjacent to the house.

Connectivity to the wider landscape is good. Bat foraging potential is moderate.

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.

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 byre 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
Preliminary Roost Assessment	27.09.2022	1 Hour

Survey constraints

Access to all areas of the interior and 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.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

The property consists of a traditional stone built two storey house with a double pitched stone slate roof, the building has single storey extensions present to the rear.

Walls are pointed and partially rendered with no obvious cracks, gaps or crevices present. Roof slates are generally close fitting with no obvious lifted, missing or slipped slates present. The ridge is generally pointed and well sealed. Internally the property has vaulted ceilings with roof lights present. Some gaps are present behind fascia boarding.

The property was assessed as offering negligible to low bat roost potential.



Interpretation of results

A preliminary bat roost assessment survey was carried out on 27th September 2022. The building, when assessed in combination with location and surrounding habitat was observed to have a negligible to low level of bat roost potential.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of building and that the presence of a significant bat roost is unlikely on site.

“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.

Roost potential is limited to gaps behind fascia boarding, and it is likely that the presence of bats would be limited to non breeding low conservation value roosts. It is proposed that a precautionary emergence survey be carried out prior to works commencing to confirm absence of roosting bats.

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.

Common and soprano pipistrelle bats are considered an opportunistic species and it is possible for individuals to be found during works, even where surveys have had negative results during preliminary and activity surveys.

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.

Timing of works

It is recommended that a precautionary emergence survey is carried out prior to works on the main roof to confirm absence of roosting bats.

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

Work to affected roof areas will take place under supervision, with the batworker 'on call'.

Roof slates should be removed by hand and under supervision where necessary.

In the unlikely event bats are found during works. The area should be carefully covered and work stop until the batworker can attend to assess the appropriate way forward.

A compensatory bat box (Greenwood Eco Habitats two crevice box) will be placed on site prior to work commencing. Bat box will remain on site as part of proposed biodiversity enhancement.

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.