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

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

The Hawthornes, West Bradford Road, Waddington, BB7 3JE.

12.02.2023



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Executive summary

In January 2023 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of The Hawthornes, West Bradford Road, Waddington, BB7 3JE. to assess the potential for impact on protected species.

A preliminary bat roost assessment surveys were carried out on 19th August 2021 and 7th February 2023. 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 single emergence survey is carried out prior to works on the roof and removal of soffits to confirm absence of roosting bats. The emergence survey should be carried out between May and August inclusive.

Should bats be recorded using the building to roost, further surveys to support a Natural England EPS Mitigation licence will be carried out.

Compensatory bat boxes recommended within the method statement are commensurate with mitigation expected by Natural England should an EPS Mitigation licence be required.

This method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to bats. By following the Reasonable Avoidance Measures included in this document the work can take place, ensuring the Continued Ecological Functionality of the site, supported by a Natural England EPS mitigation licence where necessary.

This is considered an appropriate approach to roost compensation commensurate with that expected by Natural England for the purposes of licencing.

Site Location

The Hawthornes West Bradford Road Waddington BB7 3JE. NGR: SD7355544061



Surrounding Habitat



The property is located in a 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, and limited semi natural deciduous woodland.

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 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
Preliminary Roost Assessment	19.08.2023	1 Hour
Preliminary Roost Assessment	07.02.2023	1 Hour

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.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

The property consists of a stone built twos storey detached house with a double pitched tiled roof, the building has single storey flat roofed garage present to the northern facade. Walls are well pointed and partially rendered with no obvious cracks, gaps or crevices present. Timber soffits are in poor condition.

Roof tiles are generally close fitting with no obvious lifted, missing or slipped slates present. Pointing on gable ends is deteriorating and in places missing.

The property was assessed as offering low bat roost potential.











Visual Inspection.

No physical evidence, such as grease staining or presence of bat droppings was observed.

Presence of house sparrow was observed using the soffits to nest which is likely to have a negative effect on the bat roost potential.

Timber soffits are deteriorating and in places collapsing, considerable deterioration was observed between surveys and weather penetration is evident.

Interpretation of results

A preliminary bat roost assessment survey was carried out on 19th August 2021 and 7th February 2023. The building, when assessed in combination with location and surrounding habitat was observed to have a low level of bat roost potential.

Gaps present in timber soffits showed evidence to suggest occupation by nesting house sparrow and are considered unlikely to be used by roosting bats given levels of deterioration and weather penetration.

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.

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

Should bats be recorded using the building to roost, further surveys to support a Natural England EPS Mitigation licence will be carried out.

Compensatory bat boxes recommended within the method statement are commensurate with mitigation expected by Natural England should an EPS Mitigation licence be required.

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

This is considered an appropriate approach to roost compensation commensurate with that expected by Natural England for the purposes of licencing.

Recommendations for compensatory bird boxes are included within this report.

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 roof and removal of soffits 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.

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

Nesting Bird Mitigation Strategy

Demolition and vegetation clearance works will be carried out outside the bird nesting season (i.e. outwith March to August inclusive)

or

Following a nesting bird survey carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist no more than 48 hours in advance of works to ensure that no nesting birds will be harmed/disturbed during works.

If an active bird nest is detected at any point, works in that sector will immediately cease and an area of 5m radius around the nest will be cordoned off and clearly marked using hi-visibility tape and appropriate signage to prevent disturbance to nesting birds.

Any noisy machinery, or activity, will be moved at least 10m away from the location of the nest.

Works within the cordoned off area where active bird nests have been detected will only proceed once an experienced ecologist has confirmed the nests are no longer active.

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.

Compensatory bird boxes

Three integrated bird boxes (WoodStone Build-in Swift Nest Box B or similar) should be included within the design to compensate for loss of bird nesting opportunities with existing soffit boxes. Swift nest boxes have been recommended as they attract a wide range of species to utilise them.

