

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

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

**Laneside Barn,
Grindleton Road,
Grindleton,
BB7 4QN**

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**Report prepared by:
Dave Anderson
Batworker.com
dave@batworker.com
07894 338290**

Executive summary

In March 2021 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a follow up bat roost assessment of Laneside Barn, Grindleton Road, Grindleton, BB7 4QN to assess the potential for impact on protected species. Previous surveys in 2019 had recorded no evidence of bats using the barn.

A daytime surveys was carried out on 31st March 2021 in order to support plans to develop the building as a residential conversion.

No evidence of nesting birds was observed. No evidence to suggest use by barn owls, such as urea splashing, discarded feathers or owl pellets were observed.

The survey found no evidence of bats using the building to roost. Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of buildings 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 considered that a precautionary approach to development with suitable reasonable avoidance measures and mitigation in the form of timing of works is appropriate, 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.

No work will take place until static bat detector monitoring and a single emergence survey is carried out (May to September) to confirm absence of bats. In the unlikely event that bats are observed further survey work will be necessary to support a Natural England EPS licence application.

Compensatory bat boxes (Two Greenwood Eco Habitats two crevice boxes) will be placed on site prior to work commencing and will form suitable commensurate mitigation for any necessary EPS licence application.

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’.

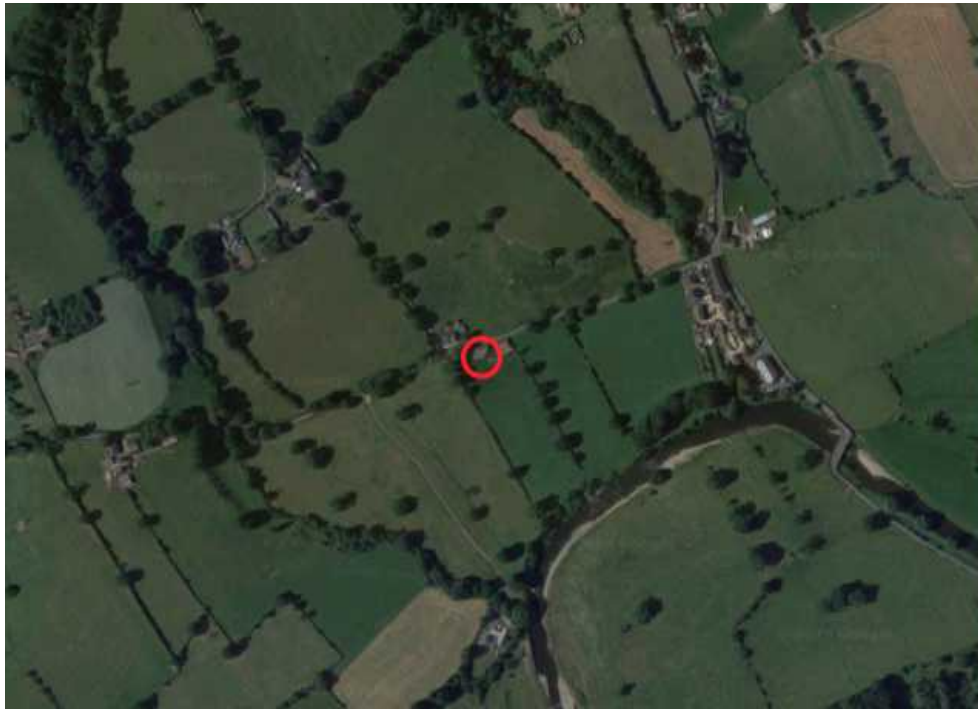
This method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to bats. By following the Reasonable Avoidance Measures and mitigation included in this document the work can take place, ensuring the Continued Ecological Functionality of the site.

Site Location

Laneside Barn, Grindleton Road, Grindleton, BB7 4QN
NGR: SD7569345050



Site Layout



The property is located in a rural position with surrounding habitat dominated by improved and semi improved grassland. Hedgerows and mature trees on field boundaries provide connectivity to the wider landscape. Approx 300m to the south of the barn is the River Hodder

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.

Bat record data: records were obtained from Magic.gov.uk. A search of the MAGIC website revealed one bat EPS licence applications within a 1km radius.

EPSM2012-4959 17/10/2012 Common Pipistrelle, Whiskered and Daubenton's Destruction of a breeding roost.

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	31.03.2021	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.

Survey Results



The property consists of a traditional stone built barn with double pitched slate roof. Areas of missing or lifted slates are present on both sides of the double pitched roof, gaps are present below ridge tiles. Some crevices in external walls are present, however examination by endoscope suggested these were too shallow for use by bats. No loft space is present, the roof is unlined. Beams and joists are hand cut.

Visual Inspection - Bats

Buildings on site were surveyed with no physical evidence of bats being recorded during inspection. The barn is open, with multiple horizontal surfaces, however no evidence of bats in the form of droppings, feeding remains or urine splashing was observed.

Visual Inspection – Barn Owls and other nesting birds

No evidence of nesting birds was observed. No evidence to suggest use by barn owls, such as urea splashing, discarded feathers or owl pellets were observed.

Interpretation of results

Surveys carried out on site have found no evidence of bats using the building to roost. The building were assessed as offering low to moderate potential for roosting bats.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of the building and that the presence of bats is unlikely on site given the evidence observed, previous survey effort and potential roost features recorded.

“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

In the unlikely event that bats are present, roosts will likely consist of small numbers of common species of low conservation value.

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.

Whilst it is possible that further survey work may identify further roosts, it is considered that these will likely consist of small day roosts of common species, low conservation value and bat boxes will be suitable compensation.

Impact Assessment

Short-term impacts – disturbance Low risk:

Roof stripping where necessary will be undertaken by hand and under supervision following a precautionary emergence survey carried out between May and September and installation of compensatory roost boxes.

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 two crevice boxes) will be placed on site prior to work commencing and will be used to house any bats found during works.

Timing of works - No work will take place until static bat detector monitoring and a single emergence survey is carried out (May to September) to confirm absence of bats. In the unlikely event that bats are observed further survey work will be necessary to support a Natural England EPS licence application.

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.

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.