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

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

Mill Race Cottage,
Dilworth Bottoms,
Ribchester,
PR3 3ZB

04.10.2022

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Executive summary

In August 2022 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of Mill Race Cottage, Dilworth Bottoms, Ribchester, PR3 3ZB to assess the potential for impact on protected species.

A preliminary bat roost assessment survey was carried out on 17th August 2022. The building, when assessed in combination with location and surrounding habitat was observed to have a low level of bat roost potential.

One emergence was carried out on 7th September 2022. No bats were observed emerging from or returning to roost within the building.

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

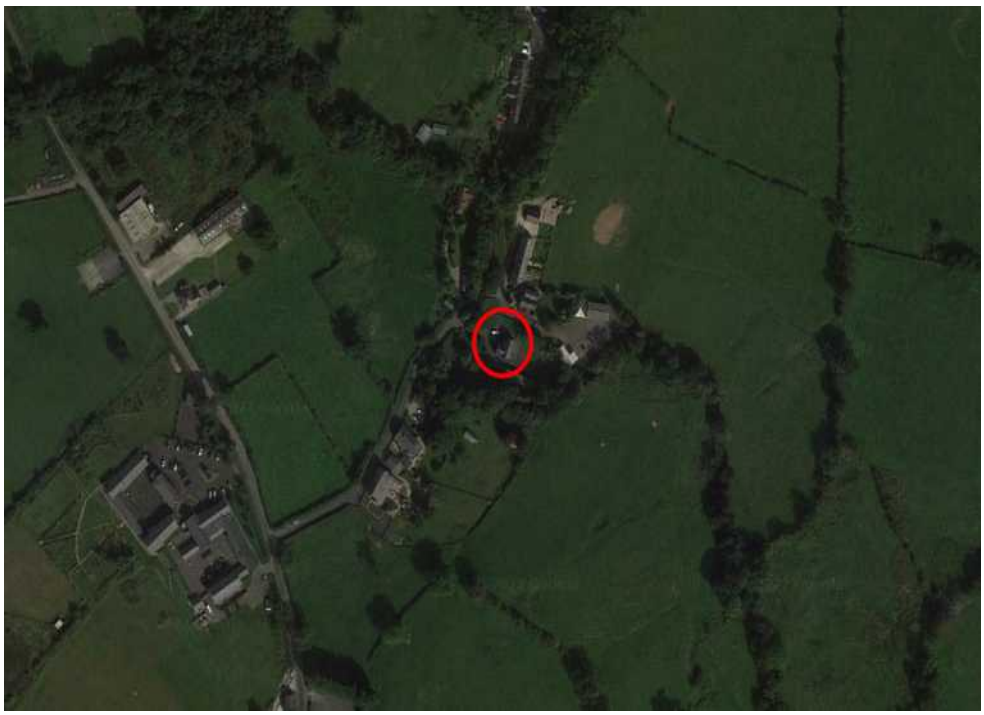
"The presence of a significant bat roost (invariably a maternity roost) can normally be determined on a single visit at any time of year, provided that the entire structure is accessible and that any signs of bats have not been removed by others". - Mitchell-Jones, A (2004) Bat mitigation guidelines.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

It is considered unlikely that low conservation value roosts are present within the building, however reasonable avoidance measures are recommended within this report.

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
Mill Race Cottage, Dilworth Bottoms, Ribchester, PR3 3ZB
NGR: SD6334537248

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, and riparian semi natural deciduous woodland.

Connectivity to the wider landscape is moderate. 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	17.08.2022	1 Hour
Emergence survey	07.09.2022	3 Hours

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 detached modern stone built two storey house with a double pitch and valley slate roof, a single storey porch is present to the frontage. The property has a open fronted portal style corrugated metal and block outbuilding present to the west of the main house. External walls are generally well pointed with no obvious cracks, gaps or crevices suitable for roosting bats.

Roof slates are close fitting with no obvious missing, lifted or slipped slates present. Ridge tiles are pointed and well sealed. Some gaps were present behind fascia boarding.

The main house was assessed as offering low bat roost potential, the portal style outbuilding offers negligible potential due to a lack of cavities or crevices.

Emergence Survey 17th September 2022

Start Temp: 15.3c Finish Temp: 14.6c 100% Cloud cover with internittent light rain. Wind: Bfd0
Start: 19.30 Sunset: 19.46 Finish: 21.16

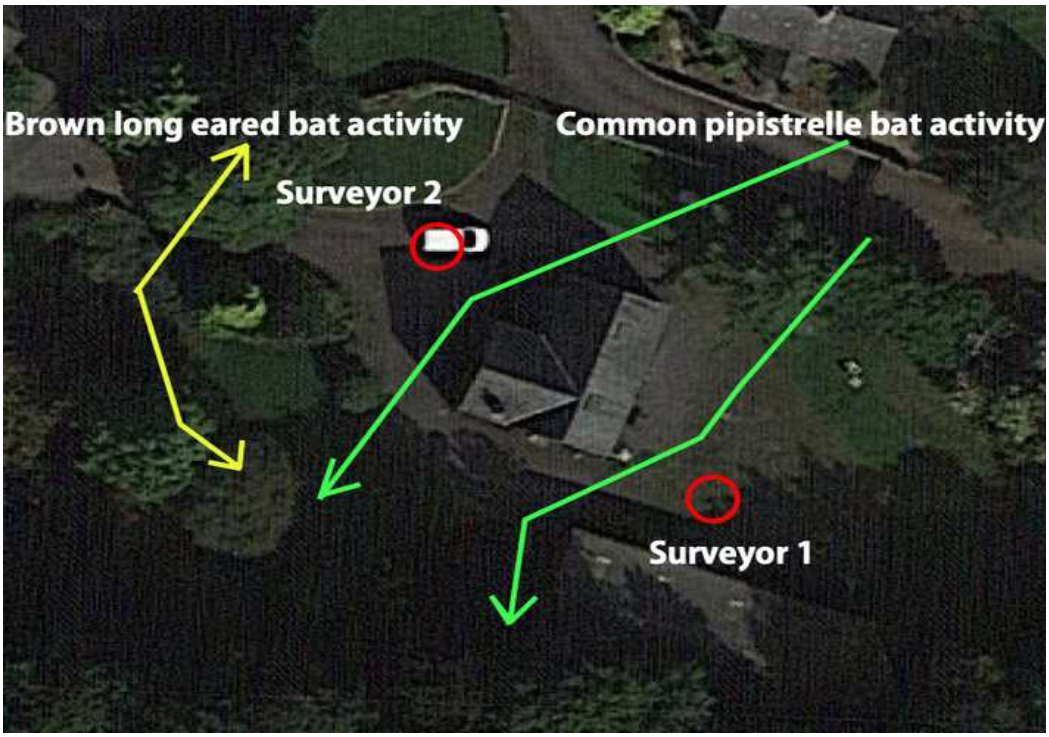
Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout and Anabat Scout full spectrum detectors aided with Canon XA50 and XA25 infrared video cameras with infrared flood and spot lights were positioned around the building to monitor for emerging bats.

Recorded bat calls were analysed post survey using Anabat Insight software. Video footage was reviewed on a 42" 4K monitor at realtime post survey.

Between 19.56 and 20.37 common pipistrelle bats were recorded foraging within the garden of the property arriving from a direction to the north east. Timings were consistent with bats emerging from a nearby roost.

From 20.15 brown long eared bats were recorded and observed foraging along trees to the west of the site.

No bats were recorded emerging from the house.



Interpretation of results

A preliminary bat roost assessment survey was carried out on 17th August 2022. The building, when assessed in combination with location and surrounding habitat was observed to have a low level of bat roost potential.

One emergence was carried out on the 7th September 2022. No bats were observed emerging from or returning to roost within the building, however both common pipistrelle and brown long eared bats were observed foraging within the garden.

The surveys found no evidence of bats using the building to roost, Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of building and that the presence of a significant or low conservation value 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 unlikely that low conservation value roosts are present within the building, however reasonable avoidance measures are recommended within this report, given the close proximity of observed common pipstrelle and brown long eared bat activity.

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

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 tiles should be removed by hand and under supervision where necessary.

Fascia boards should be removed with care 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 boxes) will be placed on site prior to work commencing. Bat boxes 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.