

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

## **Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures**

**New Springs Barn,  
Saccary Fold,  
Saccary Lane,  
Mellor, BB1 9DL**

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## Executive summary

In February 2024 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of New Springs Barn, Saccary Fold, Saccary Lane, Mellor, BB1 9DL to assess the potential for impact on protected species.

Proposed works consist of installation of solar panels, including the temporary lifting of roof slates to position panel supports.

A daytime survey was carried out on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, the building was considered to have a low bat roost potential when surrounding habitat, and lack of connectivity were taken into consideration.

Evidence to suggest use of the porch by a low number of Common Pipistrelle bats was observed, although the position of the roost is away from proposed works and is unaffected by proposed works.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of buildings and that the presence of either a significant or low conservation value bat roost is present 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 with mitigation in the form of timing of works and compensatory bat boxes will be an appropriate approach commensurate with that expected by Natural England.

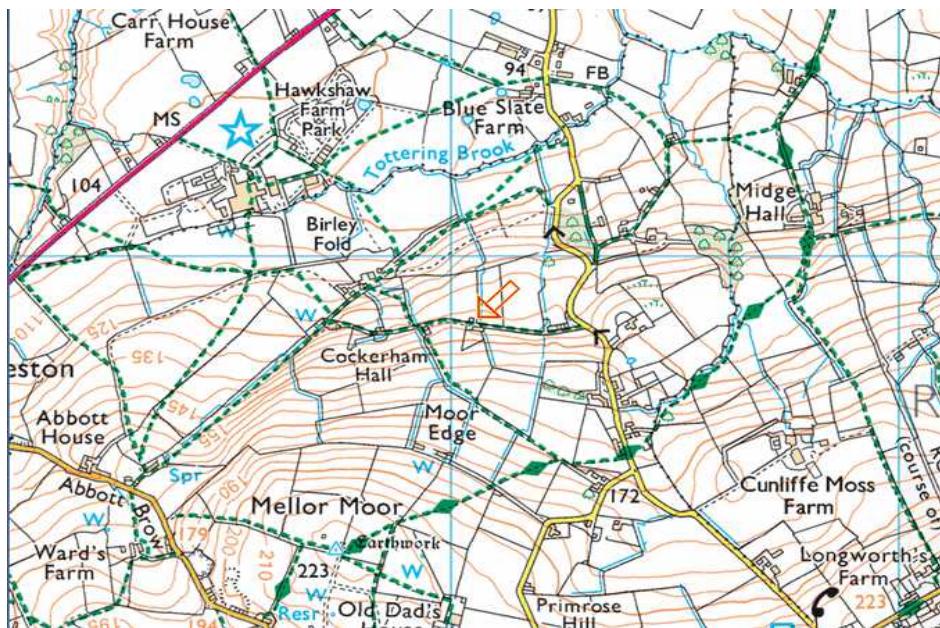
A compensatory bat box (Two Greenwood Eco Habitats two crevice box) will be placed on site prior to work commencing.

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’.

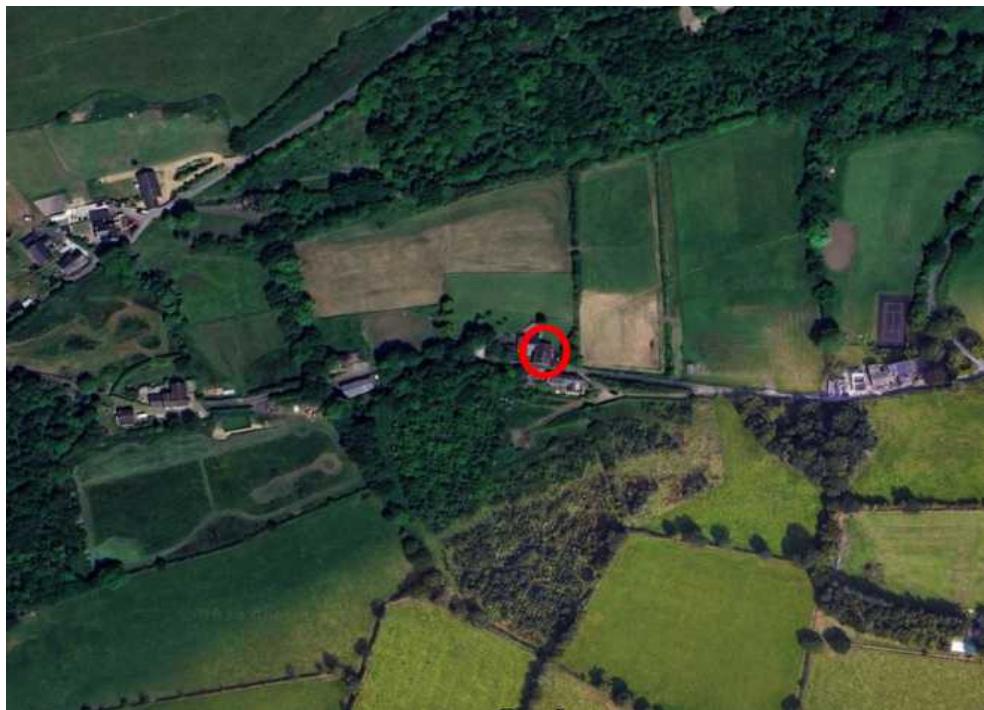
This method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to bats. By following the Reasonable Avoidance Measures and mitigation included in this document the work can take place, ensuring the Continued Ecological Functionality of the site.

## Site Location

New Springs Barn, Saccary Fold, Saccary Lane, Mellor, BB1 9DL  
NGR: SD6605531846



## Site Layout



The property is located in a rural position with surrounding habitat a mosaic of rough, improved and semi improved grassland, scrub and semi natural deciduous woodland cover. Connectivity to the wider landscape is good.

Overall foraging potential for bats can be considered 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**

<b>Survey</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Timings</b>
Visual	29.02.2024	1 Hour

## **Survey constraints**

Access to all areas of the ground floors and exterior of the buildings 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

### Visual Survey



The property is a traditional stone built barn conversion with a double pitched slate roof, the building has single storey extensions to the southern gable.

External walls are generally well pointed with no obvious cracks, gaps or crevices present. The gables are pointed and sealed. Fascia boarding is generally close fitting.

Roof slates are close fitting with no obvious lifted, slipped or missing slates present. The ridge is sealed.

A gap in the underdrawn porch was observed with droppings adhering to the wall consistent with a small non breeding roost of Pipistrelle sp bats.



*Location of roost within porch area.*

## Interpretation of results

Proposed works consist of installation of solar panels, including the temporary lifting of roof slates to position panel supports.

A daytime survey was carried out on 29th February 2024, the building was considered to have a low bat roost potential when surrounding habitat, and lack of connectivity were taken into consideration.

Evidence to suggest use of the porch by a low number of Common Pipistrelle bats was observed, although the position of the roost is away from proposed works and is unaffected by proposed works.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of buildings and that the presence of either a significant or low conservation value bat roost is present 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 with mitigation in the form of timing of works and compensatory bat boxes will be an appropriate approach commensurate with that expected by Natural England. It is not considered that proposed works warrant a Natural England EPS Mitigation licence to cover works.

A compensatory bat box (Two Greenwood Eco Habitats two crevice box) will be placed on site prior to work commencing.

## 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.

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 -** Work should be carried out between October and May.

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

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.

Scaffolding should be positioned to ensure a clear flight line from the porch to surrounding habitat.

A compensatory bat box (Two Greenwood Eco Habitats two crevice box) will be placed on site prior to work commencing and will be used to house any bats found during works. 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.

## **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.