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

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

Outbuildings at Parsonage Farm,
Church Street,
Ribchester,
PR3 3ZR

23.08.2024

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Executive summary

This Method Statement supports proposed plans for a residential development at Parsonage Farm, Church Street, Ribchester, PR3 3ZR

A preliminary roost assessment on the 21st July 2021 assessed two buildings (outbuilding 1 and barn 1) as offering moderate bat roosting potential.

Droppings suggesting the presence of a pipistrelle roost were observed scattered within outbuilding 1.

Static bat detector monitoring, carried out from 21st to 31st July 2021 inclusive identified bat activity consistent with Common Pipistrelle emerging from and returning to roost within Outbuilding1.

Emergence surveys were carried out on 15th May and 9th September 2021, and 18th August 2023 with further emergence surveys on 29th June and 7th August 2024.

Surveys confirmed a small non breeding roost of Common Pipistrelles was roosting within Outbuilding 1

Surveys were carried out with full spectrum bat detectors and infrared video cameras to ensure full visibility throughout the survey period.

Reasonable Avoidance Measures are considered an appropriate approach to development of Barn 1 and removal of Outbuilding 2.

The client is happy to retain the roost in Outbuilding 1 which will be used for agricultural storage.

Outbuildings 3 and 4 are to be retained.

It is considered that the installation of bat boxes is an appropriate level of roost compensation consistent with the requirements of Natural England EPS Mitigation licencing should licencing be necessary.

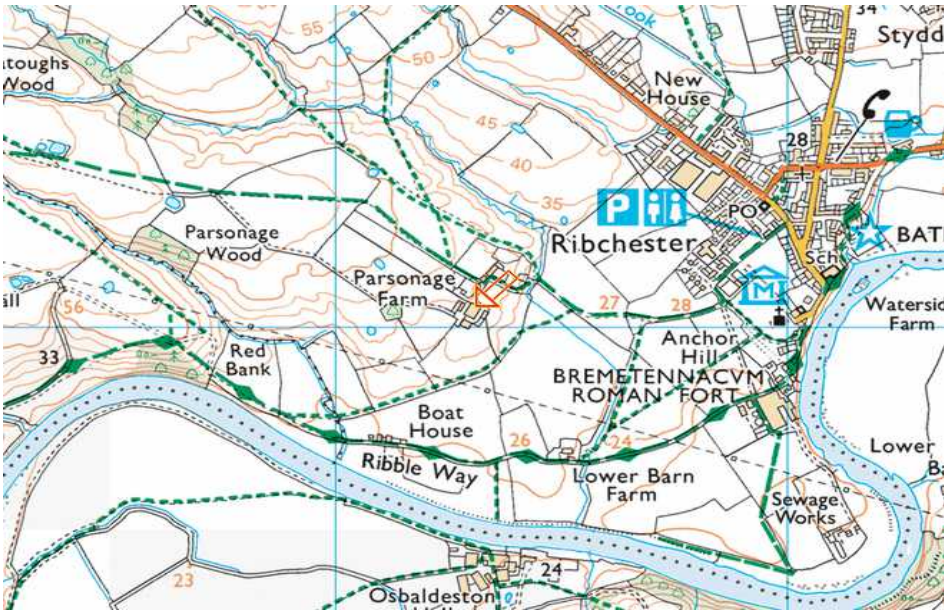
The overall purpose of the Method Statement is to ensure that bats and their roosts are fully protected to ensure the ‘favourable conservation status of the species’.

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

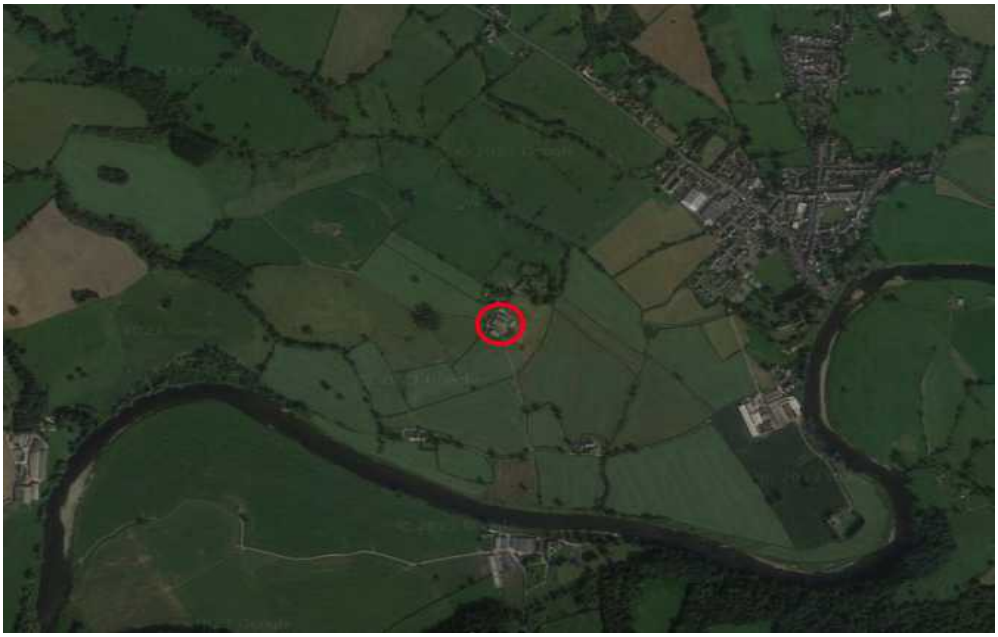
Breeding Barn Owl were recorded within Outbuilding 4 during emergence surveys.

The clients intention to retain the Barn Owl box within Outbuilding 4 offers the opportunity to offer continuing ecological functionality of the site for breeding Barn Owl and as such the proposed development is not expected to impact on the presence of Barn Owl.

Site Location
Parsonage Farm, Church Street, Ribchester, PR3 3ZR
NGR: SD6432935049



Surrounding Habitat



The property is located in a rural position with surrounding habitat dominated by improved and semi improved grassland with hedgerow and scattered deciduous tree cover present on field boundaries. The River Ribble and associated riparian deciduous woodland and ancient woodland is located approximately 500m to the south.

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 one EPS licence applications within a 1km radius.

2017-27875-EPS-MIT SD64903500 Destruction of a Natterer's bat resting place.
The surveyor holds records of a Soprano Pipistrelle maternity roost at the same location.

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). Sharon Anderson, an experienced bat surveyor.

Survey Summary

Survey	**Date**	**Timings**
Preliminary Roost Assessment	21.07.2021	1 Hour
Static Bat Detector Monitoring	21 – 31.07.2021	Sunset to Sunrise
Emergence Survey	14.08.2021	3 Hours
Emergence Survey	07.09.2021	3 Hours
Emergence Survey	18.08.2022	3 Hours
Visual Survey	29.06.2024	1 Hour
Emergence Survey	29.06.2024	3 Hours
Emergence Survey	07.08.2024	3 Hours

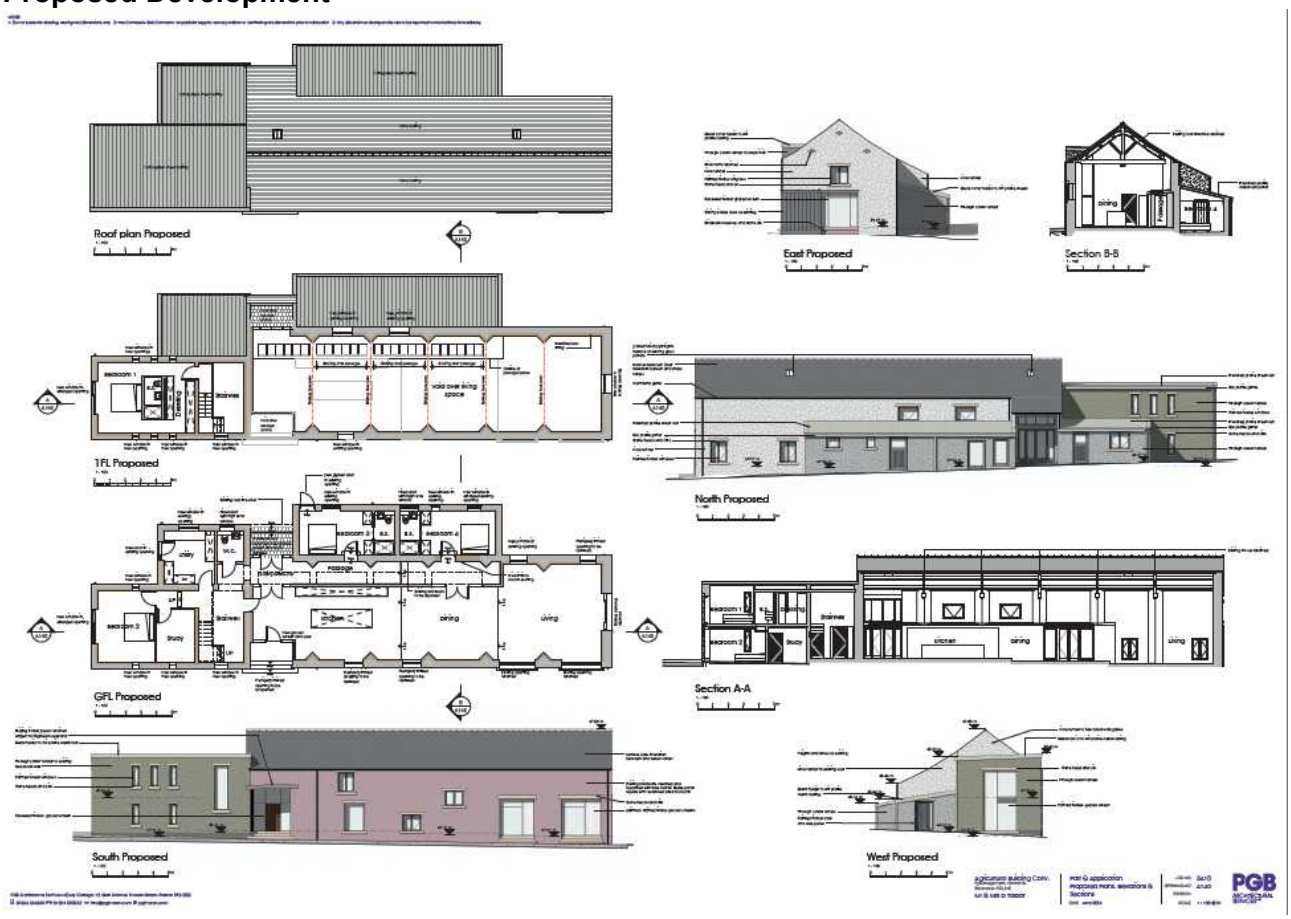
Survey constraints

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.

Proposed Development

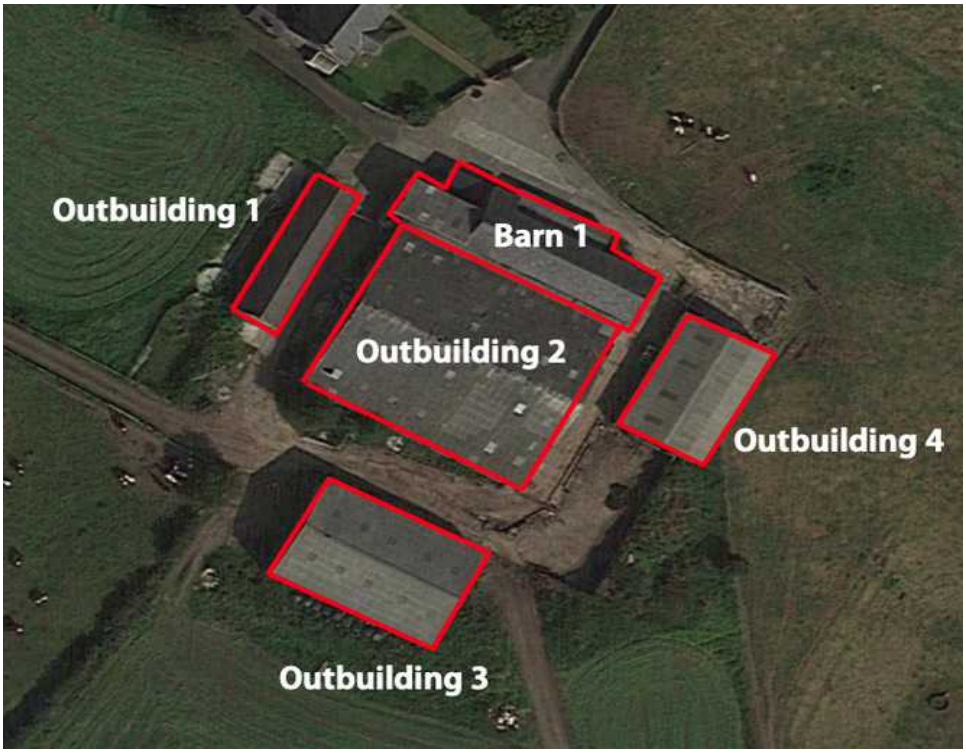


The proposed development consists of the residential conversion of Barn 1 and removal of outbuilding 2.

Outbuildings 1,3 and 4 are to be retained.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

The property consists of a complex of agricultural outbuildings associated with Parsonage Farm.



Site layout

Outbuilding 1

A single storey stone faced block built outbuilding with a double pitched slate roof. External walls are generally well pointed with no obvious cracks, gaps or crevices, however internally gaps are present at wall tops.

Roof slates are generally close fitting with no lifted, slipped or missing slates present. Gaps in pointing are present on gable ends allowing access below slates. Roof slates are lined with a bituminous roofing felt.

The building was assessed as offering moderate bat roosting potential.

Outbuilding 1 North Gable End

Outbuilding 1 North West Facade

Outbuilding 1 South East Facade

Outbuilding 1 South Gable End

Outbuilding Internal

Outbuilding Internal

Outbuilding 2

Outbuilding consists of a steel portal barn with single skin timber and corrugated metal external walls. Then building has a double pitched single skin corrugated fibreboard roof.

The building was assessed as offering negligible bat roosting potential.

Outbuilding 2 Northern Gable

Outbuilding 2 Western Facade

Outbuilding 2 Southern Gable

Outbuilding 2 Internal View

Outbuilding 3

Outbuilding 3 consists of a steel portal barn with single skin timber and corrugated metal external walls. Then building has a double pitched single skin corrugated fibreboard roof.

The building was assessed as offering negligible bat roosting potential.

Outbuilding 3 Northern Gable

Outbuilding 4

Outbuilding 4 consists of a steel portal barn with single skin concrete block, timber and corrugated fibreboard external walls. The building has a double pitched single skin corrugated fibreboard roof.

The building was assessed as offering negligible bat roosting potential.

Barn 1

Barn 1 is a brick built two storey barn with single storey extensions to the north and eastern facades. The building has a double pitched slate roof, extensions have single pitched unlined corrugated fibreboard roofs.

External walls are well pointed and partially rendered and pebble dashed with some gaps and crevices present. Gable ends are pointed and sealed. Gaps were recorded on internal walls and all tops within the barn are exposed.

Roof timbers are hand cut and gaps and crevices are present within joints, some cracks were noted within beams. Roof slates are lined with a bituminous roofing felt in good general condition.

The building was assessed as offering moderate roosting potential.

Barn Owl Survey

Between surveys in 2021 and 2024 the client has installed a Barn Owl Nest Box into Outbuilding 4. During emergence surveys in 2024 Barn Owls were observed provisioning young, and young fledgling Barn Owls were heard during the survey confirming breeding within the outbuilding.

Evidence to suggest use of Barn 1 by feeding Barn Owls in the form of scattered Barn Owl pellets was recorded, however no evidence to suggest use of the barn by nesting birds was observed.

The clients intention to retain the Barn Owl box within Outbuilding 4 offers the opportunity to offer continuing ecological functionality of the site for breeding Barn Owl and as such the proposed development is not expected to impact on the presence of Barn Owl.

Visual Survey

Visual surveys of the outbuildings and barn were carried out during the preliminary roost assessment and as a follow up survey in July 2024 and on 5th August 2024.

The survey was focussed on a search for physical evidence of use of the buildings by bats such as droppings (both concentrated and scattered), feeding remains, urine splashing and grease marking.

Scattered droppings were observed within the south western bay of outbuilding 1.

Droppings were consistent with pipistrelle bats emerging from and returning to roost within the building.

Static Bat Detector Monitoring.

Anabat Express static bat detectors were placed within Outbuilding 1 and Barn 1 to gather data of bat usage of the buildings for ten nights between 21st July and 31st July 2021.

Bat detectors were programmed to record bat activity from 30 minutes prior to sunset to 30 minutes post sunrise. Resulting recordings were analysed post survey using AnalookW to identify species and record timings of bat activity.

Recorded activity was dominated by Common Pipistrelle, with sporadic Soprano Pipistrelle activity recorded at times consistent with bats arriving on site to forage.

Timings of Common Pipistrelle activity recorded was consistent with bats emerging from and returning to roost within Outbuilding 1.

Emergence Survey - 14th August 2021

Start Temp: 16.6c Finish Temp: 15.1c 70% Clear Sky Wind: Bfd1 Westerly
Start: 20.25 Sunset: 20.42 Finish: 22.15

Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout and Anabat Scout full spectrum detectors were positioned around the barn to monitor for emerging bats. Survey effort was supported by use of Canon XA50 and Canon XA25 HD infrared video cameras, with twin 5w Nightfox XB5 torches.

Recorded bat calls were analysed post survey using Anabat Insight software.

21 Common pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from Outbuilding 1 and flying into Barn 1 and Outbuilding 2 to forage before dispersing into the wider landscape.

At 21.37 Soprano Pipistrelle were observed to arrive on site from the north to forage around buildings.

No bats were recorded emerging from Barn 1.

Emergence Survey - 9th September 2021

Start Temp: 18.5c Finish Temp: 17.0c 100% Clear Sky Wind: Bfd 0 Precipitation 0
Start: 19.20 Sunset: 19.38 Finish: 21.10

Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout and Anabat Scout full spectrum detectors were positioned around the barn to monitor for emerging bats. Survey effort was supported by use of Canon XA50 and Canon XA25 HD infrared video cameras, with twin 5w Nightfox XB5 torches.

Recorded bat calls were analysed post survey using Anabat Insight software.

14 Common pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from Outbuilding 1 and flying into Barn 1 and Outbuilding 2 to forage before dispersing into the wider landscape.

No bats were recorded emerging from the barn.

Emergence Survey - 18th August 2022

Start Temp: 16.8c Finish Temp: 15.2c 100% Clear Sky Wind: Bfd1 Westerly
Start: 20.15 Sunset: 20.31 Finish: 22.05

Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout and Anabat Scout full spectrum detectors were positioned around the barn to monitor for emerging bats. Survey effort was supported by use of Canon XA50 and Canon XA25 HD infrared video cameras, with twin 5w Nightfox XB5 torches.

Recorded bat calls were analysed post survey using Anabat Insight software.

26 Common pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from Outbuilding 1 and flying into Barn 1 and Outbuilding 2 to forage before dispersing into the wider landscape.

Between 21.21 and 21.50 five Soprano Pipistrelle were observed to arrive on site from the north to forage around buildings.

No bats were recorded emerging from Barn 1.

Emergence Survey - 29th June 2024

Start Temp: 15.5c Finish Temp: 14.8c 100% Cloud Cover Wind: Bfd0 Precipitation 0
Start: 21.25 Sunset: 21.44 Finish: 23.15

Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout, Anabat Chorus, Anabat Swift , Anabat Scout and Echometer Touch 2 Pro full spectrum detectors were positioned around the barn to monitor for emerging bats. Survey effort was supported by use of Canon XA50 and Nightfox Whisker HD infrared video cameras, with twin 5w Nightfox XB5 torches.

Recorded bat calls were analysed post survey using Anabat Insight software**.**

9 Common Pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from Outbuilding 1 and flying into Barn 1 and Outbuilding 2 to forage before dispersing into the wider landscape.

Emergence Survey - 7th August 2024

Start Temp: 17.5c Finish Temp: 17.0c 100% Clear Sky Wind: Bfd0 Precipitation 0
Start: 20.40 Sunset: 20.57 Finish: 22.30

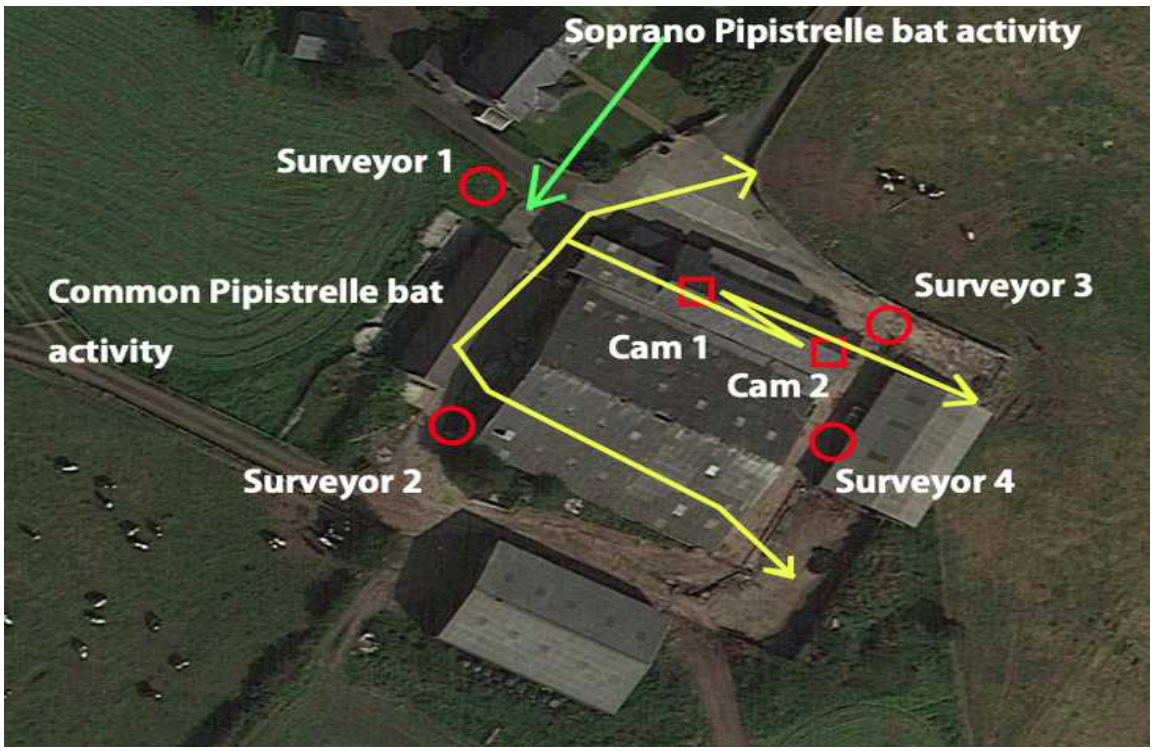
Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout, Anabat Chorus, Anabat Swift , Anabat Scout and Echometer Touch 2 Pro full spectrum detectors were positioned around the barn to monitor for emerging bats. Survey effort was supported by use of Canon XA50 and Nightfox Whisker HD infrared video cameras, with twin 5w Nightfox XB5 torches.

Recorded bat calls were analysed post survey using Anabat Insight software.

17 Common Pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from Outbuilding 1 and flying into Barn 1 and Outbuilding 2 to forage before dispersing into the wider landscape.

Between 21.43 and 22.34 Soprano Pipistrelle bats were observed to arrive on site from the north to forage around buildings.

No bats were recorded emerging from Barn 1.



Emergence Surveys summary

Interpretation of results

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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 included in this document the work can take place, ensuring the Continued Ecological Functionality of the site.

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Impact Assessment

Short-term impacts: disturbance

Low risk: Roof stripping will be undertaken by hand and under supervision following installation of compensatory bat boxes.

Long-term impacts:

Roost loss: No impact on a local bat population.

Long-term impacts:

Fragmentation and isolation: minimal, 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.

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 with the batworker on call.

Roof slates and fascia boarding should be removed by hand where necessary.

The underneath of slates and boarding should be checked for dormant bats prior to moving.

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.

One bat box (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.

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.

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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, recover any bats and liase with Local Authority and Natural England.