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

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

1 Ferry Butts,
Garstang Road,
Chipping,
PR3 2QJ

15.01.2024

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Executive summary

In December 2023 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of 1 Ferry Butts, Garstang Road, Chipping, PR3 2QJ to assess the potential for proposed residential development to impact on protected species.

A preliminary bat roost assessment survey was carried out on 18th December 2023. The building, when assessed in combination with location and surrounding habitat was observed to have a negligible to low level of bat roost potential.

No evidence to suggest use by bats was recorded within the building at a time of year when such physical evidence would be expected. Endoscope inspection of gaps revealed no evidence to suggest use by bats.

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

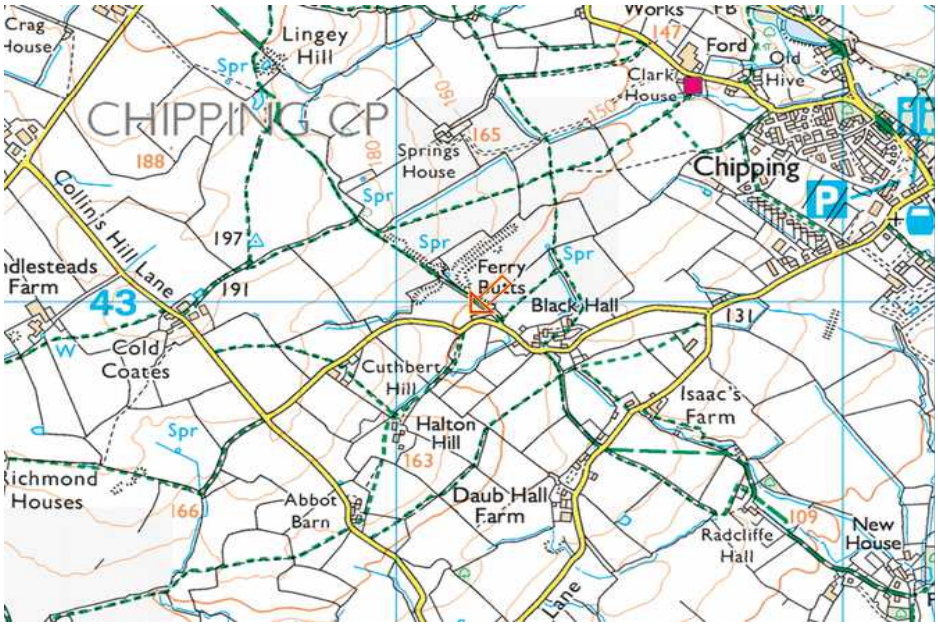
"The presence of a significant bat roost (invariably a maternity roost) can normally be determined on a single visit at any time of year, provided that the entire structure is accessible and that any signs of bats have not been removed by others". - Mitchell-Jones, A (2004) Bat mitigation guidelines.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

It is considered unlikely that significant conservation value roosts are present within the buildings, however given some wide gaps are present behind fascia boarding and metal panelling on the gable end, reasonable avoidance measures are considered an appropriate approach to development.

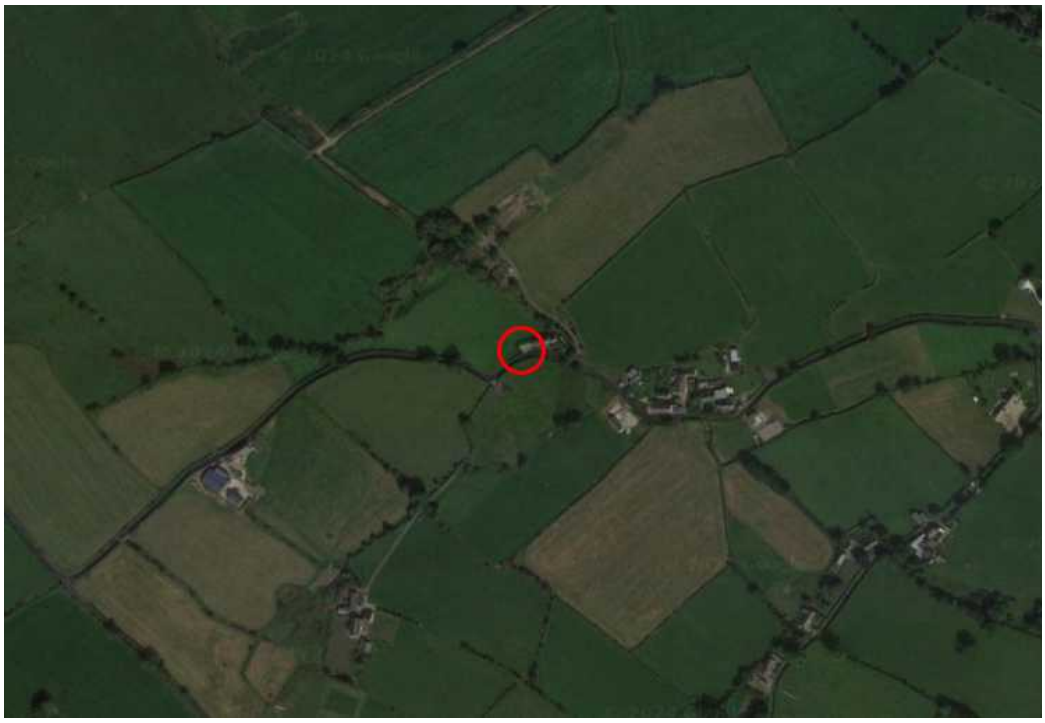
The overall purpose of the Method Statement is to ensure that bats and their roosts are fully protected to ensure the 'favourable conservation status of the species'.

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
1 Ferry Butts, Garstang Road, Chipping, PR3 2QJ
NGR: SD6119442961



Surrounding Habitat



The property is located in a rural position with surrounding habitat dominated by improved and semi improved grassland with little hedgerow or deciduous tree cover on field boundaries.

Connectivity to the wider landscape is poor. Bat foraging potential was assessed as low.

Survey summary and site assessment

Pre-existing information on the bat species present at this site.

A search of the MAGIC (www.magic.gov.uk) website revealed no bat EPS licence application 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	18.12.2023	1 Hour

Survey constraints

Access to all areas 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.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

The property consists of a single storey outbuilding with double pitched corrugated roof adjoining an end terrace two storey stone built cottage with double pitched slate roof.

External walls are generally well pointed and rendered, with no obvious cracks, gaps or crevices present Fascia boarding is generally close fitting, however one area of a wide (+50mm) open gap is present on the frontage.

Roof panels are close fitting, roof lights are present on the rear roof aspect. The ridge is sealed. Gaps were noted below panels at the gable.

The building was assessed as offering negligible to low bat roost potential when surrounding habitat was taken into consideration.

Visual Survey.

A visual survey of the barns was carried out focussing on potential roost features and physical evidence, such as droppings, feeding remains, urea splashing or grease marking. Numerous undisturbed surfaces were present.

No physical evidence to suggest use by bats was recorded, despite inspection of gaps via endoscope and the timing of the survey at a time of year when physical evidence could still be expected.

Nesting Birds

No evidence to suggest the use of the building by nesting birds was recorded

Proposed Development.

The proposed development consists of a residential conversion of the outbuilding.

Interpretation of results

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

"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.

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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

Work should take place following a precautionary check of the building to confirm contimuing absence of bats.

Work to remove fascia boarding and roof panels should take place following night temperatures of 5c

Work to affected roof areas will take place under supervision, with the batworker 'on call'.

Fascia boarding should be removed by hand and under supervision where necessary.

The reverse of fascia boarding and gable end roof panneling 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.

A compensatory 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.