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

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

High Edge Farmhouse,
Tinklers Lane,
Slaidburn,
BB7 4TP

12.02.2024

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

Executive summary

In July 2023 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of High Edge Farmhouse, Tinklers Lane, Slaidburn, BB7 4TP to assess the potential for use by bats and breeding birds.

A daytime survey was carried out on 18h July 2023 to support development plans.

The building, when assessed in combination with location and surrounding habitat was observed to have low level of bat roost potential.

Static bat detector monitoring between 18th July and 7th August 2023 recorded low levels of Common Pipistrelle bat foraging activity at times consistent with bats arriving from distant roosts to forage.

No activity was recorded at times suggesting bats were roosting on site.

A dawn survey carried out on 12th August 2023 observed no bats returning to roost within buildings, with bat activity limited to a single foraging Common Pipistrelle observed foraging to the west early in the survey.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of buildings 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.

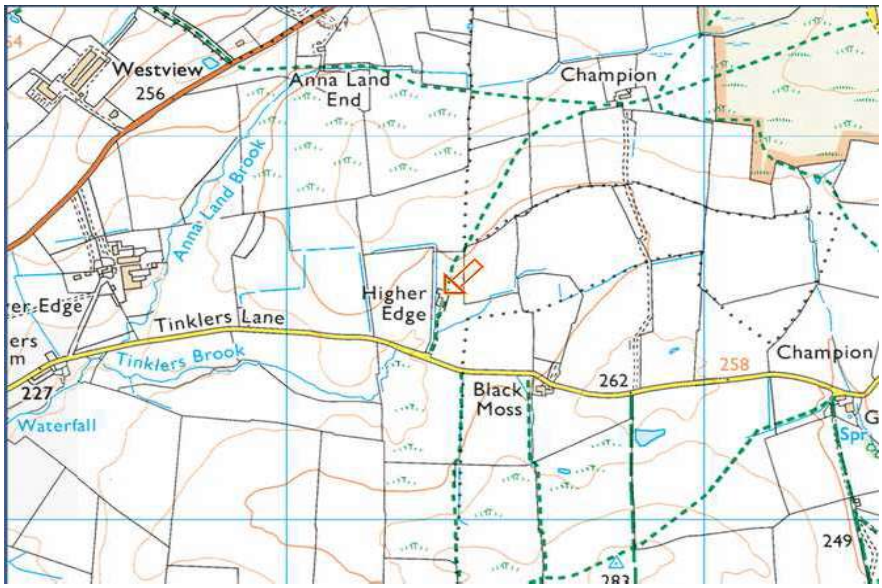
The overall purpose of the Method Statement is to ensure that bats and their roosts are fully protected to ensure the 'favourable conservation status of the species'.

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.

Compensatory bat boxes recommended within the method statement provide a sufficient level of biodiversity enhancement commensurate with the development.

Site Location
High Edge Farmhouse, Tinklers Lane, Slaidburn, BB7 4TP
NGR: SD7437552586



Surrounding Habitat

The property is located in a rural position with surrounding habitat dominated by rough, improved and semi improved grassland.

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

Survey summary and site assessment

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

A search of the MAGIC.gov 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). Sharon Anderson, an experienced bat worker.

Survey Summary

Survey	**Date**	**Timings**
Preliminary Roost Assessment	18.07.2023	1 Hour
Static Detector Monitoring	18.07 - 7.08.2023	Sunset to Sunrise.
Dawn Survey	12.08.2023	3 Hours

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.

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment.

The property consists of a two storey stone built farmhouse and adjoining barn with a double pitched stone slate roof. A two storey porch is present to the frontage of the barn.

Gaps are present in external and internal walls and at wall tops. Lifted, slipped and missing roof slates are present, and gaps below ridge tiles were noted. A modern breathable membrane suggests recent re-roofing.

The building was assessed as offering low bat roosting potential when combined with surrounding habitat.

Visual Survey

Visual surveys of the building was carried out on 18th July 2023 and 8h August 2023. Surveys focussed on a search for physical evidence of present of roosting bats, such as scattered or concentrated piles of droppings, feeding remains, urine splashing or grease marking.

No physical evidence was observed that would suggest the use by roosting bats despite the presence of numerous undisturbed horizontal surfaces.

Nesting Birds

No evidence to suggest use by nesting birds was recorded during surveys.

Static Bat Detector Monitoring - 18th July to 7th August 2023

An Anabat Express passive bat detector, programmed to record bat activity from 30 minutes before sunset to 30 minutes after sunrise, was placed within the barn.

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

On two nights in the survey period a low level of Common Pipistrelle foraging activity was recorded. Timing of the activity in the hour before and hour after midnight suggested a single bat arriving on site to forage rom a distant roost.

No bat activity was recorded at times to suggest bats emerging from or returning to roost within the building.

Dawn Survey - 12th August 2023

Start Temp: 13.4c Finish Temp: 13.2c 60% Clear Sky Wind: Bfd 0 /1Westerly Precipitation 0
Start: 04.10 Sunrise: 05.40 Finish: 05.55

Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout and Anabat Scout full spectrum detectors aided with Canon XA50 HD and Nightfox Whisker infrared video cameras with infrared flood and spot lights positioned covering the building to monitor for returning 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 by two separate surveyors.

At 04.23 a single Common Pipistrelle bat was recorded to the west of the site foraging. No further bat activity was recorded.

Interpretation of results

A daytime survey was carried out on 18h July 2023 to support development plans.

The building, when assessed in combination with location and surrounding habitat was observed to have low level of bat roost potential.

Static bat detector monitoring between 18th July and 7th August 2023 recorded low levels of Common Pipistrelle bat foraging activity at times consistent with bats arriving from distant roosts to forage.

No activity was recorded at times suggesting bats were roosting on site.

A dawn survey carried out on 12th August 2023 observed no bats returning to roost within buildings, with bat activity limited to a single foraging Common Pipistrelle observed foraging to the west early in the survey.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of buildings 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 that reasonable avoidance measures contained within this method statement and the placement of bat boxes for biodiversity enhancement offers an appropriate approach to the proposed development whilst ensuring the continuing ecological functionality of the site.

Impact Assessment

Short-term impacts – Disturbance Low risk: Roof stripping where necessary will be undertaken by hand.

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.

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. Underneath of slates and boarding should be checked 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.