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

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

Park Farm Barn,
Whalley Road,
Barrow,
BB7 9YS

29.07.2024

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Executive summary

In June 2024 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of a barn adjoining Park Farm, Whalley Road, Barrow, BB7 9YS to assess the potential for a proposed residential development to impact on protected species.

A preliminary bat roost assessment survey was carried out on 20th June 2024.

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

An emergence survey carried out on 22nd July 2024 recorded no bats emerging from the building. Bat activity was limited to two Common Pipistrelles recorded arriving on site from the south east and foraging around the buildings before dispersing into the wider landscape. Noctule bats were observed commuting and foraging over the site.

Given the results of both the preliminary bat roost assessment and the observations of the emergence survey it was considered that survey effort is appropriate to characterise the roost potential of the buildings and that the presence of a significant or low conservation value bat roost is unlikely.

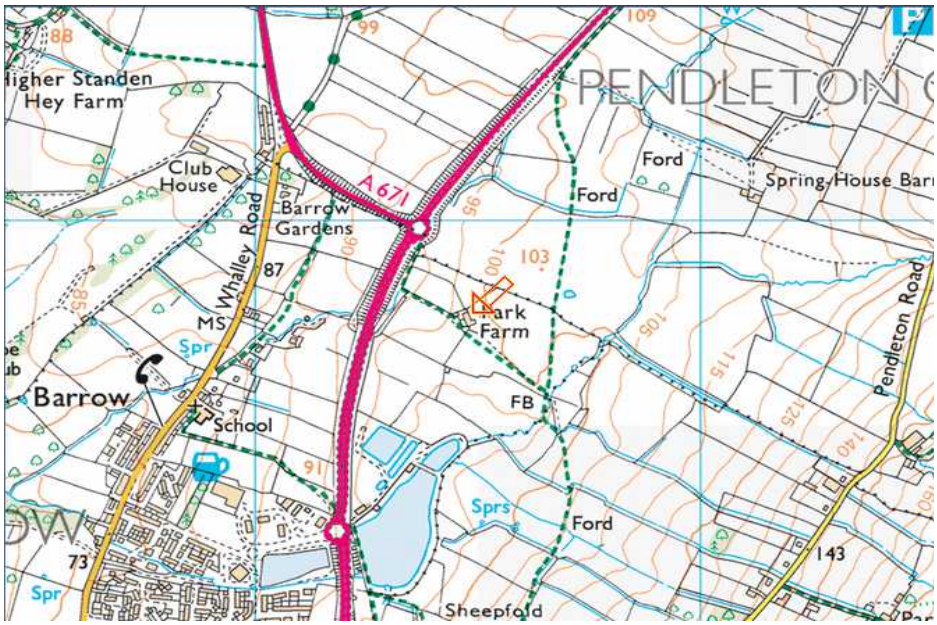
"The presence of a significant bat roost (invariably a maternity roost) can normally be determined on a single visit at any time of year, provided that the entire structure is accessible and that any signs of bats have not been removed by others". - Mitchell-Jones, A (2004) Bat mitigation guidelines.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

It is considered unlikely that significant or low conservation value roosts are present within the building, however given the building offers moderate potential and the opportunistic nature of Pipistrelle bats it is recommended that proposed works are carried out under supervision.

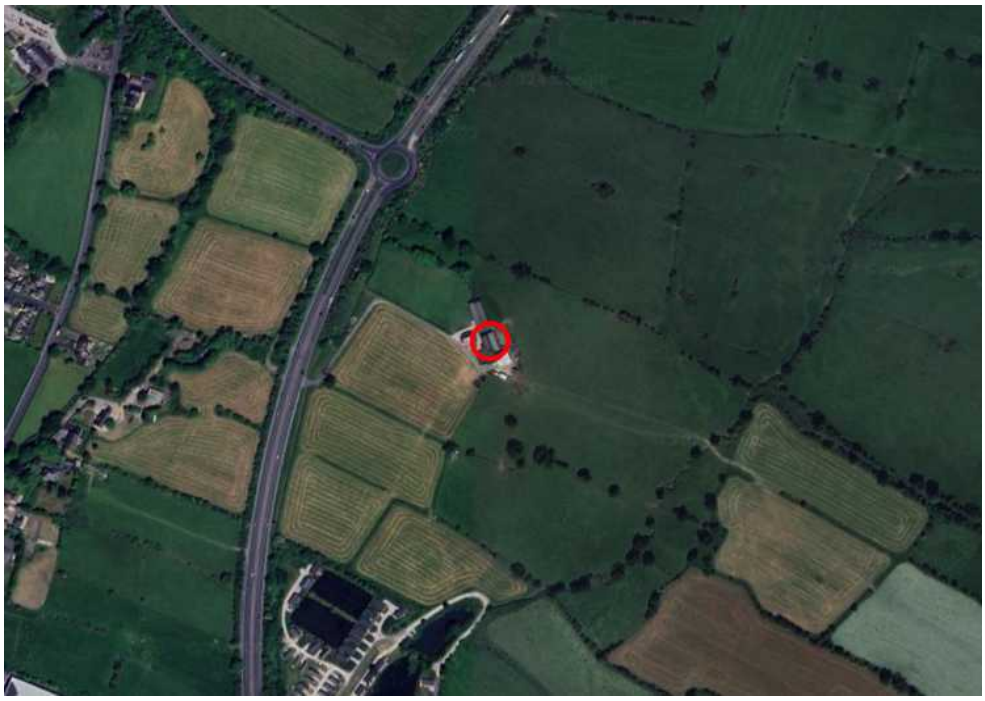
The overall purpose of the Method Statement is to ensure that bats and their roosts are fully protected to ensure the 'favourable conservation status of the species'.

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
Park Farm, Whalley Road, Barrow, BB7 9YS
NGR: SD7446438778



Surrounding Habitat



The property is located in a rural position with surrounding habitat dominated by improved and semi improved grassland with limited scattered mature deciduous tree cover present on field boundaries, open water is present to the south.

Connectivity to the wider landscape is low. Overall foraging potential for bats can be considered low.

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.

The surveyor holds records of a Natterer's bat maternity roost located within Cracoe village to the north west of the site.

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). Sarah Dunham, an experienced bat surveyor.

Survey Summary

Survey	**Date**	**Timings**
Preliminary Roost Assessment	20.06.2024	1 Hour
Emergence Survey	22.07.2024	2 Hours

Survey constraints

Access to all areas of the interior 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.

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment.

The property consists of a two storey stone built barn with a double pitched slate roof adjoining Park Farm. A single storey entrance is present on the frontage next to the main doors. A shippon with cat slide roof is present to the rear.

External walls are generally well pointed, however some gaps at wall top level were recorded. An Owl hole is present in the gable end linking to a barn owl box in the interior.

Roof slates are generally close fitting, however areas of lifted slates are present on the front porch area. The ridge is pointed and well sealed. Slates are unlined to the underside. Roof timbers are bandsawn with no obvious gaps or crevices.

Overall the barn was assessed as offering low bat roost potential.

Nesting Bird Survey.

No nesting birds were observed using the barn during surveys.

Breeding Barn Owls were observed entering the barn owl box positioned on the northern gable of the barn and young owls were heard during the emergence survey,

Visual Survey.

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

No evidence to suggest use by bats was observed despite suitable undisturbed horizontal surfaces on stored farm machinery being present.

Emergence Survey 22nd July 2024

Start Temp: 16.2c Finish Temp: 16.4c
100% Cloud Cover. Wind: Bft 1 Westerly Precipitation 0
Start: 21.10 Sunset: 21.24 Finish: 22.55

Surveyor points equipped with Anabat Walkabout, Anabat Scout, Anabat Chorus, and Anabat Swift full spectrum detectors aided with Canon XA50 and Nightfox Whisker video cameras with infrared flood and spot lights were positioned around the buildings to monitor observed potential roost features 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 and checked by a second surveyor.

Two Common Pipistrelle bats were observed to forage around buildings between 21.55 and 22.16 having arrived on site from the south.

No bats were observed emerging from buildings on site.

IR Video Coverage and Illumination level at end of survey.

Interpretation of results

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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 - Bats

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 night temperature of 5c

Work to affected roof areas will take place under supervision of the batworker.

Roof slates should be removed by hand and under supervision where necessary. Slates should be checked for dormant bats prior to stacking.

The reverse of fascia 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.

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.

Barn Owl Method Statement

The Overriding principles behind this method statement follow the *Three Golden Rules in Barn Owl Mitigation* (continuity, legality, and permanence);

" Maintain continuity of occupation by creating alternative provision at least 30 days before development begins."

"Maintain the legality of the development by carrying out development works outside of the breeding season. Barn Owls are protected by law against disturbance whilst nesting."

"Establish permanence by creating a permanent accessible nest/roost site space within (i.e. inside) the finished development."

Precautionary Measures

The following steps will ensure that nesting barn owl are not adversely affected by the proposed works:

All site personnel/contractors will receive a tool-box talk during their site induction to include details of the potential presence of barn owls and implications for work to be carried out.

1. A visit by the ecologist immediately prior to work commencing will ensure absence of barn owls prior to works commencing.

2. Work to move the barn owl box should be carried out between October and February inclusive.

3. A replacement breeding barn owl box (to plan within this report) will be installed within the Cattle Shed to the north of the barn 30 days prior to work to on the barn beginning. Installation of the box should be above three metres in height. Pellets from the existing should be transferred to the new nesting box.