

Bat Survey Report
Springhead Farm, Scholes Moor Road.
27th Sept 2015.



Prepared by:

Peter Middleton MCIEEM *Peter Middleton*

Middleton Ecological Consultancy, 33 Wilthorpe Road, Barnsley S75 1JA

Contents

1	Summary.....	3
2	Introduction.....	3
3.	Site description.....	3
3.3	Aims of survey.....	5
4	Methodology.....	5
4.1	Field survey.....	5
5	Results.....	6
5.1	Desk survey.....	6
5.2	Field surveys.....	7
6	Assessment	9
6.1	Summary and evaluation of findings	9
6.2	Survey limitations.....	9
6.3	Legislation and policy guidance.....	10
7.	Recommendations.....	12
8.	Conclusion.....	12

1. Report summary

- 1.1 The bat survey was commissioned by planning consultant Michael Townsend on behalf of the client.
- 1.2 The preliminary roost assessment survey was conducted on the 22nd September 2015 followed by dusk emergence surveys on the 24th and 27th September 2015.
- 1.3 There was no visible signs of bat presence in the inside or outside of the building(s). However, the building has features that can accommodate bats. Therefore the building has been assessed as having medium bat roost potential.
- 1.4 The emergence survey confirmed that no bats were roosting in the building subject to the planning application.
- 1.5 It was concluded that a European Protected Species licence is not required and no further survey effort is necessary.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The building is subject to a planning application and subsequent conversion to a dwelling. Middleton Ecological Consultancy were therefore contracted initially to conduct a baseline assessment to confirm presence of bats and to identify roost locations, access points, species present, level of use and the importance of nearby landscape features. This report confirms the findings of the survey carried out by one/two surveyors.

3 Site description

- 3.1 The site consists of a rectangular stone built barn with hay-loft and adjoining single storey lean-to. The barn has a corrugated asbestos cement sheet roof with ridge and gables and the lean-to has a sloping sheet metal roof with transparent fibreglass roof lights (see plates 2, 3 & 4).

3.2 Habitat assessment

- 3.2.1 The site is 303m above sea level and the surrounding area is predominantly grassland together with a reservoir and a tree lined brook. (See plate 1). Table 1 summarises the habitats present, adjacent to and further afield to 1 Springfield Farm on Scholes Moor Road.

Table 1

Name and address: Springfield Farm, Scholes Moor Road, Hade Edge HD9 1RU			
OS Grid Ref. SE 1518 0601		Altitude. 303m	
Local Planning Authority: Kirklees			
Features on site and adjacent to site			
Feature	On site	Adjacent	Comments
Buildings	✓	✓	Farm house
River bordered by trees			
Standing water			Reservoir 160m south
Bridges tunnels and culverts			
Trees			Nearest is 80m from site.
Woodland		✓	300m east
Grassland	✓	✓	Extensive

Plate 1 The site



3.3 Aims of survey

3.3.1 The surveys were conducted to find out the following:

- The presence of bats.
- Where in the building are bats likely to roost.
- Where bats are likely to enter and exit.
- Whether additional survey work is required.

4. Methodology

4.1 Field survey

4.1.1 The following personnel conducted the survey:

Surveyor(s): Peter Middleton (WML-A34-level 2; 2015-11028-CLS-CLS)
Carl Dixon
Stephen Frost

4.1.2 The following activities were carried out during the surveys.

- A brief inspection and assessment of the site and habitats present to within 500m.
- An extensive examination of all parts of the building both inside and out to record structural features and condition and to record features that may be suitable for roosting bats.
- A thorough search of all sections of the inside of the building for the presence or evidence of roosting bats including droppings, scratch marks and staining.
- Activity surveys in the form of two emergence surveys on the building beginning 15 minutes before sunset and finishing 75 minutes after sunset. Two surveyors were used.

4.1.3 The following equipment was used or at hand during the survey:

- Cluelite
- Binoculars
- Torch

- Ladder
- Endoscope
- Camera
- Ipad & EM touch, Petterson 240x duet.

5. Results

5.1 Desk survey - Data supplied by West Yorkshire Bat Group for a 2km radius of site.

Grid Ref	Location Name	Date	Common Name	Abundance	Record Type
SE138069	River Holme, Holmfirth	01/08/2006	Daubenton's Bat		field record
SE138069	River Holme, Holmfirth	01/08/2007	Daubenton's Bat		field record
SE1460607543	99 Dunford Road, Holmfirth, Kirklees	07/06/2005	Pipistrelle Bat species	19 Count of Adult	Roost
SE1442107983	72 Dunford Road, Holmfirth, Kirklees	22/08/2005	Pipistrelle Bat species		Roost
SE144077	Dunford Road, Holmfirth	05/07/2001	Common Pipistrelle	unknown Count of Adult	Roost (possible)
SE1633606983	15 Kemp's Way, Holmfirth, HD9 1HZ, Kirklees	10/05/2004	Pipistrelle Bat species	50 Count of Adult	Roost
SE16360699	9 Kemp's Way, Hepworth, Holmfirth, HD9 1HZ, Kirklees	21/05/2004	Pipistrelle Bat species	1 Count of Adult	Casualty
SE1633606983	15 Kems Way, Hepworth	12/08/2006	Pipistrelle Bat species		Roost
SE1442107983	72 Dunford Road, Holmfirth, Huddersfield, HD7 1DR	26/07/2001	Vesper Bat species		Roost (excluded)
SE1640406987	4 Kemp's way, Hepworth, Kirklees	08/07/2003	Vesper Bat species		Roost
SE1447708051	South House, South lane, Holmfirth, Kirklees	24/07/2003	Vesper Bat species	2 Count of Adult	Roost

5.2 Preliminary daytime assessment

- 5.2.1 The building was internally and externally inspected for bats using a high powered lamp. The potential of the building to accommodate bats was assessed along with a search for signs (e.g. droppings, moth wings, scratch marks, staining etc) or bats that were present. Particular attention was paid to any crevices or gaps in walls, lintels, gaps between beams and joists and to the possibility of finding droppings stuck to walls, floors or other surfaces, or insect remains below beams, among a number of other factors and signs indicative of a bat roost.

Plate 2 west and north elevations



Plate 3 south and north elevations



5.3 Inside inspection of building

- 5.3.1 The building has king post roof timbers and the internal space is open to the underside of the asbestos sheets. There is no ridge board and the apex is considered unsuitable for Brown long-eared bats. Also, the asbestos sheets fall short of covering the wall top on the east gable (see plate 4). However, the walls have many holes giving potential access to the rubble filled core. The ground floor beneath the hay-loft is very ‘cobwebby’ around joists and walls. The only potential within the lean-to is within holes in mortar joints in the gable wall of the main barn (see plate 5). No signs of bats were found.

Plate 4



Plate 5



5.4 Outside inspection of building

- 5.4.1 There are some large holes on the external walls which are not normally used by bats plus some more suitable holes and gaps in mortar joints mostly near the wall tops on the east gable and the south facing wall. The northern elevation does not appear to have any suitable features (see plates 2 & 3).

5.5 Emergence/re-entry surveys

- 5.5.1 **Dusk survey, 24th Sept 2015** – Two people undertook the survey and both were in position 15 minutes before sunset (Sunset 19.02). The surveyors were positioned so that all of the building could be monitored for bat activity.
- 5.5.2 The temperature at the beginning of monitoring was 11.8c with a force 3 south westerly wind and 100% cloud. The temperature dropped slightly to 11.7 by the end of monitoring and the other conditions remained the same.

- 5.5.3 The first bat was a Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* that was heard for a few seconds before being seen over the east gable of the barn at 19.38. It foraged intermittently around the barn for 3 minutes. No bats emerged from the building being monitored (see 6.1.2).
- 5.5.1 **Dusk survey, 27th Sept 2015** – Two people undertook the survey and both were in position 15 minutes before sunset (Sunset 18.55). The surveyors were positioned so that all of the building could be monitored for bat activity.
- 5.5.2 The temperature at the beginning of monitoring was 12.6c with a force 2 westerly wind and a clear sky. The temperature dropped to 10.5 by the end of monitoring and the wind decreased to force 1.
- 5.5.3 The first bat observed was a Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* that was foraging in the field to the west of the barn at 19.30. Three minutes later a Common pipistrelle was seen flying in a westerly direction north of the farm house and thereafter there was several more foraging passes. No bats emerged from the building being monitored.

6. Assessments

6.1 Summary and evaluation of findings

- 6.1.1 No bats were found roosting in the building during the preliminary daytime assessment and there were no signs of bat occupation. The building has suitable features that can accommodate crevice dwelling bats, however, the site is at 303m and somewhat exposed to the westerly prevailing wind therefore it was assessed as having moderate bat roost potential.
- 6.1.2 During the first emergence survey on the 24th a Common pipistrelle appeared over the east gable flying in an easterly direction. Unfortunately, it was not seen by the other observer and therefore the evaluation of its origin was made a little difficult. Fortunately, the bat was heard several seconds before it was seen over the east gable and a static detector placed within the barn only recorded two very weak sonograms. Therefore, it is not considered to have emerged from the barn but from the adjacent farm house that has a York stone roof with a side facing east sheltered from the prevailing wind.

6.2 Survey limitations

- 6.2.1 The survey was undertaken late in the season when maternity roosts will have dispersed. The surveys was completed during favourable weather conditions and there was no issues regarding access.

- 6.2.1 A daytime bat survey is used only to determine whether bats are present and if a more detailed survey is required in preparation for a protected species license application. A dusk/dawn bat activity survey in the summer months when bats are most active can give a much greater indication of the level of use of the building, in addition to the species present, roosting locations and access and exit points.
- 6.2.2 Large or complex buildings require a number of surveyors equipped with appropriate bat detectors and monitoring devices to ensure that the range of frequencies used by British Bats are covered, thus ensuring that no bat species are overlooked during the survey(s). Unlike the old heterodyne detectors which can only monitor one frequency at a time, modern detectors have much improved and all the frequencies of bats can be heard and/or seen resulting in many species being confidently identified in the field.

6.3 Legislation and policy guidance

- 6.3.1 Bats receive protection under the Conservation of habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (and 2011 Amendment Regulations) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994.
- 6.3.2 It is an offence to:
- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat.
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb a group of bats where the disturbance is likely to significantly effect the ability of any significant group of animals to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young or likely to significantly effect the local distribution or abundance of the species, whether in a roost or not.
 - Damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat.
 - Possess a bat (live or dead), or any part of a bat.
 - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
 - Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (dead or alive), or parts of parts.
- 6.3.3 The Convention on Biological Diversity, signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, requires member states to develop national strategies and to undertake a range of actions aimed at maintaining or restoring biodiversity. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the Convention.
- 6.3.4 Individual Species Action Plans (SAPs) have been developed to address the causes of decline for those species that have been identified as priorities for UK

- conservation action. Country-level lists contain species considered of national importance in biodiversity strategies. The current list includes Bechstein's Bat, Greater Horseshoe Bat, Lesser Horseshoe Bat, Barbastelle, Noctule, Soprano Pipistrelle and Brown long-eared bat. At a more local level there are Local Biodiversity Action Plans for smaller geographical areas which may cover a greater or lesser range of bat species.
- 6.3.5 In England & Wales, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, "to have due regard, as far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity". It notes that "conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat".
- 6.3.6 Where it is proposed to carry out works which will have an adverse impact on bats or on a bat roost, a European Protected Species (EPS) license must first be obtained from Natural England, even if no bats are expected to be present when the work is carried out.
- 6.3.7 An EPS license application requires details of the proposed works, the bats which may be affected and the mitigation proposed to maintain the favourable status of bats in the region. The application is usually drawn up on behalf of the client by a specialist ecological consultant. The consultant is likely to be required to check that work is proceeding in accordance with the method statement and to also carry out monitoring of the impact on bats for sometime after completion of the works.
- 6.3.8 When considering an application, the Natural England licensing section may consult with the local planning authority and specialist conservation staff. This process may take a considerable length of time. Natural England presently states that it aims to make a decision on an application within 30 working days of receipt. There is no guarantee that a license will be granted and no fast track process to obtaining a license. Applications can only be made once planning permission has been granted (where appropriate).
- 6.3.9 EPS licenses can only be issued if Natural England is satisfied that there is no satisfactory alternative to the development and that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.
- 6.3.10 NPPF: 11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils.
 - Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services.

- Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 No bats were recorded roosting on site during the survey works and consequently there is no compulsory requirement for mitigation. However, in order to enhance the ecological value of the site and in accordance with the aims of planning policy NPPF: 11, it is suggested that the developer integrates bat roosting features into the building. It is therefore advisable to use a F1 bitumen felt membrane beneath the tiles when re-roofing and install a bat tube high on the east gable where some of the stonework will have to be rebuilt (see plate 6). For further information on appropriate bat roosting features please contact Middleton Ecological Consultancy.

Plate 6

Bat tube high on this east facing gable



8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The building has features that can accommodate bats and a building of this age and structure is normally assessed as having high bat roost potential. However, the building is at 303m and somewhat exposed therefore it was considered to have only moderate bat roost potential. The activity survey confirmed that no bats are roosting in the building.

- 8.2 No further survey effort is necessary for the building subject to the planning application and therefore a European Protected Species License is not required.
- 8.3 Works should proceed with caution and vigilance for unexpected bat presence, as single bats can roost almost anywhere. If bats are subsequently discovered, work should be stopped and further advice sought without delay.
- 8.4 The precautionary measures are recommended.

References

Bat Conservation Trust, 2007. Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines.

Mitchel- Jones AJ, 2004, Bat Mitigation Guidelines, English Nature.