



DRUB LANE BARN, GOMERSAL.

BAT SURVEY.

Ref No:- 130803.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. A planning application has been submitted (Ref:2013/91870) for the conversion of an existing barn off Drub Lane, Gomersal. A bat survey and report are required by Kirklees Planning Department in support of that planning application.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd was therefore commissioned to carry out a bat survey of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. This survey was carried out on 7th August 2013 and this report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.4. Appendix I of this report provides back ground information with respect to bats and the legal protection afforded to them.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. The buildings were thoroughly checked internally and externally for potential bat roosting sites in line with L Hundt (2012). *Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines* by looking for the following signs:-

- * Holes, cracks or crevices.
- * Bat droppings.
- * Prey remains.
- * Staining on external walls.

2.2. Unless otherwise stated, all lofts were accessed and inspected using a high powered torch and where necessary an endoscope.

2.3. A thorough external inspection was carried out from ground level for any gaps or openings in the roof and ridge tiles, behind soffits and fascias and in the walls of the structure for suitable roost access points and field signs to indicate possible use by bats.

2.4. All window cills, walls and the ground around the structure were checked for signs of bat droppings or staining to indicate possible use by bats. Where necessary, ladders were utilised to gain access within the limits of health and safety. Any access constraints encountered are outlined within the following report.

2.5. All survey work was carried out in line with the Bat Conservation Trust, Good Practice Guidelines

2.6. This was followed by a dusk emergence survey by three surveyors.

2.7. The survey was undertaken by Derek Whitcher who has over twenty years' experience of surveying for wildlife and has run his own wildlife consultancy since 1998. He has extensive experience of a wide variety of survey techniques for a variety of species of protected wildlife supplemented by attendance on a wide range of training courses through CIEEM, FSC and BCT. As a member of CIEEM he is committed to continuous professional development, a continual process of learning and career development, a condition of CIEEM membership. He holds current Natural England survey licences for barn owl, bat, great crested newt and white clawed crayfish.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

A data search request was submitted to West Yorkshire Bat Group for existing records of bat roosts within 1km of the barn. They hold two records of Pipistrelle roosts in the surrounding area. Their response is shown below.

Grid Ref	Location Name	Date	Common Name	Abundance	Record Type
SE1914026842	2 Drubb Lane, Cleckheaton	25/05/2007	Pipistrelle Bat species	20 Count of Adult	Roost
SE1914026842	2 Drubb Lane, Cleckheaton	15/06/2006	Vesper Bat species		Roost

3.2. Site Description.

3.2.1. The aerial photograph below shows Drub Lane barn and the surrounding area.



3.2.2. The barn is located in a grazing field and is surrounded by grazing fields and mature tree lines with residential areas to the west and the northeast.

3.2.3. The barn is a tall, single storey structure, Building A, as shown in the photograph below.



3.2.4. On the north eastern side there is a further single storey building, Building B, used as a storage area, as shown below.



3.3. Day Time Survey Results.

3.3.1. Both buildings were inspected internally and externally for potential bat roosting opportunities.

3.3.2. Building A is a metal framed barn with block work lower walls, rendered on the outside and with timber cladding to the upper walls. The roof is pitched and cement sheet covered with ridge ventilators.

3.3.3. The walls and the roof have been well maintained and there are no opportunities for roosting bats, except in the roof ventilators. These could not be closely inspected to determine whether they were meshed internally but they are quite large and therefore very unlikely to provide a protected roost site for bats.

3.3.4. Internally the building has a mezzanine floor at the western end accessed from inside and by an external staircase. The whole of the inside has been sprayed throughout with a thick layer of insulation material. This effectively seals the inside completely including the eaves and the ventilators.



3.3.5. No bats or bat field signs were identified anywhere inside or outside the building and the building was assessed to have minimal bat roosting potential.

3.3.6. Building B is a single storey, open fronted building with solid block work walls and a mono pitched roof covered with corrugated metal sheets, used for storage. No bat roosting opportunities were identified in this building and no bats or bat field signs were found.

3.4. Dusk Emergence Survey Results.

3.4.1. Three surveyors carried out a dusk emergence survey. Each surveyor was equipped with a Batbox Duet detector and a two way radio for communication. Three static Anabat recorders were placed around the site to record bat activity for subsequent computer analysis using Analook software.

3.4.2. The surveyors were positioned to be able to view all sides of the building simultaneously as shown on the aerial photograph below. Anabat recorders were placed with each surveyor.



3.4.3. One surveyor holds a current Natural England bat survey licence and the other two are experienced surveyors.

3.4.4. The evening was still and clear with a temperature of 14°C at 21:00.

3.4.5. The following are the observations of the surveyors:-

Surveyor 1.

21:14. Pipistrelle 45 from the southwest along tree line.

21:16. Pipistrelle 45 foraging along tree line to the southwest and around the west side of the barn. This activity continued until 21:30.

21:40. Faint Pipistrelle 45 calls, heard not seen.

21:42. Pipistrelle 45 foraging overhead and away to the southwest.

Surveyor 2.

21:14. Pipistrelle 45 heard but not seen along tree line to the north.

21:16. Pipistrelle 45 heard but not seen along tree line to the north.

21:30. Pipistrelle 45 flew overhead towards the southeast.

21:34. Pipistrelle 45 heard foraging along tree line to the north of the site.

21:37. Pipistrelle 45 heard foraging along tree line to the north of the site.

21:39. Pipistrelle 45 heard foraging along tree line to the north of the site.

21:40. Pipistrelle 45 foraged overhead and to south.

Surveyor 3.

21:11. Distant Pipistrelle 45 recorded but not seen.

21:19 Pipistrelle 45 heard and seen foraging along the tree line to the southwest of the barn. This activity continued until 21:25.

21:25. Pipistrelle 45 started to forage along south side of the barn until 21:29.

21:29. Pipistrelle 45 still foraging along south side of the barn but now also along the east side of the barn until 21:31. Then no bat activity.

21:38. Pipistrelle 45 from the west and foraged along south and east side of the barn.

21:40. Pipistrelle down west side of barn and away to the west then all went quiet.

3.4.6. The following bat activity was recorded on the static Anabat recorders.

Anabat 1.

The first Pipistrelle 45 pass was recorded at 21:14 with a total of thirty nine passes recorded by 21:41.

Anabat 2.

The first Pipistrelle 45 pass was recorded at 21:16 with a total of eight passes recorded by 21:42.

Anabat 3.

The first Pipistrelle 45 pass was recorded at 21:12 with a total of thirty six passes recorded by 21:41.

3.4.7. No bats emerged from the buildings.

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. The day time visual inspection identified both buildings as having very little potential for roosting bats, no bats and no bat field signs.

4.2. The surrounding habitat was assessed to be high value foraging habitat with mature tree lines and open grazing land.

4.3. The data search results identified two Pipistrelle roost records to the west of the site.

4.4. The bat activity identified during the dusk emergence survey was confined to a small number of foraging Pipistrelle 45s. The first was seen to approach the site from the southwest and initially forage along the tree line to the southwest of the barn. This then started to forage along the south side of the barn before progressing to the east side of the barn. At the same time further Pipistrelle 45s were heard foraging along the tree line alongside Drub Lane to the north of the site.

4.5. No bats emerged from the buildings on the site and no other species of bat was heard or recorded during the survey.

4.6. The proposed conversion of the buildings on site will therefore have no impact on roosting bats.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. There is a high level of confidence in the survey results and therefore no further bat surveys are recommended.

5.2. There are no bats roosting in the buildings on the site and therefore there is no requirement for a bat mitigation strategy or for a Natural England bat licence in connection with the proposed conversion.

5.3. In order to enhance the biodiversity of the site, it is recommended that bat roosting opportunities be incorporated into the new building in the form of ridge tile access points that enable bats to roost in the void beneath the ridge tiles. A typical design is shown in Appendix II.

Prepared by:	
Derek Whitcher. BSc, MCIEEM, MCMI.	Date: 8 th August 2013.

Checked by:	
Jenny Whitcher Roebuck MCIEEM.	Date: 8 th August 2013.

Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.

It is necessary to understand a little about bats, their basic nature, ecology and legal protection in order to evaluate the findings of this report.

Over 15 species of bat have been recorded in Britain. These fall into two families, the horseshoe bats and the 'ordinary bats'. They are extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

All appear to be diminishing in numbers, probably due to shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet, and habitat change.

As their diet consists solely of insects, bats hibernate during the winter when their food source is at its most scarce. They will spend the winter in hollow trees, caves, mines and the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly the pipistrelle (the commonest and most widespread British bat) can quickly adapt to man made structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, The Habitats Regulations 1994 and the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000.

It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture or disturb bats or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter or protection.

A breeding or resting site of any bat is known as a bat roost. A bat roost is therefore any structure a bat uses for shelter or protection. Because bats tend to use the same roosts each year, legal opinion is that the roost site is protected whether or not the bats are present at that time.

Bat roosts can be identified by looking for:-

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices.
- Bat droppings.
- Prey remains.
- By carrying out night observations using a bat detector.

Where development proposals are likely to affect a bat roost site, a licence is required from Natural England.

The person applying for that licence has to be suitably qualified and experienced in bat matters. That person is then responsible for ensuring that the measures contained in the licence are carried out.

Appendix II. BAT ROOST EXAMPLE.

