

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

Reasonable Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

**Harefield Hall Farm,
Chadwick Lane,
Heywood,
OL10 1QL.**

11.09.2023



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

Executive summary

In June 2023 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of Harefield Hall Farm, Chadwick Lane, Heywood, OL10 1QL to assess the potential for proposed re-roofing to impact on protected species.

A preliminary bat roost assessment survey was carried out on 30th March 2023 by JCA Ltd (*Bat Roost Potential Survey Report at Harefield Hall Farm, Chadwick Lane, Heywood, Lancashire, OL10 1RN JCA Ltd 14/04/2023*). No physical evidence to suggest use by bats was recorded and buildings were assessed as offering moderate to high roost potential.

Three emergence surveys have been carried out by surveyors equipped with infrared video cameras and infrared illumination as night vision aids.

No bats were recorded emerging from buildings on site.

Activity was characterised by low levels of foraging Noctule bat and high levels of Common Pipistrelle bat activity, with Common Pipistrelle observed to commute onto site from the west to forage within the courtyard and active cow shed.

Timing of activity suggested bats arriving from a nearby roost to forage before dispersing into the wider landscape.

Survey effort is considered appropriate to characterise the roost potential of building and that the presence of significant or low conservation value bat roosts is unlikely on site.

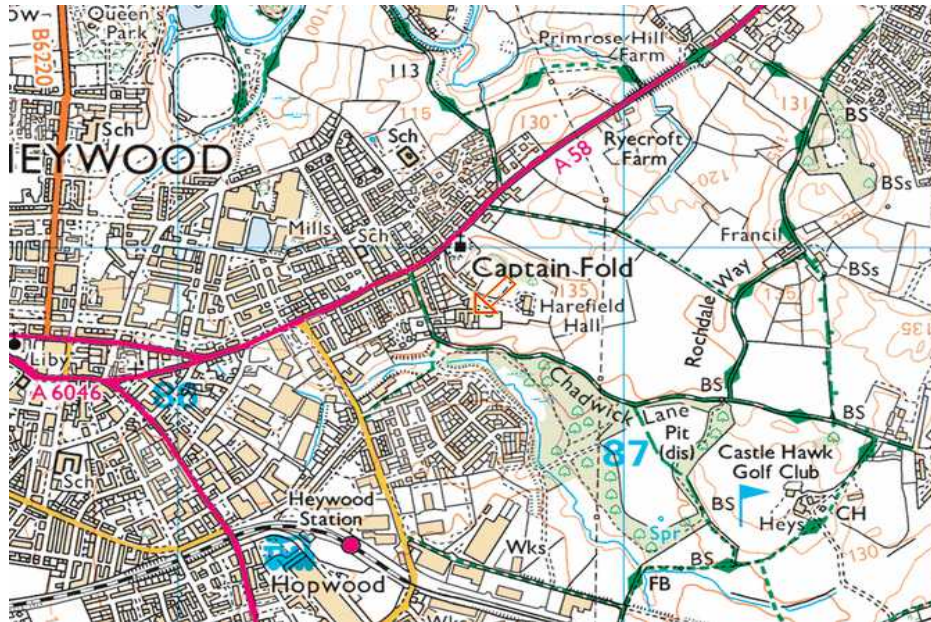
“The presence of a significant bat roost (invariably a maternity roost) can normally be determined on a single visit at any time of year, provided that the entire structure is accessible and that any signs of bats have not been removed by others”. - Mitchell-Jones, A (2004) Bat mitigation guidelines.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

It is considered unlikely that low conservation value roosts are present within the buildings, however reasonable avoidance measures are recommended within this report taking into consideration suggested proximity to a Common Pipistrelle roost.

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

Harefield Hall Farm, Chadwick Lane, Heywood, OL10 1QL
NGR: SD8666310814



Surrounding Habitat



The property is located in a semi rural position on the urban fringe of Heywood with surrounding habitat a mosaic of improved and semi improved grassland with some hedgerow and scattered deciduous tree cover present on field boundaries, scrub and semi natural deciduous woodland cover.

Connectivity to the wider landscape is moderate. Bat foraging potential is moderate.

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.

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, Sarah Dunham and Martha Anderson all experienced bat surveyors.

Survey Summary Survey

Survey Summary Survey	Date	Timings
Preliminary Roost Assessment	14.07.2023	1 Hour
Emergence survey	14.07.2023	3 Hours
Emergence survey	02.08.2023	3 Hours
Emergence survey	05.09.2023	3 Hours

Survey constraints

Access to all areas of the interior and 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 during preliminary and activity surveys.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

The property consists of a complex of stone built two storey farmhouse house with adjoining and detached outbuildings.

External walls are generally well pointed however gaps are present due to missing mortar.

Roof slates are generally close fitting however areas of missing slates and roof collapses were recorded with resulting weather and light penetration. The north west barn in particular had large areas of missing slates at ridge level potentially reducing likelihood of typical barn roosting bats such as Brown Long Eared and Natterer's bat.

The buildings were assessed as offering moderate to high bat roost potential in line with previous assessments.



Emergence Survey 14th July 2023

Start Temp: 18.1c Finish Temp: 16.6c 50% Cloud cover. Wind: Bft 0/1 Westerly. Precipitation 0
Start: 21.15 Sunset: 21.38 Finish: 23.10

Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout, Anabat Swift, Anabat Chorus, Anabat Scout, Peersonic RPA and Echometer Touch Pro full spectrum detectors aided with Canon XA50, XA25 and Nightfox Whisker infrared video cameras with infrared flood and spot lights were positioned around the buildings to monitor 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.

Between 21.35 and 21.47 five Noctule bats were observed foraging to the immediate east of the site before dispersing south. Timing of activity suggested bats emerging from a nearby roost.

From 21.55 to 22.27 Common Pipistrelle bats were observed to arrive on site from the west and forage continuously around the courtyard and cattle shed, bats were recorded dispersing to into the wider landscape.

No bats were recorded emerging from buildings on site.

Emergence Survey 2nd August 2023

Start Temp: 16.1c Finish Temp: 16.6c 100% Cloud cover. Wind: Bft 0/1 Westerly. Precipitation 0
Start: 21.30 Sunset: 20.48 Finish: 23.20

Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout, Anabat Swift, Anabat Chorus, Anabat Scout, Peersonic RPA and Echometer Touch Pro full spectrum detectors aided with Canon XA50, XA25 and Nightfox Whisker infrared video cameras with infrared flood and spot lights were positioned around the buildings to monitor 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.

Between 20.45 and 21.37 seven Noctule bats were observed foraging above and to the immediate east of the site before dispersing south. Timing of activity suggested bats emerging from a nearby roost.

Between 21.17 and 22.45 Common Pipistrelle bats were observed to arrive on site from the west and forage continuously around the courtyard and cattle shed, bats were recorded dispersing to into the wider landscape.

No bats were recorded emerging from buildings on site.

Emergence Survey 5th September 2023

Start Temp: 20.9c Finish Temp: 20.1c 100% Clear Sky. Wind: Bft 0 Precipitation 0
Start: 19.35 Sunset: 19.51 Finish: 21.25

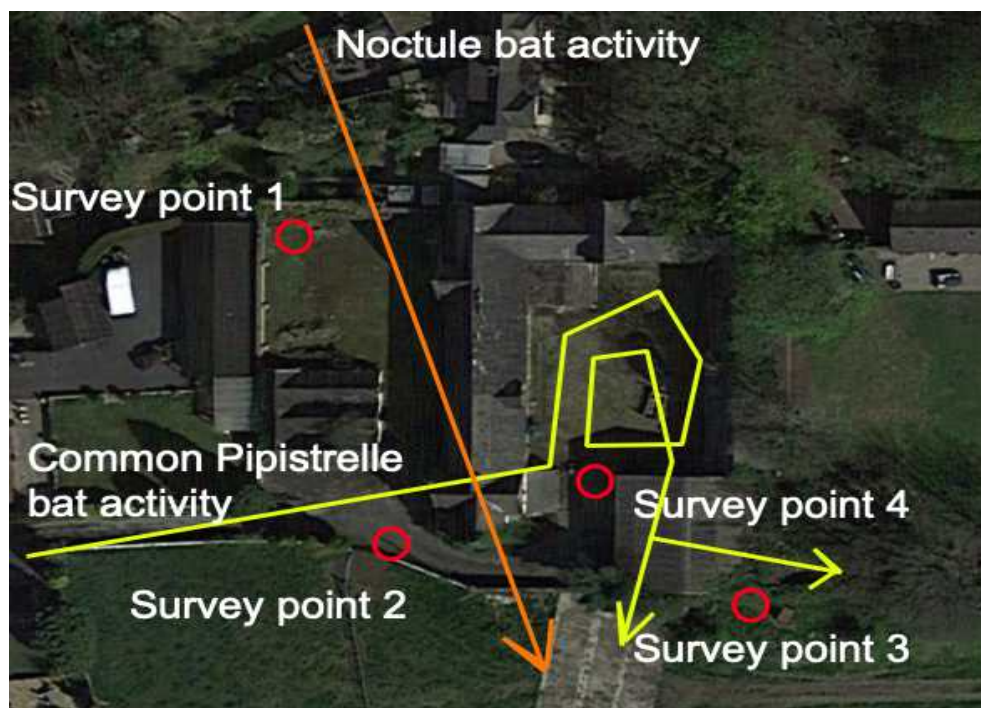
Surveyors equipped with Anabat Walkabout, Anabat Swift, Anabat Chorus, Anabat Scout, Peersonic RPA and Echometer Touch Pro full spectrum detectors aided with Canon XA50, XA25 and Nightfox Whisker infrared video cameras with infrared flood and spot lights were positioned around the buildings to monitor 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.

Between 20.02 and 20.11 three Noctule bats were observed foraging above and to the immediate east of the site before dispersing south. Timing of activity suggested bats emerging from a nearby roost.

Between 20.09 and 20.49 two Common Pipistrelle bats were recorded foraging around the courtyard and cattle shed. General bat activity recorded was low.

No bats were recorded emerging from buildings on site.



Survey summary

Interpretation of results

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Timing of activity suggested bats arriving from a nearby roost to forage before dispersing into the wider landscape.

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

Given the deterioration of roofs allowing considerable light and weather penetration to interiors it is considered unlikely that low conservation value roosts are present within the buildings, however reasonable avoidance measures are recommended within this report taking into consideration suggested proximity to a Common Pipistrelle roost.

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

Roof work should take place following an evening temperature of +5c

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

Roof slates should be removed by hand and under supervision where necessary.

The reverse of roof slates 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.

Compensatory bat boxes (2 Greenwood Eco Habitats three crevice boxes) 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.