

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.  
Wildlife Consultants.**



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**PLASHWOOD STABLES, GREENMOOR.**

**BAT SURVEY.**

**Ref No:- 121017.**

**Date: 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012.**

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# **1. INTRODUCTION.**

1.1. A planning application is to be submitted to convert the Plashwood Stables for residential use. A bat survey is required 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 4<sup>th</sup> October 2012 and this report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

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

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## **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 not followed by a dusk emergence survey as bats are in hibernation at this time of year.

2.7. The survey was undertaken by Derek Whitcher who has over twenty year's 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 IEEM, FSC and BCT. As a member of IEEM he is committed to continuous professional development, a continual process of learning and career development, a condition of IEEM membership. He holds current Natural

England survey licences for barn owl, bat, great crested newt and white clawed crayfish.

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### **3. SURVEY RESULTS.**

#### ***3.1. Data Search Results.***

3.1.1. A data search request has been submitted to South Yorkshire Bat Group for existing records of bat roosts within 2km of the site.

3.1.2. The data search results have not been received to date but will be provided in Appendix II of this report.

#### ***3.2. Site Description.***

3.2.1. Plashwood Stables is located on a hillside below Greenmoor, surrounded by open grazing fields and clumps of woodland, as shown in the aerial photograph below.



### ***3.3. Day Time Survey Results.***

3.3.1. The Stables is a group of stone buildings in three separate parts forming one block, as shown in the photograph below.



3.3.2. The main block is a two storey section with stables and storage on the ground floor and a with a mezzanine floor with more storage space above.

3.3.3. The walls are built from stone that is generally well pointed but with a few open joints and cracks low down on the walls. There is a large clump of ivy growing against the eastern elevation.

3.3.4. The roof is supported on a traditional purlin timber frame and is covered with stone slates with no lining. The ridge is wide with stone ridge tiles that are too wide to provide bat roosting opportunities. All roof tiles are in place and the ridge tiles are well pointed. The photograph below shows the underside of the roof.



3.3.5. No bat droppings or field signs were identified on the outside of the building. A few small and hard droppings were found on the mezzanine floor but these were all mouse droppings. No bat droppings or field signs were found inside the building.

3.3.6. On the northern end of the building there is a single storey lean-to section used as a further stable. The walls are a similar stone construction and the lean-to roof is part covered with stone slates and part covered with Welsh slates.

3.3.7. Internally the walls have been whitewashed and are in good condition and there is no lining beneath the roof slates. The photograph below shows the inside of this building.



3.3.8. No bats or bat field signs were identified inside or outside this part of the building.

3.3.9. To the rear of the buildings there is a further single storey lean-to section that is built low into the ground as shown in the photograph below. The walls are mainly below ground level and the roof is covered with stone slates. Some of these are misplaced but all are present.



3.3.10. Internally the walls have been whitewashed and there is no lining beneath the stone slates, as shown in the photograph below. This building is quite damp.



3.3.11. No bat field signs were identified inside or outside this section of the building.

#### ***3.4. Dusk Emergence Survey results.***

3.4.1. Two surveyors carried out a dusk emergence survey of the stables on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2012. The evening was mild, still and clear with a temperature of 13°C at 19-30.

3.4.2. The two surveyors were positioned one at either side of the buildings in order to be able to view all sides at once. Each surveyor was equipped with a Batbox Duet detector and a two way radio. Three static Anabat recorders were deployed to record bat activity for subsequent computer analysis using Analook software.

3.4.3. The following aerial photograph shows the positions of the surveyors and the Anabat recorders. Anabat 3 was placed inside the buildings.



3.4.4. The following bat activity was identified by the two surveyors.

Surveyor 1.

18:45. Pipistrelle 45 foraging to the north of the site.

18:50. Pipistrelle 45 foraging around trees to the north of the site.

18:52. Pipistrelle 45 foraging in circles around the northern side of the stables.

This foraging activity continued throughout the survey.

19:01. Two quiet bats flew across the site seen but not heard.

19:13. Pipistrelle 55 flew across the site from the east over the site to the west.

19:30. Two Pipistrelle 45s foraging over Surveyor 1 and left to the west.

Surveyor 2.

18:44. Pipistrelle 45 flew from the west across the field to the south of the stables and away.

18:54. Pipistrelle 45 foraging high over the garden to the west of the stables.

This continued until 19:03.

19:05. Pipistrelle 45 flew round the east side of the stables.

19:07 to 19:10. Pipistrelle 45 foraging over garden to the west of the site and away to the north.

19:13. Brief Pipistrelle 55 call heard not seen.

19:20. Brief bat call unidentified.

19:23. Brief bat call unidentified.

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

Anabat 1.

This Anabat recorded continuous Pipistrelle 45 activity throughout the survey with two Myotis calls, possible Whiskered or Brandt's bats at 19:01 and 19:12.

Anabat 2.

This Anabat recorded occasional Pipistrelle 45 calls throughout with one pipistrelle 55 call at 19:11 and three Myotis calls at 19:02, 19:20 and 19:23.

Anabat 3.

No bat activity was recorded on this Anabat placed inside the buildings.

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## **4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.**

4.1. The stable buildings were assessed to have minimal bat roosting potential limited to occasional voids in the walls and small gaps between the stone roof slates where they do not sit flat to each other. These would be unsuitable for anything more than the occasional male Pipistrelle.

4.2. The inside of the stables and the underside of the roof were assessed to be totally unsuitable for roosting bats.

4.3. The dusk emergence survey identified a small number of Pipistrelle 45 bats continually circling and foraging throughout the survey. These appeared initially from the west of the site.

4.4. One Pipistrelle 55 flew directly over the site and there were three Myotis passes over the site. The calls were brief but appear to be Whiskered or Brandt's bats.

4.5. No bat field signs were identified inside or outside the stable buildings and no bats emerged from any of the buildings.

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## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. As the buildings were assessed to have a low potential for roosting bats and no bats emerged from the buildings during the dusk emergence survey, the results indicate there are no bat roosts present in the stable buildings and therefore no further surveys are recommended.

5.2. Nevertheless, all works to the buildings should be undertaken with care and all personnel employed on the works should be briefed to be observant. In the unlikely event that a bat is found during the works, the bat should be covered and protected, work should cease at that location and the undersigned contacted for further advice.

5.3. To increase the biodiversity of the site, it is recommended that bat roosting opportunities are designed into the converted stables. These can take the form of a roost built into the external stone walls or bat roosting opportunities beneath the ridge tiles. Examples of each of these are provided in the Appendices of this report.

5.4. It is recommended that the ivy on the walls of the building is removed outside the nesting bird season, which extends from March to September as the ivy provides ideal nesting bird potential.

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Prepared by:	
Derek Whitcher. BSc, MIEEM, MCMI.	Date: 10 <sup>th</sup> October 2012.

Checked by:	
Sue Whitcher	Date: 12 <sup>th</sup> October 2012

## **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:-

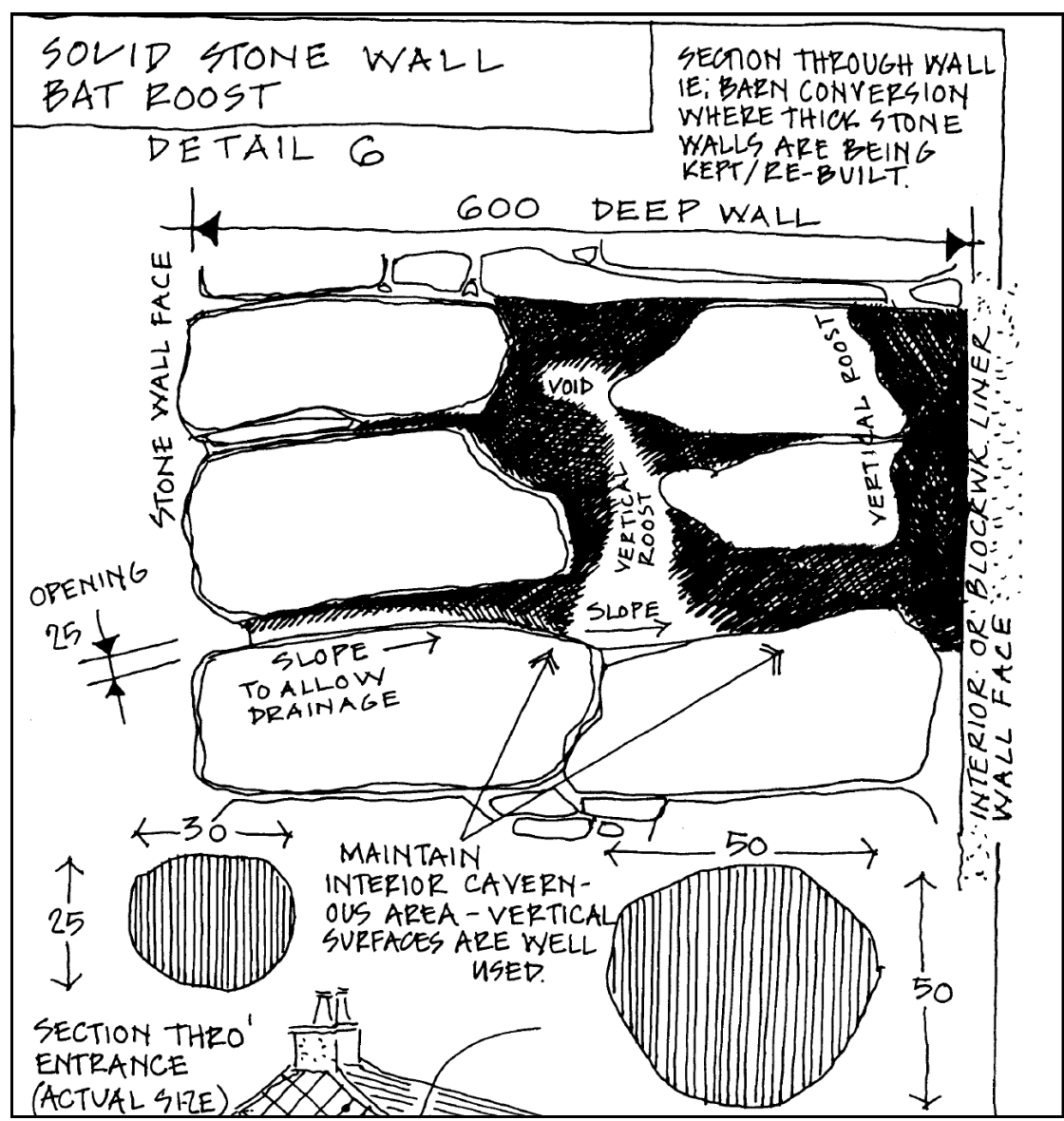
- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices.
- Bat droppings.
- Prey remains.
- By carrying out night observations using a bat detector.

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

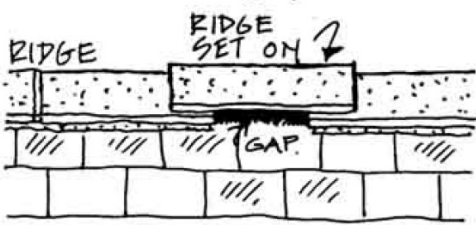
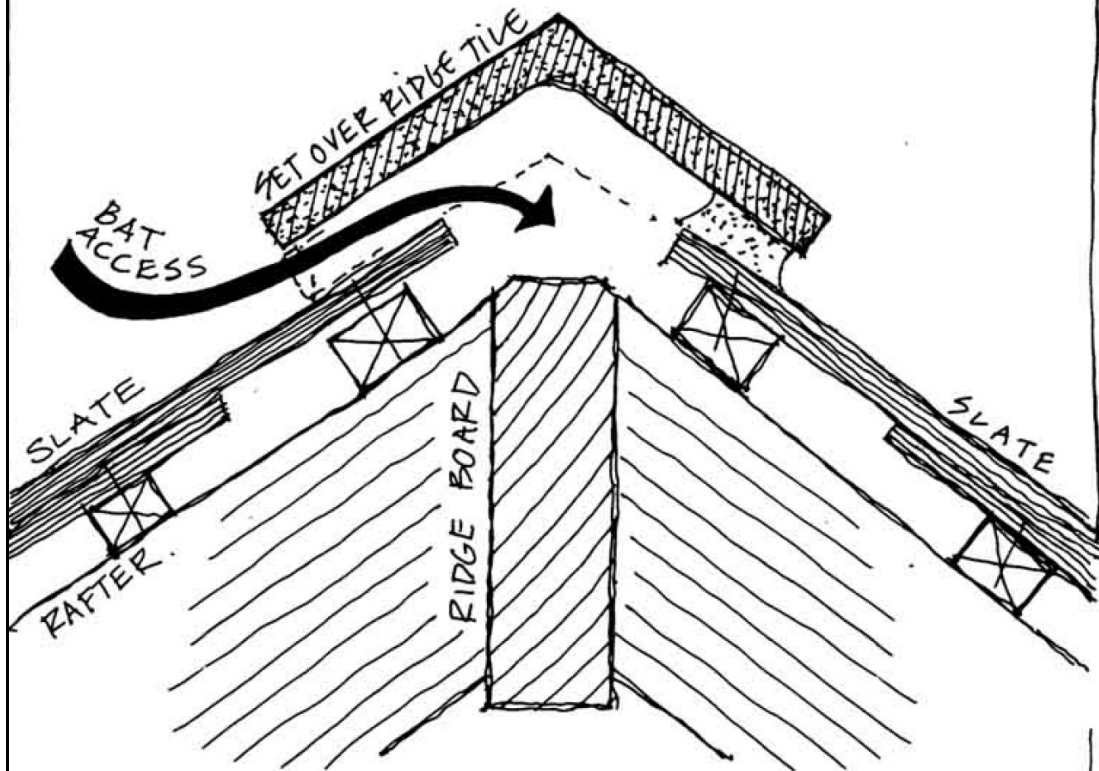
The person applying for that licence has to be suitably qualified and experienced in bat matters. That person is then responsible for ensuring that the measures contained in the licence are carried out.

## **Appendix II. DATA SEARCH RESULTS.**

# Appendix III. EXAMPLE BAT ROOSTING OPPORTUNITIES.



# RIDGE TILE ACCESS DETAIL 4A



~ OPTION A ~

ROOF RIDGE SET ON TOP OF GENERAL RIDGE TILES TO FORM BAT ACCESS GAP.



~ OPTION B ~

MAINTAIN 20MM MORTAR GAP. & LEAVE A SECTION OUT.



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The above information is for guidance only and may not be appropriate in all circumstances, if in doubt seek professional advice.  
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