

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Ecological Consultants.**



347 DONCASTER ROAD.

OS REF: SE 37041 05591.

BAT SURVEY.

Ref No: 190474/1.

Date: 7th May 2019.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. A Planning Application has been submitted to demolish the existing buildings at 374 Doncaster Road and to replace with new dwellings. A bat survey report is required in support of that planning application.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd has therefore been 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. The initial day time survey was carried out on 26th April 2019 followed by a dusk emergence survey on 2nd May 2019. This report outlines the findings of those surveys and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.4. Appendices I and II of this report provide additional information on protected species and the protection afforded to them and are designed to assist the reader in understanding the contents of this report.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. The buildings were thoroughly checked internally and externally for potential bat roosting sites 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 sills, 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 Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition)*, with an assessment of the buildings suitability for roosting bats made in accordance with these guidelines.

2.6. 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.

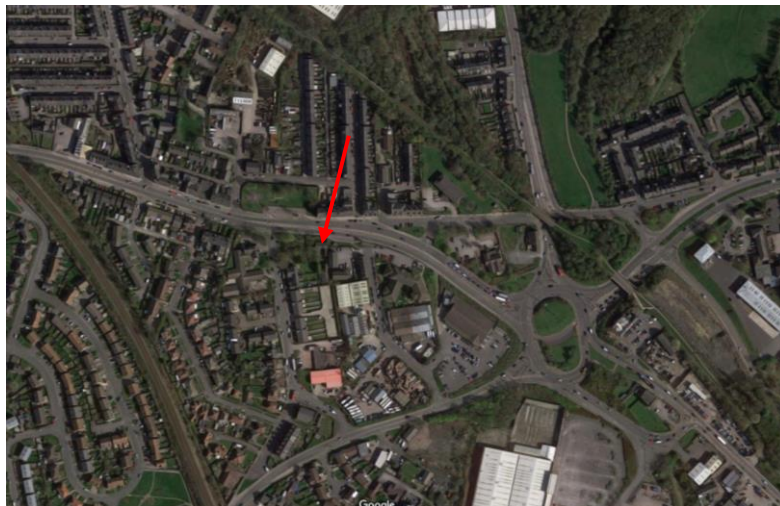
3.1.1. A data search request was submitted to South Yorkshire Bat Group for records of existing bat roosts within 2km of the site.

3.1.2. The data search results returned abundant bat records, the majority of which were historic or were records of bat activity. No roost records were provided anywhere close to the site.

3.1.3. The full list of records can be provided as a separate document on request.

3.2. Site Description.

3.2.1. The site is located in a busy residential and commercial area of Barnsley with Doncaster Road to the north, Stairfoot Roundabout to the east and with residential and commercial areas to the west and south, as shown by the red arrow on the aerial photograph below.



3.2.2. The aerial photograph below shows the buildings currently on the site. There is a two-storey house facing Doncaster Road with a further series of outbuilding at right angles behind the house.



3.3. Daytime Bat Survey Results.

3.3.1. The House.

3.3.1.1. The house is a two-storey brick building with solid brick walls, as shown in the photograph below showing the rear of the building.



3.3.1.2. The photograph below shows the front on the building and the eastern gable end wall from Doncaster Road. This shows that these faces are rendered over the bricks.

3.3.1.3. The walls are generally in good condition although there are occasional small gaps between the brickwork towards the eaves.



3.3.1.4. The pitched roof of the building is fairly modern and has been replaced with interlocking tiles. This is sound condition with all tiles in place and no gaps between. All ridge tiles are also in place although there are occasional gaps beneath them that provide some opportunity for roosting bats.



3.3.1.5. There are two loft spaces above the house, one accessible through the loft hatch and the other through a hole in the ceiling. The roof comprises a purlin and joist arrangement and the loft is shallow as the top floor rooms extend partly into the loft

space. There is a breathable membrane lining beneath the roof tiles inserted when the roof was replaced. There were no signs of daylight in the loft space.

3.3.1.6. No bats or bat field signs were identified in the loft spaces and both contained abundant cobwebs throughout.



3.3.1.7. This building was assessed to have a LOW potential for individual, crevice dwelling bats to roost.

3.3.2. The Outbuildings.

3.3.2.1. Immediately to the rear of the dwelling there is a block of single storey garages with solid stone walls and a pitched, interlocking tiled roof. The western aspect of the building contains two double door openings, each to a garage sized open room and one pedestrian door and window into an outside storage space. All are completely open to the underside of the roof, which has been replaced at the same time as the house roof and comprises interlocking tiles with a breathable membrane lining.



3.3.2.2. No bats or opportunities for roosting bats were identified anywhere within this block.

3.3.2.3. To the rear of the site there is a further single storey garage, but this is now devoid of the roof, which was burnt down by fire. This building is unsuitable for roosting bats and no bat field signs were found inside or outside this building.



3.3.2.4. Beyond that, there is a two-storey outbuilding. This is constructed with solid brick walls, the same as the house.

3.3.2.5. The ground floor rooms have no doors and comprise open storage with a timber ceiling and whitewashed walls.



3.3.2.6. Upstairs there is open room with open windows to the outside. The walls are solid brick and have been whitewashed at some time in the past although much of this has fallen off.

3.3.2.7. The roof of this building is supported by a king post timber structure and the tiles above were replaced at the same time as the other roofs on the site. This building is covered with interlocking tiles with a breathable membrane lining.



3.3.2.8. No bats or bat field signs were identified in these buildings and this building was assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats.

3.3.3. Dusk Emergence Survey Results.

3.3.3.1. Two surveyors carried out a dusk emergence survey on the evening of 2nd May 2019.

3.3.3.2. The evening was warm, still and clear with a temperature of 13°C at 20-00. Sunset was at 20:30 and the survey commenced at 20:00.

3.3.3.3. The two surveyors were positioned so that they could see all aspects of the house to be surveyed. The outbuildings had been assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats and therefore did not require a dusk emergence survey. The position of each surveyor was as shown on the aerial photograph below.

3.3.3.4. One of the surveyors holds a current Natural England bat survey licence and the other surveyor was an experienced assistant.

3.3.3.5. Each surveyor was equipped with a Batbox Duet detector and a static Anabat recorder to record bat activity.



3.3.3.6. The following are the observations of the surveyors.

20:37. S1 heard a distant faint bat call, heard not seen.

20:45. Both surveyors saw and heard a Common Pipistrelle fly south to north high over the site and away over Doncaster Road.

21:02. Common Pipistrelle from the south turned and left to the west.

3.3.3.7. The Anabat recordings. Confirmed the above observations.

Anabat 11 with Surveyor 1 recorded one Common Pipistrelle at 20:45 and another at 21:02.

Anabat 1 with Surveyor 2 recorded one Common Pipistrelle at 20:45.

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. The existing house on the site was assessed to have a LOW potential for roosting bats during the day time survey while the outbuildings were assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats in line with the bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines.

4.2. One dusk emergence survey was therefore undertaken on the existing house and during that survey no bats were seen to emerge from the house.

4.3. Small birds, including robins and wrens were identified around the back of the house during both surveys. However, no active nest was identified.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. No roosting bats were identified during the two surveys and therefore there is no requirement for a mitigation strategy or for a Natural England licence in connection with the proposed development.

5.2. Nevertheless, individual bats can seek temporary shelter almost anywhere and therefore it is recommended that demolition of the existing buildings is undertaken with due care. In the unlikely event a bat is found, the bat should be covered and protected, work should cease at that location and the undersigned should be contacted for further advice.

5.3. In order to provide biodiversity enhancements in line with the NPPF, it is recommended that two integrated bat bricks are installed in the new dwellings to be built on the site.

Prepared by:	
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Checked by:	
Jenny Whitcher Roebuck MCIEEM.	Date: 7 th May 2019.

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Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.

Ecology

There are currently 18 species of bat residing in Britain, 17 of which are known to breed here. 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 habitat change and shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet.

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.

Surveys

During walkover surveys, bat roosts can be identified by looking for:

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices within any building, tree or other structure.
- Bat droppings along walls, window sills, or on the ground.
- Prey remains, such as insect wings.

Further investigations can be made using endoscopes, by carrying out aerial inspections of trees or by conducting bat activity surveys during dusk and dawn over summer months.

Legislation

Bats are protected under Appendix II and III of the Bern Convention (1982), Schedule 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (some species under Annex II), Annex II of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) and EUROBATs agreement. Numerous species are

also listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) making them species of principal importance.

All bats and their roosts are therefore protected in the UK. This makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any bat, to interfere with any place used for shelter or protection, or to intentionally disturb any animal occupying such a place.

The UK has designated maternity and hibernacula areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) under the Habitats Directive. Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan also includes action for a number bat species and the habitats which support them.

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

Toolbox Talk: Bats

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18 species of bat have been recorded in Britain, 17 of which are known to breed here.

Identification.

Some species can be extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

Species such as the Brown Long Eared bat pictured above can be more easily identified in the hand. Whereas, the Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle are more difficult to identify.



Bats are more easily identified by field signs such as droppings or feeding remains.



Habitat.

Bats are highly specialised creatures and require a relatively narrow range of suitable conditions in order to sustain a viable population. Bats require an abundant supply of flying insect food in places where they can easily be caught and they need safe and reliable roosting sites, particularly during breeding and hibernation.

Bats are heavily dependent on buildings and trees for their roost sites and therefore extremely susceptible to disturbance from human activities. Development schemes can also isolate bat populations and sever roost sites from favoured feeding areas by removing hedgerows or other features used as commuting routes.

Bats are susceptible to disturbance and have been known to abandon roost sites after instances of disturbance. The effects of disturbance are more pronounced at different times of year. Serious disturbance during breeding can result in the breeding females being killed or the abandonment and subsequent starvation of dependant young. Repeated disturbance during winter hibernation can result in the death of adult animals from starvation.

The level of protection afforded to bats in the UK and European legislation reflects the fact that it is now generally accepted that bats have declined substantially, maybe by as much as 60%, over recent years. Most species are declining and vulnerable with all species being protected.

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 occasionally the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly Pipistrelle, can quickly adapt to manmade structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

Legislation.

Bats and their roosts are fully protected at all times (whether the bats are currently present or not). This protection comes from the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (updated by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000) and the Habitats Regulations 1994. Under this legislation it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, capture or disturb bats or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter or protection.

Under the Habitats Regulations, where bats may be affected by development proposals, a licence is required from Natural England. Natural England's published guidelines on the licence procedure indicate that if, on the basis of survey information and specialist knowledge of the species concerned, the proposed activity is reasonably likely to result in an offence then a licence is required. If, on the other hand the proposed activity is reasonably unlikely to result in an offence, then a licence is not required.

If bats or bat field signs are identified during works, stop all works and contact Whitcher Wildlife Ltd directly on 01226 753271 or at info@whitcher-wildlife.co.uk