

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Wildlife Consultants.**



WATERSLACK FARM, CAWTHORNE.

BAT SURVEY.

Ref No:- 121175.

Date: 7th December 2012.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. Nuttall Yarwood and Partners are drawing up plans for the conversion of a barn at Water Slack Farm in Cawthorne.

1.2. A bat survey of the building was commissioned to identify any issues that may affect the proposed conversion.

1.3. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd carried out the survey on the 6th December 2012. This report outlines the findings of the 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 not followed by a dusk emergence survey as bats are in hibernation at this time of year.

2.7. This survey was carried out by Steven Whitcher MIEEM. Since 2002 Steven has had experience in a professional capacity as a Wildlife Consultant carrying out ecology and protected species surveys and Phase 1 Habitat surveys. Steven holds Natural England Survey Licences in respect of bats, great crested newts, crayfish and barn owls, CCW Survey Licences in respect of bats and great crested newts and an SNH Survey Licence in respect to bats. He has also successfully completed a number of courses run by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM),

the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) and the Field Studies Council (FSC) in the relative protected species, plant species and in carrying out Phase 1 Habitat Surveys.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. A desktop data search for existing records of bats in the area of the site was submitted to South Yorkshire Bat Group.

3.1.2. South Yorkshire Bat Group hold several records of bats in the area of the site although none of the records are specific to this site.

3.1.3. A full copy of the results returned by South Yorkshire Bat Group is included in Appendix II of this report.

3.2. The Surveyed Area.

3.2.1. The surveyed area was a barn to the rear of Waterslack Farm in Cawthorne, as shown on the plan below.



3.2.2. The barn is a single storey stone built barn that is located to the rear of Waterslack Farm and is used for general storage.

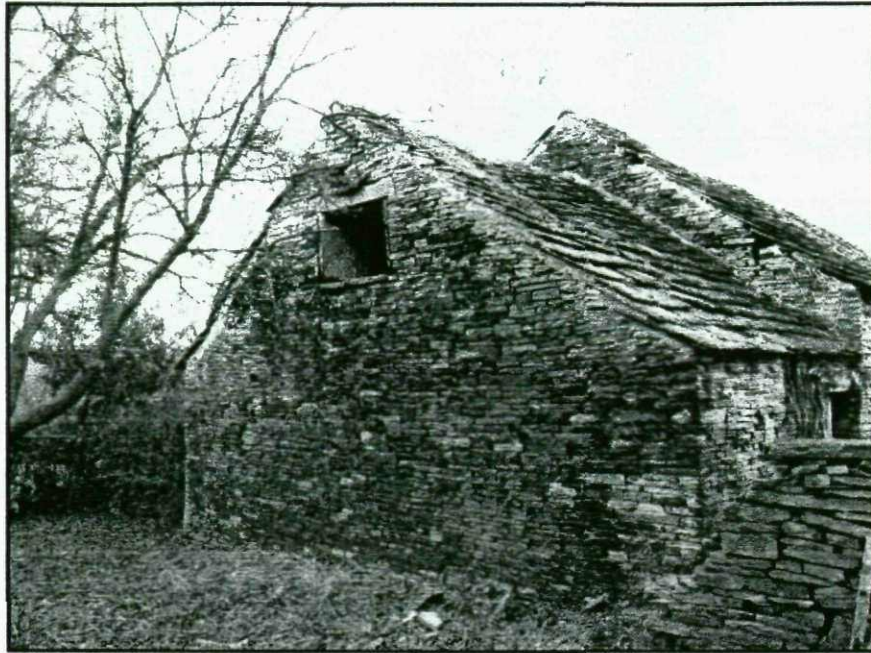


3.2.3. The walls of the building are rubble filled stone walls. There are several windows and doors around the building with the majority of the doors being open. There are also open window voids in both gable ends of the building.

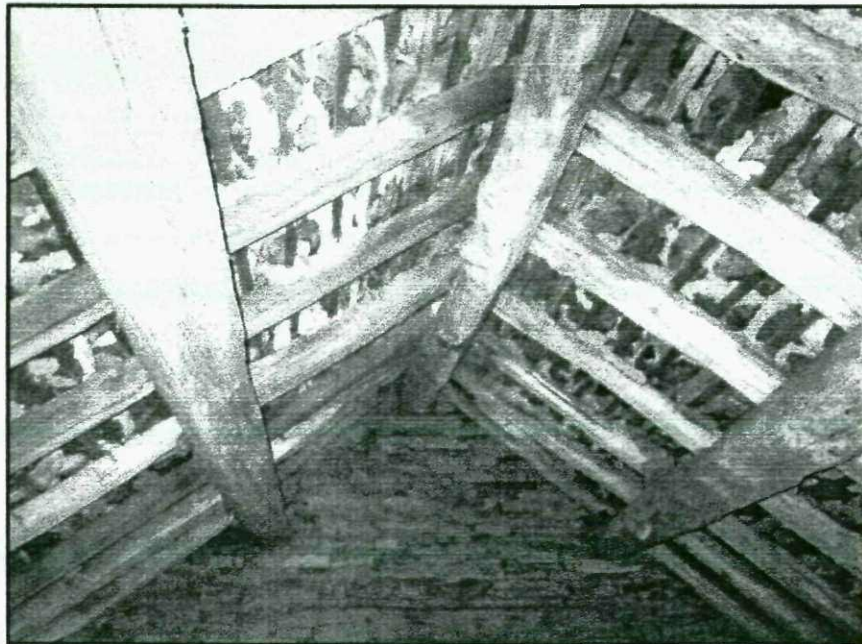
3.2.4. The western end of the building displays ivy trunks where a large amount of ivy has recently been partially removed from the building.



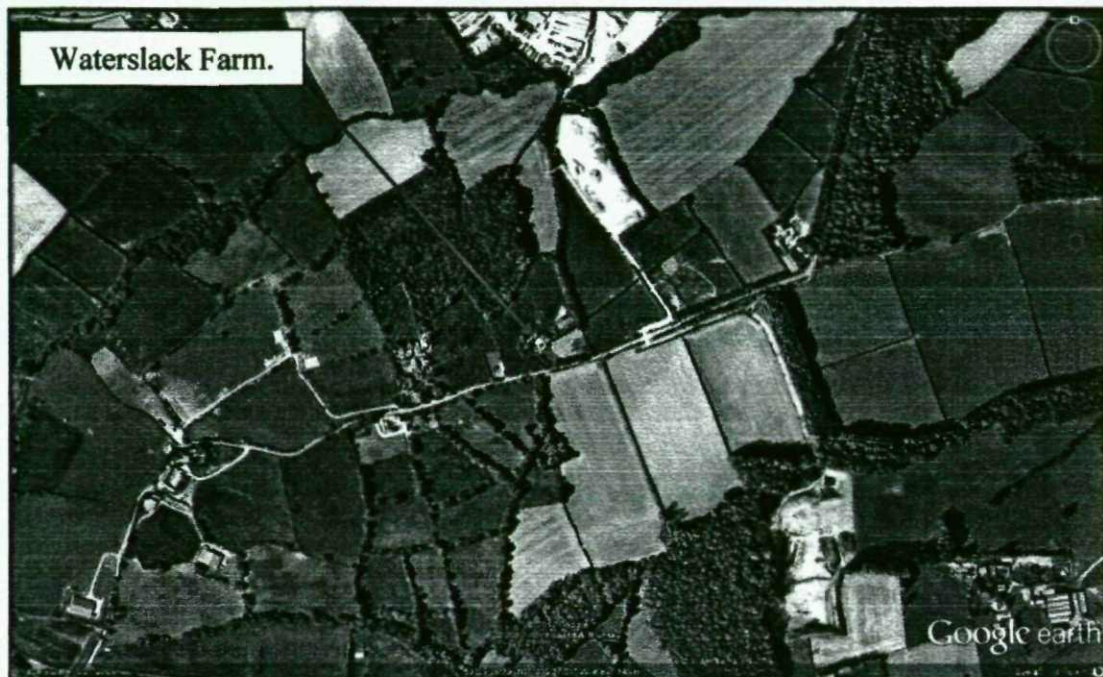
3.2.5. The roof of the building is a stone tiled pitched roof with a lower section of roof at the western end of the building.



3.2.6. Internally the building comprises a main room open to the inside of the roof with no lining on the tiles and an exposed queen post timber structure. There are hay lofts at both ends of the room. A further two storey room is located under the lower section of roof at the western end of the building, this is also open to the inside of the roof with no lining.



3.2.7. The building is surrounded by open grazing land, hedgerows and small pockets of woodland.



3.3. Survey Results.

3.3.1. Access around the interior of the building was restricted during this survey due to the poor state of the floor in the hay loft at the eastern end of the building. Therefore this area could not be thoroughly inspected.

3.3.2. The external walls of the building display abundant cracks and voids that would provide potential access to the rubble fill of the walls. No bat field signs were identified around these voids during this survey.

3.3.3. The building also displays an abundance of voids that would provide suitable access for bats to the interior of the building due to the missing doors and openings in the gable ends of the building.

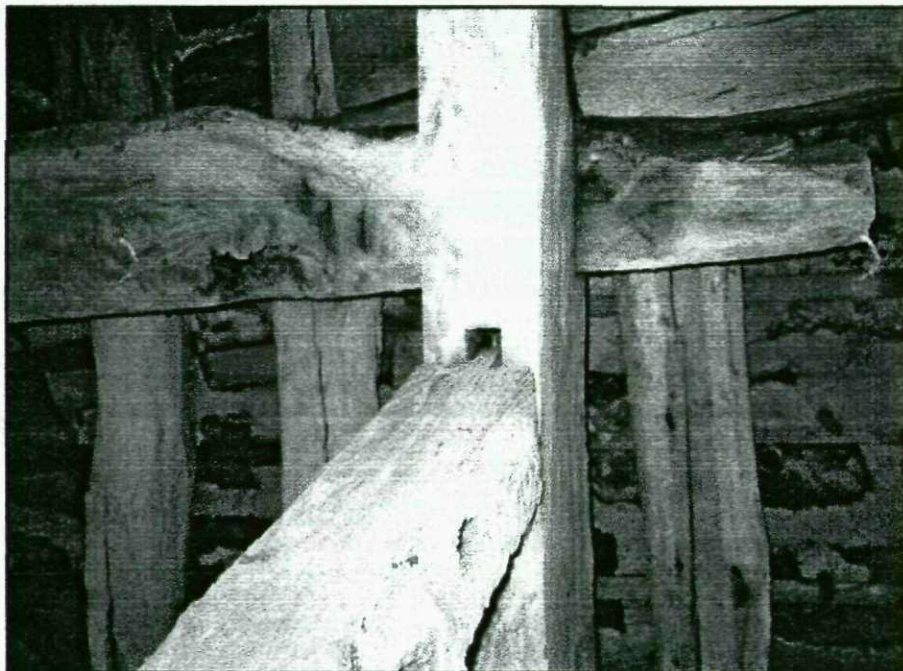
3.3.4. The ivy on the eastern end of the building appeared to recently have been partially removed at the time of this survey leaving the walls in these areas of the building disturbed. The ivy trunks are also very dense in areas providing potential bat roosting sites behind the ivy. No bat field signs were identified around the ivy during this survey.

3.3.5. The roof of the building was found to be in a poor state due with abundant cracked, missing or slipped stone tiles allowing potential access to the interior of the building.

3.3.6. Internally the building displayed abundant voids within the walls that would provide potential access to the rubble fill of the walls.

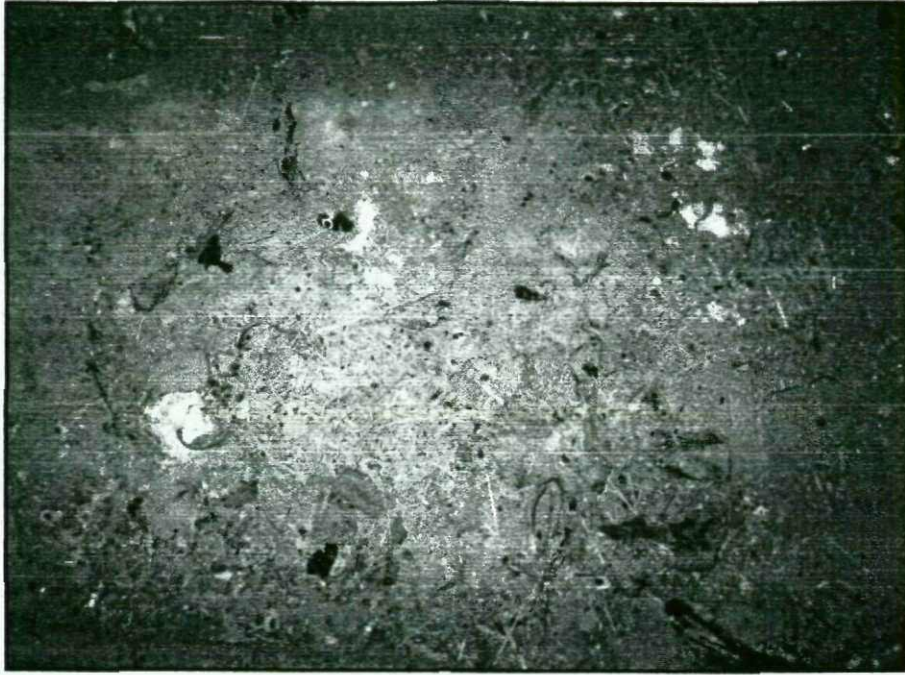
3.3.7. The internal ridge of the building was found to be very open with abundant open voids where the roof tiles are cracked or missing.

3.3.8. Several voids were also identified around the timber structure of the roof providing suitable bat roosting sites.

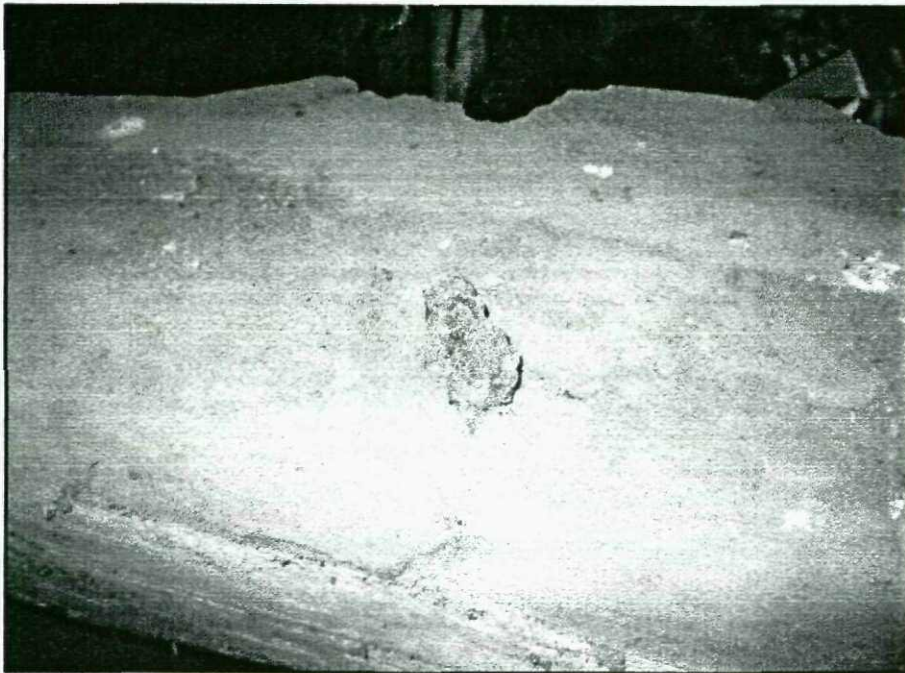


3.3.9. One old bat dropping was identified within the building during this survey. The dropping was located on a plastic bag within a window recess in the western hay loft. No other bat droppings were identified around the interior of the building.

3.3.10. Several butterfly wings were identified on the floor within the building. There was no single concentration of wings located although a number of small areas of wings were identified throughout the building.



3.3.11. A single owl pellet was identified on the timber structure at the eastern end of the building. The pellet was quite old but appeared to be a barn owl pellet.



3.3.12. A large number of bird nests were also identified throughout the interior of the building. The nests were assessed as swallow and several other small bird nests with some of the nests displaying quite fresh materials implying use during the previous nesting season.



3.3.13. A house martin nest box was also identified on the southern elevation of the building although the nest box displayed ivy shoots growing in the entrance and therefore has not been used for some time.

3.3.14. The land around the site provides an abundance of suitable flight lines and foraging areas for bats although a thorough assessment of bat foraging activity in the area of the site could not be carried out during this survey.

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. South Yorkshire Bat Group hold several records of bats in the area of the site although none of the records refer to this site.

4.2. During this survey access around the interior of the building was restricted due to the poor state of the floor within the hay loft. Therefore a thorough survey of some areas of the building was not possible.

4.3. The barn was found to display an abundance of suitable bat roosting opportunities and potential access to the interior of the building although at the time of this survey there had been disturbance around the building due to the removal of dense areas of ivy around the eastern end of the building.

4.4. One bat dropping was identified during this survey although the dropping appeared to be quite old.

4.5. Several areas of butterfly wings were identified within the building. The butterfly wings may be due to bats foraging within the building but also may be due to the large numbers of bird nests identified within the building.

4.6. The building is therefore assessed as providing a high potential for roosting bats with the bat dropping identified within the building showing that bats have been present within the building at some time.

4.7. The proposed conversion of the building will have a high impact on bats if they are present within the building.

4.8. Several bird nests were also identified throughout the interior of the building. None of the nests were in use at the time of this survey because the survey was carried out outside the nesting season, which extends from March to September each year.

4.9. The conversion of the building will potentially have a high impact on nesting birds if the conversion work is carried out during the nesting season.

4.10. The conversion of the building will also potentially remove suitable nesting habitat for bird species such as swallows, which will have an impact on the species.

4.11. The presence of a barn owl pellet within the building shows that the building has been used as a feeding perch at some time although the pellet was old and no other pellets were identified within the building. Therefore the conversion of the building will not have an impact on barn owls because the perch is not regularly used and no owl nesting signs were identified.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. Due to the high potential for bats to roost within the building it is recommended that further dusk emergence and dawn swarming bat surveys are carried out prior to any work commencing on the building.

5.2. Dusk emergence or dawn swarming surveys must be carried out at a time when bats are active, ideally May to August.

5.3. It is recommended that any conversion works to the building are carried out outside the nesting season, which extends from March to September each year, or that measures are put in place to prevent birds from nesting in the building prior to the conversion taking place. These measures should be put in place in the winter months.

5.4. It is also recommended that additional swallow nesting opportunities are designed into the converted building to replace the habitat lost during the conversion.

Prepared by:	
Steven Whitcher, MIEEM.	Date: 7 th December 2012.

Checked by:	
Jenny Whitcher Roebuck MIEEM.	Date: 7 th December 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. DESKTOP DATA SEARCH RESULTS.



Bat Conservation Trust
Partner Group



Sue Whitcher
Whitcher Wildlife Ltd,
Cliff Edge,
Cliff Road,
Darfield,
Barnsley,
S73 9HR

03 December 2012

Project: SE 269 062 Water Slack Farm, South Lane, Cawthorne, S75 4EF. Reference: 121175

Dear Sue,

Further to your request, all grid squares around 1 km of SE269 062 were searched in the South Yorkshire Bat Group Database. The records found from the search can be seen on the following page.

Our charge for performing this data search is £30.00 and an invoice will be sent in due course.

To ensure that our database is as comprehensive as possible and therefore of greatest benefit to users in the future, we would appreciate a copy of any bat records made during your project.

Please note the South Yorkshire Bat Group data-set contains information gathered as part of the National Bat Monitoring Programme via the Bat Conservation Trust. Please see the enclosed notes on interpreting the metadata from NBMP surveys.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.

South Yorkshire Bat Group

Grid square	Date	Location	Recorder	Survey type	Species	Roost/type	Notes
SE2707	2011	Cawthorne Park	P. Middleton	Survey	Daubenton's		6 counted over pond
SE2707	2011	Cawthorne Park	P. Middleton	Survey	Common pipistrelle		12 counted over pond
SE2506	2011	New Rd, Penistone	SYBG			Roost	Large roost in roof between tiles and felt.
SE2605	2005	Hoylandswaine	English Nature	Call out			Injured bat found and taken into care