

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Ecological Consultants.**



NETHERFIELD FARM BARN.

OS REF: SE 24286 03842.

BAT SURVEY.

Ref No: 210838.

Date: 17th August 2021.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. There are plans to raise the roof of the western barn at Netherfield Farm in Penistone to the same height as the adjacent barn.

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 16th August 2021 and this report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.4. Appendix I of this report provides additional information on bats and the protection afforded to them and is 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 fascia's 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 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 subsequent dusk emergence survey was also conducted in accordance with Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition)*. It was conducted by a sufficient number of surveyors to cover all areas of roosting potential, in suitable weather conditions from fifteen minutes before sunset to at least an hour and half after.

2.7. All surveyors were equipped with Batbox Duet bat detectors, or similar. The use of static recording devices such as Anabat SD2's and video cameras with infrared lights were also utilised where appropriate.

2.8. This survey was carried out by Jenny Whitcher Roebuck MCIEEM. Since 2001 Jenny has had experience in a professional capacity as a Wildlife Consultant carrying out Ecology Surveys and Phase 1 Habitat surveys. Jenny holds Natural England Survey Licences in respect of bats, great crested newts, crayfish and barn owls, NRW and SNH Survey Licences in respect of bats and great crested newts. She has also successfully completed a number of courses run by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), 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. As a full member of CIEEM she is committed to continuous professional development, a continual process of learning and career development, a condition of CIEEM membership.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. A desktop data search was requested from South Yorkshire Bat Group for records of bats and bat roosts within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.2. There are numerous records of bats and bat roosts within 2km of the survey area. However, the nearest records are located over 400m to the southeast of the survey area. There are no records specific to the survey area.

3.2. Site Description.

3.2.1. The survey area is two barns at Netherfield Farm in Penistone.

3.2.2. Plans are to raise the roof of the western barn to the height of the eastern barn. Therefore, both barns were surveyed to ensure there is no bat roost in the eastern barn that will be affected by the works to the western barn.

3.2.3. The aerial photograph below shows the surveyed barns.



3.2.4. The aerial photograph below shows the survey area and the wider surrounding area.



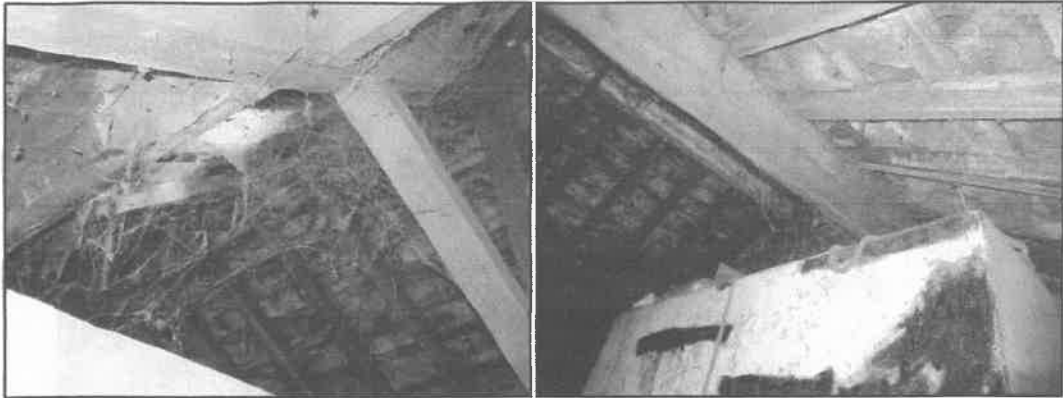
3.3. Daytime Survey Results.

3.3.1. The survey area is two joined barns, which are joined to the western end of the farmhouse at Netherfield Farm. The upper floor of the eastern barn has been converted and earlier this year the underside of the roof of this section was insulated with spray foam.

3.3.2. The left photograph below shows the southern side of surveyed barns in red with the farmhouse at the end. The right photograph below shows the northern side.



3.3.3. The photographs below show the loft space of the western barn.



3.3.4. The barns are two storey and constructed with stone walls and pitched stone slate roofs. The ground floor of both barns has a large open arch doorway and the room extends through both barns. The first floor of the eastern barn has been converted and is part of the house. The first floor of the western barn is disused and access through a small doorway on the northern side. The floor is in poor condition and the roof is heavily covered with cobwebs with cobwebs hanging throughout the room.

3.3.5. The walls are generally in good condition and well pointed. Three holes were found in the stone walls, one on the northern side of the western barn, one on the southern side due to a broken vent and one on the southern side of the eastern barn.

3.3.6. The roof of the eastern barn is in good condition with the slates all in place and well fitted and all ridge tiles in place and well pointed. The gable end is well pointed under the slates. The wall of the gable end has a decorative finish but this is well sealed and has no gaps. This roof is lined inside with spray insulation.

3.3.7. The roof of the western barn has all slates in place but there are gaps due to slightly lifted slates. The ridge is in place and well pointed. Internally the roof is unlined and very heavily covered with cobwebs.

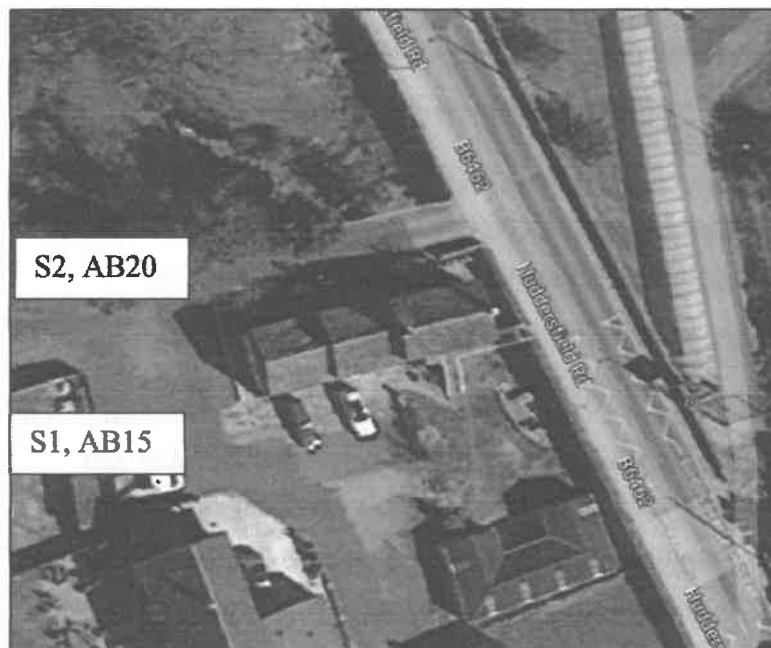
3.3.8. No bat field signs were found internally or externally around the barns. The barns are assessed as providing low potential for roosting bats.

3.3.9. Two disused swallow nests were identified on the ceiling beams of the first floor room.

3.4. Dusk Emergence Survey Results.

3.4.1. The dusk emergence survey was carried out by two surveyors on the evening of 16th August 2021. Both surveyors hold a current Natural England class licence for surveying bats.

3.4.2. The two surveyors were positioned around the building in order to be able to view all aspects of the buildings simultaneously. Each surveyor was equipped with a Batbox Duet detector and a two-way radio for communications. In addition, two static Anabat recorders were deployed to record bat activity for subsequent computer analysis using Analook software. The positions of the surveyors (S) and the Anabat recorders (A) were as shown below.



3.4.3. The evening was fine, clear with a breeze to 4.5mph, 2BWS. There was a temperature of 17°C at 20:15, which dropped to 14°C at the end of the survey. The survey continued until 22:00 and sunset was at 20:34.

3.4.4. The following are the observations of the surveyors and the recordings of the Anabat detectors: -

3.4.4.1. Surveyor 1.

- 20:56 – Common Pipistrelle heard very briefly in the distance, not seen.
- 20:59 – Common Pipistrelle flew from east to west then back east.
- 21:13 – Common Pipistrelle flew from west to east.
- 21:18 – Common Pipistrelle foraging to the north.
- 21:19 – Common Pipistrelle foraging to the north.
- 21:22 – Common Pipistrelle heard pass, not seen.
- 21:32 – Common Pipistrelle foraging to west of barn.
- 21:34 – Common Pipistrelle heard pass in the distance, not seen.

Anabat 15 with Surveyor 1 recorded five Common Pipistrelle calls between 20:59 and 21:33.

3.4.4.2. Surveyor 2.

- 20:56 – Common Pipistrelle heard pass, not seen.
- 20:59 – Common Pipistrelle flew past from west to east.
- 21:10 – Common Pipistrelle flew past from east to west.
- 21:12 – Common Pipistrelle flew from south then flew east past north of barn.
- 21:15 – Common Pipistrelle foraging along trees to north of barn along drive.
- 21:16 – Common Pipistrelle flew from south then flew east past north of barn.
- 21:18 – Two Common Pipistrelle flew past from west to east.
- 21:19 – Two Common Pipistrelle flew past from east to west.
- 21:21 – Common Pipistrelle flew from south then flew east past north of barn.
- 21:32 – Common Pipistrelle flew from south, foraged briefly, flew west.
- 21:33 – Common Pipistrelle flew from east and foraged to west.
- 21:47 – Common Pipistrelle heard pass, not seen.

Anabat 20 with Surveyor 2 recorded fifteen Common Pipistrelle calls between 21:00 and 21:47.

3.4.5. No bats emerged from the building during the survey. Low levels of Common Pipistrelle activity was recorded with bats passing the site and little foraging was recorded.

3.4.7. No other species of bat was recorded during the survey.

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. No bat field signs were found internally or externally around the barns. The barns are assessed as providing low potential for roosting bats.

4.2. No bats emerged from the building during the survey. Low levels of Common Pipistrelle activity was recorded with bats passing the site and little foraging was recorded.

4.3. Therefore, works to raise the roof of the western barn will have no impact on roosting bats.

4.4. Two disused swallow nests were identified on the ceiling beams of the first-floor room. If works seal the ground floor of the barn there will be an impact on nesting swallows.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. No bat roost was identified in the barns during the surveys. Therefore, there is no requirement for any further surveys or for a Natural England licence.

5.2. Nevertheless, individual bats can seek temporary shelter almost anywhere and therefore it is recommended that conversion 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 Whitcher Wildlife Ltd should be contacted for further advice.

5.3. As swallow nests were identified on the ground floor of the barns it is recommended that swallow nest cups are put up on the site. There is a stable building that would be suitable with a covered area to place the cups.

5.4. To enhance the site for roosting bats it is recommended that one integrated bat box is built into the gable end of the western barn when the works to raise the roof are carried out.

5.5. This should be a Habitat 001 Bat Box with Bespoke Facing to match the external walls of the building. The box should be placed high on the gable end but not above any doors or windows.



Prepared by:	
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Checked by:	
Derek Whitcher. BSc, MCIEEM, MCM I	Date: 20 th August 2021.

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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 cills, 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.

