

Bat Survey Report

Far Broad Oak Farm

Mr. and Mrs. Moody

August 2011



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INTRODUCTION

Background to the activity/development

Access Ecology Ltd were commissioned in July 2011 by Mr Patrick Moody to undertake bat survey works at Far Broad Oak Farm (OS Grid Ref: SE 246 064; see Figure 1). The bat survey work was commissioned to support a planning application for the conversion of the existing barn into a residential dwelling.

An Internal and External Visual Building Assessment of the site was undertaken together with an assessment of the surrounding habitats with regard to suitability for bat foraging and commuting activity. The survey work was undertaken by Mr Nick Bonsall (Bat Licence: 20104731), an experienced field surveyor and full member of the Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (MIEEM) on 27th July 2011.

The site is located in the rural district of Ingbirchworth, South Yorkshire, and comprises the eastern section of a partially converted barn, currently utilised as a tack/equipment room for livery stables which surround it. To the immediate west is the farmhouse. The farm is surrounded on all sides by land under arable production and horse pasture, interspersed with areas of woodland and hedgerows.

SURVEY AND SITE ASSESSMENT

Pre-existing information on the bat species at the survey site

A desktop study was undertaken, requesting bat records for the site and surrounding environs (up to two kilometres) from the following organisation:

- South Yorkshire Bat Group

The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) internet resource was examined to identify the locations of protected species and sites designated for nature conservation within the area surrounding the site.

Legislation

This legal information is a summary and intended for general guidance only. It is recommended that the original documentation is referred to for detailed and definitive information. Web addresses are located in the References and Bibliography section of this report.

Habitat Regulations

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 transpose Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (Habitats Directive) into English law, making it an offence to deliberately capture, kill or disturb wild animals listed under Schedule 2 of the Regulations. It is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal (even if the animal is absent at the time).

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 (which also places a duty on authorities to have due regard for biodiversity and nature conservation) consolidates and amends existing national legislation to implement the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive), making it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or their eggs or nests (with certain exceptions) and disturb any bird species listed under Schedule 1 to the Act, or its dependent young while it is nesting;
- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed under Schedule 5 to the Act; intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection by any wild animal listed under Schedule 5 to the Act; intentionally or recklessly disturb certain Schedule 5 animal species while they occupy a place used for shelter or protection;
- Pick or uproot any wild plant listed under Schedule 8 of the Act.

Planning Policy Statement 9

PPS9, and associated document ODPM 06/2005, outline government policy on biodiversity and nature conservation and places a duty on planners to make material consideration to the effect of a development on legally protected species when considering planning applications. PPS9 also promotes sustainable development by ensuring that developments consider the role and value of biodiversity and its conservation and enhancement in association with a development.

Biodiversity Action Plans

The original objective of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) was to fulfill the requirements of the Rio Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992, to which the UK is a signatory. A list of national priority species and habitats has been produced with specific action plans defining the measures considered necessary to ensure their conservation. Regional and local BAPs have also been developed for species/habitats of nature conservation importance both regionally and locally.

Local Structure Plans

County, District and Local Councils have Structure Plans and other policy documents that include targets and policies which aim to maintain and enhance biodiversity through the planning system.

Objectives of the survey

- Survey for signs of bats within the buildings on site.
- Assess the potential of the buildings to contain roosting bats
- Assess the habitats and other features of interest to bats
- Collect incidental records of other protected or notable species present on site
- Provide outline mitigation or compensation recommendations where required

Site/habitat description

The building is located within an equestrian centre and farm, and is situated between the occupied farmhouse, stables, yards and riding sheds. The farm is located within an area of mixed arable and pasture (mostly horse grazing), with hedgerows as field boundaries, typically poor, and occasional areas of broadleaved woodland.

Field survey methodologies

Building and Habitat Suitability Assessment

An Internal and External Visual Assessment was undertaken on all buildings (Figure 2, Appendix A) potentially impacted by the proposed development. The building exteriors were visually assessed for potential access points and evidence of bat activity on the 27th July 2011 by Mr Nick Bonsall (Bat Licence: 20104731). Evidence that potential access points are used includes staining within gaps together with droppings and/or urine staining under gaps. Indicators that potential access points are likely to be inactive includes the presence of cobwebs and general detritus within the access (BCT, 2007).

The interior of the buildings, including roof voids where present, were visually assessed for evidence of bat activity and/or for the potential to be used by bats. Evidence of a roost is determined as the presence of live or dead bats, droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and/or staining.

When a roost is positively identified during an Internal and External Visual Assessment the building within which the roost is located is classified within the category Roost Present. Other buildings are classified as having High, Medium or Low Potential to contain bat roosts based upon the number and quality of features present, and the buildings position in relation to the surrounding environs. Table 1 gives the features considered when attributing a potential classification to a building.

A High Potential building would typically be an older building situated close to high quality bat foraging habitats such as woodland, water features or substantial hedgerows. Buildings falling within this class will usually offer a variety of roosting opportunities suitable for use by a range of bat species.

Conversely a Low Potential building will typically be well sealed and of modern construction, offering no or few clear access points or roosting opportunities. The risk of a building housing a bat roost is further reduced if located within an area of poor quality habitat such as hard standing or amenity grassland.

Table 1. Features typical of buildings within the different potential categories

Low Potential	Medium Potential	High Potential
No easily identifiable access points such as gaps within stonework or between tiles.	Some access points. Typically obscured by cobwebs or detritus.	Several possible access points. Some clean showing potential use.
No roof void	Small or cluttered roof void	Large roof void with unobstructed flying spaces
No external cavities such as crevices within wall or behind fascia boards	Few external cavities with cavities present of low suitability	A variety of external features offering a range of roosting locations
Located within areas of poor quality habitat, away from bat foraging or commuting routes	Area offering some habitat features likely to be used by bats	Good connectivity to high quality habitats
Not part of a group of buildings	Part of a group of buildings, all offering similar roosting opportunities	Part of a group of buildings offering a range of different conditions and potential roost locations
Heavily disturbed	Potential roosting locations suffering little disturbance	Building disused or little used, largely undisturbed

The surrounding habitat was assessed for its suitability as bat foraging or commuting habitat, in particular the area surrounding the proposed wind turbine location and the habitat connecting the site to potential roosting habitats.

Survey Results

Desktop Study

South Yorkshire Bat Group have been contacted and we are awaiting a response.

No sites designated for their nature conservation value we present within 2km of the site, although ten areas of ancient replanted or ancient and semi-natural woodland were recorded. The results of the MAGIC search are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. MAGIC search results

Grid Reference	Wood Name	Distance	Bearing	Designation
SE 242 069	Burnt Cote Wood	0.58 Km	301°	Ancient Replanted Woodland
SE 249 073	Cuckold Carr	0.73 Km	16°	Ancient Replanted Woodland
SE 240 069	Burnt Cote Wood	0.76 Km	293°	Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
SE 237 062	Clough Wood	1.08 Km	248°	Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
SE 251 053	Cat Hill Clough Wood	1.36 Km	163°	Ancient Replanted Woodland
SE 244 081	Baycroft Wood	1.53 Km	349°	Ancient Replanted Woodland
SE 262 070	Dixon Wood	1.55 Km	75°	Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
SE 230 065	Margaret Wood	1.70 Km	267°	Ancient Replanted Woodland
SE 259 078	Susannah Spring	1.70 Km	45°	Ancient Replanted Woodland
SE 259 087	Shuff Wood	2.42 Km	30°	Ancient Replanted Woodland

Internal and External Visual Assessment

The building is a stone built two storey high barn, with a single pitch grey slate roof, which is currently being used as a tack and feed room. It has two large sliding doors, one on northern aspect and on the southern aspect, and a single well sealed wooden window on the gable facing east. To the immediate west the barn has already been converted to a residential dwelling.

The exterior walls are well pointed, with ivy on all three sides. There is no fascia/soffit, as the gutter sits on the wall plate. The roof appears to be in good repair, with tight fitting slates and ridge tiles that are well pointed. Internally, no underfelt was present, and expanding foam was evident under the majority of the ridge tiles. There were occasional gaps in the interior stonework, the majority of which were shallow and/or cobwebbed covered.

No evidence of bat activity was recorded in association with the building. The room appeared well used, with both large sliding doors in frequent use. There were several surfaces where droppings would be clearly visible. Roosting opportunities both externally and internally, were very limited.

Habitat Suitability Assessment

The site is situated within a rural area, with horse grazed pasture immediately adjacent to the farm and arable further afield. Field boundaries are mostly well managed hedgerows, providing connectivity, and the area is interspersed with copses of varying sizes, and groups of farm buildings providing roosting opportunities.

The surrounding habitat is considered to be of high quality for foraging and commuting routes.

Interpretation/evaluation of survey results

No evidence of bat activity was recorded, and the building offered very little potential for use by roosting bats. Although the building is located within a high quality area, with feeding areas and connectivity, they are not considered to be present.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

No direct evidence of bat activity was found within the building, and very little potential has been identified. Current proposals for conversion of the building for residential use is not considered to present any impacts to bats.

MITIGATION STRATEGY

Based upon the results of the survey work undertaken, the structure on site was deemed to have Low Potential for roosting bats. No evidence of roosting bats was recorded and it is considered unlikely roosting bats utilise this structure, with sufficient bat survey works undertaken to have an acceptable level of confidence in this conclusion. It is therefore assessed that no further bat surveys works are required or justified in relation to this project.

The results of the surveys documented in this report are valid until summer 2011. If works are to commence after this time then advice should be sought regarding the requirement for additional survey to update the report findings.

It should however be remembered that bat roosts may move into a building overnight and consequently it is not possible to completely rule out the possibility that roosting bats may be encountered during works, therefore we recommend you contact Access Ecology before work starts.

No bats were recorded roosting during the bat survey works and consequently there is no compulsory requirement for mitigation to be installed in the post-development site. However, in order to enhance the ecological value of the site and in accordance with the aims of Planning Policy Statement 9, it is suggested that the developer may wish to integrate bat roosting features into the re-developed building. Roosting features that may be suitable for inclusion within the new building to be constructed on site include enclosed bat box units which can be constructed into the external walls of the building or bat boxes which can be suspended from trees. For further information on appropriate bat roosting features please contact Access Ecology.

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Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2010/uksi_20100490_en_1

Habitats Directive:

www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/lif/dat/1992/en_392L0043

Birds Directive:

eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/consleg/1979/L/01979L0409-20070101-en

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981:

www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/1981/cukpga_19810069_en_1

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000:

www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/200000037

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2006/ukpga_20060016_en_1

Protection of Badgers Act 1992:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts1992/ukpga_19920051_en_1

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/RevisedStatutes/Acts/ukpga/1949/cukpga_19490097_en_1

Planning Policy Statement 9:

www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/147408

APPENDIX A



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Legend

Site location

Project Far Broad Oak Farm

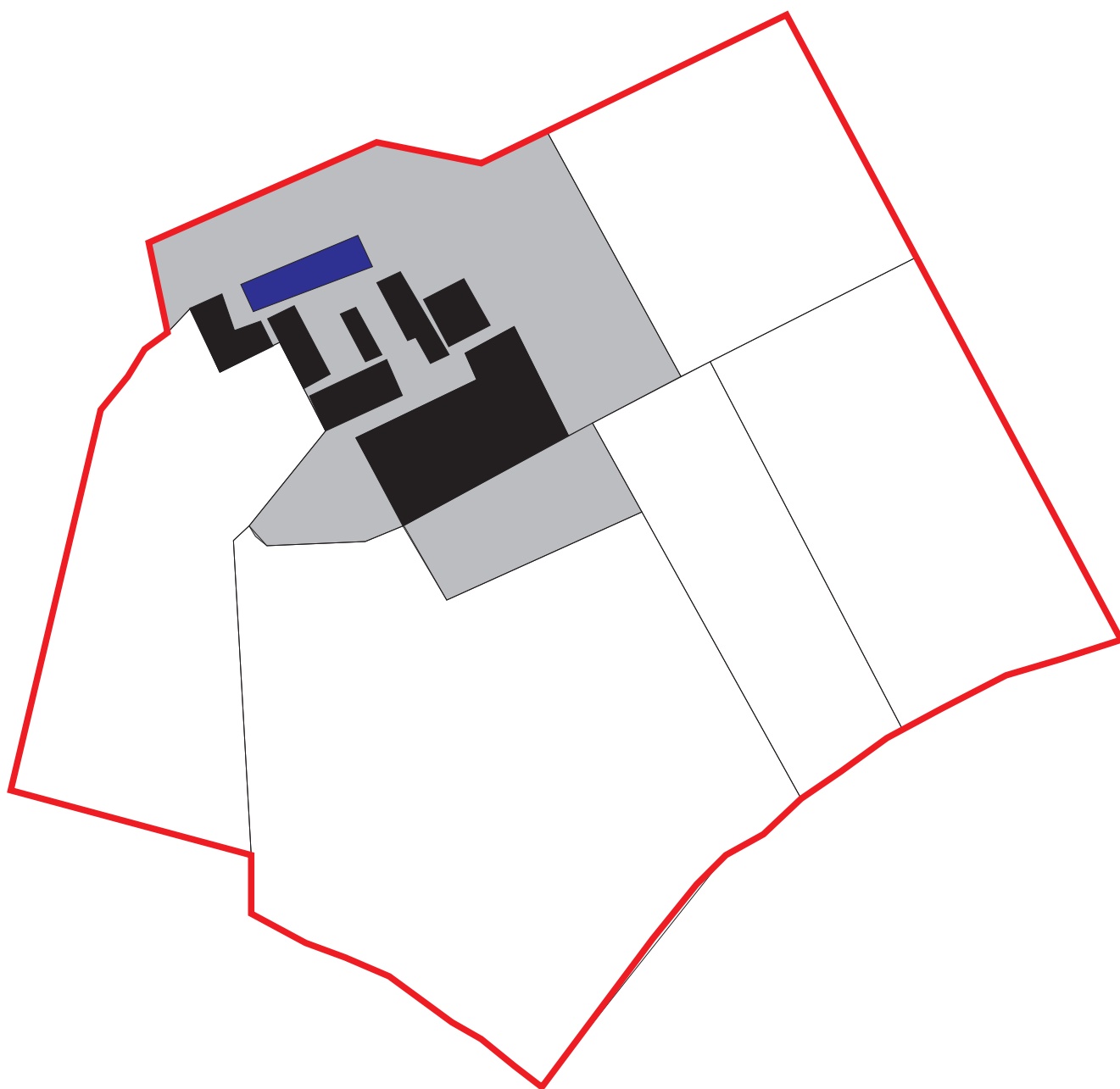
Title Location Plan

Client Mr & Mrs Moody

Date August 2011

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Legend

	Building proposed for development
	Existing Buildings
	

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Project	Far Broad Oak Farm
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Title	Building Plan
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Client	Mr and Mrs Moody
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Date	August 2011
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