

**Derek A Whitcher Ltd.
Wildlife Consultants.**



**HILLTOP FARM, REDBROOK ROAD,
BARNSELY.**

BAT SURVEY.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. There are plans to develop part of Hilltop Farm on Redbrook Road in Barnsley. This will involve converting some existing barns and cottages on the site.

1.2. Derek A Whitcher Ltd was therefore commissioned to carry out a bat survey of the buildings to be affected. The survey was carried out on 7th December 2007. This report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.3. Appendix I of this report provides back ground information with respect to bats and the legal protection afforded to them.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

The structures were checked for potential bat roosting sites by looking for the following signs:-

- * Holes, cracks or crevices.
- * Bat droppings.
- * Prey remains.

A dusk emergence survey could not be carried out as the survey was carried out at a time when bats are in hibernation.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Hilltop Farm is located on the edge of Barnsley and is surrounded by private housing with an open field to the north west.

3.2. Below is a plan of Hill Top Farm. The buildings to be affected by the works are highlighted in red and are individually labeled for the purpose of this report. Each building is dealt with individually.



3.3. Building A.

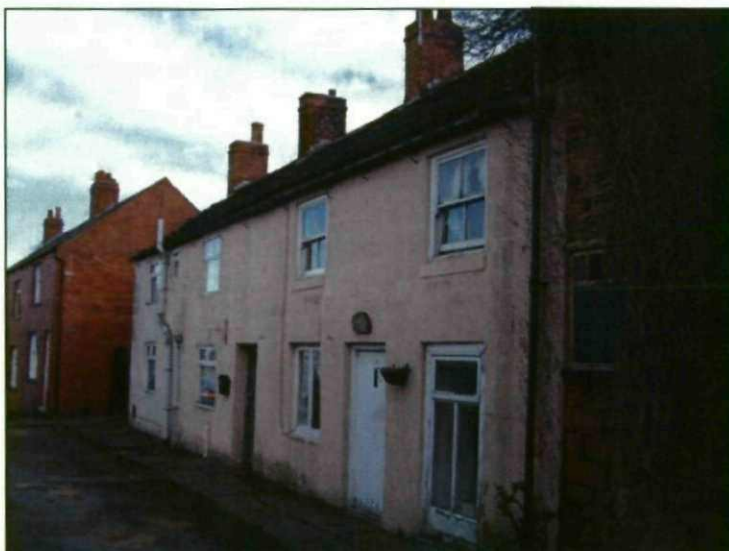


3.3.1. Building A comprises a row of three terraced houses. They have brick walls with occasional missing pointing, sealed windows and doors, and a pitched slate roof that seems to be in good condition and generally well sealed around the eaves.

3.3.2. There are no fascias or soffits and no accesses were identified for bats. No bat field signs were identified around the exterior of the terrace.

3.3.3. There was no available access to the inside of the loft spaces during this survey.

3.4. Building B.



3.4.1. Building B comprises two semi detached cottages. The walls are solid stone and are mostly rendered. The windows and doors are well sealed and there are no fascias or soffits.

3.4.2. The roof is a pitched, stone tiled roof with a number of gaps under and between the tiles. There is no lining under the tiles.

3.4.3. The loft comprises two separate loft spaces that are both insulated although the loft space of the north of the two houses was very cold and draughty during the survey.

3.4.4. No bat field signs were identified inside the loft spaces or around the exterior of the buildings. Two butterfly wings were identified in the loft space of the north house but no bat droppings to suggest that this is a result of bats.

3.5. Building C.



3.5.1. Building C is an old, two storey high, ex slaughter house. It has not been used for a number of years.

3.5.2. The building comprises coursed stone walls with deeply weathered faces and with a number of open joints between, leading into the middle of the walls.

3.5.3. There is an open window on the west side of the building on the first floor and there are gaps above the doors.

3.5.4. The roof comprises a corrugated cement sheet roof with skylights. The roof beams are of a king post structure. There are gaps around the eaves due to the nature of the corrugated roof, but these are just meeting points with the walls and lead directly inside the barn providing no roost opportunities.

3.5.5. The interior of the barn is partitioned into three sections. The south section is completely open to the roof. It is obvious that pigeons regularly use this part of the building as there is a huge amount of bird excrement on the floor.

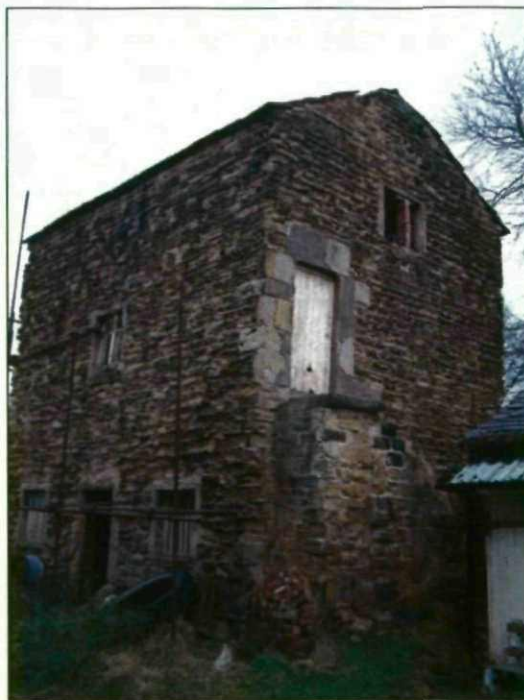
3.5.6. The middle section of the barn is open to the roof structure with a single storey room built into one end. A large amount of bird excrement was identified across the floor.

3.5.7. The north section comprises two floors and a loft space. The first floor and the loft space are unstable and could not be accessed safely.

3.5.8. There is a double garage extension on the east side of the building. This comprises stone walls with two sets of large double wooden doors and a corrugated single pitch roof.

3.5.8. No bat field signs were identified inside or outside the buildings.

3.6. Building D.



3.6.1. Building D is a three storey barn that was previously used for keeping livestock. The walls comprise coursed stone with weathered faces and have a number of gaps between leading into the middle of the walls. There are two open windows on the second floor.

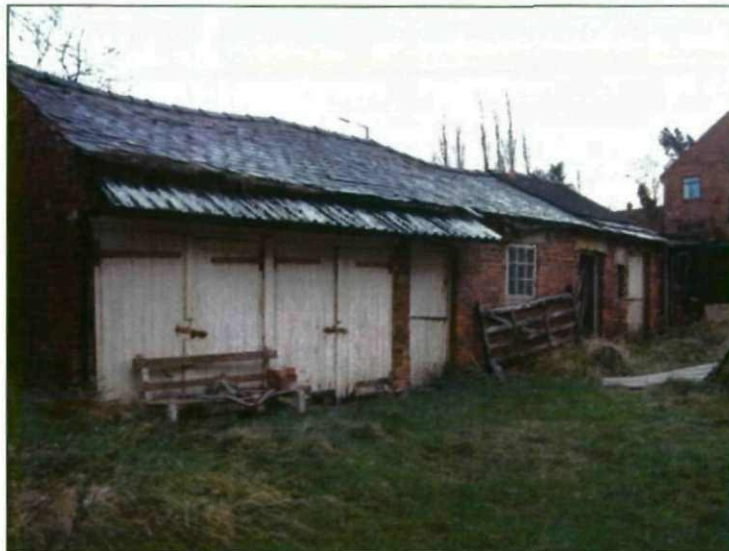
3.6.2. The roof is a pitched, tiled roof that is in poor condition and seems to have no lining. There is an open dormer window in the east facing roof pitch.

3.6.3. An internal inspection was carried out of the ground floor but the first and second floors are unstable and not safe to access.

3.6.4. No bat field signs were identified around the exterior of the building or on the ground floor.

3.6.5. An old bird nest was identified inside the building.

3.7. Building E.



3.7.1. Building E is an old single storey stable block. The walls comprise solid brick and are well pointed. The roof comprises mostly slate but has been patched with corrugated metal at the south end. It is all in poor condition and there is no lining under the slates.

3.7.2. The building comprises four rooms. The southern room has large holes in the roof and walls and an open doorway making it very exposed and draughty. The next room north is completely sealed and has no gaps in the walls or roof.

3.7.3. The most northern room has a material and polythene lining roughly laid across the roof beams, creating a ceiling.

3.7.4. No bat field signs were identified inside or outside the building.

3.7.5. Some old bird's nests were identified inside the building.

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. No bat roosts were identified during the survey therefore there is no requirement at this stage for a Natural England bat licence.

4.2. Although there was no access inside building A during the survey, no suitable access points were identified for roosting bats as the walls and roof are in good condition and there are no obvious gaps around the eaves. Building A is therefore assessed as low potential for roosting bats.

4.3. Building B has no bat roosting places in the walls or under the roof tiles as there is no roof lining. If any bats have been roosting inside the loft spaces at any time, bat field signs would have been present during the survey. For these reasons building B is assessed as low potential for existing bat roosts.

4.4. Building C has a corrugated roof, which is unsuitable for roosting bats. There is potential for bats to roost in the walls as there are a number of accesses that lead into the walls.

4.5. There was no access to the first and second floors of building D during the survey and there are a number of accesses for bats leading into the walls.

4.6. Building E has low potential for roosting bats as the walls are solid with no roosting places and there is no roof lining. Three of the four rooms have accesses for bats inside the building but one of these rooms is very exposed to the weather conditions making it unsuitable for bats, and if any bats had been roosting inside the remaining two rooms, bat field signs would have been present during the survey.

4.7. A bat dusk emergence survey could not be carried out as bats are in hibernation at this time of year. Bats are active in the late spring and summer months.

4.8. Birds' nests were identified inside some of the buildings and there is potential for birds nesting inside any buildings with access. The nesting bird season extends from March to September.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. It is recommended that no work is carried out on buildings C and D until a bat dusk emergence survey has been carried out in the spring/summer months.

5.2. It is recommended that access is arranged to access the loft spaces of building A to confirm the results of the survey on this building.

5.3. Work can commence on buildings B and E at any time without restriction. Individual bats can seek shelter almost anywhere and therefore it is recommended that in the unlikely event that a bat is found during the work, the bat should be covered and protected, the work must stop immediately and professional advice sought.

5.4. It is recommended that if work is to commence during the nesting bird season any accesses inside buildings B and E for nesting birds are blocked prior to the nesting bird season. Accesses should not be blocked in the remaining buildings until it has been confirmed that there are no bat issues.

5.5. If any birds do nest in the buildings they should be left undisturbed until the young have fledged.

Ruth Georgiou.

Natural England Bat Survey Licence Number 20072769.

11.12.2007.

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. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.

It is necessary to understand a little about the legal protection offered to nesting birds in order to evaluate the findings of this report.

Part 1.-(1) Of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 states that:-

If any person intentionally:-

- (a) kills, injures or takes any wild bird;
- (b) takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or
- (c) takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird,

he shall be guilty of an offence.

Part 1.-(5) of the Act states that:-

If any person intentionally:-

- (a) disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; or
- (b) disturbs young of such a bird,

he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the above by inserting after "intentionally" the words "or recklessly".

The nesting season will vary according to the weather each year but generally commences in March, peaks during May and June and continues until September.

It is also worth remembering that some birds nest in trees and scrub but others are ground nesting.

The best way to avoid this issue is to plan for vegetation clearance to be carried out outside the bird-nesting season.