Small Lanes Farm, Cawthorne

Bat and Bird Survey Report

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1. Summary

1.1.1 A bat survey of Small Lanes Farm was commissioned by Freddie Garside of One 17 Design on behalf of the client on 14th June 2022.

1.1.2 The survey was undertaken to inform the proposed residential conversion of the existing barn and stables together with alterations to the existing dwelling at a site near Barnsley.

1.1.3 Bat survey works detailed in this report include a desk-based study and an internal and external visual inspection, undertaken on 27th June 2022.

1.1.4 No records were received from either BBRC or SYBG in relation to the site. In addition, no evidence of roosting bat presence was recorded during the visual inspection.

1.1.5 Buildings 1, 2 & 4 are considered to display a moderate level of bat roost potential, with Building 3 displaying low bat roost potential. An active swallow nest was recorded from B4.

1.1.6 It is understood that the proposed scheme does not entail alterations to the exterior of the dwelling (B1), with bat roost potential limited to the roof on this building. As a result, no further survey of this building is considered necessary.

1.1.7 In accordance with the accepted bat survey guidelines (Collins, 2016) two further nocturnal surveys of Buildings 2 – 4 should be undertaken to determine bat roost presence/absence. These surveys should comprise dusk emergence or dawn return surveys, to be led by a licensed bat worker, with survey visits to be separated by at least 14 days.

1.1.8 The need for bat mitigation licensing and roost mitigation/compensation will be determined following nocturnal survey works.

1.1.9 Building renovation works should commence either outside the bird nesting period (March to September inclusive), or the works will need to be preceded by a nesting bird check.

1.1.10 Conversion of B4 will result in the loss of a confirmed swallow nesting site. It is advised that this loss should be compensated for. Swallows typically nest internally within buildings. Assuming it is not possible to retain/create any access for swallows into existing buildings then it is recommended that an open-sided structure (i.e. a log store or bin store) be included in the scheme, within which a swallow nest cup may be installed. A sparrow terrace on B3 should be retained.

2. Introduction

2.1.1 A bat survey of Small Lanes Farm was commissioned by Freddie Garside of One 17 Design on behalf of the client on 14th June 2022.

2.1.2 The survey was undertaken to inform the proposed residential conversion of the existing barn and stables together with alterations to the existing dwelling.

2.1.3 Bat survey works detailed in this report include a desk-based study and an internal and external visual inspection.

2.1.4 The site is located off Small Lane in countryside equidistant between the villages of Cawthorne, Silkstone and Hoylandswaine, c.7km west of Barnsley town centre.

3. Habitat Assessment

3.1.1 Small Lanes Farm comprises a somewhat isolated historic farmstead which includes a renovated farmhouse and adjoining barns. Lawns are present to the east and southwest of the buildings with a tree-lined footpath comprising the northwest boundary.

3.1.2 The local area is extensively wooded, with Ellhirst Wood c.200m south of the farmstead, Hattersley Wood c. 240m northwest and the ancient and semi-natural woodlands of Whin Moor Plantation and Bullhaw Carrs a little further to the southeast. Between the farmstead and woodlands is mixed farmland.

3.1.3 It is anticipated that a moderate density of bats, belonging to a varied range of species, is likely to use habitats within the local area.

Table 1. Location and habitat table

Name and address: Small Lanes Farm, Cawthorne, S75 4EF			
OS Grid Ref. SE 26996 06086		Altitude. 148m	
Local Planning Authority: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council			
Features on site and adjacent to site			
Feature	On site	Adjacent	Comments
Buildings			Small Lanes Farm is in a quite isolated location
River			
Standing water			
Bridges tunnels and culverts			
Trees	✔	✔	Tree lined lane runs along northwest boundary of site
Woodland			Numerous broadleaved woodland blocks nearby (i.e. Ellhirst Wood c.200m to south)
Grassland	✔	✔	Lawn to east and pasture field to south

Figure 1. Site location, as indicated by red circle

3.2 Aims

3.2.1 The survey was conducted to help determine the following:

- The presence/absence of roosting bats.
- Bat roosting areas and access/egress points into the buildings.
- The level of bat roost potential associated with the buildings.
- The number and species of bat roosting within the buildings if present.
- Identify further survey work or mitigation requirements.

4. Methodology

4.1 Data Consultation

4.1.1 Bat records for locations within 2km of the site were obtained from both Barnsley Biological Records Centre (BBRC) and South Yorkshire Bat Group (SYBG).

4.1.2 A search of the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was also undertaken to identify historic European Protected Species (EPS) licences obtained for locations within 2km of the site.

4.2 Field Survey

Internal and External Visual Inspection

4.2.1 The following personnel conducted preliminary roost assessments on 27th June 2022:

- Robert Bell (MCIEEM; Class license WML-A34-Level 4, 2016-25236-CLS-CLS)

4.2.2 The following activities were carried out during the surveys in compliance with relevant Bat Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2016):

- A brief inspection and assessment of the site and habitats present to within 300m.
- An extensive examination of all parts of the buildings both inside and out to record structural features and condition and to record features that may be suitable for roosting bats. Particular attention was paid to any crevices or gaps in walls, lintels, gaps between beams and joists and to the possibility of finding droppings stuck to walls, floors or other surfaces, or insect remains below beams, among a number of other factors. All and signs indicative of a bat roost presence including live or dead bats, droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and staining were recorded.
- An assessment of the buildings' bat roost potential (negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed roost).

4.2.3 In addition:

- Recording of any signs of nesting bird usage of the buildings.

4.2.4 The following equipment was used or at hand during the survey:

- Clulight
- Binoculars
- Endoscope
- Ladders
- Camera

4.3 Survey Limitations

4.3.1 Within the farmhouse (B1, Figure 1), only one section of the roof space could be accessed for inspection. Part of the roof was not accessible. This was not considered to be a significant limitation given that the building had been quite recently re-roofed with a breathable roofing membrane and consequently, bat access to roof spaces did not appear to be possible. In addition, the roof was partially vaulted, and the remaining roof spaces were of low height (1.5m). Furthermore, no impacts to these roof spaces are proposed in connection with the proposed works.

5. Results

5.1 Data Consultation

5.1.1 South Yorkshire Bat Group provided 53 records for locations within 2km of the site, however, no bat records related to the site itself. Species positively identified in the records included common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus,* Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii,* whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus,* Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri,* Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. The closest recent record comprised a Natterer's bat roost day, recorded in 2018, located c.1km northwest of the site, with common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, whiskered bat and brown long-eared bat also recorded from the same site.

5.1.2 A total of 54 bat records were received from BBRC. Species positively identified in the records included common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus,* Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii,* whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus,* Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. The closest recent record comprised a common pipistrelle record, collected from a location 690m south of the site.

5.1.3 One European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence has been issued for a location within 2km of the site. This licence was issued in 2018 to permit the destruction of a Natterer's bat resting place. The licence was issued for a location c.1 km northwest of the site.

Figure 1. Building numbering plan

5.2 Field Survey

Preliminary Roost Assessment

5.2.1 For the purpose of aiding description, the surveyed buildings have been numbered, with their locations shown in Figure 1.

5.2.2 No evidence of bat roosting was recorded from any site building. Buildings 1, 2 & 4 are considered to display a moderate level of bat roost potential, with Building 3 displaying low bat roost potential.

5.2.3 An active swallow *Hirundo rustica* nest was recorded from B4.

Building 1 (dwelling)

Description and external bat roost potential

5.2.4 Building 1 comprises a quite recently renovated (within last 20 years) traditional two-storey farmhouse (Plates 1 & 2). The building dates back to either the 18th or 19th Century. External walls are cement rendered and the house has a pitched stone-slate covered roof with a cat-slide section on the southeast elevation. Two brick-built chimneys are present. This building has uPVC-framed double-glazed windows and uPVC gutters. Flashing is present at the base of chimneys.

5.2.5 On the exterior of the building potential bat roosting features appear mainly limited to crevices present between the stone slates of the roof, with these slates of slightly uneven widths as is typical of this type of roof.

Internal inspection

5.2.6 The central roof void was accessed, with the roof found to be lined with a breathable roofing membrane and suspended on a ridge beam, purlins, rafters and laths (Plate 3). The void was 1.5m high with the internal rooms partially vaulted. Within the void there was 200mm of insulation on the ceiling. No potential bat access points into the void were noted. Mouse *Mus musculus* and rat *Rattus norvegicus* droppings were however recorded from this void.

5.2.7 Building 1 is considered to display a moderate level of bat roost suitability.

Plate 1. North corner of B1, with B2 to right of image (beyond dotted red line)

Plate 2. Southwest elevation of B1

Plate 3. Roof void within B1

Building 2 (barn)

Description and external bat roost potential

5.2.8 Building 2 comprises an L-shaped stone-built traditional barn dating back to either the 18th or 19th Century. The barn has a pitched stone-slate covered roof. The northeast wall of the barn adjoins the dwelling (B1), whilst the southeast wall adjoins another outbuilding (B3). Wooden double doors are present in the northwest elevation with single doors in the northeast and southwest elevations. A wood-framed single glazed window and a second wood panel covered window is present in the southwest elevation. The building has a mixture of wooden and uPVC gutters.

5.2.9 Two Schwegler 1FF bat boxes are present on the exterior of B2, with one on the northeast elevation and a second on the northwest elevation. Both boxes were inspected with no signs of bats noted. A blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* had been roosting in the box on the northeast elevation.

5.2.10 On the exterior of B2 bats may roost either between the stone slates of the roof, or within the many open masonry joints, particularly in the largely un-pointed southwest gable. Occasional crevices are also present between external timbers and adjacent stonework.

Internal inspection

5.2.11 The unlined roof of B2 is suspended on hand-cut king-post trusses, purlins, rafters, a ridge beam and laths. The southeast end of the building is two-storey with the roof held up by Acrow-props in this area. Building 2 is actively used for storage.

5.2.12 No signs of bat presence were noted from the interior of B2. Open mortice joints in roof trusses were inspected and found to display good potential to support bat roosts, as do the numerous openings in the internal face of the un-pointed southwest gable. A crevice is also present between two timber window lintels.

5.2.13 Building 2 is considered to display a moderate level of bat roost suitability.

Plate 4. Southwest elevation of B2

Plate 5. Western corner of B2. Schwegler 1FF bat box is circled in red

Plate 6. Northeast elevation of barns and outbuildings. Second Schwegler 1FF bat box is circled in red

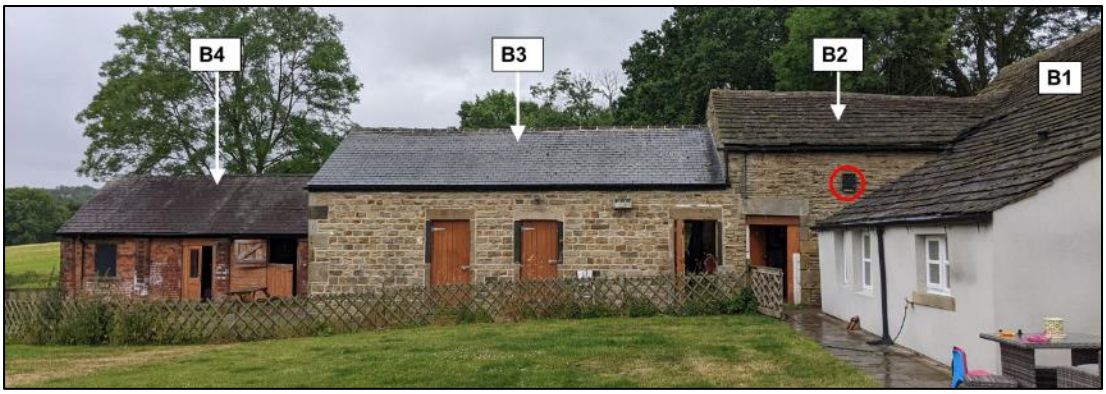

Plate 7. Interior of B2

Plate 8. Open mortice joint in king-post truss in B2

Building 3 (outbuilding)

Description and external bat roost potential

5.2.14 Building 3 comprises a recently largely re-built single storey outbuilding with a pitched Welsh slate covered roof with clay ridge tiles (Plates 5 & 9). The northeast elevation is stone faced with a concrete block inner skin, whilst the southwest elevation and gables comprise solid stone walls. A wooden fascia board is present on the northeast elevation. Two single-paned wood-framed windows are present in the southwest elevation with three wooden doors in the northeast elevation. Gutters are a mix of wood and uPVC.

5.2.15 On the exterior of B3 bats may potentially roost within eroded open joints in the exterior of the southwest elevation. There is also a crevice behind the fascia board on the northeast elevation (Plate 10), although this is largely cobwebbed. A Schwegler sparrow terrace is also present on the northeast elevation.

Internal inspection

5.2.16 The interior of B3 is open to the inside of the roof, which is lined with a breathable roof membrane and suspended on king-post trusses, purlins, rafters and laths. The interior is actively used for storage with no signs of bats noted from this structure.

5.2.17 Building 3 is considered to display a low level of bat roosting suitability.

Plate 9. Southwest elevations of B3 (left) and B4 (right)

Plate 10. Gap behind fascia board on B3

Building 4 (outbuilding)

Description and external bat roost potential

5.2.18 Building 4 comprises an 1800s brick-built single-storey outbuilding with a pitched Welsh slate covered roof with clay ridge tiles and eaves (Plates 5, 9 & 11). Arrow style ventilation slots are present in the southeast gable and southwest elevation, with these slots sealed within the inner face of the brick walls. This building appears to have formerly been partly open sided on the northeast elevation, with these openings now boarded up with two doors present (Plate 6). A mix of wood and uPVC gutters are present.

5.2.19 Within the exterior of B4 there are sections of missing mortar within the ridge bedding and gaps beneath slates, particularly on the southeast gable. There is potential bat access to the interior of the building via either the open stable door or across a gap above the wall plate. The ventilation slots do not lead into the interior of the building but do provide potential bat access into crevices within the walls.

Internal inspection

5.2.20 The interior of B4 is open to the underside of the slates with the roof suspended on king post trusses, purlins, a ridge beam, rafters and laths (Plate 12). The interior is divided into two compartments. The building is actively used for storage and in common with Building 3 is quite regularly swept. No signs of bats were recorded but an active swallow nest was observed (Plate 13).

5.2.21 Building 4 is considered to display a moderate level of bat roosting potential.

Plate 11. South corner of B4

Plate 12. Interior of B4

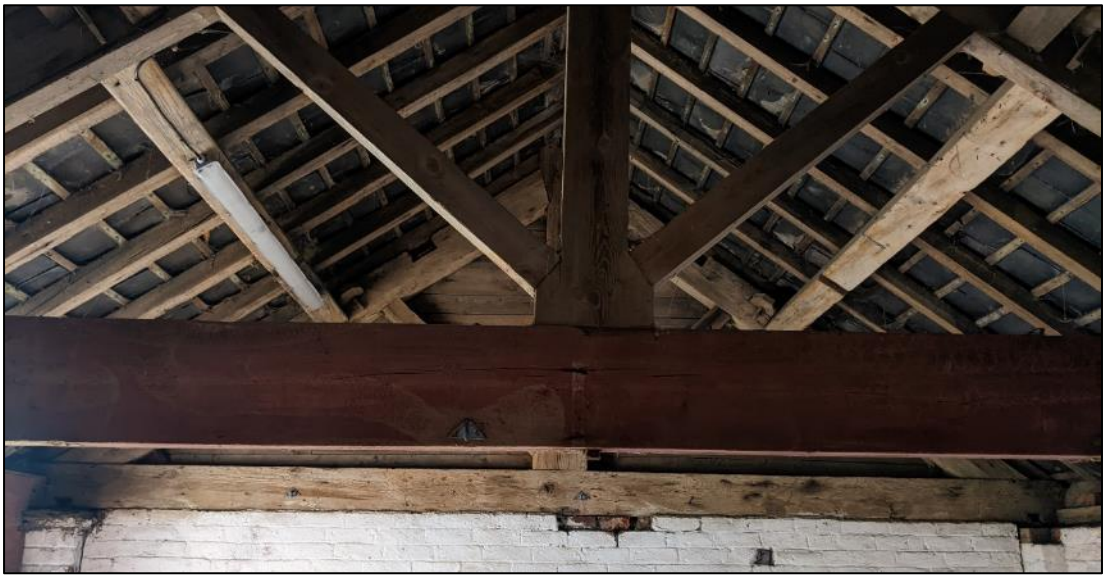

Plate 13. Swallow nest and chicks in B4

6. Assessment

6.1 Summary and Evaluation of Findings

6.1.1 No records were received from either BBRC or SYBG in relation to the site. In addition, no evidence of roosting bat presence was recorded during the visual inspection.

6.1.2 The presence of two Schwegler 1FF bat boxes on site buildings and the relatively recent nature of the farmhouse renovation is suggestive of a bat licence having been obtained for the site in the past. There is however no record of this licence available on the MAGIC web resource and no historic roost records have been received through the data consultation. In addition, no record of past bat survey works can be obtained via the Barnsley Council planning website.

6.1.3 Buildings 1, 2 & 4 are considered to display a moderate level of bat roost potential, with Building 3 displaying low bat roost potential.

6.1.4 An active swallow nest was recorded from B4.

6.2 Legislation and Policy Guidance

Bats

6.2.1 Bats receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

6.2.2 It is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection or obstruct access to any such place.
- Damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat.
- Possess a bat (live or dead), or any part of a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
- Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (dead or alive), or parts of parts.

6.2.3 The Convention on Biological Diversity, signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, requires member states to develop national strategies and to undertake a range of actions aimed at maintaining or restoring biodiversity. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the Convention.

6.2.4 In England & Wales, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, “to have due regard, as far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”. It notes that “conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat”. Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein’s *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, noctule and soprano pipistrelle bats are included as priority species within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. At a more local level there are Local Biodiversity Action Plans for smaller geographical areas which may cover a greater or lesser range of bat species.

6.2.5 Where it is proposed to carry out works which will have an adverse impact on roosting

bats, the site must either be registered on the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) or a European Protected Species (EPS) license must first be obtained from Natural England. This requirement applies even if no bats are expected to be present when the work is carried out.

6.2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework for England was revised in 2021. This document states that plans should 'promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity'.

Birds

6.2.7 All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird.

6.3 Further Survey, Recommendations and Enhancements

Bats

6.3.1 It is understood that the proposed scheme does not involve alterations to the exterior of the dwelling (B1), with bat roost potential limited to the roof on this building. As a result, no further survey of this building is considered necessary.

6.3.2 In accordance with the accepted bat survey guidelines (Collins, 2016) two further nocturnal surveys of Buildings 2 – 4 should be undertaken to determine bat roost presence/absence. These surveys should comprise dusk emergence or dawn return surveys, to be led by a licensed bat worker, with survey visits to be separated by at least 14 days.

6.3.3 The need for bat mitigation licensing and roost mitigation/compensation will be determined following nocturnal survey works.

Birds

6.3.4 Building renovation works should commence either outside the bird nesting period (March to September inclusive), or the works will need to be preceded by a nesting bird check.

6.3.5 Conversion of B4 will result in the loss of a confirmed swallow nesting site. It is advised that this loss should be compensated for. Swallows typically nest internally within buildings. Assuming it is not possible to retain/create any access for swallows into existing buildings then it is recommended that an open-sided structure (i.e. a log store or bin store) be included in the scheme, within which a swallow nest cup may be installed.

6.3.6 The sparrow terrace on B3 should be retained.

6.4 Conclusions

6.4.1 No signs of bat roosting were recorded during the preliminary bat roost appraisal of Small Lanes Farm. Two further nocturnal surveys are required on Buildings 2 – 4 in order to confidently determine bat roost presence/absence.

6.4.2 The requirement for bat licensing and mitigation will be determined following further nocturnal survey work.

6.4.3 If works are to commence during the nesting bird season (March- September), then they should be preceded by a nesting bird check.

6.4.4 A nesting bird mitigation recommendation has been provided.

7. References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. The Bat Conservation Trust.