

**Report
of
Preliminary Ecological Bat Survey**

**The Barn Fronting Lidsey Road
Lidsey Farm
Lidsey**

20th December 2016



Survey undertaken by:-

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Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence 2015-11919-CLS-CLS

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2 Executive Summary

- A planning application is to be made to convert an old agricultural barn fronting Lidsey Road, Lidsey Farm to a dwelling. The building has recently been used for storage
- A preliminary ecological bat survey was undertaken on 20th December 2016 during the daytime by Sue Harris, consultant ecologist
- There was no evidence to suggest that the well-sealed barn was used as a bat roost. There was no evidence that any further investigations are required or that the proposal to convert the building to accommodation would destroy or disturb a bat roost
- There were crevices within a low stone wall on the rear of the building. The wall is very close to a porta- cabin and has a low probability for bats to access it but it will be important to check the crevices immediately before the wall is repaired and to cease work and seek advice if a bat is seen
- There was no evidence to suggest that any further investigations related to bats are required or that the proposal to convert the barn to a dwelling would affect the local bat population.
- There was no access into the building to barn owls or birds

This report has been completed for the building as seen during the survey and discussed in this report. The survey is only valid for the buildings as seen during this survey

3 Background

A planning application is to be made to convert an old agricultural barn, recently used for storage, to a dwelling. The building fronts Lidsey Road at Lidsey Farm.

A preliminary ecological bat survey was undertaken on 20th December 2016 during the daytime by Sue Harris, consultant ecologist, to support the planning application.

The Bat Conservation 'Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition' have been taken into account to determine the extent of the investigative work required on this site.

4 Experience of Ecologist

Sue Harris holds a Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2) registration number 2015-11919-CLS-CLS and has considerable experience surveying buildings and land for bats and monitoring bat activity on a consultancy basis and has been the named ecologist in many Natural England mitigation licences.

Sue is also is a Natural England roost visitor and holds a Natural England licence WML CL15 (Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor Level 1), has undertaken many bat rescues and subsequent rehabilitation in West Sussex and takes part in the Bat Conservation Trusts National Bat Monitoring Program during the summer and winter hibernation counts.

Map reference

SU 9393 0306

Address

The Barn fronting Lidsey Road
Lidsey Farm
Lidsey
West Sussex

5 Description of building

The rectangular barn orientated almost north/south had once been part of a dairy farm. The building lay between buildings once part of the farm buildings now used for commercial use and the A29 road. The barn has recently been used for storage.

The walls of the barn were of stone and brick. A pitched roof covered with corrugated sheeting with roof lights fitted into one side lay over the building.

A small area of the ground floor was enclosed and the remainder of the building was open to the roof internally.

6 Surrounding Habitat

The busy A29 passed the frontage of the barn to the west with a large caravan site on the opposite side of this road. A small number of houses lay in gardens with trees to the north and linked to a ridge lined with trees which links to a small area of woodland.

Open and very flat farmland surrounds the buildings catching the prevailing south westerly winds.

There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the locality.

7 Legislation related to bats

All species of bats and their roosts are legally protected in England. All bats in England are listed as a European Protected Species. The following provides a guide to the legislation.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") consolidate and update the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 ("the 1994 Regulations").

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 fully protect bats and their roosts, making it an offence to:-

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat
- Deliberately disturb bats
- Damage or destroy a breeding or resting place of bats (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/ exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any parts of bats or transport a bat or any part of a bat
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

Disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely:-

- (a) to impair their ability—
 - (i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
 - (ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
- (b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong

In addition, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) makes it an offence to: Intentionally or recklessly

- disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection;
- obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection.

Natural England, European Protected Species Licence would be required if an individual wishes to undertake works/activities that would affect bats and would involve one or more of the following: capture, kill, disturbance, transport and/or damage/destroy the roosts or resting places of bats.

Under Regulation 53(2)(e-g) & 53(9)(a-b) of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 Natural England, under powers conferred by the Secretary of State, has authority to issue licences. In determining whether or not to grant a licence Natural England must apply the requirements of Regulation 53 of the Regulations and, in particular, the three tests set out in sub-paragraphs (2)(e), (9)(a) and (9)(b).

- (1) **Regulation 53(2)(e)** states: a licence can be granted for the purposes of "preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment".
- (2) **Regulation 53(9)(a)** states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied "that there is no satisfactory alternative".
- (3) **Regulation 53(9)(b)** states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied "that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the

population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range."

Evidence of the proposed provisions to accommodate the bats in the future would be required for a licence to be granted where needed—for example, an alternative roost may need to be provided. Details of the conduct of the proposed activities would be required in detail.

8 Objectives of the preliminary survey

- To establish if there is any evidence of bats roosting in the building
- To establish if there are roosting opportunities for bats in the building
- To investigate the species of bat using the building for roosting if relevant
- To consider the type of bat roost if relevant
- To consider access points used by bats if relevant
- To consider the implications of the proposed work to any bat roosts identified in the building or to possible roosting sites
- To provide recommendations, information and mitigation if evidence of bats roosting or evidence of potential bat roosting is identified in the building

9 Methodology of preliminary survey

- A detailed inspection of the building was undertaken for evidence of bat activity and for bats
- The building was surveyed carefully and thoroughly from the ground by eye and a torch were appropriate
- Consideration was given to any possible access points open to bats
- The surveyor checked for any evidence of bats including oil stains formed during entry and exit of possible roost sites, urine stains, droppings and for bats
- Equipment used included torches and digital camera
- The surrounding habitat was considered during the survey to consider its suitability for bats to forage and commute to foraging
- A desk top study of the surrounding habitat was undertaken accessing appropriate websites such as DEFRA MAGIC, Google maps, ordinance survey maps etc. for suitable habitat for bats in the area

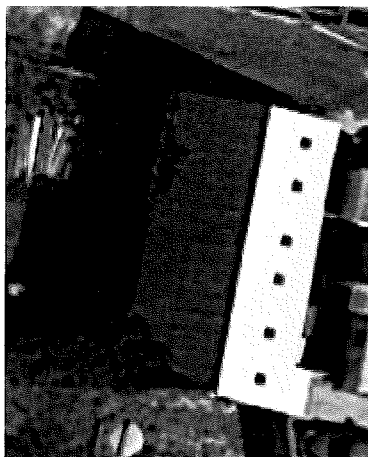
10 Constraints during the survey

The survey was undertaken in the early winter when maternity roosts have disbanded and it was too late in the year for night time monitoring. This was not of any significance to the outcome of the survey

11 Weather during preliminary survey

6C, wind calm, dry, 6/8 cloud cover.

12 Outcome of preliminary survey



Aerial photo of building from Google maps

12.1 Internal



North end



South end with stairs to floor
over enclosed section

A small area of the ground floor was enclosed and not accessible to bats. The remainder of the building was open to the roof with stairs onto a floor over the enclosed section. Light entered roof lights.

There were no crevices identified in the building for bats to roost which appeared to be well sealed internally. There were no crevices or cracks in the walls or timbers.

The corrugated roof was lined with a breathable roofing membrane which was tightly fitted and the eaves sealed.

No bat droppings or bats were seen or evidence of bats feeding.

12.2 External



West facing frontage and northern end



Southern end

The roof was covered with corrugated panels with roof lights fitted into the eastern side all of which was well sealed.

There were crevices in the low stone walls on the eastern rear where mortar had been lost which were deep enough for bats to access and roost. There was no evidence of bats roosting in these crevices, no bat droppings or bats were seen during the survey.



Low rear wall facing west showing crevices where mortar had been lost

There were two small areas of timber cladding both of which were well sealed.

13 Summary of preliminary survey

There were no cracks or crevices identified within the stone and brick barn with a pitched roof covered with a well-sealed corrugated roofing lined with breathable roofing membrane. No bat droppings or bats were seen or evidence of bats feeding. There was no access or roosting opportunities available to bats identified in the building.

There were crevices within a low stone wall externally on the rear of the building but no bat droppings, bats or other evidence of bats accessing these crevices were seen.

There was no access to bats under two small areas of well-sealed timber cladding or under the corrugated roofing.

14 Conclusions and recommendations

There was no evidence to suggest that the well-sealed barn was used as a bat roost. There was no evidence that any further investigations are required or that the proposal to convert the building to accommodation would destroy or disturb a bat roost.

There were crevices within a low stone wall on the rear of the building. The wall is very close to a porta- cabin and has a low probability for bats to access it but it will be important to check the crevices immediately before the wall is repaired and to cease work and seek advice if a bat is seen.

There was no evidence to suggest that any further investigations related to bats are required or that the proposal to convert the barn to a dwelling would affect the local bat population.

There was no access to barn owls or birds identified in the building.

15 Bibliography

- *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition – Bat Conservation Trust*
- *Bat Workers Manual – Joint Nature Conservation Committee*
- *Bat Mitigation Guidelines – English Nature (now Natural England)*
- *A Field Guide to British Bats – Frank Greenaway & A. M. Hutson*
- *British Bats – John Altringham*
- *Long-Eared Bats – Susan M Swift*
- *Bats of Britain, Europe and Northwest Africa – Christian Dietz, Otto von Helverson, Dietmar Nill*
- *Bats of Britain and Europe– Christian Dietz and Andreas Kieffer.*