

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Wildlife Consultants.**



WAKEFIELD LODGE, EAST LOUND.

BAT AND BARN OWL SURVEY.

Ref No:- 090835.

Date: 7th September 2009.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page Number
1. INTRODUCTION.	3.
2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.	4.
3. SURVEY RESULTS.	5.
4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.	9.
5. RECOMMENDATIONS.	10.
Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.	11.
Appendix II. BARN OWL INFORMATION.	12.
Appendix III. DATA SEARCH RESULTS.	14.

1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. There are plans to convert the old piggery at Wakefield Lodge, East Lound into residential accommodation.

1.2. The Local Authority requires a bat and barn owl survey is carried out to determine whether either protected species is present on the site.

1.3. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd was therefore commissioned to carry out a bat survey. The survey was carried out on 1th September 2009. This report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.4. Appendices I and II of this report provide back ground information with respect to bats and barn owls and the legal protection afforded to them.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. The structure was checked for potential bat roosting sites by looking for the following signs:-

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

2.2. This was followed by a dusk emergence survey by two surveyors, each using a Batbox Duet detector and supplemented by four static Anabat recorders positioned around the site.

2.3. The building was also searched for evidence of barn owl activity by looking for barn owl pellets and possible nests.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Site Description.

3.1.1. Wakefield Lodge piggery is located on the eastern edge of East Lound in an area that is surrounded by arable farmland as shown on the aerial photograph below.



3.1.2. The paddock to the south of the property has clearly not been used for a long time and is full of nettles, thistles, rosebay willow herb and rank grass. There are two trees in the paddock, one a large, mature oak tree.

3.2. Desk Top Data Search Results.

A data search request was submitted to the local Bat Group and the reply is included in Appendix III of this report. They hold no records in this area.

3.3. Day Time Survey Results.

3.3.1. The piggery comprises a long, single storey, brick building with a pitched, corrugated cement sheet roof.

3.3.2. The walls are solid brick and are generally in sound condition with no holes or gaps that would provide suitable bat roost opportunities. Many of the windows have glass missing and provide openings into the building.



3.3.3. Internally the building has a timber, braced, roof support with no lining beneath the corrugated cement sheets. The ridge is ventilated from the days when it was used as a piggery with abundant ventilation gaps and where there are no gaps, abundant cobwebs.

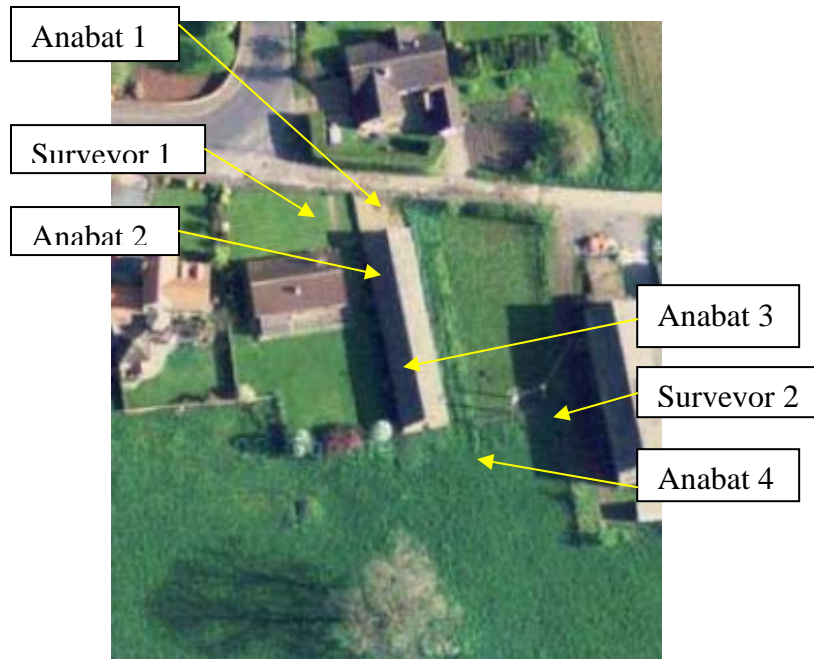
3.3.4. Old bird's nests were identified in the ridge area on top of the roof rafters but no bat or barn owl droppings or field signs were identified.

3.3.5. The building was assessed to have low potential for either species to be present.

3.4. Dusk Emergence Survey Results.

3.4.1. Two surveyors carried out a dusk emergence survey. The surveyors were positioned as shown in the aerial photograph below with two Anabat recorders inside the building and two outside, as shown.

3.4.2. The evening was initially very wet indeed with a torrential downpour but then cleared up and became dry with a clear sky and a temperature of 13°C at 20-30. There was a moderate breeze blowing throughout the survey.



3.4.3. The following bat activity was identified by the two surveyors.

- 20-12. Pipistrelle 45 from the west along the back of adjacent houses and feeding along hedge line.
- 20-14. Pipistrelle 45 feeding over gardens west of the site.
- 20-16. Pipistrelle 45 feeding up and down to the north of the barn, east of the site. This feeding activity continued throughout the survey.
- 20-17. Pipistrelle 45 from the west and feeding around the garden west of the site. feeding activity over the garden continued intermittently until 20-38.
- 20-20. Pipistrelle 45 flew from the west along the back of the piggery and continued to the south of the barn.
- 20-33. Pipistrelle 45 flew from the west along the back of the piggery and continued to the south of the barn.
- 20-35. Pipistrelle 45 flew up and down west side of the barn, east of the site, feeding.
- 20-45. Pipistrelle 45 flying to north of houses, west of site, feeding.

3.4.4. The following activity was identified by the four surveyors.

Anabat 1. North end of piggery.

Recorded intermittent pipistrelle 45 activity from 20-14 to 20-32.

Anabat 2. Inside the piggery, north end.

Recorded distant and brief pipistrelle 45 activity at 20-27, 20-28, 20-29 and 20-47.

Anabat 3. Inside the piggery, couth end.

No bat activity recorded.

Anabat 4. South end of piggery.

Recorded pipistrelle activity at 20-15, 20-20, 20-32 and 20-45.

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. The only species of bat identified was pipistrelle 45 activity and no bats were seen to emerge from the piggery.

4.2. The pattern of activity observed suggests a pipistrelle 45 roost in the houses to the west of the site with bats foraging over gardens and sheltered areas around the site.

4.3. No barn owl field signs or activity was identified.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. No bat or owl activity and no bat roosts or barn owl nests were identified in the piggery and therefore there is no requirement for a Natural England European Protected Species Licence required.

5.2. Other bird's nests were identified in the piggery and therefore it is recommended that works are carried out outside the nesting bird season. Alternatively, it will be necessary to carry out a nesting bird survey immediately prior to works commencing and any active nests found, plus a buffer zone around them, will need to remain undisturbed until the young have fledged.

Derek A Whitcher.

07.09.2009.

Natural England Bat Survey Licence Number.
Natural England Barn Owl Survey Licence Number

20090195
20080392

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. BARN OWL INFORMATION.

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

Barn owls are protected under Schedule 1 and Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is therefore an offence to injure, kill or capture a barn owl, to disturb nesting birds, to take eggs, and to release captive owls into the wild without a licence.

The diet of the barn owls consists almost entirely of small mammals such as mice, shrews and voles. Consequently, areas of moist, moderately long grassland are especially important for foraging with 90% of prey taken within a 1km radius of the nest site.

Their feathers are specially structured for silent flight and, by using their extremely sensitive hearing, barn owls can find and swoop noiselessly onto their prey. Although barn owls can see perfectly well in daylight, they tend to hunt mainly at night.

Suitable nest sites are predominantly in derelict buildings such as farm buildings, church towers and old chimneys. Nest sites must be dry and warm to prevent fatal chilling of the owlets in wet weather.

Barn owls generally produce 4 – 7 eggs, laid at intervals of 2 – 3 days. This gives a staggered hatch, with the first hatchling being as much as a week older than the last. In poor prey years the youngest chicks are unlikely to fledge.

Habitat loss due to agricultural change and urbanisation has had the most significant impact on barn owl numbers. The drainage of grasslands, increases in cereal crops, autumn sowing, the decline in haymaking, the loss of wild grassland, edge habitats and hedgerows, the vermin proofing of grain storage and the fragmentation of habitats as a result of land take for new roads, factories and housing schemes have all had an influence on the availability of suitable foraging habitat.

This has been compounded by the loss of traditional nest sites as a result of building improvements and conversions for other uses including residential.

Provision for Barn Owls in converted buildings should be made where suitable prey rich habitat is available nearby.

As birds are pushed to exploit prey rich roadside verges and railway embankments they increasingly become prone to deaths from collisions with trains and road

vehicles. Death can also be caused by consuming prey items which contain residues of rat and mouse poison.

The effects of disturbance are more pronounced at different times of the year. The early stages of the breeding season are the most vulnerable and birds may abandon nest building or even eggs if disturbed. When the eggs have hatched they tend to tolerate a higher level of disturbance before abandoning young birds in the nest. Generally disturbance should be avoided between April and September.

Appendix III. DATA SEARCH RESULTS.

Thanks for your enquiry, but we have no records at all for this very under-recorded area. (So any records that you pick up, client confidentiality permitting, would be gratefully received - to help others!)

Regards,

Annette Faulkner
Recorder,
Lincs Bat group
----- Original Message -----

From: [Sue Whitcher](#)

To: info@lincsbatgroup.co.uk

Sent: Thursday, September 03, 2009 10:05 AM

Subject: Data Search Request

Could I please request a data search for records of bat roosts within 1km of the following site:-

SK788997 Wakefield Lodge, East Lound, DN9 2LU.

I have attached a map showing the location of the site.

Our reference is 090835.

Regards

Sue Whitcher
Office Manager

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