

Bat and Breeding Bird Survey Report

For: Mr W. Smith

Site: The Groves
Adjacent to Trent side farm
Amcotts
Nr Doncaster
DN17 4AX

Date: October 2010

Surveying Ecologist:
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Natural England Bat Licence Number 20102214



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Summary:

No bats or field signs to indicate the presence of bats was recorded. No birds of any species were recorded using the dwellings on site including no Schedule one species. The buildings were assessed as being a low risk of being used by bats.

1.0 Introduction and Background to the Site

1.1 A bat and bird survey is required to satisfy an application to convert and link an old barn and cottage. Within the current plans a number of old barns are planned for demolition.

1.2 The barns are located on land known as The Groves adjacent to Trentside Farm, Amcotts, Scunthorpe SE 85997 13792.

2.0 Protected Species Legislation

2.1 Bats and their roosts are fully protected at all times (whether the bats are currently present or not). This protection is afforded under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007. This legislation has amended the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (The Habitats Regulations).

As a result it is an offence to: Intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, capture or disturb bats

Or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter or protection. Under this legislation, where bats maybe affected by development proposals a licence is required from Natural England.

2.2 Relevant legislation includes the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which states that all birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law. Special considerations of Schedule 1 birds and European protected species should be made.

3.0 Survey and Site Assessment

3.1 Existing information on bats, (*all species*) at the survey site

No specific records are held for the site however within the vicinity the following records are held. Common Pipistrelle and Brown long eared bat roosts at Flixborough village, nr Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire.

3.2 Status of bats in the local / regional area

Consultation would suggest that bats are generally common and widespread in the local / regional area.

3.3 Objectives of the survey

The objective of this survey was to establish the present or absence of bats and whether bats (*all species*) were using the buildings on the site for roosting or as a place of shelter and if present to identify to species level, determine the population size and nature of the roost.

Where appropriate the presences of other European protected species were surveyed for and findings reported.

Furthermore the occupation by birds of all species was noted and the activity level assessed.

3.4 Survey areas

3.4.1 Barn One:

A small red brick barn with an asbestos roof and in places walls. The interior of the barn shows signs of long term and historical water damage with extensive salting evident within the brick work. Internally the barn is heavily cobwebbed indicating no flying activity within the interior. Externally the pointing within the brick work is largely intact providing very few cracks and fissures than bats could utilise. The property has no suitable access points for barn owl, *Tyto alba* to enter.

3.4.2 Barn two:

A red brick pan tiled roofed barn currently used as a hay barn. The roof has partial under felting and loose or absent pan tiles opening the roof space to the elements. The interior is partially rendered eliminating space between brick work that bats could utilise. Evidence of long term historical water damage was observed within the barn. Externally the pointing between the brick work is largely intact. Subsidence within the eastern facing wall was recorded. Such areas could provide suitable access points for bats however all cracks were observed to be covered by heavy cob webbing indicating no activity.

3.4.3 Barn three:

A small red brick barn with a corrugated iron roof. Internally the pointing within the brickwork is present and the brick work itself shows signs of long term water damage failing to provide suitable conditions for bats of all species. Externally the pointing is largely intact with few places bats could utilise.

3.4.4 Barn four:

A red brick structure with a corrugated iron roof. The interior of the building is very damp. This combined with the internal brick work being rendered fails to provide suitable conditions for bats. To the western aspect of this barn is a small room whose walls and roofs are constructed out of corrugated iron sheets. Such materials eliminate the potential for bats to roost in this area.

3.4.5 Barn five:

A barn constructed from asbestos sheeting with a corrugated iron roof. The nature of these materials eliminates roosting potential for bats. The barn does have suitable access points and perching structures for barn owl.

3.4.6 Barn six:

A barn constructed entirely from corrugated iron sheets. The windows and doors are all intact and no suitable access places for barn owl exist.

4.0 Survey Methodology

4.1 Daytime survey (all structures)

Where accessible all cracks and fissures in the buildings were examined using a pro vision 300 endoscope. An external examination was conducted to identify potential roost sites and access points and any signs of actual occupation such as droppings, smudge marks, discarded moth wings and urine staining etc. Internally the roof space and internal structures were inspected for field signs and the presence of bats and birds.

4.2 Assessment of site and surrounding habitats.

4.3 Search of existing bat roost records

4.4 Emergence survey

Emergence surveys were conducted during suitable weather conditions as outlined in Natural England bat mitigation guidelines 2004). The emergence surveys commenced half an hour before dusk and ended half an hour after dark and involved suitably qualified staff positioned at the front, back and sides of the properties with bat detectors.

4.5 Timing

The surveys were conducted on the 12th October 2010 which is within the latter stages of bat activity. This is a viable period to survey the structures described (Natural England bat mitigation guidelines 2004) particularly as the temperature was above the seasonal average.

4.6 Weather conditions

All surveys were carried out in suitable weather conditions as outlined by Natural England guidelines. The average temperature throughout the survey period was 15°C for the daytime surveys and 10°C for the emergence surveys.

4.7 Personnel

The surveys were carried out by bat ecologist Natasha Estrada (Natural England bat licence no.20102214) assisted by one other protected species ecologist.

5.0 Survey Findings

5.1 All barns at Trentside Farm, Amcotts.

The structure and condition of the barns on site fails to provide suitable conditions for bats of all species. Only one barn (number 5) shows any suitability for use by barn owl. No field signs to indicate presence of any legally protected species were recorded.

All suitable entrance points for bats were surveyed as well as where present windows and window sills for bat field signs. No signs of bat droppings, urine spotting, smudge marks or wing cases were found. Investigation with an endoscope showed that no bats were present within any of the suitable cracks or fissures within the buildings.

Emergence surveys:

Bats: No bats of any species were observed to enter or exit the structures. No bats of any species were recorded within the vicinity of the site.

Birds: No birds of any species were found to be occupying any of the buildings and no signs of casual or historical use by birds were found. No barn owl splashings or pellets were recorded within any of the barns on site.

6.0 Interpretation and evaluation

6.1 The survey produced no evidence to suggest casual, infrequent or historical use of the properties surveyed by bats of any species.

6.2 The above properties no bats were found emerging from any property. The structure and condition of all properties surveyed make it highly unlikely that bats would occupy the buildings.

6.3 Externally and internally there were no signs of droppings, urine spotting, smudge marks or discarded insect remains, the latter which would have indicated the presence of species such as Brown Long – Eared bats, *Plecotus auritus*. No individuals of any species were found within the structures surveyed.

6.4 The structure of the properties provides very few places suitable for bats to utilise. Areas of the roof space have exposed to the elements through loose roof tiles. The majority of the barns show signs of water damage and historical dampness. Such conditions fail to provide the suitable constant temperatures bats require. The intact pointing and lack of cavity walls in these properties again provides few areas for bats to utilise.

7.0 Site Status Assessment

7.1 There is no evidence to suggest use by bats in any of the properties surveyed.

7.2 No bats were recorded in the immediate vicinity of the site.

7.3 There is no evidence to suggest the use by nesting birds in any of the structures surveyed. All birds and their nests are protected during the breeding season (typically 1st March to 30th September) and this legislation should be adhered to during any development.

7.4 No signs were found internally of other European protected

species such as Barn Owl, *Tyto alba*. There were no signs of casual or nesting use.

8.0 Ecological constraints

8.1 No ecological constraints prevented a thorough survey of the properties.

9.0 Assessment of Impacts

9.1 The properties were assessed as being a low risk to be utilised by roosting bats. The planned works are likely to have a neutral impact upon the local bat population.

10.0 Mitigation

10.1 Mitigation is required to avoid or reduce the impact of development proposals on the population of bats present, either roosting or feeding. Licences are required where a roost site is threatened in some way by a scheme.

10.2 No formal mitigation measures are required however the following best practice is advised.

10.3 Purely as a precaution care should be taken during roof stripping. Lifting rather than sliding tiles and checking for signs of bats should be conducted.

10.4 With most buildings there is a residual possibility of use of wall crevices and under roof tiles for hibernation by single bats. This likelihood is considered low but during any development work on the properties if bats or evidence of their occupation is found then work should cease immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.

11.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

11.1 The proposed demolition of the properties surveyed is not deemed to have a significant effect on the local bat population.

Appendix one: Barn two



Appendix two: Barn six showing unsuitable conditions for bats



Appendix three: An example of the internal brickwork rendering with signs of water damage evident.



Appendix four: Barn five



Appendix five: The interior of barn five

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