





Protected Species Survey  
Outbuilding at Rectory Farm  
Widmerpool Road  
Wysall  
Nottinghamshire  
NGR SK60605 27301

Report prepared by:  
Christopher Barker CEnv  
Ecologist and Licensed Bat Consultant

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	Reviewed by: KB	CBE Consulting, Highbank, 5 Grantham Road, Navenby, LN5 0JJ Tel: 01522 810086 Email: chris@cbeconsulting.co.uk
	Report ref: P2228 / 0221 - 01	

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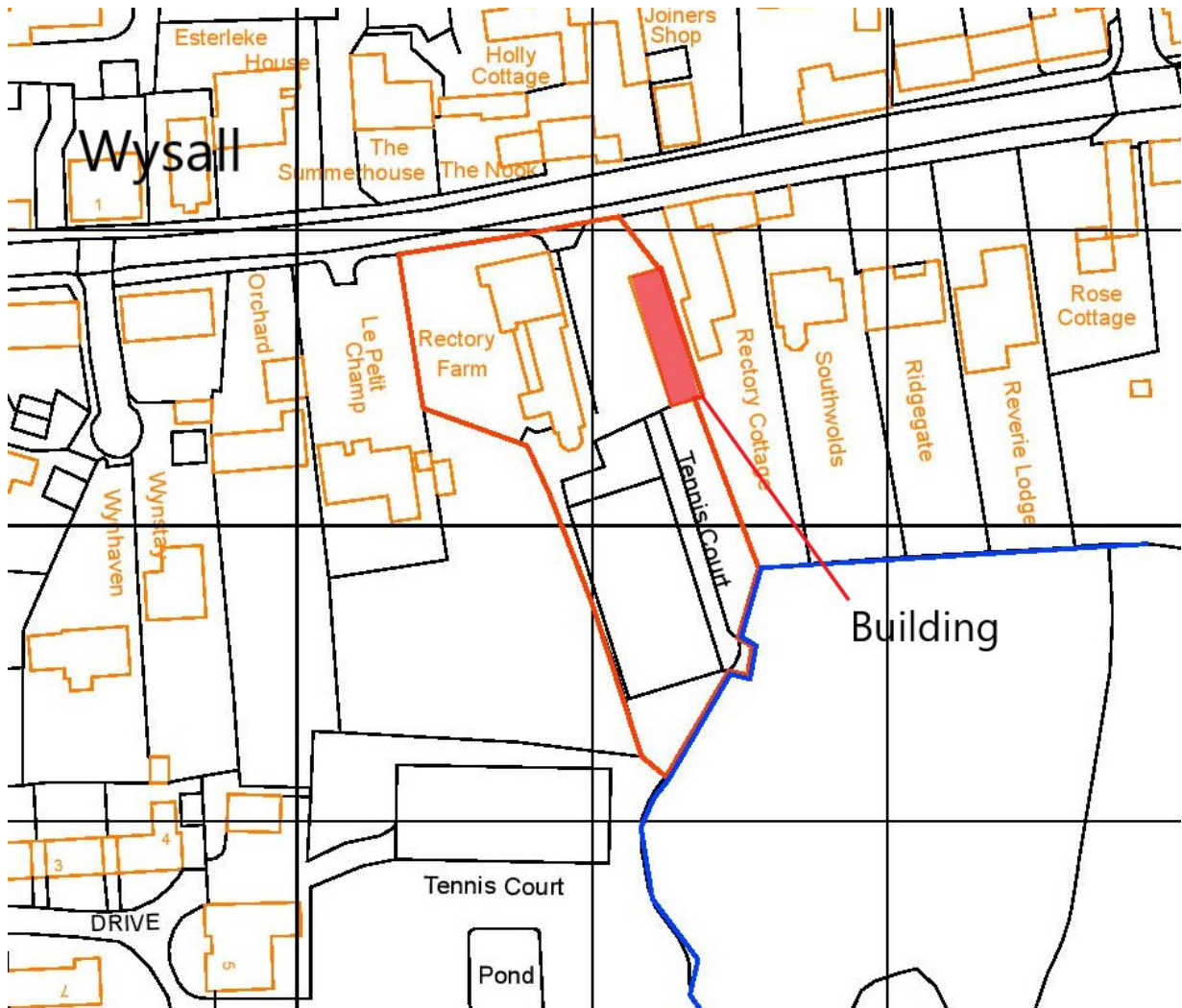
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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Site Description, Location and Survey Background

The site surveyed comprises an outbuilding comprising a garage, a storage room and a holiday let which was converted previously, situated at Rectory Farm, Widmerpool Road, Wysall, Nottinghamshire, centred at NGR SK60605 27301.

The location of the site is shown on the plan within **Figure 1** and an aerial photograph is provided to place the site into its environmental context in **Figure 2**.



**Figure 1: Site Location**

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Planning permission has been applied for to convert the remaining parts of the building into a holiday let which may require some alteration to the roof structure to fit velux style windows. As part of the new application the Applicant has been advised to have the existing building assessed for the potential presence of protected species, in particular bats and birds.

An internal and external inspection of the building at the property was completed on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021.

## 1.2 Neighbouring Land Uses

As can be seen from the photograph below, the building being assessed lies between Rectory Farm house and Rectory Cottage on the south side of Widmerpool Road close to the centre of

the village of Wysall. There is a tennis court to the south of the building within the rear garden of Rectory Farm and there are houses and gardens to the east, and north Further to the south is open arable land, the nearest field does have a small pond in the field interior. The property is close to the village edge and there is scattered tree canopy cover within the village and local gardens.

The street lighting along Widmerpool Road and within the village centre provides significant levels of night light in the vicinity of the property being assessed and the immediate locality is not rich in potential bat foraging areas /routes. Species such as Pipistrelle Bats which are less sensitive to artificial lighting and may be foraging around the margins of the village. A contextual aerial photograph has been provided below.



**Figure 2: Site Contextual Aerial Photograph**

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## 2. Survey Context

This survey has been carried out to provide information to the Planning authority in regard to an application to.

### 2.1 Protected Species

The survey covers an outbuilding comprising an existing holiday let at the south end, a small storage barn in the centre and a triple-garage at the northern end close to Widmerpool Road, Taking in account the issue of 'proportionality', as referenced in the 2016 Bat Survey Guidelines and Clause 4.1.2 of BS42020 wherein "*professionals should take a proportionate approach to ensure the provision of information within the (planning) application is appropriate to the level of environmental risk it presents,*" it was considered appropriate to review protected species records within the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and the Multi-agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) rather than purchase a full set of biological records in the first instance.



The nearest European Protected Species License issued in the area is for a small bat roost located at the northern edge of the village of Wysall 150m from the property being surveyed where a solitary Brown Long-eared bat was found roosting in the roof space. There have been no other protected species licenses issued within 1km according to the MAGIC dataset. The table below summarises the protected species records found within the NBN dataset for the 1km area surrounding the property.

Genus	Common Name	No of records	Location
Rana temporaria	Common Frog	1	350m north of the property
Meles Meles	Badger	1	>500m from the property to the south of Wysall
Nyctalus noctula	Noctule Bat	1	>250m to the east
Pipistrellus pipistrellus	Common Pipistrelle	1	Foraging record along the north side of the village
Plecotus auritus	Brown Long-eared bat	1	Historically associate with the property being assessed.
Anguis fragilis	Slow Worm	1	North side of Wsall >250m distance
Natrix natrix	Grass Snake	1	North side of Wsall >250m distance

This same building was originally surveyed in 2007 at which time a small Brown Long-eared roost was identified in the roof space and mitigation measures were incorporated onto the design of the current holiday let occupying the southern end of the building. A heated bat roost loft area was constructed which is shown within figure 3 lying in the roof space above part of the holiday let and the small storage area adjacent to this. The roost is sealed but there is a small access to allow for monitoring which has a notice affixed restricting access due to the potential presence of bats.

During the survey of the building observations and identification or signs of any species protected under the Habitat Regulations 2010 (originally Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) were noted. The objective of the survey is to identify and report any physical evidence of protected species, particularly bats using the buildings. It was concluded that the potential for other protected species to be present in this location within the building and concrete car parking area adjacent to this was negligible based on the review of the records and character of the survey area.

The inspector cannot be held responsible for any parts of the building structures that may have been inaccessible to the inspector due to services or structural restrictions, or any other restriction that could compromise the safety of the inspector or prevent unrestricted access. ***In this instance all parts of the building including the enclosed loft spaces were accessed. This included a quick inspection of the loft roost area as the surveyor holds an appropriate Class 18 Bat Survey License and also has a Class 15 License***

The client must accept that the inspector will remain impartial to all parties involved and the results of the survey may not be in the best interests of the client. The surveyor, Christopher Barker, is an experienced ecological surveyor and Licensed Bat Worker (Class 18 L2 Natural England License) and an active member of the Lincolnshire Bat Group (Class 15 License Natural England Roost Visitor).

## 2.2 Legal Constraints

### ***Legislation Protecting Bat Species:***

All species of Bat within the UK are protected under the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (Habitat Regulations). These were passed into law in England and Wales on 01 March 2010. This legislation is now the principle means that enables Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitat and of wild fauna and flora to be transposed for England and Wales. These new Regulations consolidate all the various amendments to the

Conservation (Natural Habitat) Regulations 1994 that in turn previously amended and incorporated the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

The Habitat Regulations now incorporate all the requirements for the protection of bats that the amended WCA 1981 originally contained. Under Part 3 Section 42 of the Habitat Regulations all species of bats are listed as being protected. Under the auspices of the Habitat Regulations it is an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a bat [WCA section 9(1)]
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a bat [WCA section 9(2)]
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a bat [WCA section 9(4)(a)]
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose [WCA section 9(4)(a)]

Included within Part 2 Section 11 of the Habitat Regulations are regulations defining the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and these regulations also provide protection for Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats, Barbastelle and Bechstein's Bats. Inclusion of these protected species within the European protected species Regulations means that member states are required to put in place a system of strict protection as outlined in Article 12; this is presented through inclusion on Schedule 2 of the Regulations. Regulation 39 makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture or kill a bat [Regulation 39(1)(a)]
- Deliberately disturb a bat [Regulation 39(1)(b)]
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat [R.39(1)(d)]
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange a live or dead bat or any part of a bat [R.39(2)]

The legislation makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a site used by bats whether bats are present at the time or not.

Where there is a risk that a bat roost may be present, it is incumbent upon the owner to commission a survey to identify the possible presence of a bat roost before instructing any work that may potentially impact upon the roost to commence. Failure to do so and in the event of disturbing a roost site and upon conviction is an offence. The maximum penalty for committing offences relating to bats or their roosts can amount to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to fines of up to Level 5 on the standard scale under the Criminal Justice Act 1982/1991 (i.e. £5000 in April 2001) per roost or bat disturbed or killed, or to both.

### ***Legislation Protecting Bird species:***

The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (Habitat Regulations) provides protection to wild birds, particularly species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act such as Barn Owl. Under the Habitat Regulations all birds, their nests and eggs, are protected under law. It is an offence, with certain exceptions, to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being constructed
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of a wild bird
- Intentionally (or recklessly in England and Wales only) disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at (or near) a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

### 3 Survey Methodology

The survey of this site was completed during January which is outside of the optimum survey season for roosting bats and nesting birds. The survey of the building included an inspection of the internal and external roof structures searching for evidence of bat activity. Appraisal of the external faces of the building was carried out using binoculars to assess potential features of interest. This was followed by a more detailed external and then internal inspection of the building with particular attention being paid to the internal roof and any other features of interest noted.

The visual inspection initially comprised an assessment from all accessible sides using professional high-quality binoculars 10 x 25 magnification to establish if any access points for bats are present and identify any external indications such as stains, wearing around holes etc. that indicate the potential presence of these species. Windows, windowsills, doors, walls and the ground around the base of walls were inspected for signs of bat activity although evidence such as droppings may only be retained in covered and protected external areas. If evidence of potential access points for bats has been identified, these features have been targeted for further detailed investigation at close quarters. Bats in particular may roost at any time of year in locations such as voids behind beams and tiles, fissures, knot holes, gaps between bricks, voids behind roofing felt etc.

A potential bat roost site is to be inspected for overt evidence of bat presence and occupation. This could present as:

- Staining around a cavity, fissure, void or split caused by oils secreted by the bat into its fur
- Scratching on timbers and joists caused by the bat in the act of take off and landing
- Bat droppings and feeding debris in and around the access point or below the feeding roost
- Urine stains below a possible entrance site or within the entrance to a cavity. The urine also smells heavily of ammonia which is distinctively identifiable at close quarters
- Possible audible noises during daylight of bats chattering especially in hot weather
- Flies around entrance of possible roost which may be attracted to bat guano
- The lack of cobwebs around a possible entrance site may also suggest occupation, but of course does not directly confirm bat presence.

Potential bat roost locations in relation to buildings are described within this report (taken from Bat Survey Guidelines 2016) as:

**Confirmed Roost** – a structure with physical evidence confirming the presence of bats or bats visibly seen.

**High** – a structure with one or more potential roost features that are obviously suitable for use by a large number of bats on a regular basis and which is situated in an area of continuous high-quality foraging habitat suitable for bats;

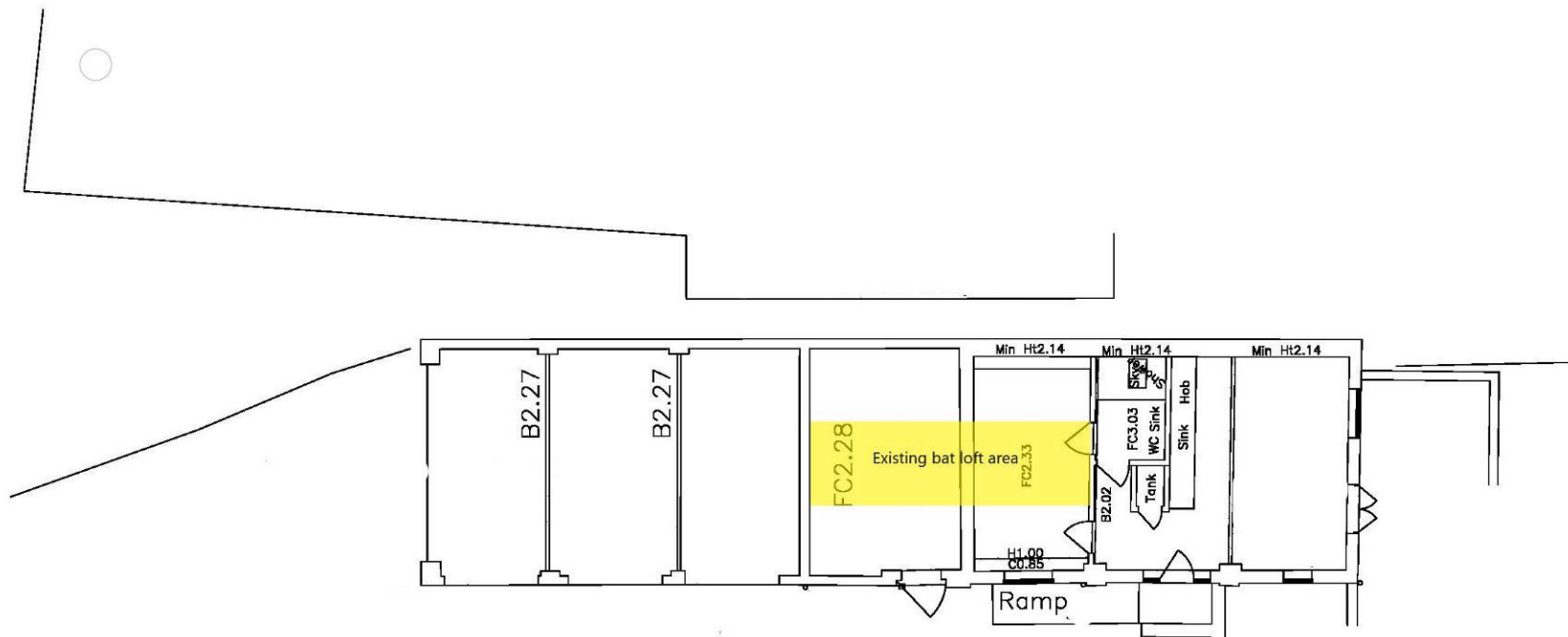
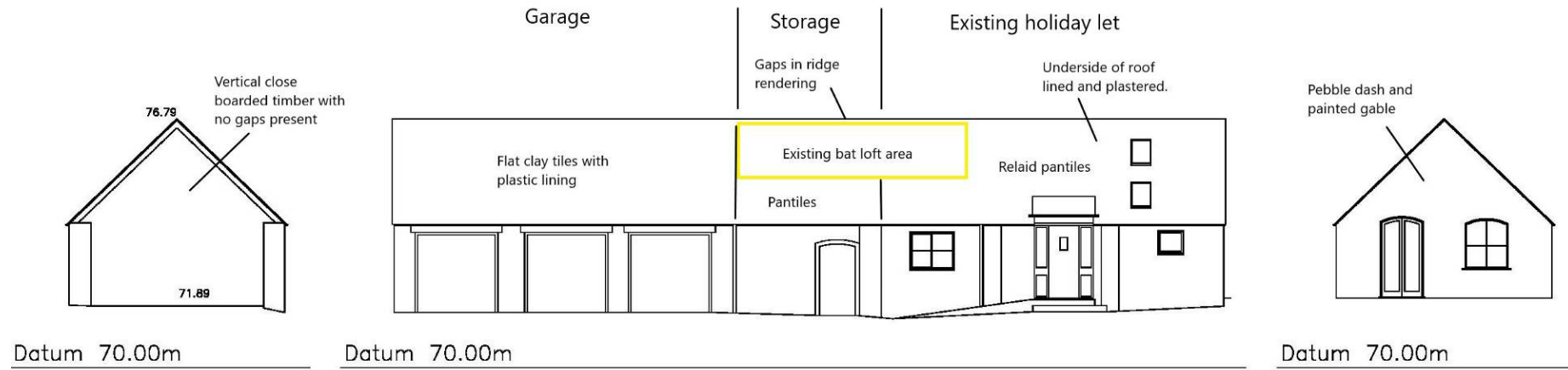
**Moderate** – a structure with one or more potential roost features that could be used by bats, but which is unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status and which is in an area of connected habitat suitable for foraging by bats;

**Low** – a structure with one or more potential roost features that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost features do not provide sufficient potential to be used by a larger number of bats or on a regular basis and the surrounding habitat is not of high value to foraging bats.

**Negligible** – a structure with negligible habitat features which is in a poor location making it highly unlikely roosting bats will be present.

Any potential roost features with the evidence indicating the presence of bats that is not fully visible to the naked eye will then be subjected to a visual inspection using a torch or, if necessary, an Endoscopic Fiberscope with illumination as appropriate. The survey looked for evidence of nesting birds and significant bird activity such as nesting materials, feathers, guano, owl pellets and redundant or active nests within the building interior and around the exterior.

**Figure 3 – Property Elevations**





#### 4. Survey Findings

The property is a single storey outbuilding internally sub-divided into three parts consisting of a triple garage at the northern end, a small storage area in the centre which has a sealed loft overhead, and a holiday let, part of the loft space to which is also sealed.

The entire building is constructed from two courses of red brick with cavity, insulated at the southern end where the existing holiday let is situated. The brickwork is in excellent repair throughout with no cracks, gaps or cavities visible from the exterior.

**Holiday Let** – situated at the southern end of the building the south gable has been pebble dashed and painted white with no cracks, bubbling or other cavities visible. The pitched roof was re-laid in 2007/8 when the holiday let was constructed and the main living area has no enclosed loft but is open to the roof apex. Internally the roof has been lined, boarded and painted and the roof edges are effectively sealed. Two velux style windows have been fitted.

There is a sealed loft area over the bedroom of the holiday let which extend to the north over the small storeroom. The pitched roof has traditional pantiles throughout which have a number of gaps and since the roof is lined there may potentially be roosting places between the pantiles and the lining beneath. This part of the building does have a purpose-built loft roost space so ***the roost potential must be classed as high*** due to the presence of this loft area. However, ***no evidence of bat activity was found externally on any part of the building***. No evidence of nesting was found on any part of the building.



Front of holiday let



South gable of holiday let



Roof of holiday let



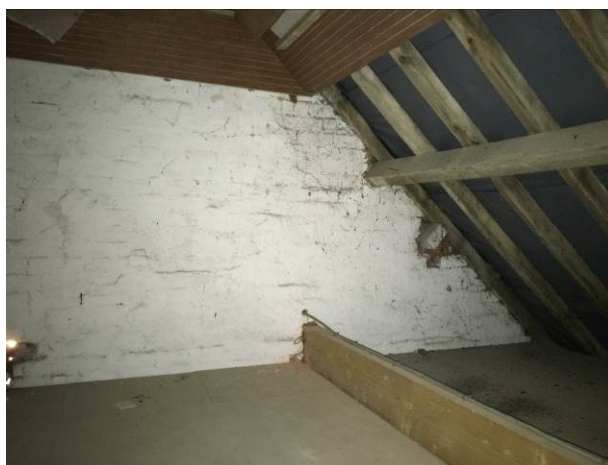
Internal open roof of holiday let

**Storage Area** – situated in the centre of the building this small single-room storage area has an enclosed loft space which is part of the purpose-built loft roost space. The pantiles extend across this section of the pitched roof and there are many gaps between these and rendering missing from the ridge.

The ground floor room is painted white and has a concrete floor. There is a tightly fitting wooden door on the west side (front). No evidence of any bat or bird activity was found within this ground floor area. The loft area has been utilised to construct a purpose-built heated roosting area for the small colony of bats originally found within this building. This was quickly inspected and no fresh droppings were found anywhere within this and no bats were found using the roost space. The roost was inspected in 2018 by the Bat Conservation Trust Officer and a handful of old BLE droppings were found at that time. An activity survey carried out by BCT in August 2018 did not identify any bats leaving the building but for the purpose of assessment of the building this loft space should be considered to be an active roost even though it does not appear to be frequently used based on the lack of internal evidence. Access is via gaps in the pantiles and along the ridge directly above the storage room.



Storage area ground floor



Bat loft roost area



Bat loft roost area



Bat loft roost area

**Triple Garage** – the northern end of the building comprises an open triple garage area with three lifting steel doors on the west side. The interior of the garage is open and there is no enclosed loft area. The brickwork throughout both external and internal is exposed and in excellent condition. The north gable end is constructed from two layers of vertical cladding with internal insulation. This cladding is tightly fitted with no gaps or holes present.

The pitched roof of this section of the building comprises concrete tiles with modern grey plastic sheet lining laid over prefabricated timber beams. There are no gaps or holes present in the tiles, none appear lifted, slipped or broken and the roof edges appear tightly sealed. No evidence of



bat activity was found on any part of the building or anywhere within the garage interior and because of the condition of the roof, the lack of any gaps or entry points visible and presence of grey plastic lining, which is not particularly desirable to bats, this part of the building is considered to have **negligible roost potential**. No evidence of nesting birds was found within this part of the building.



North gable and roof



Roof to rear of garage



Garage interior looking north



Interior of garage roof

## 5. Conclusion

The proposal is to convert the garage and the ground floor storage room area into a modern holiday let in the same way the southern part of the building was converted. This may require the garage roof to have some velux-style roof windows fitted but otherwise the roof area will not be disturbed. The existing bat loft roost area will not be disturbed by the proposed conversion as only the ground floor storage room will be used and this is already sealed off from the bat loft overhead.

Based on the inspection there is no evidence to suggest the loft roost area was used during the 2020 bat activity season and the 2018 BCT activity survey noted no bat activity but did find a handful of old droppings. However, since this loft roost has been constructed as part of the mitigation requirements for the original holiday let and there is evidence of it having been occupied in the past, it is concluded that this part of the building is a **confirmed roost**. It is also noted that this loft area is separated from both the holiday let and the storage room underneath. The inspection has found no evidence of bat activity associated with the storage room.

The inspection of the garage similarly found no evidence of bat activity and the structure displays no features that would of potential interest to roosting bats. It is therefore concluded that this part of the building has negligible roost potential.

The proposal being considered is for the garage to be converted into a separate holiday let. This may include the ground floor of the storage room. It is unlikely that any conversion will have any impact of the existing bat loft area provided no velux windows are fitted too close to the sealed loft area. If the ground floor storage room is included within the holiday let building the loft access and ceiling to this room which forms the floor of the sealed loft must be carefully insulated to ensure that there is no way noise of heat can disturb the environment within the loft roost area.

The conversion of the garage should not require any further surveys to take place. However, as a precaution it might be prudent to consider undertaking any roof works to the garage to install windows outside of the bat activity season as such works may cause vibrations which could disturb bats in the adjacent loft roost area. Alternatively, the roost area could be inspected beforehand to determine if there are any bats present and the work supervised by a Licensed Bat Consultant to ensure it is carried out in a manner which does not cause any disturbance through noise or vibration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Christopher Barker", written in black ink on a white background. The signature is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Christopher Barker CEnv ACIEEM  
Licensed Bat Consultant

## **REFERENCES**

*National Planning Policy Framework 2019 as amended.* Department for Communities and Local Government. HMSO

*British Standard 42020 – British Standard for Biodiversity: Code of Practice for planning and development.* British Standards Institute 2013.

*The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994: Statutory Instrument 1994 No 2716.* OPSI. HMSO.

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Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (2016). Collins - Bat Conservation Trust.

Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (2017). Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)

Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) in the UK and Ireland (2018). Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)

### *Web references*

MAGIC: Designated area data downloaded from URL <http://www.magic.gov.uk.html>

National Biodiversity Network: Protected species data downloaded from URL <http://data.nbn.org/interactive/map>

## **APPENDIX 1: Procedure to follow if bats are unexpectedly discovered during works**

- The tiled roof structure of the garage is unlikely to be disturbed unless velux windows are to be fitted or a chimney is installed near the north gable end. If any works are required to the roof or roof edges ideally such work should be completed outside of the bat activity season (i.e. not between May – August). Any tiles or roof timbers should be carefully dismantled by hand at the start of the work and all tiles should be lifted rather than slid to enable the underside of these to be inspected in accordance with accepted good practice.
- If works to the garage roof have to be carried out during the bat activity season the adjacent loft roost area should be inspected to determine if any bats are present and the work should be supervised by a Licensed Bat Consultant as a precautionary measure.
- If, prior to any approved works commencing following there is any indication that bats may be present in or around the building (e.g. droppings or staining is noted on the walls or significant bat activity is seen around the property in the evenings), work should not be undertaken until a further survey is carried out to determine the significance of this.
- If at any point during the work bats are discovered, then the contractors must immediately stop work and telephone Christopher Barker on 07957 912470.
- An appropriately licensed bat worker will liaise directly with Natural England and the County Ecologist if any indication of bats or actual presence of bats is discovered. Actions will then be taken following advice given. This may include removal of bats, but only where direct written or verbal permission is gained from the appropriate authorities.
- Only when the appropriate authority is satisfied that there is no further risk to bats will works recommence.
- Should it transpire that the operation being carried out is of more risk to bats than was originally thought, then works will be stopped until they can be supervised by an appropriately licensed bat worker.
- Any injured bats should be gently placed in a secure ventilated box in a cool, quiet dark place (e.g. cardboard box with a sealed lid) by the contractor while wearing gloves for the bat's protection whilst awaiting the arrival of the licensed person.