

FOR MR SHERING

# Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

Martinique, East Martin, Fordingbridge,  
Hampshire, SP6 3JS

By Joanna Ramsay Horbury BA (Hons), MSc

2021

12TH JULY 2021

# Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

## INTRODUCTION

1. Joanna Ramsay Horbury, a licensed (bat survey or research licence (level 2) (CL18)) and experienced ecologist was commissioned by Mr Shering to undertake a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of Martinique, East Martin in the light of the proposed conversion of three redundant storage buildings into dwellings.

2. The property is situated in East Martin, a hamlet within the New Forest district of Hampshire lying SW of Salisbury and NE of Fordingbridge. (central grid reference SU0722 2020).

Fig. 1 Site location (Image from Google Earth 12/07/2021)



3. The property comprises three storage buildings of varying corrugated metal and single skin industrial/agricultural construction.

4. The site was visited by Joanna Ramsay Horbury on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021 for a daytime external and internal inspection of the buildings checking for evidence of, or potential for, roosting bats and nesting birds.

## LEGISLATION AND POLICY

5. This is intended only as a brief introduction to the relevant wildlife law and policy in the UK. Reference should always be made to the full text of the legislation or policy if more detailed interpretation is needed.

6. All British species of bat are protected under the *Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* and the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and changes made by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019* which implements the *EC Habitats Directive*. It is an offence to intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or disturb a bat or to destroy; damage or obstruct access to a place used for shelter or protection. This applies throughout the year whether bats are present or not at the time of survey or work being carried out. Where a development has the potential to impact upon bats, the results of appropriate survey and mitigation measures must be submitted with a planning application.

7. Where works will affect a bat roost, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence is likely to be required, following appropriate survey effort, to undertake any works lawfully. Licence applications

# Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

will only be considered when accompanied by full planning permission. In determining whether to grant a licence Natural England must apply the three tests:

- I. preserving public health or safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.
- II. that there is no satisfactory alternative.
- III. that the action will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

8. All wild bird species, their eggs and nests are protected under the *Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. The sections which are relevant in this case are, that it is an offence to;

- *intentionally kill, injure or take wild birds*
- *intentionally take, damage or destroy a wild bird's nest while it's being used or built*

9. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 expects that planning decisions are based on full, up-to-date ecological information with minimal impacts on biodiversity and provision of net gains in biodiversity. Local planning authorities will refuse planning permission where a criminal offence relating to bats is likely to result from the proposed works and where an EPS licence is unlikely to be granted by Natural England.

10. Other relevant documentation and policies;

- *Government Circular 06/2005 ; Biodiversity and geological conservation – Statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system (DCLG, 2005)*
- *Circular 02/99; Environmental Impact Assessment 1999 (DCLG, 1999)*

## METHODOLOGIES

### 11. Desktop Study

The DEFRA Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was consulted for information on statutory site designations and granted bat European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licences in the area.

### 12. Field Survey

An examination was undertaken of the buildings to search for signs of bat and bird use. This included a systematic search, using a torch where safely possible, of features such as walls, roof slopes, window and door surfaces and ledges, attic floors, attic walls and roof rafters. Signs of bat use searched for included; droppings, urine staining, foraging signs (such as moth wings), rub marks indicating prolonged use, and bats themselves. The internal conditions of any voids were noted. The buildings were also assessed for suitability to support bat roosts, such as the presence of features or any potential bat access points which were inspected, with a torch where possible, and noted. Methodologies followed current best practice guidance such as those outlined within the *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines* (Bat Conservation Trust, 2016)

The building was assessed using the following scale:

Confirmed roost	Evidence of bat use found
High suitability	One or more potential roost sites suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat
Moderate suitability	One or more potential roost sites that could support bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status

# Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

Low suitability	One or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically however these sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or surrounding suitable habitat to be used on a regular basis or by a large number of bats
Negligible suitability	Negligible habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats

## RESULTS

### 13. Desktop Study

The DEFRA Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that the site is approximately 1km from Toyd Down and Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); 1.5km from Martin and Tidpit Downs SSSI; and 2km from Knighton Downs and Wood SSSI, Chickengrove Bottom SSSI and Pentridge Downs SSSI. Martin Down is also a National Nature Reserve. All these areas offer good habitat and opportunities for bat roosting and foraging.

Fig. 2 Map extract from MAGIC showing designated sites



Mr Shering has owned the property for six months with his father owning it before that. He has not been aware of any use of the buildings by bats or birds.

### 14. Field survey

On 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the weather was light rain and at 16°C (feeling like 18°C) with light NE winds (BBC Weather). The weather had been a mixture of sunny intervals and rain for the previous 2 weeks. The results are described below;

External inspection: The three storage buildings were constructed in the 1960s and run in a NE-SW alignment with single pitched roofs. All buildings have gaps and crevices in them by nature of their agricultural construction.

‘Barn 1’ - The building is a single skin construction of blockwork and wooden panelling with a single skin of corrugated iron roofing. No evidence of use by bats or birds was observed.

## Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

Fig. 3 'Barn 1'



Fig. 4 The rear of the 'Barn 1'



'Barn 2' – The building is a single skin of corrugated iron overlaying wooden panelled walls with an asbestos roof overlain with corrugated iron. ~6 bat dropping were observed on the corrugated iron wall panelling on the SE side of the building. No evidence of use by birds was observed.

# Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

Fig. 5 'Barn 2'



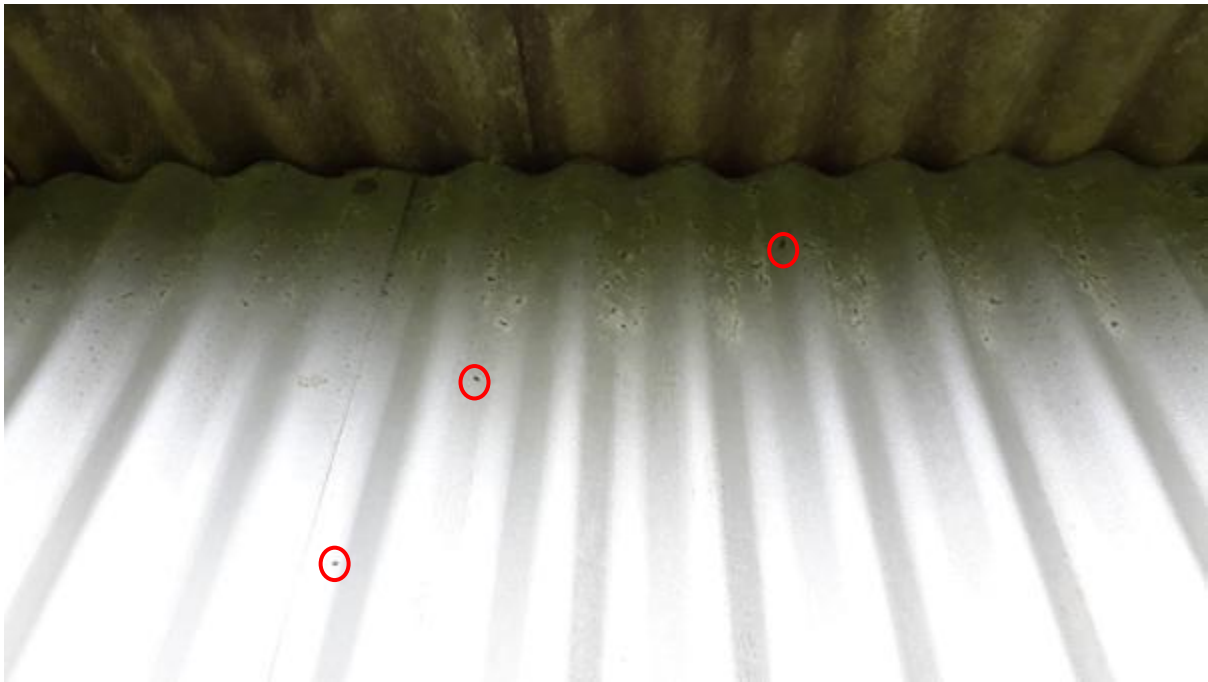
Fig. 6 NE gable end of 'Barn 2'



## Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

Fig. 7 SE side of 'Barn 2' with bat droppings evident



'Barn 3' – The building is made up of two sections; a single storey wooden panelled section with corrugated iron roof which has vented sections remaining from its use as a chicken shed (these are now blocked off); and a double height corrugated iron section at the SW end. No evidence of use by bats or birds was observed.

Fig. 8 'Barn 3'



## Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

Fig. 9 NE gable end of 'Barn 3'



Fig. 10 Rear (SE side) of 'Barn 3'



Internal inspection: 'Barn 1' - The internal space is split into three storage areas and is boarded throughout but has no insulation. Multiple gaps were evident. No evidence of use by birds was observed in any of the three sections. From NE to SW; in the first section ~6 droppings of a small bat, most likely pipistrelle sp., were observed; in the second section no evidence of bats was observed; in the third section ~3 droppings of a small bat, most likely pipistrelle sp., were observed.



## Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

Fig. 11 First and most north easterly section of 'Barn 1'



Fig. 12 Bat droppings in first section of 'Barn 1'



## Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

Fig. 13 Second section of 'Barn 1'



Fig. 14 Third section of 'Barn 1'



'Barn 2' – The internal space is boarded throughout and has no insulation. ~3 droppings of a small bat, most likely pipistrelle sp., were observed. Evidence of activity by a squirrel, in the form of paw prints in dust, was also observed. No evidence of use by birds was observed.

## Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

Fig. 15 'Barn 2'



'Barn 3' – The internal space is single skin corrugated iron with no boarding or insulation. ~2 droppings of a small bat, most likely pipistrelle sp., were observed. No evidence of use by birds was observed.

Fig. 16 'Barn 3'



# Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

Fig. 17 'Barn 3' double height section



## CONCLUSIONS

15. It was possible to access all parts of the buildings and no specialist equipment was necessary to undertake the visual inspection. Some evidence of bat use in the form of droppings was established in all storage buildings. However, the buildings are considered to offer low suitability for bat use given the lack of insulation and single skin corrugated iron construction which renders them vulnerable to extremes of heat and cold. Use is likely to be opportunistic for individual bats.

16. Bats roost in a wide variety of sites within buildings, with many species roosting in cracks and crevices, under roof tiles and within timber beam joints where they are difficult to see. The absence of evidence cannot, therefore, be treated as conclusive evidence that bats are not using a building.

17. As such, a precautionary approach to any works is recommended and if at any stage bats or evidence of bat use is observed, works should stop immediately and advice be sought from Joanna Ramsay Horbury or Natural England (via the contract with the Bat Conservation Trust) on 0845 1300 228.

18. Provision of potential bat roosting features could be included in the proposed works on site with the installation of bat boxes on mature trees around the site or on external walls of buildings and consideration of bat tiles and bat bricks in any new features. Consideration of phasing the project could be given.

## REFERENCES

Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (Bat Conservation Trust, 2016)

Bats: surveys and mitigation for development projects (Natural England & Defra, 28 February 2020)

## DISCLAIMER

## Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment for Mr Shering

---

The information and advice contained in this report relate primarily to factual survey results and general guidance only. All reasonable effort has been made to provide accurate information at the time of the survey which remains valid for 12 months. On all legal matters you are advised to take legal advice. The report is confidential to the client and the author accepts no responsibility in respect of any matters outside the scope of the contract with the client. The report remains the property of the author until full payment has been received.