

Stable at Sawmills Farm, Rufford
Bat Roost Assessment



Client:

Mr D Bower

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Switch board 0115 930 2493: info@rammsanderson.com: www.rammsanderson.com

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1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Purpose and Scope of this Report

- I RammSanderson Ecology Ltd was instructed by Mr D Bower to carry out a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) to inform the proposed re-use of a stable building at Sawmills Farm, Rufford. The surveys were required to determine the presence or likely absence of bats species on site.
- ii The study area is defined as shown in the enclosed Site Location Plan to include the Zone of Influence (see below) of the proposals (hereafter referred to as the "Site").
- iii This appraisal is based on a review of the development proposals provided by the Client, and surveys of the Site. The aims of this survey and report are to:
 - Investigate the presence / likely absence of bats on site or in the immediate vicinity;
 - Identify potential impacts on bats (if present); and
 - Provide outline recommendations for mitigation or compensatory measures where applicable.
- iv This report pertains to these results only; recommendations included within this report are the professional opinion of an experienced ecologist and therefore the view of RammSanderson Ecology Ltd.
- v The surveys and desk based assessments undertaken as part of this review and subsequent report including the Ecological Constraints and opportunities Plan are prepared in accordance with the British Standard for Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development (BS42020:2013).

1.2 Zone of Influence

- I The Zone of Influence is used to describe the geographic extent of potential impacts of a proposed development. The Zone is determined by the nature of the development and also in relation to individual species, depending on their habitat requirements, mobility and distances indicated in any best practice guidelines. This can be 5km from a site is significant bat habitat is to be affected.

1.3 Site Context and Location

- I The site is located off Rufford Lane, Rufford North Nottingham (Grid reference SK 648 647). It is located within an arable and pastoral setting with Rufford Country Park to south.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Impact Appraisal

I In appraising any impacts the review considers the Client’s Site proposals and any subsequent recommendations made are proportionate and appropriate to the site and have considered the Mitigation Hierarchy as identified below:

Avoid: Provide advice on how the development may proceed by avoiding impacts to any species or sites by either consideration of site design or identification of an alternative option.

Mitigate: Where avoidance cannot be implemented mitigation proposals are put forward to minimise impacts to species or sites as a result of the proposals. Mitigation put forward is proportionate to the site.

Compensate: Where avoidance cannot be achieved any mitigation strategy will consider the requirements for site compensatory measures.

Enhance: The assessment refers to planning policy guidance (e.g. NPPF) to relate the ecological value of the site and identify appropriate and proportionate ecological enhancement in line with both national and local policy.

2.2 Bat Roost Suitability Assessment

I The overall value of the site and its connectivity to the wider countryside was assessed in relation to bats. The likelihood of bats roosting at the site or moving through the site between local roost sites and foraging/mating/hibernation habitats was considered.

ii The building was assessed by an ecologist and graded as to their suitability for supporting roosting bats using the Bat Conservation Trust’s *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Survey Guidelines* (Collins, J. Eds. 2016), an extract of which is provided interpreted in the table below.

Table 1: Criteria for bat roost potential assessment of buildings

Roost Potential	Description	Surveys Required (Buildings)
Confirmed roost	Evidence of roosting bats found during initial daytime inspection.	
High *	Structures with one or more features suitable for bat roosting, with obvious suitability for larger numbers of bats.	3 – including 1 dawn as a minimum, or all dusk with augmentation of Night Vision Aids
Moderate	Structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used due to size, shelter and protection but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	2– including 1 dawn as a minimum, or all dusk with augmentation of Night Vision Aids
Low	Structure with one or more potential roosting sites used by individual bats opportunistically. Insufficient space, shelter or protection to be used by large numbers of bats.	1 Survey

Roost Potential	Description	Surveys Required (Buildings)
Negligible	No or negligible features identified that are likely to be used by roosting bats	None

** Unless it is a confirmed roost, additional surveys are required of buildings to assess presence / likely absence of a roost. The number of surveys are indicative to give confidence in a negative result, i.e. where no bats are found, confidence in a result can be taken.*

2.3 Limitations

- I It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment.

2.4 Accurate lifespan of ecological data

- I The majority of ecological data remain valid for only short periods due to the inherently transient nature of the subject. The survey results contained in this report are considered accurate for approximately 2 years, notwithstanding any considerable changes to the site conditions.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Surveyor Competency

- The survey was carried out by Nick Sanderson BSc MSc CEcol MCIEEM. Nick also holds a class two licence for GCN (2015-16947-CLS-CLS) (and is a Registered Consultant under the Low Impact Scheme GCN1RC052) and class two licence for bats (2015-15565-CLS-CLS) and has been a professional ecologist for the past seventeen years. The survey was completed during suitable conditions as detailed in the table below.

Table 2: Summary of conditions during survey

Abiotic Factor	Survey 1
Survey type	PBRA
Date completed	26/09/2023
Temperature (°C)	12
Wind speed (Beaufort Scale)	1
Cloud cover	100%
Precipitation	Light drizzle

3.2 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

- The site comprises a timber frame and panel stable structure with pitched bitumen covered roof. The structure is circa 7years old and in very good repair with the timber panels are intact with no crevices.

Figure 2: General View of the Site



- ii There are no gaps present in the timber panels or at any join interfaces. In each gable wall there are however louvered vent details to allow for air flow within the stable.

Figure 3: Louvered vents



- iii Internally the structure is split into several partitions with timber panels walls with machine cut frame which lacks any secluded niches. Two parts have had internal modifications to create wash down and tack rooms.

Figure 4: Interior view



3.3 Nesting Birds

- I No Bird nests were recorded on site.

3.4 Invasive Species

- I No non native species were identified on site.

4 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Bats

- I The building was identified as having negligible potential for roosting bats. Whilst there are louvered vents, the interior lacked suitable niches, was open and in continued use and extremely unlikely to provide scope for roosting. Never the less there remains an extremely low residual risk given the sites location that opportunistic solitary individuals might seek refuge here in transient phases of the year. Whilst this is deemed extremely unlikely it can never be entirely ruled out. As such a precautionary method should be adopted and it is recommended that at the start of works the building is inspected by site operatives. In the extremely unlikely event a bat is found works will need to be postponed and further consultation and or survey undertaken.

4.2 Site Enhancements

- I The NPPF encourages biodiversity enhancements through the planning process. Sites such as this can easily and cost effectively achieve localised enhancements through inclusion of a range of nest boxes for birds. A range of boxes could be affixed to the structure to encourage birds including small aperture boxes and open fronted boxes for species such as robins and blackbirds.

5 REFERENCES

- i Institution of Lighting Professionals and Bat Conservation Trust (2018). Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK – Bats and the Built Environment Series Guidance Note. 08/18
- ii BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development 2013: The British Standards Institution.
- iii Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2018. Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland. Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Winchester: CIEEM.
- iv Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2017. Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd ed. Winchester: CIEEM.
- v Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), 2019. 'Advice Note: on the Lifespan of Ecological Report and Surveys'. Winchester: CIEEM.
- iv Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2018.' Guidelines for Ecological Impact
- vii Collins J eds. 2016. Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd Edition. London: Bat Conservation Trust.
- viii Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 2004. Bat Workers Manual. 2nd ed. Peterborough: s.n.
- ix Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 06/2005. Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and their impact within the planning system. London: ODPM.
- x Department of Communities & Local Government, 2019. 'National Planning Policy Framework', London: DCLG.

6 APPENDIX 1: LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

6.1 General & Regionally Specific Policies

I Articles of British legislation, policy guidance and both Local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and the NERC Act, 2006 are referred to throughout this report. Their context and application is explained in the relevant sections of this report. The relevant articles of legislation are:

- 1) The Environment Act (2021)
- 2) The National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
- 3) ODPM Circular 06/2005 (retained as Technical Guidance on NPPF 2021)
- 4) Local planning policies (Broxtowe Borough Council)
- 5) The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019;
- 6) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- 7) EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 79/409/EEC;
- 8) The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- 9) Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Nottinghamshire

6.2 Bats

I British bats are fully protected within UK Law under *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) through their inclusion in Schedule 5. Under the Act, they are protected from:

Intentional or reckless killing, injury, taking;
Damage to or destruction of or, obstruction of access to any place of shelter, breeding or rest;
Disturbance of an animal occupying a structure or place;
Possession or control (live or dead animals);
Selling, bartering or exchange of these species, or parts of.

ii This law is reinforced by the UK's transposition of the EU Habitats Regulations under *The Conservation of Habitats & Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (as amended)*. These Regulations also prohibit:

the deliberate killing, injuring or taking of great crested newt or bats;
the deliberate disturbance of any great crested newt or bat species in such a way as to be significantly likely to affect:
their ability to survive, hibernate, migrate, breed, or rear or nurture their young; or
the local distribution or abundance of that species.
damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place;
the possession or transport of great crested newt or bats or any other part of.

iii Under certain circumstances a licence may be granted by Natural England to permit activities that would otherwise constitute an offence. In relation to development, a scheme must have full planning permission before a licence application can be made.

iv In addition, seven British bat species are listed as Species of Principal Importance (SPI) under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006. These are barbastelle (*Barbastellus barbastellus*), Bechstein's (*Myotis bechsteinii*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), greater horseshoe (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*) and lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*).

v Under the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 the presence of any protected species is a material planning consideration. The Framework states that impacts arising from development proposals must be avoided where possible or adequately mitigated/compensated for and that opportunities for ecological enhancement should be sought.

6.3 Birds

- I The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is the principle legislation affording protection to UK wild birds. Under this legislation all birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence, with certain exceptions, to recklessly or intentionally:
 - Kill, injure or take any wild bird;
 - Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built;
 - Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.
- ii For birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Act, it is an offence to disturb any bird while it is building a nest, is at or near a nest with young; or disturb the dependant young of such a bird.
- iii Species listed in Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive 1994 (e.g. barn owl) are required to have special conservation measures taken to preserve their habitats and sites to be classified as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) where appropriate.