

BAT SURVEY REPORT

**The Barn, Highfield House, Newark Road,
Wellow, Nottinghamshire**



Produced by: Protected Species Surveys

Contact: [REDACTED]

Client: Oldfield Design Ltd

Location: **The Barn, Highfield House, Wellow, Nottinghamshire**

Date: September 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Protected Species Surveys was instructed by Oldfield Design Ltd to conduct a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of a detached brick-built barn within the grounds of Highfield House off Newark Road in Wellow, Nottinghamshire. The PRA was undertaken on 24th August 2023 with subsequent nocturnal survey completed on 29th August 2023.

The site is located within the village of Wellow between between Ollerton and Ompton (grid reference: SK 6704 6623 (Figure 1)). The barn is situated within the grounds of Highfield House which borders Newark Road. Residential houses border the east and western aspects of the site with Newark Road bordering the south. The village of Wellow is present south of the site. The village is bordered by mixed agricultural land with Wellow Park approximately 390m to the north-east.

Site Proposals

1.2 Current proposals include stabilisation works to the barn which is in a poor state of repair and potential health and safety concern due to bowed walls.

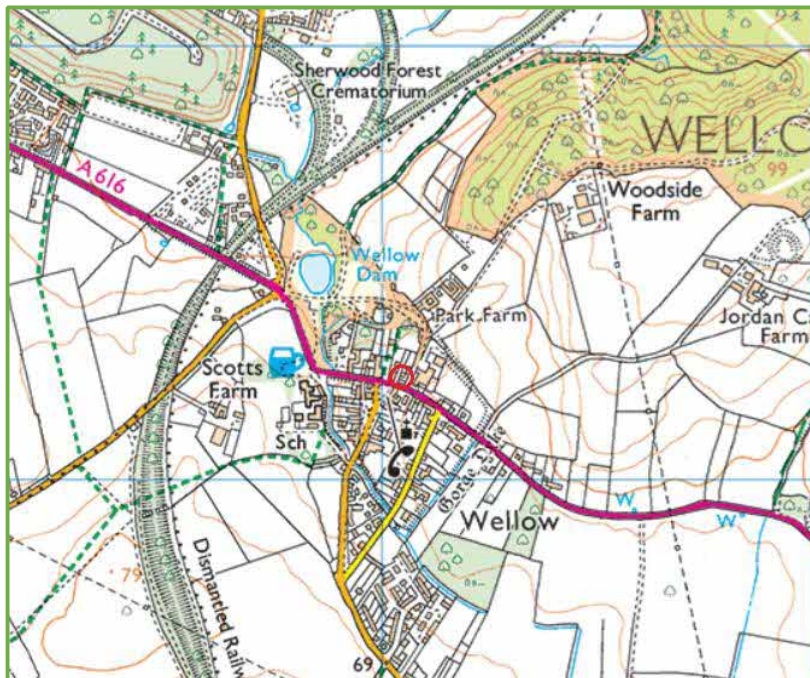


Figure 1: Site Location (denoted by redline)

2.0 METHODOLOGY

External / Internal Building Assessment

- 2.1 The internal / external PRA was undertaken on 24th August 2023 to search for potential bat access points and evidence of bat activity in accordance with BCT, 2016¹.
- 2.2 A licensed bat worker from Protected Species Surveys (Natural England Licence Number: 2015-10587-CLS-CLS) with over 14 years' experience of bat work completed the building assessment of all buildings affected by the proposals within the site boundary.
- 2.3 The external elevations of the buildings were assessed for features that could provide suitable access points for bats. Such features comprise:
- small gaps at the eaves;
 - gaps underneath over lapping asbestos roof sheeting;
gaps under lifted and raised flashings;
 - gaps in stonework and masonry where degradation of mortar has occurred.
gaps around or over the top of doors;
 - gaps at broken or missing windows;
 - gaps around wall ventilation points;
- 2.4 The internal building survey was focused on roof timbers and other cavities where bats could potentially roost. During the survey the evidence of current or previous occupation by bats was sought. Such evidence comprised:
- the presence of dead or live bats;
 - concentrated piles or scattered bat droppings;
 - food remains such as insect wing fragments;
 - urine staining on woodwork, stored items or pipe work.
- 2.5 Where access to potential access points was possible a full inspection using an endoscope was completed to identify current or previous evidence of use such as the physical presence of bats or bat droppings. Indicators that potential access points had not recently been used included the presence of cobwebs and general detritus within the access. From this, features of likely / potential value for bats can be broadly identified and a decision made over the selection of locations for more detailed work if required.

¹ Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edn). Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Nocturnal Survey

- 2.6 A single nocturnal survey was completed by experienced ecologists including a licensed bat worker (Natural England Licence Number: 2015-10587-CLS-CLS). During the survey two surveyors were positioned such that all aspects of the building were covered (Figure 2). The dusk emergence survey started approximately 15 minutes before sunset and finished at least 90 minutes after sunset.
- 2.7 During the nocturnal survey, the location and species of any bat observed emerging from / returning to the building was recorded and, the level of activity within the vicinity was also recorded. To aid species identification ultrasonic bat detectors (Bat Box Duet) were used.
- 2.8 The survey was conducted in appropriate conditions, i.e. ambient temperature above 10°C with little wind and no rain.
- 2.9 This methodology takes into account the statutory guidance from English Nature² (now Natural England) and further guidelines introduced by the Bat Conservation Trust³ (BCT).
- Dusk Survey 29th August 2023 – 19:46 – 21:16 (sunset 20:01) 17°C, no rain, 10% cloud and no wind.

Birds

- 2.11 During the survey evidence of current or previous usage of the building by other avifauna was also sought. Evidence sought included the presence of active or redundant nests in the building.

² Jones AJ (2004) Bat Mitigation Guidelines, English Nature

³ Hundt L (2012) Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 2nd edition, Bat Conservation Trust

3.0 RESULTS

Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

- 3.1 Building 1 (B1) comprised a two-storey, brick-built detached barn with a pitched clay pan-tiled roof with clay ridge tiles (photo 1). Other features of note comprised corbelled brick-work along the eaves of the barn with a single-storey brick-built lean-to extension adjoining the southern gable end of the two-storey barn. Potential bat access points were observed via large sections of collapsed roof, open doors and boarded timber slatted windows. No external evidence of use by bats was identified during the survey.



Photo 1: View of the detached barn (eastern aspect)

- 3.2 The building remains a shell with only the exterior walls intact. The first-floor flooring was missing as was any first-floor ceiling joists (Photo 2). The internal conditions of the barn were open to the weather elements with large sections of the clay pan-tiled roof having collapsed with numerous roof timbers having rotten (Photo 2 and 3). No under-felt was present under the remaining sections of the pitched roof. No evidence of bats was observed internally. Due to the open nature of the building as a result of large missing sections of roof and internal damp conditions the barn was considered to offer low potential to support roosting bats.



Photo 2 (left) showing large missing section of roof and missing floors.
Photo 3 (right) Showing large gaps in the pitched roof and missing floors

Nocturnal Survey

Dusk Survey 29th August 2023 (Figure 2)

- 3.3 During the survey the first bat recorded was a common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* commuting over the barn entering the survey area from the south heading in a northerly direction at 20:30 followed by a second common pipistrelle at 20:32. Two unidentified *Myotis* sp. was observed commuting along the western aspect of the barn at 20:34 entering the survey area from the south before briefly foraging over the off-site garden habitat north-west of the barn. Occasional unidentified *Myotis* sp.. were also recorded briefly foraging off-site, north-west of the barn at 20:46 and 20:55. A single brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus* bat was observed entering the large collapsed section of roof at 21:05 before dispersing at 21:09. No evidence of a bat roost was observed during the survey.

Birds

- 3.4 During the survey evidence of current or previous usage of the building by other avian species was also sought. Two bird nests were observed although neither nest was considered active at the time of the survey.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Site Proposals

- 4.1 Current proposals include stabilisation works to the barn which is in a poor state of repair and potential health and safety concern due to bowed walls.

Bats

- 4.2 All species of bats are listed on the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 making it illegal to deliberately disturb any such animal or damage / destroy a breeding site or roosting place of any such animal. Bats are also afforded full legal protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is illegal to recklessly or intentionally kill, injure or take a species of bat or recklessly or intentionally damage or obstruct access to or destroy any place of shelter or protection or disturb any animal whilst they are occupying such a place of shelter or protection.
- 4.3 The PRA comprised an internal and external building survey of the detached brick-built barn within the grounds of Highfields House on 24th August 2023. The barn was considered to offer low potential to support roosting bats due to the barn presenting a brick shell with partially collapsed roof present. Therefore, in accordance with industry guidelines (BCT, 2016), a single nocturnal bat survey was carried out on 29th August 2023 to determine the presence / absence of roosting bats.
- 4.4 Bat activity during the dusk nocturnal survey was limited to occasional unidentified *Myotis sp.* entering the survey area from the south briefly foraging over the off-site garden habitat north-west of the barn. Common pipistrelle was also recorded commuting through the surveys area with a single brown long-eared observed briefly foraging within the barn before dispersing. No evidence of a bat roost was recorded during the survey.
- 4.5 From the results of the completed PRA and nocturnal bat survey, it has been concluded bats are not a statutory constraint to the proposed works.
- 4.6 In the unlikely event that evidence of bat occupation or live bats are discovered during any stage of works, all works must stop immediately, and further advice should be sought from Protected Species Surveys.

- 4.7 In the event works have not commenced within 12 months of the nocturnal survey, it is recommended that an updated nocturnal survey is undertaken to determine the current status of the site in terms of bats.

Birds

- 4.8 All wild bird species are protected while nesting by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation protects wild birds and their eggs from intentional harm, and makes it illegal to intentionally take, damage, or destroy a wild bird nest while it is in use or being built.
- 4.9 During the PRA, evidence of nesting birds was recorded although not considered active at the time of the PRA or nocturnal survey. However, due to the timeframe of the survey nesting birds if present earlier in the year may have dispersed.
- 4.10 To avoid disturbance to any potential nesting birds works should be undertaken prior to the bird-breeding season (i.e. avoiding March to August, inclusive) to minimise the risk of disturbance to nesting birds. If this is not possible, habitats will be checked prior to removal by an experienced ecologist. If active nests are found, nest sites will be left untouched and suitably buffered from works until all birds have fledged.

Figure 2: Building and Nocturnal Survey Plan



Client: Oldfield Design Ltd

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Key:



The Barn with low bat roosting potential



Surveyor Location (29.08.2023)