

**BARN  
AT  
THRIFT FARM  
BROOKLAND  
KENT:  
BAT BUILDING SURVEY**

BY

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20<sup>th</sup> August 2024

D115. Brookland (TQ998264)R2



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This document was compiled in order to report upon a bat building survey of a barn at Thrift Farm, Brookland, Kent<sup>1</sup>. Planning permission is being sought for its partial redevelopment.
- 1.2** The **site** consists of the northwestern side of a single building, which originates from c. 1960, and is part of a yard of similar buildings. Built originally as a cow shed, albeit slightly changed in small ways over the years, the barn is one void with a part – built separate enclosed area in one corner, and a small workshop area with a small mezzanine area over in another. The barn is understood to have originally been a winter cow housing. The barn as is a prefabricated ‘Charcon’ building that is made with a concrete frame and exterior cladding and roof of corrugated asbestos<sup>2</sup>; there is no interior lining. There is a foundation block wall throughout which is approximately 1.5 to 2 metres tall. On the northwestern exterior is an open porch / storage area. This is a typical former agricultural building for its era.
- 1.3** The barn is part of a small complex of buildings which consist of two dwellings and other farm buildings of several types. It is situated on the northwestern side of the A259 Hastings to Folkestone carriageway at approximately three metres OD, on neutral alluvial soils. The surrounding land is all agricultural in nature.
- 1.4** The location of the survey site is shown in Figure 1 and a sketch layout is shown in Figure 2.
- 1.5** The barn was previously surveyed in 2015<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> OS / TQ998264 - approximate location.

<sup>2</sup> Provisional identification.

<sup>3</sup> Newcombe, 2015.

## 2.0 METHODS

**2.1** The site visit took place on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2024 and took approximately 1.5 hours to complete. The method used for the **bat survey** of the building was a visual assessment of the quality of possible roost sites based on the descriptions of bat roosts given by Hundt (2012), Collins (2023), Corbet and Harris (1991), Harris and Yalden (2008), Mitchell - Jones and McLeish (2004) and Ransome (1990) as enhanced by extensive personal previous experience. Other methods which were also used included:

- The use of an endoscope, mirrors, a Flir E60 thermal imager and similar equipment to check cracks and cavities, including those between joints etc.
- Searching for bat droppings on flat surfaces, walls, and floors, in spiders' webs and on artefacts. These, if found, would later be identified using experience, a reference collection and Stebbings, Yalden and Herman's (2007) descriptions, or DNA examination if needed.
- Checking for signs of bat entry points.
- Checking for signs of bat feeding points e.g. piles of insect wings.
- Where access was difficult or dangerous, photographs of parts of the site were taken and then checked and / or binoculars were used to scan potential roost sites.
- Other methods as appropriate.

### **3.0 RESULTS**

**3.1** No evidence of bats or their field signs, and no bat roosts were found in any part of the barn.



## 4.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

**4.1** Short surveys such as this one are good at giving a sample of the ecological value of a given site and showing which species, if any, require more detailed survey<sup>4</sup>.

**4.2** The **methods** of the survey have been used extensively elsewhere with consistent results and accord with good practice guidelines<sup>5 6</sup>. Signs of bats and their habitat parameters are reasonably obvious to an experienced surveyor and ecological surveys of this type are valuable in terms of helping to decide whether bats are likely to be present, are present, or have been present in or around a site and whether further, more detailed Phase 2 survey is needed. However, the results of a survey are partially decided by the time of year at which the survey takes place, the stages in a bat's life cycle, and the accessibility of the site. At this site, access was complete, and given the season, any evidence of bat roosting, particularly for maternity purposes, would have been clearly apparent.

**4.3** The absence of any evidence of **bat roosting** from the building was not surprising insofar as the building lacked any suitable roosting habitat; it was very light as a result of the presence of skylights, it was very dry and ventilated and the structure of the barn was simple and without any suitable roosting places, with no architectural features that could hold roosting bats. The roof was unsuitable being tightly attached with open eaves spaces, and because of its type of construction, the whole building would lose heat during the night, and be hot from insolation during the day. The building was warm enough during the visit to make it seem possible that bats could use it, but the roof and the rest of the building lacked any insulation so would be cold at night; conditions for maternity roosting were therefore non – existent. There were no features, either internally or externally which could allow bats to hibernate either and thus it is considered that the building was unsuitable for bats' use.

**4.4** In **summary**, therefore, there is no bat habitat present in or on the building and no bat evidence was found during the survey.

**4.5** It is strongly **recommended** that, in order to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>7</sup> and to provide some positive ecological benefits, some of the

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<sup>4</sup> Stork and Samways, 1995.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., Collins, 2023

<sup>6</sup> <https://cieem.net/resource/guidance-on-preliminary-ecological-appraisal-gpea/>

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021.

wildlife conservation measures and **mitigation**, including a biodiversity enhancement plan and measures suggested by Gunnell, Murphy and Williams (2013) for instance, for bats in the built environment should be incorporated into the proposed Scheme by means of the provision of several bat boxes on the property and by the provision of a suitable, bat - friendly lighting scheme. This latter should include;

- A range of Schwegler bat boxes should be erected on the site for the purposes of supplying bat roosting opportunities.
- In order to support the needs of bats, barn owls and nocturnal insects, any lighting that is erected on site should be either low - pressure sodium lamps or mercury lamps fitted with ultraviolet filters. The brightness of lamps should be kept as low as possible and be directed to where it is needed to avoid unnecessary spillage of light. Lighting should not be upwardly - directed light and lighting durations should be limited by fitting timers to all external lights.



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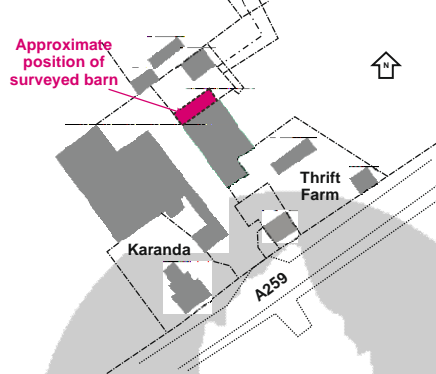


<b>APPENDIX 1: BUILDING ASSESSMENT FOR BATS (nb. All data approximate)</b>	
<b>Name of owner:</b>	Mr Steve Sullivan
<b>Survey commissioned by:</b>	Mr Steve Sullivan
<b>Address of site:</b>	Barn at Thrift Farm, Straight Lane, Brookland.
<b>OS grid reference:</b>	TQ998264
<b>Date:</b>	15th August 2024.
<b>Surveyor:</b>	Martin Newcombe
<b>Building no.:</b>	1
<b>Building type:</b>	Barn
<b>Current use:</b>	Storage
<b>Age:</b>	1960s? (Charcon)
<b>Condition</b>	Good
<b>Storeys:</b>	Ground floor only.
<b>Foundations:</b>	Concrete and block.
<b>Cellar:</b>	Absent
<b>Attic:</b>	Absent
<b>Walls:</b>	Block to 2 metres.
<b>Any wooden joints with potential for bats?</b>	Absent
<b>Any cavities in brick or stone work suitable for bats?</b>	Negligible; generally too big or debris - filled.
<b>Cladding:</b>	Corrugated asbestos sheet
<b>Walls:</b>	Concrete frame with single exterior skin.
<b>Hanging tiles?</b>	Absent
<b>Soffits:</b>	Absent
<b>Roof type:</b>	Pitched
<b>Roof covering:</b>	Corrugated asbestos sheet
<b>Lined with:</b>	Absent
<b>Insulation present?</b>	Absent
<b>Building Axis</b>	SW - NE
<b>Extent of insolation:</b>	Full
<b>Intrinsic heat source:</b>	Absent
<b>Humidity:</b>	As exterior
<b>Features of potential interest to bats:</b>	Absent
<b>Position of potential bat access points:</b>	Through gaps around doors?
<b>Bat roosting sites:</b>	Absent
<b>Number of bats at time of visit:</b>	Absent
<b>Droppings:</b>	Absent
<b>Other bat evidence:</b>	Absent
<b>Conclusions re bats at this site:</b>	<b>Unsuitable for use by bats at any time due to method of construction and absence of potential roost sites.</b>
<b>Constraints on survey:</b>	None
<b>Additional notes</b>	1. Building is north-westerly end of larger building.
	2. Abundant skylights in roof; very light interior.
	3. Eaves fillers present; foam?
	4. Former cow sheds.



**FIGURE 1: THE SURVEY SITE LOCATION.**

REPRODUCED FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CONTROLLER OF HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE © CROWN COPYRIGHT MARTIN NEWCOMBE, ALDINGTON, KENT, TN25 7BZ. LICENCE NO. AC000810789



**FIGURE 2: SKETCH MAP TO SHOW THE POSITION OF THE BARN.**



**FIGURE 3: A COMPOSITE GENERAL VIEW OF THE EXTERIOR OF THE BARN.**



**FIGURE 4: THE EXTERNAL STORAGE AREA ON THE NORTHWESTERN SIDE.**



**FIGURE 5: SHOWING THE ROOF AND SKYLIGHTS.**



**FIGURE 6: THE BLOCK WALL AND AN INTERNAL BLOCK PARTITION.**



**FIGURE 7: ONE OF THE SUPPORTING PIERS SHOWING THE LACK OF ROOSTING SPACES.**



**FIGURE 8: THE BEAMS ARE SEVERAL CENTIMETRES PROUD OF THE ROOF AND WALL.**



FIGURE 9: THE GAP BETWEEN THE BEAMS AND THE ROOF.

