

Bat Scoping Survey: South Moor Farm

NYMNPA  
- 1 DEC 2009

**Bat Scoping Survey**

South Moor Farm, Dalby Forest



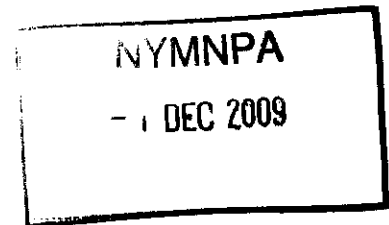
**MAB Environment & Ecology Ltd**

The Old Chapel, Knayton, Thirsk, North Yorkshire Y

Tel. [REDACTED]

[www.mab.uk.com](http://www.mab.uk.com)

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**Site:**

Farm buildings at South Moor Farm, Dalby Forest.

**Date:**

26<sup>th</sup> September 2008

**Client:**

Mr Bob Walker, South Moor Far, Dalby Forest Drive, Langdale End, Scarborough  
YO13 0LW

**Agent:**

none

**Planning Office:**

North York Moors NPA

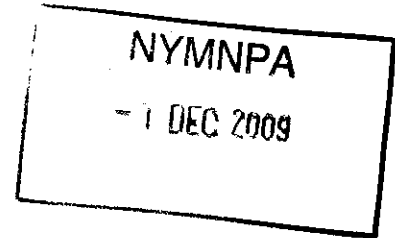
**Reference:**

n/a

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## **1. Summary**

**A range of stone outbuildings was inspected for bats and potential bat roost habitat. No evidence of bat usage was detected. The buildings provide some potential habitat in the form of masonry crevices, but the site is very exposed and has no habitat linkage. In the absence of any signs of bats throughout the site, we can advise that there is very little risk of impact on bats. In addition, there were no signs of use by barn owls.**

## **2. Introduction**

MAB Environment & Ecology Ltd were commissioned to undertake a bat and barn owl scoping survey for a range of outbuildings that form part of the holding of South Moor Farm. The scoping survey was required for a planning permission application for the conversion of part of the outbuilding into holiday accommodation.

## **3. Methodology**

3.1 The property was surveyed by Giles Manners CEnv MIEEM, of MAB Environmental Management. Mr Manners has been trained by the Bat Conservation Trust in surveying properties for bats, and is licensed by Natural England to work with bats. He is also a zoologist of over 20 years' experience, a full member of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and a Chartered Environmentalist.

3.2 The interior and exterior of the buildings were inspected during the day using halogen torches, ladders, and a flexible endoscope (a Pro Vision 636). All normal signs of bat use were looked for, including bats, bat droppings, feeding waste, entry and exit holes, dead bats, and the sounds / smells of bat roosts.

3.3 A bat records search of 2km square around the site was commissioned from the North Yorkshire Bat Group (NYBG) (Mr John Drewett).

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**4. Constraints**

Emergence surveying has not been done as part of this report; the results of the daylight survey were found to be sufficient.

**5. Site Description**

Figure 1 Location map

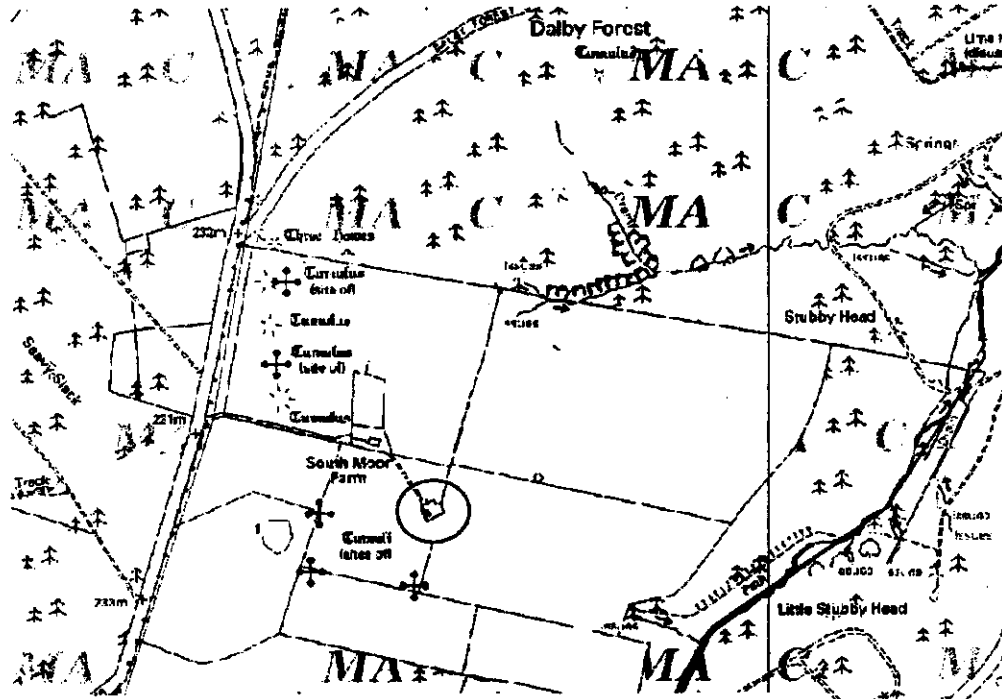


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Figure 2 Detailed location map

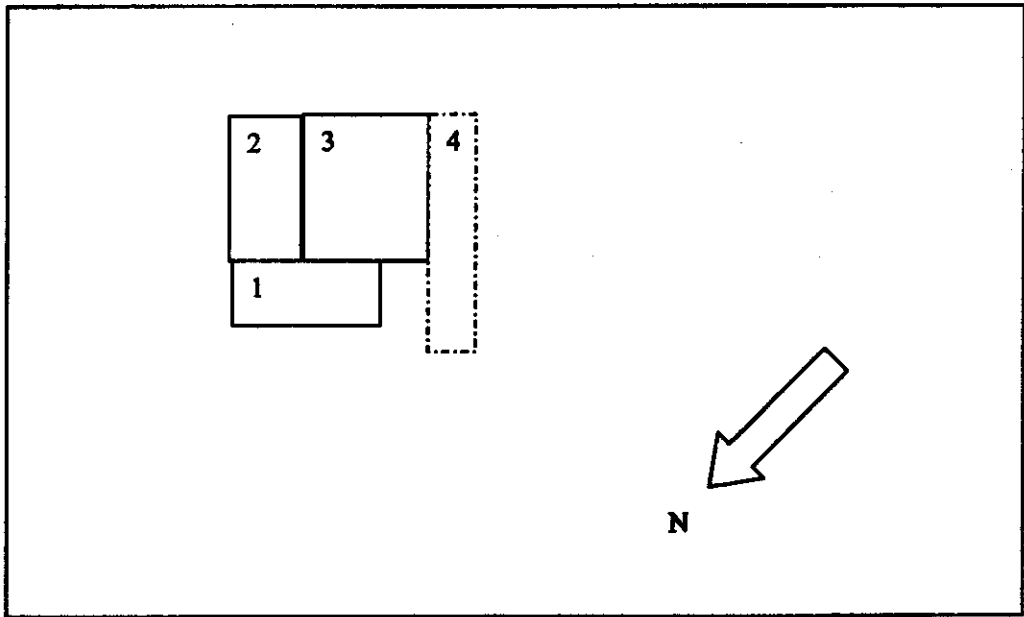


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Figure 3 Site plan



All buildings of local stone with clay pan tiles: one barn, one stable and one ruin (no roof). Deep crevices in masonry, some wooden lats under tiles, mostly unlined. Very exposed and roofs in poor condition.

On figure 3:

Area 1 is a tall barn with no floors (hay barn). The plans are for the conversion of this area.

Area 2 is single storey stables; there are no plans for the development of this bit – to remain in use for lambing).

Area 3 is a fold yard, asbestos roof.

Area 4 are stone ruins (walls only).

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## 6. Pre-existing information

A records search for a 2km radius around the barn had the following results:

No bat records held within 2km of site.

## 7. Results

### 7.1 Daylight inspection

A thorough search found no bat droppings in any location, despite some dry surfaces. Several areas were very wet, and droppings on the ground would have decayed quickly. There are abundant crevices which were checked for droppings with ladders and a halogen torch, and no bat droppings were found. Several lintels also provided suitable habitat, but no evidence of bat usage was detected.

There is a high number of barn swallow nests, evidently in active use.

The exterior crevices were also checked for bat usage, and none was found.

The site is exposed and separated from any foraging habitat by open pasture with no hedge, walls or trees. Therefore habitat connectivity is almost zero, and bat usage is made less likely. The level of expose high on a hillside in Dalby Forest is also extreme.

No signs of barn owl usage were evident.

### 7.2 Emergence survey

n/a

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## **8. Conclusions**

No evidence of bat usage was detected.

A very low level of potential bat roost habitat was noted.

It is highly unlikely that bats will make use of buildings 1, 3 or 4 in the absence of some connective features and reduced exposure.

Building 2 provides some more suitable potential roosting habitat because the roof and the wooden lats are in better condition. However, no signs of bat usage were found, and this is possibly due to the lack of habitat connected.

The exposed nature of the site makes it ideal hunting country for barn owls: provision of barn owl boxes may be taken up by nesting birds.

## **9. Likely Impact on Bats**

Negligible.

## **10. Method Statement**

As work progresses, crevices should always be examined for the presence of bats, and if any are found, the bat helpline or the environmental consultant should be telephoned.

Swallows must be taken account of, and building works must not affect swallows once they are on eggs or with young.

## **11. Mitigation outline**

There is no need for mitigation in the absence of likely uptake by bats in this site.

Provision for swallows must be maintained.

We would strongly recommend provision of a barn owl box on the exterior walls of the barn, or a suitable location nearby. We have attached information on barn owl boxes as an appendix.



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## 12. Legislation relating to bats

**12.1 All bat species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats &C) Regulations 1994 as amended in 2007.**

Under the WCA it is an offence for any person to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bat; to intentionally disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection; to intentionally damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection; to be in possession or control of any live or dead wild bat, or any part of, or anything derived from a wild bat; or to sell, offer or expose for sale, or possess or transport for the purpose of sale, any live or dead wild bat, or any part of, or anything derived from a wild bat.

Under the Habitats Regulations it is an offence to deliberately disturb animals of a European protected species (EPS) where the disturbance is likely to significantly affect the ability of any significant group of animals of that species to survive, breed or rear or nurture their young or likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species. Natural England 2007.

**12.2 Prosecution could result in imprisonment, fines of £5,000 per animal affected and confiscation of vehicles and equipment used.** In order to minimise the risk of breaking the law it is essential to work with care to avoid harming bats, to be aware of the procedures to be followed if bats are found during works, and to commission surveys and expert advice as required to minimise the risk of reckless harm to bats.

**12.3** Where it is proposed to carry out works which will affect a bat roost, a licence must first be obtained from the Natural England even if no bats are expected to be present when the work is carried out.

**12.4** The application for a license normally requires a full knowledge of the use of a site by bats, including species, numbers, and timings. Gathering this information usually involves surveying throughout the bat active season. The licence may require ongoing monitoring of the site following completion of the works.

**12.5** When considering an application, the Environmental Consultant must consult with the local planning authority. This process may also take a considerable length of time. Applications can only be made once planning permission has been granted (where appropriate), and consultation responses have been received.

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**12.6 Licences can only be issued if Natural England are satisfied that there is no satisfactory alternative to the development and that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.**

**12.7 PPS9: Planning Policy Statement on Biodiversity and Geological Conservation is the relevant national planning guidance in relation to ecological issues. It provides guidance on how the Government's policies on nature conservation should be implemented through the land use planning system. PPS9 states that biodiversity may be material to decisions on individual planning applications. It also talks about conserving and enhancing biodiversity and ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity.**

13. References.

Natural England 2007: *Amendment of the Habitats Regulations in England and Wales 2007: Change to licensing requirements.* <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/ewd-chang-spec-prot-lic.pdf>