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SURVEY RELATING TO BARN AT SLADE HILL FARM, STADEN LANE, BUXTON.

***DATE OF SURVEY**: 23rd March 2012*

PURPOSE OF SURVEY

The owner(s) of this barn are intending to convert it to residential use in association with their existing properties and business. This survey and appraisal is to satisfy the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to ensure bats, a European protected species, and their roost are not adversely affected. It was also possible to determine whether any barn owls were present, as signs of this creature are normally far more obvious.

DESCRIPTION:

The building is a traditional stone barn in use for storage purposes at ground floor and first floor level. It is constructed of natural stone walls (largely pointed not drystone) with a combination of stone slates and normal slate tile roof as shown on the photographs. At the time of inspection it was considered to be in a generally good condition in respect of main walls and roof, although the work originally started to renovate the building has not been completed internally or in respect of replacement doors and windows. A fair degree of natural light is therefore discernible from these door and window openings at both ground and first floor levels. Most important from a bat perspective, there is no separate roof void.
Photographs of the building are attached as an Appendix to this survey.

APPRAISAL:

The building was inspected internally and externally for its suitability for bats, using an endoscope where necessary. The fact that the building was used to some extent and there were a number of openings and a resultant reasonable degree of natural light considerably reduced the potential of the barn. Of particular importance, there was no separate roof void and few crevices in the walls of any depth suitable for bats, the internal walls being mainly cement filled with no suitable cracks. In addition the roof timbers and sarking had been replaced and the level of light at first floor level with the combined roof space was quite good. No evidence of droppings or other indications of use by bats was found here or elsewhere in the building. Generally, this barn did not provide much potential for use as a roost by bats, primarily because of the fact that the building was in use, there was generally a good level of natural light, and it lacked a separate roof space with no dark, undisturbed recesses.

CONCLUSION

There was no evidence from the inspection of the barn to suggest either current or historic use by bats. I am therefore satisfied that the building can be satisfactorily converted without causing loss of a roost site. In this particular case I would not have considered an emergence survey necessary, nor the incorporation of any mitigation measures as part of the new development as there are other traditional buildings nearby and many mature trees which appeared to have some potential for bats.
It was also possible as part of this survey to establish that no barn owls were using this building as evidence of their use in the form of pellets and feathers is very clear.

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