



HOLLACOMBE FARMHOUSE

BAT EMERGENCE AND REMOTE MONITORING SURVEYS



SURVEYOR POSITION 2; SOUTH

Report reference: *HEA863b2023*

Date: September 2023

Site Location: - Hollacombe Farmhouse, Hollacombe, Crediton, Devon. EX6 7XY

Grid reference: - SS 811 002

Surveyors: - Jessica Hutchinson, Chris Maule & Martin Williams

Natural England Licence numbers: - 2015-15065-cls-cls (Bats) Jessica Hutchinson

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<u>Brief Survey Summary</u>	
Bats:	<p>Although Hollacombe Farm is a confirmed multi-species roost the proposed extension will not impact upon those bats which are roosting within the main farmhouse structure and associated roof voids; the extension will not impact upon the existing roof and no bats were recorded emergent.</p> <p>Remote monitoring recorded bats within the main farmhouse roof void, that will not be directly impacted however, none were recorded within the small lean-to to be demolished.</p>
Further Work:	<p>There will be no requirement for a derogation licensing as the extension remains below the current roof level and therefore will not impact upon the bat roosts present within the main farmhouse.</p> <p>As bats are known to roost at the wider-site it is recommended that breathable membranes are avoided, or only those certificated as being safe for use within a bat roost are used.</p> <p>Although, no mitigation is necessary it is recommended that two enhancement features are provided for crevice dwelling species in order to provide a biodiversity net gain; note that the client is already undertaking a significant and extensive rewilding project within his wider estate, which provides a biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>Regarding all protected species, vigilance when works are undertaken, and timing of works are of great importance and should any evidence of a protected species be identified then further advice must be sought from the ecologist before works recommence.</p> <p>Refer to the timing chart in Appendix 1 for reference to breeding birds and bats.</p> <p>If works do not commence within a year of this survey an updated survey will be required.</p>

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HOLLACOMBE FARMHOUSE

BAT EMERGENCE AND REMOTE MONITORING SURVEYS

1. Introduction

Hutchinson Ecological Associates¹ were contracted to undertake further assessment of the area of the proposed extension to the East of Hollacombe Farmhouse, (here after referred to as the Site) regarding bats post their April 2023 survey effort confirming the presence of a multi-species roof within the main farmhouse roof void.

As bats are legally protected within the UK, refer to Appendix 2 for legislation detail, it is essential that the species and populations at a site are fully assessed to ensure that the proposed scheme can be managed to maintain a Favourable Conservation Status (FCS); no overall significant impact on the bat species using the site; Aims & Objectives, and, Methodology are included within Appendix 2.

Hollacombe Farm comprises of a moderately sized house, the site, and range of agricultural buildings in mixed-use. Hollacombe House lies to the southeast of the wider farm and is currently under renovation with some works within the roof void following a BCT (Bat Conservation Trust) advice letter as a known bat roost.

The Farm lies to the West of the Town of Crediton and East of the hamlet of Hollacombe. It is predominantly surrounded by grazed pasture with some occasional arable inclusion. The owner is taking pride in nature conservation enhancement of the land within his ownership and has a large, naturalised pond to the southeast and the fields are boarded by unmanaged mature hedgerows, some with trees. His overall aim is to rewild the estate to a more naturalised environment.

Our understanding is that an application is to be made to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), for the extension of the current residential dwelling to the East which would impact upon the wall tops and require the demolition of a small lean-to. The proposed plans have been viewed. This report is, therefore required to support the application to the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

An aerial view of the Site is outlined within Figure 1 with supporting photographs on the front cover and within Figure 2.

¹ hereafter referred to as HEA

2. Results: Background, Historical Records and Survey

Consideration to constraints must be applied when interpreting the results from all the completed surveys. The results of the site-specific surveys are included within the below figures and photos.

2.1 Background and Historical Data

Due to the small size of the Site, no data search from the local records centre was deemed necessary and online resources were utilised. These included the National Biodiversity Network (NBN), MAGIC and Natural England.

The NBN atlas was searched for records of Bats recorded within a 0.1, 0.5, 1, 2, 5 and 10km radius of the Site (NBN, 2023).

NBN (2023)

National Biodiversity Network (2023)

Brown Long-eared bats have been recorded within a 1km radius of the site with Commons Pipistrelle recorded within 2kms, with a further three species and a cryptic (Soprano Pipistrelle, Pipistrelle and Greater and Lesser Horseshoe) within 5kms and a further five species and one cryptic (Barbastelle, Daubenton's, Natterers, Whiskered, Whiskered/Brandt's and Leiser's).

Magic (2023)

A single European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) license has been granted within a 2 km radius, approx. 1km to the northeast for the destruction of a resting place of Common Pipistrelle bats.

Pers. Comms.

The client is aware that there are bats roosting within the roof void and renovation of the property has been undertaken empathetically following an advice letter from the BCT. To date, I have not seen this advice letter however, nothing untoward was noted at the site.

2.3 Previous survey effort

HEAecology confirmed the main farmhouse to be a multi-species roost, with the potential for maternity, in use by Pipistrelle, Long-eared and Myotis species during their survey effort complete on the 9th March 2023.

2.2 Site Description

The House consists of a brick-rendered or painted structure with a pitched tiled roof and several lean-to extensions have been added post-initial construction. Internally there is a significant roof void which has a mix of bitumen underlay and chestnut lath and plaster.

2.3 Survey Conditions

All the 2023 surveys were completed within optimal weather conditions at a suitable time of year and within suitable parameters for the survey completed. The conditions in which these were undertaken are listed in chronological order in Appendix 3.

2.4 Survey Constraints

There were no significant constraints to the survey other than they did not span the entire season.

2.5 Survey Results

Common Pipistrelle and Long-eared, most likely Brown long-eared, were emergent from the farmhouse in proximity to the new extension however, no bats were emergent from the extension and will not impact roosts within the main house.

Soprano Pipistrelle, Noctule and Serotine were recorded around the site during the survey effort undertaken.

The location of bat evidence and emergent bats is illustrated on the photos included within Figure 2.

2.5.1 Emergence Surveys

The position of the surveyors are illustrated within Figure 1 along with surveyor information.

16th June 2023

No bats were recorded emergent.

Five species of bat were recorded using the site or surrounding area, in order of abundance; Common Pipistrelle, Noctule, Soprano Pipistrelle, Serotine and Long-eared.

7th July 2023

Two bats were emergent from the main farmhouse, not within the proposed works zone, and include Common Pipistrelle at 21:44 from the southwest ridge and Long-eared at 22:34 from the southeast corner end (ridge).

Two further species of bat were recorded using the surrounding area and include, in order of abundance Noctule and Soprano Pipistrelle.

28th July 2023

Two species of bat were recorded emergent from the main farmhouse, not within the proposed works zone, and include Common Pipistrelle (six bats) and Brown Long-eared (single bat). The bats recorded emergent include:

- Common Pipistrelle:
 - 21:23 southeast ridge;
 - 21:28, 21:35, 21:40 and 21:51 East face roofing material:

- Brown Long-eared:
- 21:59 East face roofing material edge.

Two species were recorded using the site or surrounding area that of, in order of abundance; Soprano Pipistrelle and Noctule.

2.5.2 Remote Monitoring

Two static remote monitoring detectors (Song meter mini) were deployed, one within the main roof void of the farmhouse and the other within the small lean-to that is to be demolished as part of the scheme.

Three species of bat, Common & Soprano Pipistrelle and Noctule, bat species were recorded within the main farmhouse roof void. There is potential for all three species to roost within the farmhouse and Common Pipistrelle and Brown Long-eared have been recorded emergent.

No bats were recorded on the static detector deployed within the lean-to to be demolished.

The report monitoring results for the ground floor are within [Appendix 4].

3. Discussion and Impact Evaluation

The site comprises of a large farmhouse set within amenity habitats consisting of gardens, on the edge of a farmyard. The overall farm and yards are set within a valley which is undergoing rewilding, it is in close proximity to a large pond, and overall is within good quality bat habitat.

The red line boundary comprises part of the East end where an extension is proposed to be constructed, adhering to the main structure and over the top of a lean-to which will be demolished. The main farmhouse is a known multi-species bat roost in current use however, the extension will not impact directly or indirectly upon the main void where the bats roost; the extension adhering to the main farmhouse beneath the current wall top.

Whilst, two bat species were recorded emergent during surveys these were all within the main farmhouse which will not be impacted upon. The disturbances result of the construction of the proposed extension are not envisaged to reach a threshold of significance which would constitute the need for a derogation license for disturbance alone. Note, that works within the farmhouse are not included within the scope of this report nor the potential need for any derogation license.

Due to no evidence of bats being recorded at the Site, as determined within the red line boundary of the planning application, no further mitigation is required.

As good practice, it is recommended that lighting around the Site is constrained to that essential for health and safety purposes to ensure that impacts upon nocturnal species are minimised. Further advice upon lighting can be obtained from the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK.

If wanting to make enhancements for these species then the inclusion of roosting features would suffice, suitable designs are included in Appendix 2. These should be implemented in accordance with the LPA guidance and further advice can be sought upon design and positioning from the ecologist. Recommended enhancements would include two crevice roosting features away from any non-certified membrane².

General vigilance for protected species is recommended during works and should a bat be encountered as an incidental action of an otherwise legal operation then works must cease and further advice sought from a suitably qualified ecologist who will likely need to apply to Natural England for an appropriate derogation license; refer to Appendix 5 for further information regarding derogation licenses.

Note: disturbance to a bat or bat roost, destruction of a bat roost or killing of a bat is an offence with heavy fines (£5,000 per bat) and potential prison sentences.

² Breathable man-made fibre felts have been concluded hazardous to bats and only bitumen 1F felt and specifically certificated membranes have been deemed suitable and safe for use within bat roosts.

4. Conclusions

Any development will have an impact upon local nature conservation and ecology either directly or indirectly, regardless of the scale. Despite this, the inclusion of mitigation and enhancement features can achieve an overall net gain to biodiversity; this does not necessarily need to be targeted at the species impacted upon most significantly, but attain an overall improvement in habitat quality and maintain a Favourable Conservation Status (FCS).

If wanting to provide enhancements for these species in order to achieve a net gain to biodiversity, then suitable designs are included within the Figures and Appendices.

No evidence of bats was recorded within the red line boundary of the planning application however, bats do roost within the wider-site of the farmhouse to which the extension is proposed to adhere. Although, the specific site of the application is not determined to be a bat roost, caution is recommended to the presence of a multi-species roost within the adjacent farmhouse structure where bats were recorded to emerge from during the survey effort. It is therefore determined that the works within the redline boundary of this planning application are not sufficient to exceed the threshold of disturbance to a bat roost to require derogation licensing, none of the works will directly disturb a bat or bat roost.

If wanting to provide enhancement of these species then the inclusion of roosting features, indicative designs are included within the appendices, would suffice. It is recommended that the inclusion of such features follows the LPA guidance and policies; recommended as two crevices roosting features.

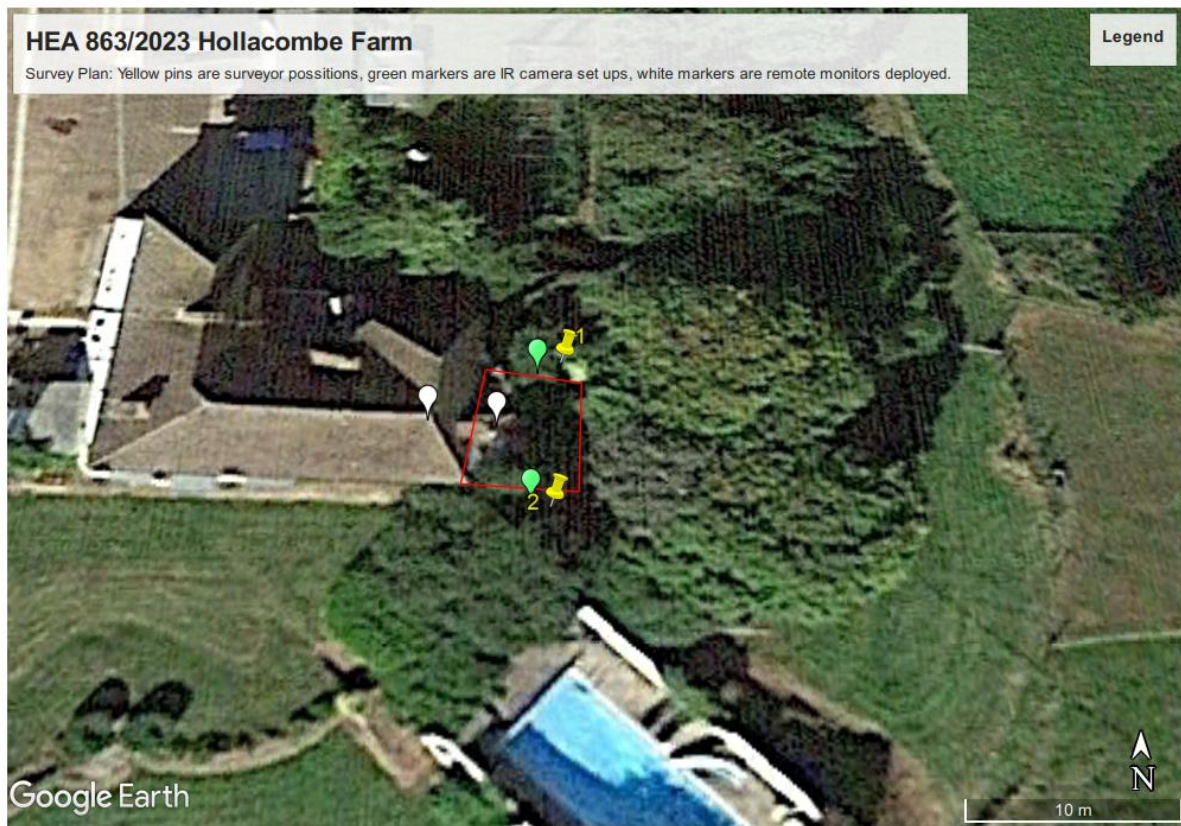
As with all works, vigilance for any protected species or signs of are recommended by all workers at all times. Should evidence of a protected species or an individual be identified then works must stop and further advice sought from the ecologist.

If works do not commence within twelve months of this survey an update survey will be required to ensure that the status of the Site, with regard to these species, has not significantly altered. Post 2-3 years a full Site re-survey will be require in accordance with Natural England guidelines.

5. References

- HEAecology (2023). Hollacombe Farm: Preliminary Roost Features Assessment; Bat, Barn owls and nesting birds.

Figure 1 – Google Earth Image Extract of the Site



Above: The Site, within the red line, with the Surveyor positions are illustrated by the yellow pins. The white pins illustrate the locations of remote static monitors and the green pins IR cameras and lighting (Night Vision Aids, NVA's).

Below: Table of surveyors and positions and equipment.

Date	Position	Surveyor	Equipment
16/06/2023	1	CM	Echo Metre Pro, Android, IR camera and IR lights
16/06/2023	2	JH	Echo Metre Pro, Android, IR camera and IR lights
07/07/2023	1	CM	Echo Metre Pro, Android, IR camera and IR lights
07/07/2023	2	JH	Echo Metre Pro, Android, IR camera and IR lights
28/07/2023	1	WM	Echo Metre Pro, Android, IR camera and IR lights
28/07/2023	2	JH	Echo Metre Pro, Android, IR camera and IR lights

Figure 2 – Photos of the Site



Figure 1. East end. The arrow illustrates the position of surveyor position 1. Circled in blue is the location of emergence locations of Brown Long-eared bats, in red emergent Common Pipistrelle bats.



Figure 2. Surveyor position 2. Circled in blue is the location of emergence locations of Brown Long-eared bats, in red emergent Common Pipistrelle bats.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Bat and Bird Timing Chart

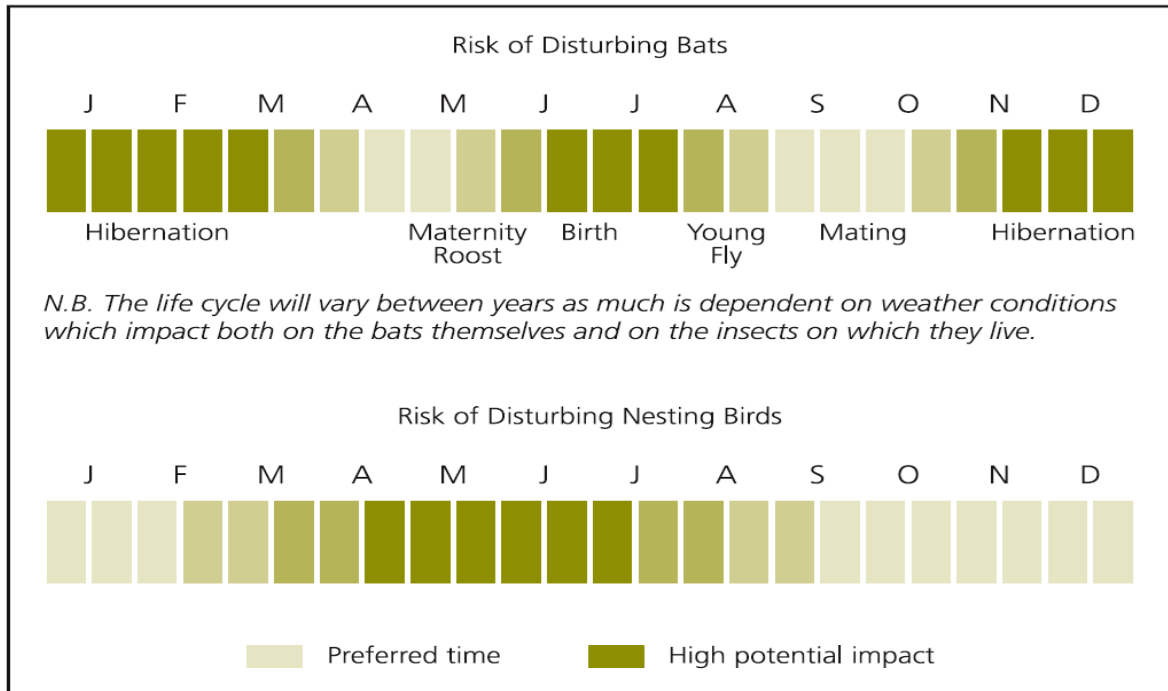


Chart reproduced from DEFRA publication PB10367 Bats, Buildings & Barn Owls. Crown copyright

Appendix 2 – Bats

Aims & Objectives

The overall aim is to establish the extent of ecological constraint upon the proposed development, with reference to the species noted within the below objectives, and to propose appropriate mitigation to minimise ecological impacts. Specific objectives include, where possible:

- Bats:
 - Determine if Bats are roosting at the Site;
 - If present, establish what Bat species are on Site; and,
 - Make recommendations upon further surveying, mitigation and licensing with Natural England.

A further aim was to refer to other species on Site of importance to local nature conservation that although may not be protected or notable, may be impacted upon by the proposed scheme and advise upon limitations to impacts.

Legislation

Many bat species populations have declined significantly in recent years and thus have been afforded legal protection (protected species). All bats, and their roosts, are protected by The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (as amended) 2019) albeit if a bat is in a roost, or not. Thus, it is an offence to kill, injure, capture, or disturb a bat, or obstruct, damage or destroy a bat roost.

It is an offence to deliberately disturb a species of British bat species, if the action has a significant effect on; (i) the ability of any significant groups of animals of that species to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young, or, (ii) the local distribution or abundance of that species. If it is relatively likely that bats are going to be encountered in a building, tree or structure and be significantly disturbed, then it is an offence to knowingly enter the roost and a Natural England licensed bat worker is required to conduct an inspection. Intervention that causes disturbance to a roost may have significant effects on local bat populations even when the bats may not be present.

Methodology

Bat Emergence Survey

The emergence surveys started 30 minutes before and finished an hour after sunset. Observers, with a bat detector (one or two of the following: EM2, Duet Batbox, Anabat SD1 and Tranquillity (II), were positioned to cover all aspects of the structure to record any bats emerging from a roost.

Thermal Inspection

All features suitable for bat roosting were further viewed with a Helion Pulsar 38QF thermal scope with magnification to seek any abnormal heat sources which could indicate a roosting bat.

Night Vision

Night vision scopes were used to assist surveyors when the light became too short to see any emergent bats.

Remote Monitoring

Static remote monitoring equipment (Anabat SD 1 and 2) detectors were deployed within the Site at the location where there was evidence of bats and set to recorded from an hour before sunset to an hour after sunrise.

Sound Analysis

Bat calls recorded were analysed using Anlook and Kaleidoscope software.

Table 1 - Criteria for Buildings Potential to Support Roosting Bats

Roosting Potential	Criteria
Negligible	Lacking habitat features suitable to be used by roosting Bats.
Low	Low numbers of features, one or more, that could be used by individual Bats or low numbers to roost. However, these potential roost features do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by large numbers of Bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).
Moderate	Either an increased number of features that could be used by Bats, or greater numbers of, to roost. Often of greater size, or afford shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat that is of a higher value. Often unlikely to support roosts of a high conservation status (with respect to roost type only and not species, species are assessed later if confirmed present).
High	Either an increased number of features or features of significant size which afford suitable/high value shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. Roost features have obvious suitability for use by larger numbers of Bats on a regular basis, potentially for longer periods of time due size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. Potential to be used for activities such as Maternity or hibernation.
Confirmed	Evidence of Bats confirmed through observation of Bats or evidence of.

Table 2 - Bat Roost Definitions, Impact Evaluation Indices and Effect Calculator

1. Definitions of roost types to be included in the application (further detail can also be found in the Bat Mitigation Guidelines and the BCT's "Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines"):

- a. *Day roost*: a place where individual Bats, or small groups of males, rest or shelter in the day but are rarely found by night in the summer.
- b. *Night roost*: a place where Bats rest or shelter in the night but are rarely found in the day. May be used by a single individual on occasions or it could be used regularly by the whole colony.
- c. *Feeding roost*: a place where individual Bats or a few individuals rest or feed during the night but are rarely present by day.
- d. *Transitional/occasional roost*: used by a few individuals or occasionally small groups for generally short periods of time on waking from hibernation or in the period prior to hibernation.
- e. *Swarming Site*: where large numbers of males and females gather during late summer to autumn. Appear to be important mating Sites
- f. *Mating Sites*: Sites where mating takes place from later summer and can continue through winter.
- g. *Maternity roost*: where female Bats give birth and raise their young to independence.
- h. *Hibernation roost*: where Bats may be found individually or together during winter. They have a constant cool temperature and high humidity.
- i. *Satellite roost*: an alternative roost found in close proximity to the main nursery colony used by a few individual breeding females to small groups of breeding females throughout the breeding season.
- j. *Other* – please explain what the roost type is if not one of the above (we recognise that roost types are interchangeable and not always easy to classify according to the nuances of certain species).

These are valued, for the purpose of impact assessment, geographically with regard to the species status. The following table is open to some interpretation as there are regional and national variations in species distribution and abundance, for example Horseshoe species are rare and more abundant in the South-West but are rare and less abundant the further east you go so a Horseshoe identified in the east would be extremely rare by comparison to it being rare in the west. This is based upon work by Wray *et al*, 2010.

2. Categorisation of Bats species by National Rarity

Rarity within range	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Island
Common population over 100,00	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Brown long-eared	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle
Rarer population, 10,000-100,00	Lesser horseshoe Whiskered Brandt's Daubenton's Natterer's Leisler's Noctule Nathusius pipistrelle Serotine	Lesser horseshoe Daubenton's Natterer's Brown long-eared	Daubenton's Natterer's Brown long-eared	Daubenton's Natterer's Leisler's Noctule Nathusius pipistrelle Brown long-eared
Rarest population under 10,000	Greater horseshoe Bechstein's Alcathoe Greater mouse-eared Barbastelle Grey long-eared	Greater horseshoe Whiskered Brandt's Bechstein's Alcathoe Noctule Nathusius pipistrelle Serotine Barbastelle	Whiskered Brandt's Alcathoe Noctule Nathusius pipistrelle Leisler's	Whiskered

3. Bat Roost Impact Evaluation Assessment criteria table

Geographical Frame of Reference	Roost Type
District, Local, or, Parish	Feeding Perches (<i>common species</i>) Individual Bats (<i>common species</i>) Small numbers of non-breeding Bats (<i>common species</i>) Mating Sites (<i>common species</i>)
County	Maternity Sites (<i>common species</i>) Small numbers of hibernating Bats (<i>common and rarer species</i>) Feeding perches (<i>rarer/rarest species</i>) Individual Bats (<i>rarer/rarest species</i>) Small numbers of non-breeding Bats (<i>rarer/rarest species</i>)
Regional	Mating Sites (<i>rarer/rarest species</i>) including well-used swarming Sites Maternity Sites (<i>rarer/rarest species</i>) Hibernation Sites (<i>rarer/rarest species</i>) Significant hibernation Sites
National/UK	Mating Sites (<i>rarer/rarest species</i>) Sites meeting SSSI guidelines with Bats roosting or noted within the citation.
International	SAC Sites with Bats roosting or noted within the citations and definitions.

4. Duration of impacts allow for the assessment of effects when cross referenced with the magnitude of the Impact. The definition of the durations is categorised within the below table.

Description of Duration of impact	
Duration	Criteria
Temporary	Effects resultant of grounds work preparation and constructional phases of the development
Short term	Effects 1-2 years post development completion
Mid term	Effects 2-5 years post development completion
Long term	Effects 5-15 years post development completion
Permanent	Effects 15 years or beyond

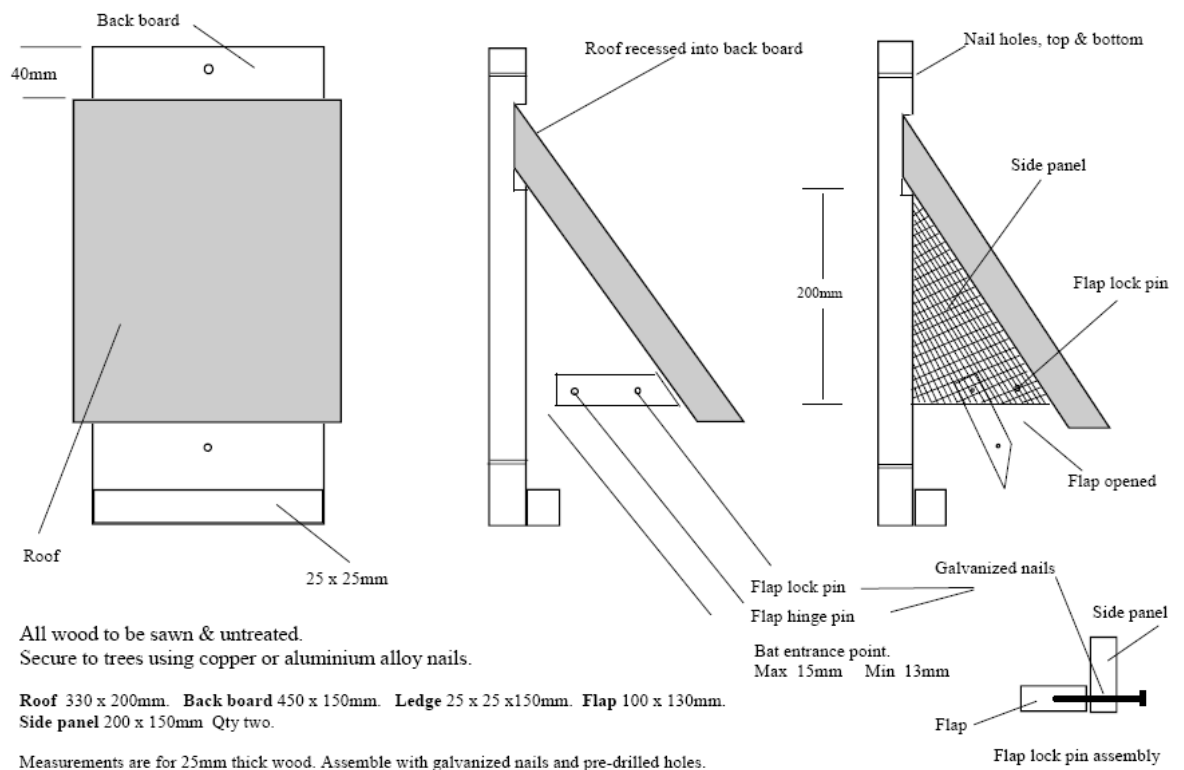
5. Magnitude of impact is cross referenced with the impact duration to establish the effect of the proposed scheme

Description of magnitude of effect	
Impact Description	Criteria
Major Adverse	The change is likely to cause a permanent adverse effect on the integrity of an ecological receptor.
Minor Adverse	The change adversely affects the valued ecological receptor, but there will probably be no permanent effects on its integrity.
Negligible	No effect
Minor Beneficial	The change is likely to benefit the receptor in terms of its conservation status, but not so far as to achieve favourable conservation status.
Major Beneficial	The change is likely to restore an ecological receptor to favourable conservation status, or to create a feature of recognisable.

6. Matrix of Residual effect is applicable to the duration of the impact for the purposes of assessment

Basic matrix used to determine significance of effects						
Impact Evaluation	International	National	Regional	County / Metropolitan	District / Borough	Parish / Neighbourhood
Magnitude						
Major Adverse	Critical	Critical	Critical to moderate	Large to moderate	Moderate to minor	Minor to moderate
Minor Adverse	Large to minor	Large to minor	Large to minor	Moderate to minor	Moderate to minor	Minor
Negligible	No Impact	No Impact	No Impact	No Impact	No Impact	No Impact
Minor Beneficial	Large to minor	Large to minor	Large to minor	Moderate to minor	Moderate to minor	Minor
Major Beneficial	Critical	Critical	Critical to moderate	Large to moderate	Moderate to minor	Minor to moderate

Mitigation: Bat Boxes and roosting features that can be included into the design



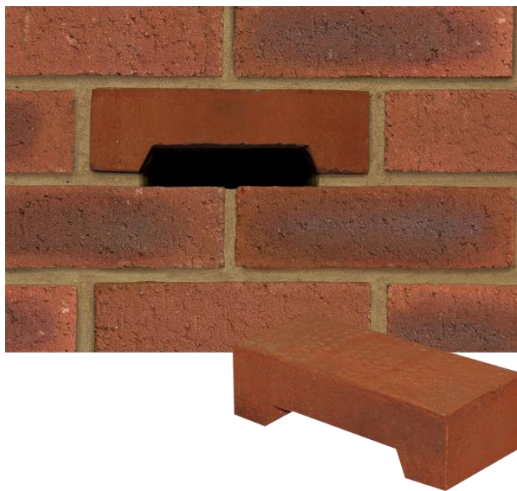
- a. Wooden wedge-shaped bat boxes to be used as temporary mitigation



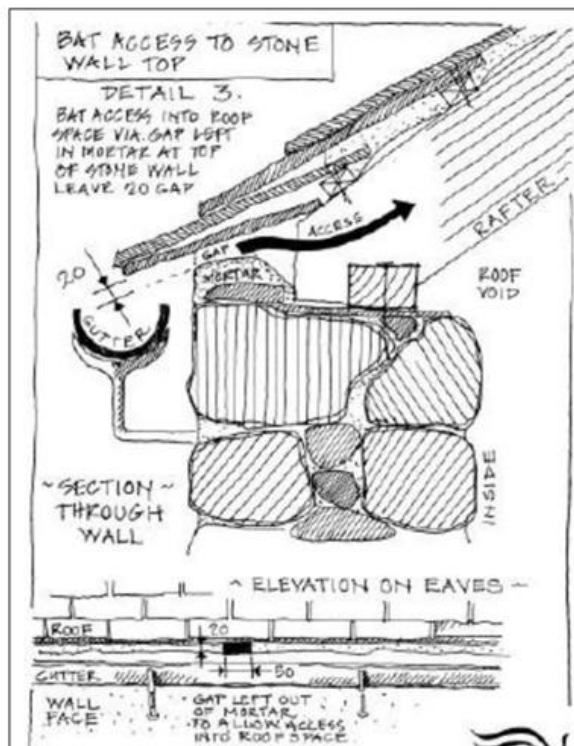
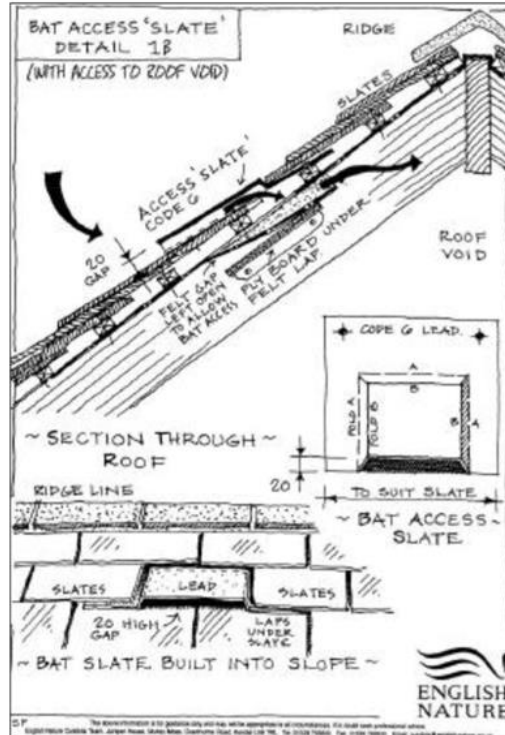
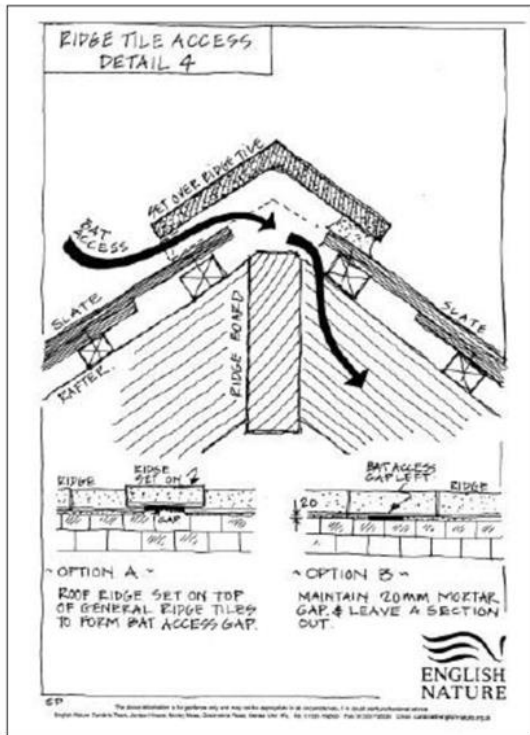
- b. Bat boxes to be used as permanent mitigation, constructed into the new residences. Left, Bat Access Unit, and, right, Habitat Bat Box. These designs are suggestive and better designs in keeping with the construction character may be substituted in.

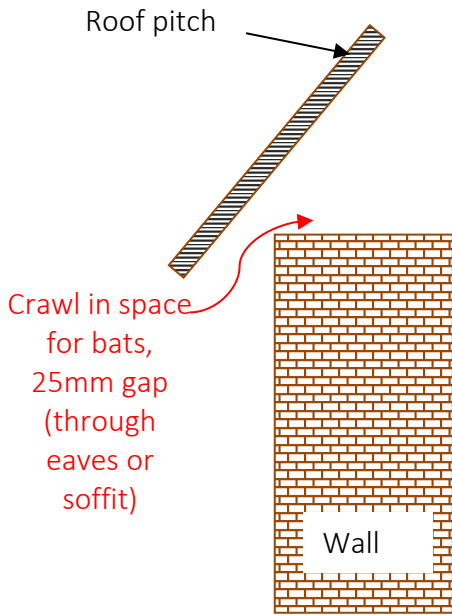


c. Norfolk bat Brick

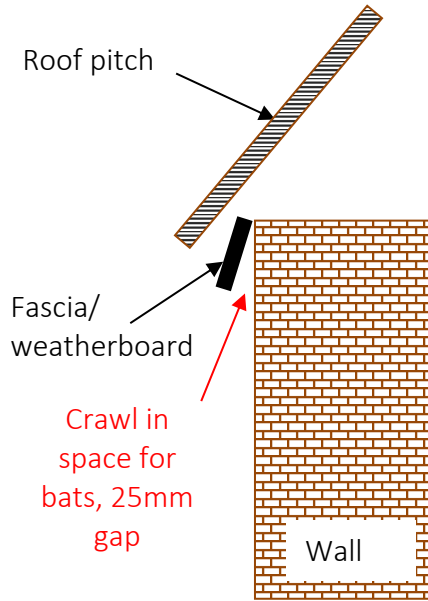


d. Ibstock Bat Brick A

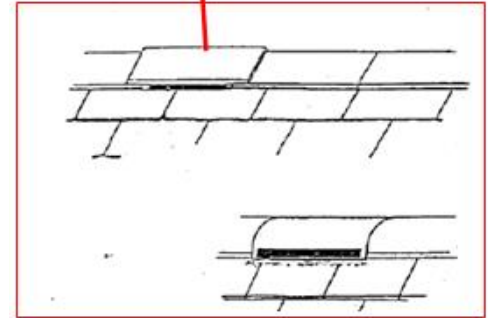




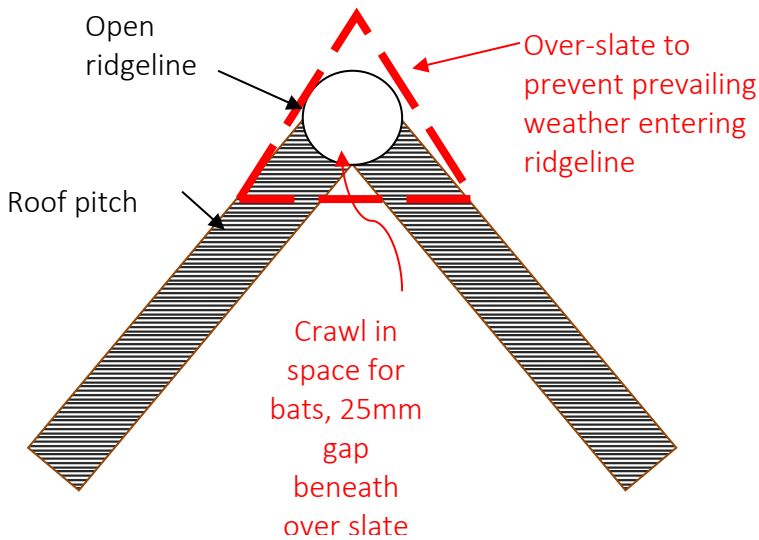
a. Wall Top access



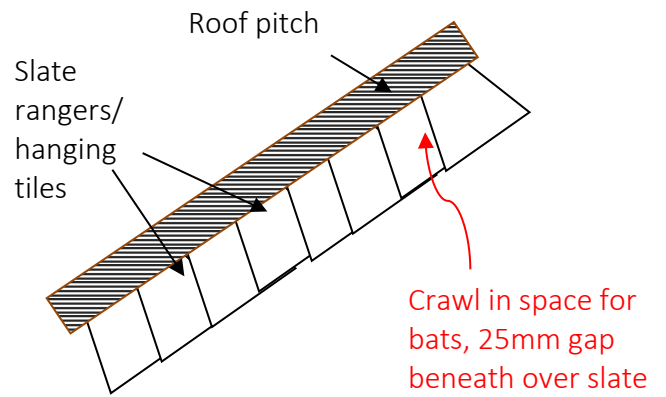
b. Fascia/weather board access



c. Raised ridge tiles



d. Ridgeline Access



e. Slate ranger access



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f. Ridge-line access



copyright JJK

g. Bat slates

References

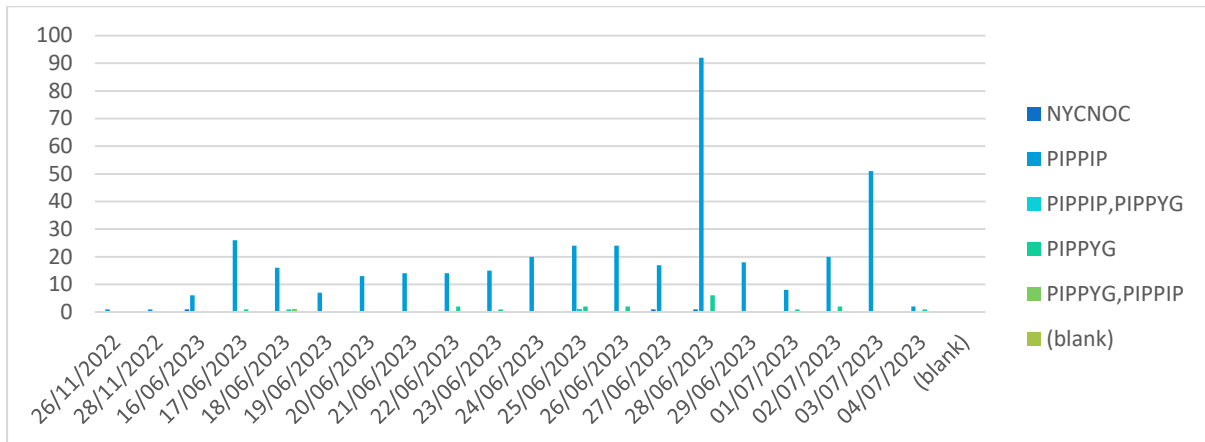
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Appendix 3 - Survey Conditions

Survey	Date	Weather	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind	Precipitation	Temp (°C)
Emergence Survey	06/06/23 22:20 -23:30 (21:30 sunset)	Good	85 – 100	Nil	Nil	17
Remote Monitoring	06/06/23 - 07/07/23 19:00 – 07:00	Varying	Varying	Varying	Varying	Varying
Emergence Survey	07/07/23 21:15 – 23:03 (21:33 sunset)	Very Good	5 - 15	Nil	Nil	19 - 18
Emergence Survey	28/07/23 21:00 – 22:36 (21:06 sunset)	Overcast	80-100	Light breeze - nil	Nil	16

Appendix 4 - Remote Monitoring Results

Farmhouse roof void



Count of MANUAL ID*	Column Labels					Grand Total	
Row Labels	NYCNO	PIPPIP	PIPPIP,PIPPYG	PIPPYG	PIPPYG,PIPPIP	(blank)	
16/06/2023	1	6					7
17/06/2023		26		1			27
18/06/2023		16		1		1	18
19/06/2023		7					7
20/06/2023		13					13
21/06/2023		14					14
22/06/2023		14		2			16
23/06/2023		15		1			16
24/06/2023		20					20
25/06/2023		24		1	2		27
26/06/2023		24		2			26
27/06/2023	1	17					18
28/06/2023	1	92		6			99
29/06/2023		18					18
01/07/2023		8		1			9
02/07/2023		20		2			22
03/07/2023		51					51
04/07/2023		2		1			3
(blank)							
Grand Total	3	389	1	19	1		413

Appendix 5 – Derogation Licenses from Natural England with regard to bats

Licensing procedure

Although there are two types of licensing procedure regarding bats, EPSM and Low Impact BML, there are similarities between the two in that, works must commence within twelve months of this survey effort with a walkover no older than three months of age prior to any application being presented and they both seek to satisfy the current legislation with the three derogation tests.

Natural England, to license for destruction/damage/modification of a bat roost, or to disturb/injure/kill a bat, would need the client to have demonstrated the fulfilment of the below three derogation tests under the Habitats Directive as implemented through the Conservation (Natural Habitats & C.) Regulations 1994;

- Regulation 44(2)(e): The “Purpose” test (the activity specified must meet the specified purpose). Demonstrating the need, either Preserving Public Health and Safety or, Imperative reasons of Overriding Public Interest; planning policy and structure evidence would be used here to specify the purpose, how and why it must be achieved in the way proposed.
- Regulation 44(3)(a): There is no Satisfactory Alternative. Demonstrate that the works proposed cannot be completed in any other manner which would avoid or lessen impacts by comparison to the proposed works. Timing and scheduling of works implementation cannot avoid destruction of a bat roost or significant disturbance.
- Regulation 44(3)(b): The action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species as a favourable conservation status in their natural range. Mitigation must be instated which will ensure that the current populations of bat species recorded at the site will be maintained and have no wider impact upon the wider meta population off site.

If the site does not fall within the terms and conditions of the BML then the EPSM license will need to be obtained and is applicable to the site.

Monitoring may be required for either license however this is species and roost status dependent.

Please note that Natural England does make charges for licenses for development gain.

European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) License

The EPSM license consists of four parts, the application form, method statement, work schedule and in some cases a reason statement; it is unlikely that a barn conversion will need a reason statement completed. All sections will need to be agreed with the client before being presented to Natural England. The application, method statement and work schedule will be predominantly completed by the ecologist with assistance from the client and their advising parties upon specific sections and timings of works. If a reason statement is required then this will be completed by a combination of the ecologist and the clients advising planning operative

i.e. planning consultant, architect, etc. Upon receipt, Natural England will take 30 working days in which to come to a decision as to whether a license will be granted and will examine the detailed mitigation contained within the document to ensure that the FCS of the site can be maintained through all stages of the development.

It must be understood that making a license application to Natural England is not confirmation of success and re-applications with Further Information Request (FIR) data may be necessary.

Bat Mitigation License / Bat Low Impact License

The Low impact BML is significantly constrained with terms and conditions and is for use only with low impact works to roosts of low numbers of common and widespread species and only available with a low limited number of structures on site. This licence can only be used if the terms and conditions can be strictly adhered to and is obtainable in approx. 15 days from Natural England acknowledging receipt. This license can only be obtained through specific registered consultants who can provide you, upon request, with the terms and conditions of this license; HEA have registered consultants that can advise you further on this.

Delays to licencing

Prior to any license application further survey effort may be required to support it and ensure that circumstances have not altered and to meet the criteria. Should the application to Natural England be older than three months of age from the most recent survey then a site walkover will need to be complete or, if older than twelve months since last survey then the site will need to be reassessed with a building inspection possibly supported by an emergence or dawn re-entry survey if the environs have significantly deviated. Post two to three years a full recovery is likely to be require.