



Bat Survey Report

Hawkeswell Lodge, Little Cheverell, Devizes, SN10 4JL

A report for Mr Ahmad Abu-el-ata

December 2025

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Project Name: Hawkeswell Lodge, Little Cheverell, Devizes, SN10 4JL
Bat Survey Report

Client: Mr Ahmad Abu-el-ata

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Herdwick Ecology was commissioned by Mr Ahmad Abu-el-ata to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment and subsequent bat activity surveys (roost characterisation) at Hawkeswell Lodge, Little Cheverell, Devizes, SN10 4JL (Grid Reference: ST 99155 53487). The proposals include the extension and renovation of the property and demolition and rebuild of the detached garage.

1.2 This report has been prepared to support a planning application and aims to:

- Describe and evaluate the building and its potential to support bats and whether further surveys are required;
- Set out the survey methodology and results of the bat activity surveys
- Identify potential bat mitigation/enhancement measures for incorporation into the design to ensure that the proposals maintain the favourable conservation status of the species;
- Set out further opportunities for net gain and ecological enhancements in line with relevant planning policy, legislation and other published guidance.

1.3 This report has been prepared by Ceri Griffiths, Director at Herdwick Ecology, who is a Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Reference is made to the Good Practice Bat Survey Guidelines¹ and BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development².

2.0 Legislation and Planning Policies

2.1 In carrying out this assessment relevant legislation, planning policies, and best practice guidelines were consulted and include:

- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended);
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF);
- Local Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

2.1 National planning policy on biodiversity and conservation is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This emphasises that the planning system should seek to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity wherever possible as part of the Government's

¹ Collins, J (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th. Ed.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London

² BSI (British Standards Institute) BS4202:2013 *Biodiversity – A code of practice for planning and development*. BSI, London.

commitment to halting declines in biodiversity and establishing coherent and resilient ecological networks. Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, is of particular relevance to this report as it relates to ecology and biodiversity. Relevant policies are set out below:

- 2.2 Paragraph 185: *“To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should: a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity...”*
- 2.3 Paragraph 186 states: “When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
- a) *‘if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts) adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused’*
 - b) Relates to developments affecting SSSI
 - c) Relates to developments affecting irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland
 - d) *‘Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity’.*
- 2.4 The Government Circular 06/2005, which is referred to by the NPPF, provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system.
- 2.5 The above approach encapsulates the ‘mitigation hierarchy’ described in British Standard BS 42020:2013, which involves the following step-wise process:
- Avoidance – avoiding adverse effects through good design;
 - Mitigation – where it is unavoidable, mitigation measures should be employed to minimise adverse effects;
 - Compensation – where residual effects remain after mitigation it may be necessary to provide compensation to offset any harm; and

- Enhancement – planning decisions often present the opportunity to deliver benefits for biodiversity, which can also be explored alongside the above measures to resolve potential adverse effects.

2.6 The measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation, and enhancement should be '*proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development*'

Environment Bill and Biodiversity Net Gain

2.7 The Environment Bill received Royal Assent on 9th November 2021, becoming the Environment Act; this includes the provision of biodiversity gain for developments in England, which will be mandated through an amendment to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The two-year transition period that follows Royal Assent means that mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became law on 12th February 2024, with small sites being mandatory on the 2nd April 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

Local Plan

2.8 The Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document ('the plan') was formally adopted on 20 January 2015. The plan provides a positive and flexible overarching planning policy framework for Wiltshire for the period up to 2026. Policy 50 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity' states that: '*Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term.... All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.* The policy goes on to state that all developments should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

Species Protection

2.9 All species of bat found in the UK are listed under Schedule 5 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are afforded protection under Section 9(4) (b&c) and Section 9(5) of Part 1 of the Act.

2.10 Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if a person intentionally or recklessly:

- disturbs any bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection;
- obstructs access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

- 2.11 In addition the protection afforded through UK legislation, further protection is provided to a small group of species, commonly referred to as ‘European Protected Species’, including all UK bats, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species 2017 (as amended) (also known as the Habitats Regulations).
- 2.12 With regards to European Protected Species listed under Schedule 2 of the Act, it is an offence to:
- Intentionally or deliberately capture or kill, or intentionally injure the animal;
 - Deliberately disturb the animal or intentionally or recklessly disturb them in a place used for shelter or protection;
 - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place;
 - Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a place used for shelter or protection.
- 2.13 The Habitats Directive provides for the derogation from these above prohibitions for specified reasons and providing certain conditions are met. Those derogations are transposed into the Regulations by way of a licensing regime that allows what would otherwise be an unlawful act to be carried out lawfully. Among the reasons why a licence may be granted and the reason relied upon by developers when seeking a licence to carry out operations for the purposes of development, is that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest why the operation should be carried out.
- 2.14 Whilst Natural England is the licensing body, the LPA must have due regard for the Habitat Regulations during the planning process and that the following three derogation tests will be met:
- Test 1: *Regulation 53(2)(e) states: a licence can be granted for the purposes of “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”.*
 - Test 2: *Regulation 53(9)(a) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that there is no satisfactory alternative”.*
 - Test 3: *Regulation 53(9)(b) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range*

3.0 Methodology

Data Search

3.1 A data search was undertaken to look for designated sites, relevant to the application, and bat records within the locality. This can provide important contextual information to gain an understanding of the Application Site and surrounds. Online sources were reviewed, such as MAGIC³ and NBN Gateway⁴. In addition, the Wiltshire Council planning portal was searched for nearby applications.

3.2 A data search request from the local environmental records centre was not considered necessary to inform this report due to the scale of the proposals and size of the Application Site.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.3 The building was surveyed on 7th August 2025 by Ceri Griffiths, Director of Herdwick Ecology, with full membership of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and a Natural England bat licence holder. Weather conditions were dry, overcast with a temperature of 21C.

3.4 The perimeter of the building was systematically inspected, and the exterior assessed, with the aid of binoculars (Pentax 10 X 36), endoscope and high powered torch, where necessary. A description of the building was made, and the location of any potential access points or roost locations were noted. These included:

- Suitable cracks and crevices within stone or brick work;
- Suitable access points via head of gable end and within lintels and gaps around the barn doors etc
- Gaps around the eaves and across the roof lines

3.5 The surrounding habitat was also assessed for its suitability for foraging and commuting quality.

3.6 The internal assessment involved a search to look for bats, or evidence of bats such as droppings or staining around common roost locations. A high-powered torch and endoscope were used where necessary to inspect the building more closely.

3.7 Following the inspection, an assessment was made of the building's suitability to support a bat roost, following the criteria set out in Table 1 below.

³ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

⁴ <https://nbnatlas.org/>

Table 1 Suitability Assessment⁵

Suitability	Roosting Habitat
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats
Moderate	A building with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status
High	A building with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
Roost	Bats or evidence of bats recorded.

- 3.8 In many situations it is not possible to inspect all locations where bats may be present, or any bats that may be present, may not be visible at the time of the survey. Hence, an absence of bats does not necessary mean that a roost is not present and further activity surveys may be required to confirm presence or absence.

Bat Activity (Roost Characterisation) surveys

- 3.9 The building inspection identified accumulations of bat droppings within the roof void, with concentrations focussed at each gable. The droppings were characteristic of those from a pipistrelle species, together with a larger species of bat. Samples were collected and sent for DNA analysis. Given that evidence of bats was found, additional bat surveys were recommended to confirm the status of the roosts. As set out in best practice guidance⁷, a building where a roost has been confirmed requires that an appropriate survey effort is undertaken to provide sufficient confidence in the status of the roost, which can usually be collated within two or three surveys.
- 3.10 Surveyors and thermal imagery cameras were positioned around the building in suitable weather conditions, to look for bats emerging from their roosts. Positions for the dusk surveys are illustrated below. Dusk surveys commenced 15mins prior to sunset and continued for 1hr30mins thereafter. EMT2 Touch Pro bat detectors were used to record the bat echolocation calls to analyse following the survey, where necessary. A Pulsar Helion XP50 Pro and two Guide Infrared TRACKIR Pro 19 were used

⁵ Collins, J (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th. Ed.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

in accordance with the relevant guidance. The Pulsar and Guide has a resolution of 640x480 17 μm and 12 μm respectively. A snip from the two TRACKIR Pro 19 is illustrated in Plate 2 and 3.

Static Detector

- 3.11 Given the potential for a night roost within the garage, a static detector was placed in the garage from 8th August 2025 and recorded for six consecutive nights.

Limitations

- 3.12 There were no limitations to the survey and full access was obtained to the roof void and around the periphery of the buildings during the survey.

Table 2 Survey Information

Date	Sunset/ Sunrise Time (Start/finish time)	Weather conditions
07/08/2025 (Including garage)	20:46 (20:25/22:20)	18C at start, BF1, 0% cloud, drizzle for first 10 mins of survey, then dry
29/08/2025	20:02 (19:45/21:40)	16C at start, BF1, 0% cloud, dry
23/09/2025	19:05 (18:50/20:35)	12C at start, BF1, 50% cloud, dry.



Plate 1: Surveyor and thermal camera locations illustrated by the red stars, with the green circles showing static detector position



Plate 2: View across rear of the house showing FoV



Plate 3: Side view of house showing FoV

4.0 Baseline Conditions

Desk Study

- 4.1 The Application Site lies to the south of Westbury Road in Little Cheverell. The property lies within mature grounds with two lakes, with woodland and grazed pasture. There is unobstructed access to the Salisbury Plain and high value habitats. The site and the wider landscape is of excellent foraging habitat for bats.



Plate 4: Application Site Location

Statutory Designated Sites

4.2 There are no Internationally designated sites of relevance to bats within 10km. The Application Site does lie within the Zone of Influence to the following International site:

- Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA) and underlying Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lie 3km to the south. This internationally designated site is selected for their orchid-rich calcareous grassland and juniper habitat as well as the population of marsh fritillary butterfly. The SPA is selected for its important breeding populations of stone curlew, quail and hobby, together with the overwintering population of hen harrier. The Application Site lies within the 6.4km recreational pressure zonation of this SPA. However, as there will be no net increase in overnight accommodation, there are no anticipated impacts to this SPA.

Species

4.3 Three European Protected Species (EPS) licences were identified within 2km of the Application Site. These relate to:

- Brown long-eared and common pipistrelle bat resting place (dated 2017) 1.4km east
- Brown long-eared, common pipistrelle and serotine bat breeding site (dated 2019-2029) 3.2km south

- Brown long-eared bat resting place (dated 2019-2019) 3.8km east
- Natterer's bat breeding site (dated 2015-2019) 4km east

Habitats

- 4.4 The property sits adjacent to two waterbodies, partially surrounded by broadleaved woodland, some of which has been highlighted as Priority Habitat.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 4.5 The property is a detached red brick building with a cross gable pitched clay tile roof. There are two small dormer windows to the rear (western) elevation and a single on the eastern elevation, with timber cladding above the window. The windows and doors are timber with brick lintels. There are two chimneys, one to the northern elevation, with a second centrally positioned on the roof line. Both have lead flashing at the base. The gable ends are well mortared in with timber soffits along the main elevations. Lead flashing is present within the verges where the different elevations join. There is a single storey lean to on the western and northern elevation with a sloping tiled roof and a entrance porch to the east, also with a sloping clay tiled roof. The brick work is in good condition, as are the soffits and verges and no visible potential roost features were noted. Small gaps were noted along the ridge lines and between the timber cladding on the dormer windows. In addition, by the nature of the tiles, occasional gaps were also recorded. There are solar panels on the eastern elevation.
- 4.6 The roof void is a single large space, in a 'T' – shape, with the chimney breast within the centre. The breeze block gable ends are visible. The roof is lined with a BRM and is mostly boarded throughout with fiberglass insulation exposed around the eaves and gable ends. It is untrussed and uncluttered with a small water tank and some services associated with the solar panels present. There were accumulations of droppings to each gable, with the greatest towards the western elevation. There was also a small scattering around the central chimney and generally throughout the roof void. No bats were seen or heard during the survey.
- 4.7 In conclusion, the building inspection recorded at least two different roosts and further surveys will be required to ascertain the type and status of the roosts.



Plate 5: Southern and western elevation of property



Plate 6: Southern and eastern elevation of property

- 4.8 The detached garage is accessed from the main property via tarmac driveway. It is a single storey red brick building with a gambrel style pitched clay tile roof. There is extensive moss and ivy across the roof line. Access was gained across to the rear of the roof to inspect the tiles more closely. They were well sealed with only one small slipped tile close to the eaves. The eaves are fully open into the building. There are two garage doors to the northern elevation with timber windows around the property. There is a small storage area, accessed via a standard door to the western side.
- 4.9 Internally, there is no separate roof void and the building is light and open. There is easy access via the open eaves. The building is lined with BRM. No bats or evidence of bats were noted. Given the closely fitted tiles and single skin brickwork, the building is considered to offer low potential only for night roosting opportunities.
- 4.10 Additional building photos are shown in Appendix 1.



Plate 7: Northern and western elevation of the garage

Roost Characterisation Surveys

8th August 2022

- 4.11 The following bats were recorded emerging:
- Four common pipistrelles from the southern elevation. Two emerged from the northern most dormer from a tile just below the ridgeline. A single pipistrelle from adjacent to the

northern chimney close to the flashing, with a fourth emerging from the second dormer. All fourth bats headed in a northerly direction. The bats emerged within two minutes of each other, approximately 20 mins post sunset;

- Two serotine bats emerged from the ridge of the extended gable and headed in a southerly direction.

4.12 No other bats were seen to emerge but, as anticipated, the activity was high, with constant foraging over the lakes and along the tree lines. Soprano pipistrelles were regularly recorded. No Daubenton's bats were seen foraging over the lower lake during the survey, but occasional *Myotis* species, considered to be Daubenton's bat, were recorded on the static detectors and may have foraging over the upper lake. Lesser and greater horseshoe bats were recorded to the north of the property towards the end of the survey.

23rd September 2025

4.13 The following bats were recorded emerging:

- Two common pipistrelles from the southern elevation. Two emerged from the northern most dormer from a tile just below the ridgeline, with a single emerging from the second dormer.

4.14 No other bats were seen to emerge and the activity was very similar to the initial survey. The lesser horseshoe bat was seen to enter the double garage adjacent to the property and remained there throughout the survey.

31st September 2025

4.15 The following bats were recorded emerging:

- Four common pipistrelles from the southern elevation. Two emerged from the northern most dormer from a tile just below the ridgeline

4.16 Activity was lower than the previous surveys, with only a small number of serotine bats recorded. Common and soprano pipistrelles were constantly recorded over the lake. The lesser horseshoe arrived from a northerly direction within 50 mins of sunset and entered the adjacent garage, as per the previous survey.

Static detector

4.17 The static detector within the garage did not record any horseshoe bats, with only occasional pipistrelle bats recorded but these calls were distance and likely to be from bats passing outside the

building. During the initial emergence survey on the garage on 8th August, no bats were seen to emerge from the building.

DNA analysis

- 4.18 The DNA analysis showed that the droppings collected from the roof void of the main property were from a common and soprano pipistrelle and a serotine bat, which is in line with the species recorded during the surveys (Appendix 2).

Roost Status Assessment

- 4.19 In conclusion, the surveys identified the following roosts:
- Common pipistrelle day roost used by individual/low numbers of bats – low conservation significance
 - Serotine bat day roost used by individual/low numbers of bats – low/moderate conservation significance
 - Soprano pipistrelle day roost used by individual/low numbers of bats - low conservation significance
- 4.20 Based on Table 3.1 to 3.3 of the Bat Mitigation Guidelines⁶, the assemblage of bats onsite is considered to be of local importance.
- 4.21 Section 5 sets out the detailed mitigation strategy for the roosts onsite to ensure that there is no detrimental effect to the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of the species.
- 4.22 A Natural England bat mitigation licence will be required for the main property, post planning but prior to works commencing onsite. Further details are provided in Section 5 below.
- 4.23 As no bat roosts were identified within the garage, there are no constraints to the proposals for this building and works can proceed without a mitigation licence.

5.0 Bat Mitigation Strategy

- 5.1 As a roost has been identified, a Natural England bat mitigation licence will be required for the works that could impact on the roost, post planning, but prior to works commencing onsite. The site should meet the criteria of a low impact bat licence (Bat Mitigation Class Licence, BMCL).

⁶ Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats*. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

- 5.2 The proposals are for the extension and modernisation of the property. The small single storey extension on the northern elevation will be demolished to allow for a two storey extension. The building will not be re-roofed and there will be no alterations to the roof void, but the dormer windows are to be replaced with a more modern design. The building is to be timber clad. The mitigation strategy seeks to retain all but the common pipistrelle roost *in situ*, although there will be a disturbance to the serotine and soprano pipistrelle roost. There will be the destruction of the common pipistrelle bat roost but appropriate mitigation will be provided, beneath the new timber cladding, which can be a favoured roost site for pipistrelles and other crevice dwellings species.
- 5.3 The bat mitigation is illustrated in accompanying planning drawings, with five bat boxes installed beneath the cladding.
- 5.4 Two 1FF Schwegler⁷ and two 2FN Schwegler bat boxes or similar will be placed on mature trees within the ownership, so that any bats found during the works will be moved by the licensed bat worker into the box.
- 5.5 Once planning has been received, the licence application can be applied for. This will provide full details of the survey results, mitigation strategy and proposed timings of works. As no maternity roosts have been identified, there are minimal timings constraints for the works, however the works should ideally avoid the main hibernation months, which are considered to be Mid-Nov to February.
- 5.6 On receipt of the licence, a licensed bat worker would be present to provide a tool box talk to all contractors and oversee works that could impact on the roost i.e. roofing works and re-pointing (works at eaves level and above). This will include a pre-commencement inspection of the building to ensure no bats are present within.

Other Mitigation Measures

- 5.7 The following measures should also be incorporated into the design and construction approach:
- The lighting design will need to be sensitively designed to avoid all impacts to the water bodies, surrounding trees and the roost sites/roof line to ensure a dark continuous corridor is maintained. Any lighting should adhere to the principles set out in the ILP Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK⁸.

⁷ [1FF Schwegler Bat Box With Built-in Wooden Rear Panel | NHBS Practical Conservation Equipment](#)

⁸ <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

Enhancement measures

- Additional enhancement measures will include the installation of bird boxes on trees within the wider ownership boundary - as illustrated on the accompanying planning drawings.

5.8 Taking the above into account, the proposed mitigation will ensure that there are no impacts to the favourable conservation status of the bats and hence it is considered the proposed development does not contravene the local planning policies and will seek to deliver a net gain in biodiversity in line NPPF.

Survey Validity and Natural England Bat Mitigation Licence Submission

5.9 Please note that a Natural England licence application needs to be based on data from the most recent survey season, unless justification can be provided.

5.10 The proposed works programme commences with internal and external modifications that will not impact on the roof line and roosts. The alterations to the dormers will not take place until 2027. Therefore, a single update emergence survey and inspection of the roof void, will be conducted between May to July in 2026 to ensure that the subsequent licence is based on recent data and that the status of the roosts have not significantly altered.

APPENDIX 1: ADDITIONAL BUILDING PHOTOS



Plate A2: Roof void of Main Property



Plate A2: roof void of Main Property



Plate A3: Northern and Eastern elevation of Garage



Plate A4: Interior view of garage showing open eaves

APPENDIX 2: LOCATION OF ROOSTS – EMERGENCE POINTS

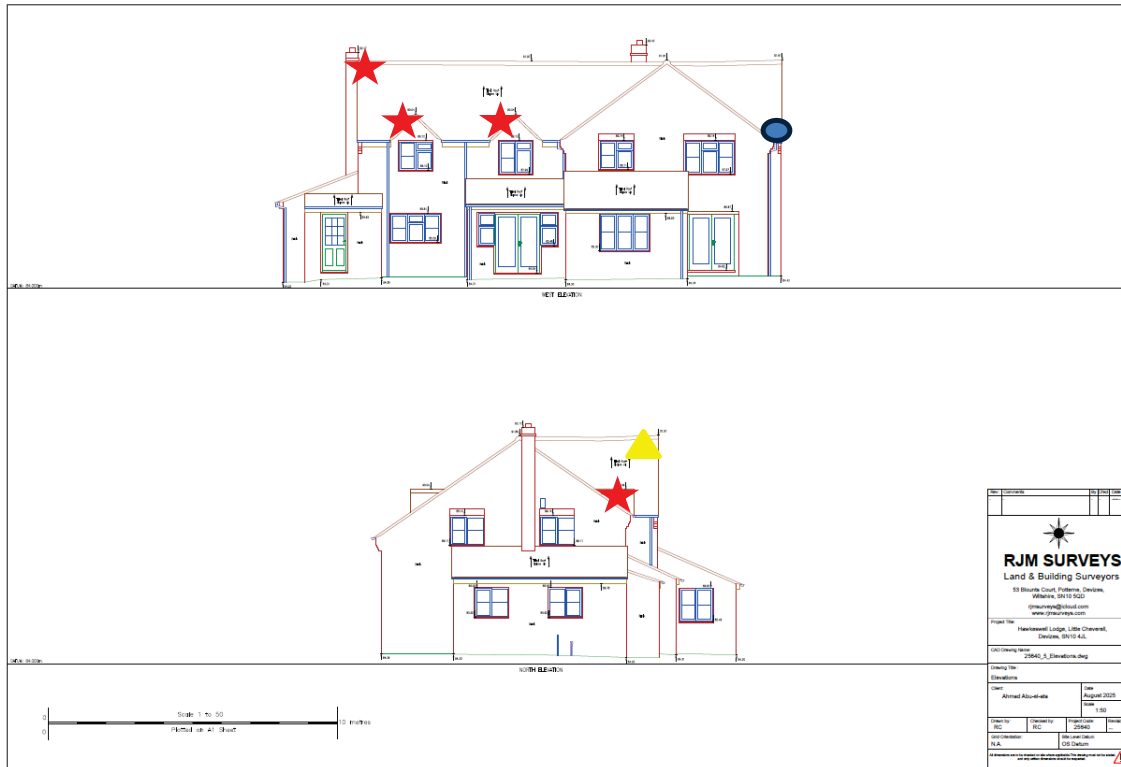


Plate A2:1 Location of roosts: red triangle – common pipistrelle day roost (classified as single roost with multiple access points); yellow triangle serotine day roost; blue circle soprano pipistrelle day roost

APPENDIX 3: DNA RESULTS

Sample ID: EG-2492-3

Sample information:

Sample type: Faecal

Species group: Bats

Suspected species:

Site Location: SN10 5TL

Comments: 436 Hawkeswell Cottage

Laboratory information:

DNA Extraction Code: EG-2025-1824

Identification method: qPCR

Analysis Procedure Notes:

Laboratory Comments:

None

Species Identified:

Species 1: Pipistrellus pipistrellus (Common pipistrelle bat)

qPCR Ct Value: 27

Species 2: Pipistrellus pygmaeus (Soprano pipistrelle bat)

qPCR Ct Value: 22

Species 3: Eptesicus serotinus (Serotine bat)

qPCR Ct Value: 23

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