



Oldbury House, Labour-In-Vain Hill, Calne
Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

For Mr. Matthew Taylor

9th December 2025

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1. Introduction

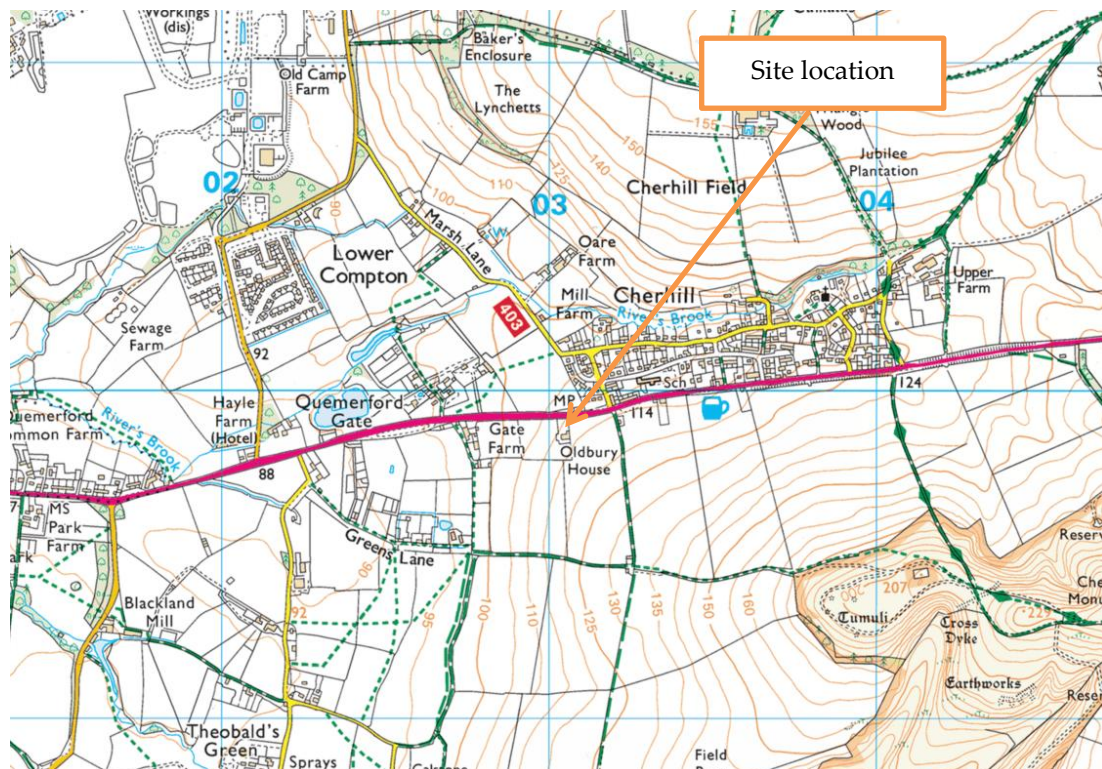
1.1 Commission

Ellendale Environmental Limited was commissioned by Mr. Matthew Taylor to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for existing outbuildings at Oldbury House, Labour-In-Vain Hill, Quemerford Gate, Lower Compton, Cherhill, Wiltshire, SN11 8UP ('the target buildings'). It is proposed to demolish the outbuildings to erect a new building ('the proposed development').

1.2 Site Details

The target buildings are located to the west of Cherhill, a village and civil parish in Wiltshire, approximately 2.5 miles east of the town of Calne, on the A4 towards Marlborough at OS grid reference SU 03049 69862.

Figure 1: Site location



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1.3 Bat Conservation

British bats

There are 18 species of bats resident in Britain, 17 of which are known to breed. These are from two families, namely the Rhinolophidae (the two horseshoe bat species) and the 15 species of vesper/evening bats (the Vespertilionidae). All British bats are insectivorous and locate their prey using ultrasonic calls through a biological system known as echolocation.

During summer months, female bats form nursery colonies in trees and buildings, where they raise infants. In the winter, males and females hibernate in trees, buildings and underground structures.

Conservation status of British bats

The general consensus in Britain and Europe is that virtually all bat species are declining and are vulnerable. Our understanding of population status is poor, as there is very little historical data for most bat species. Certain species, such as the horseshoe bat, are better understood and have well documented contractions in range and population size.

Given this general picture of decline, the UK Government (within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan) has designated eight species of bats as priority species (these being soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle (Wales only) greater and lesser horseshoe bats, barbastelle, Bechstein's, noctule and brown long-eared bat). These plans provide an action pathway whereby the maintenance and restoration of former population levels are envisaged.

Legal status of British bats

All bats and their roosts in England were originally protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. Subsequent amendments to the legislation for England (and Wales) has removed bats from most of the provisions of the Act; however, it remains an offence to:



- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; and/or
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place that a bat uses for shelter or protection.

All British bat species are listed in Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive and are fully protected through The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. All bat species found in England are classed as European protected species. They receive full protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended).

These regulations make it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure, or kill a bat;
- Harass a bat or group of bats;
- Disturb a bat in a roost (any structure or place it uses for shelter or protection);
- Disturb a bat while it is rearing or otherwise caring for its young
- Obstruct access to a bat roost or otherwise deny an animal use of a roost;
- Disturb a bat in a manner or in circumstances likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species; and/or
- Disturb a bat while it is migrating or hibernating.

The legislation, although not strictly affording protection to foraging grounds, does protect bat roost sites. Bat roosts are protected at all times of the year, regardless of whether or not bats are present at the time.

It's also an offence to:

- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal (whether or not deliberately or recklessly); and/or
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange any wild bat (or any part or derivative of one) obtained after 10th June 1994.



Where development is proposed that would result in an offence under the Habitats and Species Regulations, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence needs to be granted by Natural England (NE) to permit an act that would otherwise be unlawful. This provides for a specific derogation from the legislation, to prevent a legal infringement occurring.

To obtain an EPS licence for development it must be demonstrated that the purpose of the act to be licensed is for:

- *“Preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment” (Regulation 55(2)(e)).*

In addition, NE will not grant an EPS licence unless they are satisfied that:

- *“There is no satisfactory alternative” (Regulation 55(9)(a)); and*
- *“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” (Regulation 55(9)(b)).*

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2. Methodology

2.1 Overview

Survey work undertaken in relation to a proposed development needs to be conducted under a scientific/conservation licence issued by, in this case, NE. The work is normally conducted by an environmental consultant and they will advise on the necessary course of further action with respect to licences, mitigation and compensation measures.

A number of recognised survey techniques are available to the consultant, such as:

- Natural England guidelines (A.J. Mitchell-Jones [2004], *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*, English Nature. ISBN 1 85716 781 3), which provide generic technical advice on bat mitigation; and
- Hundt L (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*, 4th Edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-13: 978-1-872745-96-1.

For works which may impact bats, the developer/contractor must:

- Demonstrate that adequate surveys have been undertaken to establish the presence or absence of bats, to predict the potential impact on them, their resting sites or breeding roosts;
- Bring proposals forward that will integrate provision for bats into any design that will compensate and mitigate for any impact (if bats or their roosts are discovered); and
- Provide sufficient survey information that will support a licence application under the Habitats Directive should bats be discovered.

Where bat species are using a site, it will be necessary to mitigate the impacts of the development upon the population(s). These would include measures that remove or reduce any damaging effects on the animals or their roosts.



In most cases a package of compensation measures will be required to accommodate any loss of breeding or resting-places, and the timing of works will need to be synchronised with the life-cycles of the effected species.

This collective package of mitigation and compensation measures should allow the conservation status of the animals to be at least maintained. With careful thought, the conservation status may even be enhanced. This is usually most easily achieved by early ecological input into the project.

In the case of sites where bats are present, a development licence from Natural England will be required to conduct works affecting bats.

2.2 Bat Survey Licence

The survey was undertaken by Stewart Parsons, Principal Ecologist and Director at Ellendale Environmental.

Stewart holds a bat survey licence (Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), registration number 2025-85474-CL18-BAT), with respect to the Conservation Regulations 1994. The licence is valid for all counties of England, from the 1st November 2025 until 31st October 2026. Stewart has over 20 years' professional experience of undertaking ecological surveys and working with bat species across the UK.

2.3 Survey Objectives

On the basis of the brief provided by the client, Ellendale Environmental conducted survey work to fulfil the following needs:

- Obtain baseline information on the habitat features suitable for bat species;
- Determine the presence/likely absence of bat species within the proposed development site and any activity at or near the site; and
- Determine the type, extent and pattern of detected usage.

In practice this was achieved by a physical inspection of the target building, a search for live animals and/or other signs indicating their current or previous presence.



2.4 Survey Methodology

A physical internal/external inspection of the target buildings was undertaken on Friday 28th November 2025. The internal and external areas of building were searched for signs of bats and evidence of them roosting.

Table 1: Survey weather conditions for physical survey

SURVEY DATE	TEMPERATURE (°C)	WIND SPEED (MPH)	CLOUD COVER/ PRECIPITATION
28/11/25	9.1	Min. 1.0 Ave. 2.3 Max. 2.9	25% cloud cover; dry with a cool breeze.

All suitable features were assessed externally and internally. A telescopic surveyor's ladder was used to gain access to various points and a CLU-10 searchlight was used to search dark areas. A Visual Optics VO36-10ww Endoscope was utilised to assist inspection of internal spaces.

The physical search included a search for live animals and a search for other signs that give an indication of past or present occupancy. In the case of bats, typical indicators include droppings (which are characteristic and can often be speciated), signs of staining, characteristic odours, and accumulations of prey items.

2.5 Data Search

Publicly available databases, including the NBN Atlas, were consulted for historical evidence of bats within 5km of the target building.

2.6 Constraints

The survey was not restricted, and full access was granted to the target buildings.

Whilst no biological survey can guarantee that all cues and signs of protected or notable species will be recorded, Ellendale Environmental is confident that all key fauna present during the survey were noted.



3. Results

3.1 Data Search

The following bat species were identified within 5km of the target buildings by the data search:

Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*; common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*; serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*; Noctule *Nyctalus noctule*; Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*; and brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*.

These species are known to be present within 5km of the site; however, due to licensing restrictions, the locations and dates of these records cannot be disclosed. They are indicated to be present within 5km of the target buildings; however, no records exist for bats within the site itself.

3.2 Site Description

The target buildings are a combination of storage sheds of various constructions located within the curtilage of Oldbury House. To the north of the target buildings there is a gravel driveway and car parking. To the west and south there is a hardstanding patio associated with Oldbury House which is located to the west of the target buildings. Along the eastern side of the target buildings there is a strip of amenity grassland and scattered trees, beyond which is agriculture farmland used for growing arable crops.

A small area of amenity planting is located along the western side of the buildings which includes cotoneaster *Cotoneaster sp.*, saplings of holly *Ilex aquifolium* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus L. agg.* and common nettle *Urtica dioica*.



Photograph 1: showing a view of the target buildings (looking north)



3.3 Physical Bat Survey

For the purposes of the physical bat survey, the target buildings have been split into three distinct sections based on access and the building construction. This is shown on Figure 2.



Figure 2: showing the building sections



Section 1

'Section 1' is located to the north-east and is constructed from red brick with a timber frame roof covered with corrugated metal sheets which slopes to the east. Externally the walls of this section were found to be in good condition; however, gaps were noted around the roof, and a door on the western side was open. Holes were also found in the roof structure which allow in wind and rain, thus making the internal areas of this section cold and damp. No evidence of bat activity such as droppings, staining or feeding remains was found on the external surfaces of this section.

Internally this section is used for the storage of logs and timber and no evidence of bat activity such as droppings or feedings remains were found. Wood timbers that make up the roof supports were found to be wet and rotten in places and therefore provide no suitable roosting for bat species.



This section of the building is assessed as providing Negligible Roost Potential and no evidence of bat activity or roosting bats was found during the survey.

Photograph 2: showing a view of Section 1 of the building





Section 2

'Section 2' of the building is located to the south-east and is an open structure comprised of a wooden frame with wooden boarding, corrugated metal sheets on the sides and corrugated metal sheets on the roof. This section of the building is used for the storage of building materials.

Photograph 3: showing a view of Section 2 of the building



The section of the building is entirely open on the western side and large holes were noted in the walls where timber panels had fallen off. The remaining panels were found to be wet and rotten in places with many peeling away from the structure. Gaps were also found in the roof of the structure, below which damp areas were found.

The open nature of this section of the building makes it unsuitable for bats which require dry and stable conditions for roosting.



No evidence of bat activity such as droppings or feeding remains were found in this section which is assessed as providing Negligible Roost Potential for bats. Droppings from mice *Mus musculus* were observed in the structure and anecdotal evidence collected at the site suggest rats *Rattus sp.*, may also be found here.

Photograph 4: showing a view of the rear of Section 2 of the building



Section 3

'Section 3' of the building is located to the west and is constructed from red brick and breeze block. The walls were found to be in a good condition; however, some gaps/cracks were found on the north-western corner. Some vegetation is present along the southern wall; however, it is unlikely this hides any further gaps/cracks. The gaps/cracks were inspected for evidence of bat activity and none was found. It was noted that the gaps lead into the internal structure of the building as the walls are only one brick thick in this location. It was however noted that security lighting was present above the gaps/cracks which will illuminate the structure and will therefore deter bats.



Photograph 5: showing a view of Section 3 of the building



Photograph 6: showing gaps in the wall of Section 3 of the building

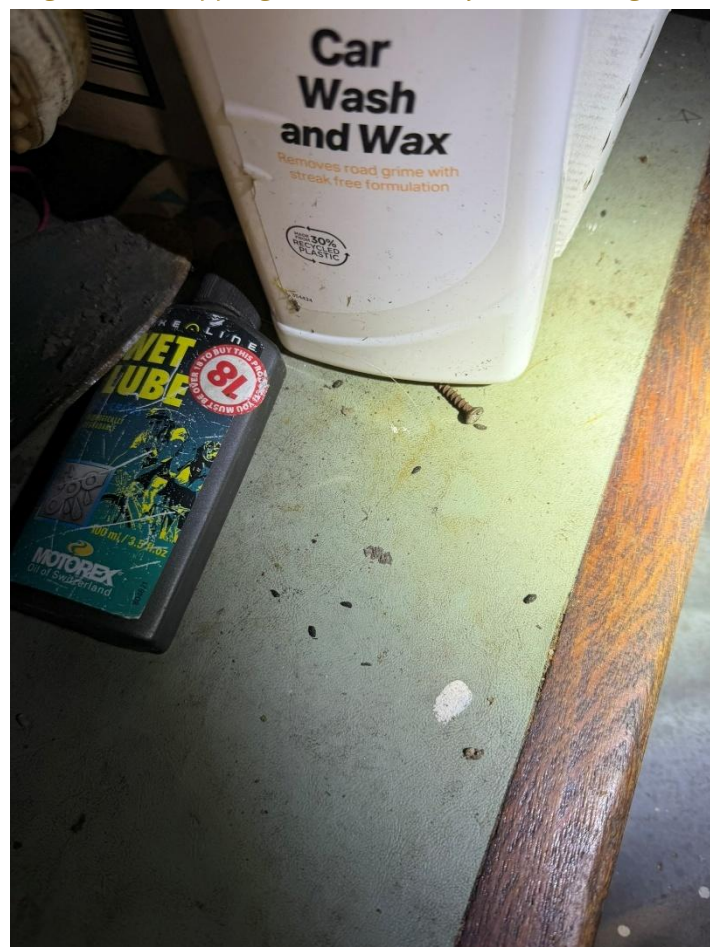




A door and window on the southern side of the section of the building was found to be in a good condition and well fitted; however, one small pane of glass was found to be missing from the window which potentially allows bats to access the internal space. No evidence of bat activity such as droppings, staining or feeding remains was found on the external surfaces of this section.

Internally the building is used for storage; however, cobwebs were found on the roof and around the wall. The roof is covered by a single layer of corrugated metal sheeting with some old bitumen felt and insulation below; however, this was found to be in a poor condition and much of it has fallen from the roof and been removed. The remaining felt and insulation was found to be damp and in a declining condition with cobwebs noted. Mouse droppings were found in the section of the building and old bait traps were also found.

Photograph 7: showing mouse droppings in Section 3 of the building





Internally no evidence of bat activity such as droppings or feedings remains were found. This section of the building is assessed as providing Negligible Roost Potential and no evidence of bat activity or roosting bats was found during the survey.

Overall the whole building is in a declining condition and has poor thermal properties making it unsuitable for roosting bats which require dry and stable conditions for roosting. Potential roosting spaces are limited within the building with much of it found to be wet and rotten in places. Open doors and windows allow in wind and rain to the internal spaces making them damp and cold and likely variable throughout the year.

The target buildings are therefore assessed as providing Negligible Roost Potential and no evidence of bat activity or roosting bats was found during the survey. No further surveys for bats are recommended.

3.4 Nesting Birds

Evidence of nesting birds was found during the survey in Section 1 where an old wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* nest was identified on the wall of the building. Given the timing of the survey, this was not active; however, the building remains suitable to provide nesting habitat for birds.

No other birds' nests were found during the survey; however, bird droppings were found throughout Section 2 of the building indicating that birds are using it for perching. However, given that evidence of mice was found, this may deter birds from nesting here.



Photograph 8: showing a bird's nest within Section 1 the target building





4. Conclusions

4.1 Conclusion

The Preliminary Roost Assessment was not constrained, and full access was gained to the external and internal spaces of the target buildings for the physical survey. The buildings are comprised of three distinct sections, constricted from red brick, breeze block and a wooden frame, and largely covered with a single layer of corrugated metal sheeting.

Externally much of the building was noted to be in a good condition, with only one small area of gaps/cracks in the wall of the structure identified; however, no evidence of roosting bats was found. No evidence of bat activity such as droppings, staining or feeding remains was found on the external surfaces of the building.

Doors and windows were open or missing on the building which allows in wind and rain, thus making the internal spaces cold and damp. Throughout much of the structure holes were also found in the walls and roof which also allowed in wind and rain. Internally no evidence of bat activity such as droppings or feedings remains was found to indicate that bats are active within the building or using it as a roost.

Evidence of mouse was found in two sections of the building with bait traps also found. Anecdotal evidence of the presence of rats was also identified at the site. Both of these species will predate roosting and hibernating bats, thereby further reducing the suitability of the building to support bats.

Overall the whole building is in a declining condition and has poor thermal properties making it unsuitable for roosting bats which require dry and stable conditions for roosting. Potential roosting spaces are limited within the building with much of it found to be wet and rotten in places. Open doors and windows allow in wind and rain to the internal species making them damp and cold and likely variable throughout the year.



The target buildings are therefore assessed as providing Negligible Roost Potential and no evidence of bat activity or roosting bats was found during the survey. No further surveys for bats are recommended.

Given the findings of the survey, it is very unlikely that bats are roosting in the target buildings and no further surveys for bats are recommended.

Evidence of nesting birds was found during the survey with a wren nest identified in Section 1; however, the nest was not active at the time of the survey.

4.2 Main Recommendations

General

Site personnel should be made aware of protected species and if any are recorded on site, all works should stop, and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted

Bats

Given the findings of the survey, it is very unlikely that bats are roosting in the target buildings. Notwithstanding this, it is advised that precautionary working methods are undertaken during works to the buildings, including:

- Site personnel will be made aware of the potential presence of bats through a toolbox talk;
- If a bat is found, or the presence of bats is suspected, all work must stop immediately, and a licensed bat worker must be contacted for advice;
- Bats must not be handled under any circumstances; and
- An ecologist will assess a potential roost space (if identified/found) and inform NE of the proposed actions to be undertaken.

Birds

Works should be undertaken out with the breeding bird season (March – August, inclusive), as all nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).



If works are undertaken within this period, a nesting bird survey would be required no more than 24 hours prior to the works. If nesting birds were found, these areas of the site would need to be protected from disturbance until the young have fledged naturally.

4.3 Suggested Biodiversity Enhancements

The following recommendations are made for biodiversity enhancements at the site, as part of the overall design, which are proportionate with the level of environmental impact from the proposed development:

- A bat box(es) should be placed on the new building or around the site boundaries, to create roosting opportunities for bat species; and
- A small-holed bird nesting box(es) should be placed within the site to create nesting opportunities for small bird species.