

JE 0 060

Tidworth Camp
Wiltshire

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Nesting Bird Appraisal

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Report for:
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Quality Management

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 J Taylor Ecology Consulting were commissioned by Aspire Defence Services Limited to carry out a bat Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and a nesting bird appraisal on the now disused office building JE 0 060, within Jalalabad Barracks, Tidworth Camp in Wiltshire. The building was in a poor structural condition and being no longer required, it is proposed that the building is demolished and the ground re-instated as amenity grassland.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of the bat Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was to conduct an external and internal visual inspection of the building, to identify the potential absence/presence of bat roosts and/or bat activity associated with the building, considering the suitability of the surrounding habitats for use by foraging or commuting bats. At the same time as the Preliminary Roost Assessment, the building was also inspected for the evidence of current or previous bird nesting activity and a suitability appraisal conducted.
- 1.1.3 The overall aim of the Preliminary Roost Assessment and nesting bird appraisal was to gain initial information on the likely use of the building by both bats and nesting birds, so that the requirement for any further survey work could be determined and any necessary avoidance or mitigation measures implemented.

1.2 Building Location and Context

- 1.2.1 Building JE 0 060 was located within the central area of Tidworth Camp, in the northern part of Jalalabad Barracks, south of Kirkee Road (Grid Reference SU 13396 44723, what3words /// balconies.user.actors).

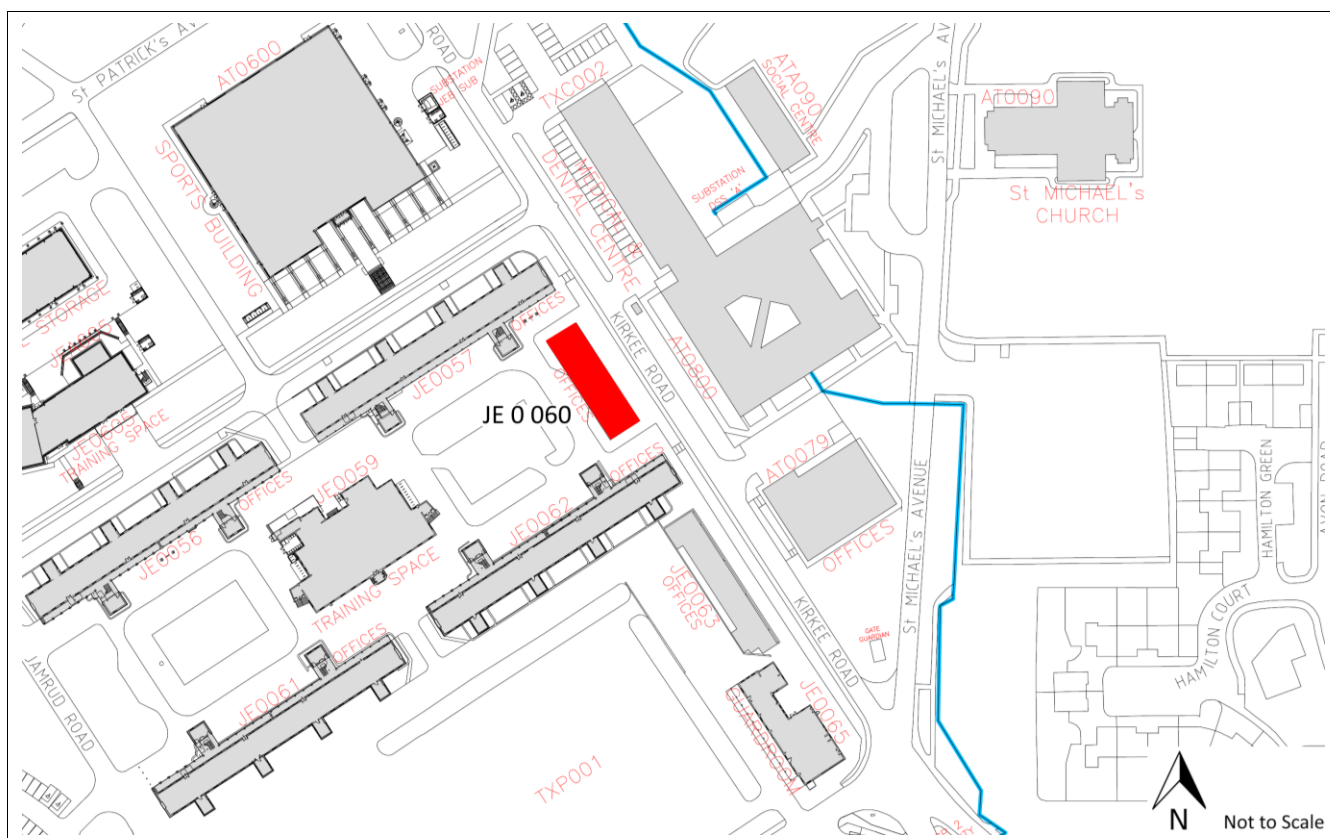


Figure 1. Location of JE 0 060 within Jalalabad Barracks, Tidworth Camp.

- 1.2.2 The building was previously in use as offices, and comprised of a single storey rectangular building with the front entrance in the centre of the southwestern elevation (photograph 1). The building was surrounded by similar buildings of varying age, with JE 0 057 to the northwest and JE 0 062 to the southeast, forming an enclosed area with central car park. Being located centrally within the Tidworth Camp, the building was within a predominantly built-up area, interspersed with areas of managed amenity grassland and scattered trees.
- 1.2.3 The building was of brick construction and considered likely to have been constructed at the same time as the surrounding buildings in around 1905. The building was of simple design, with a straight wall to the rear (photograph 2) and a central veranda over the entrance at the front of the building, along with a cast concrete roof covered in standard roofing felt.



Photograph 1. General view in the foreground of the front southwestern elevation of the building.



Photograph 2. View along the rear of the building alongside Kirkee Road, looking southeast towards the main gate.

1.3 Pre-Existing Information

- 1.3.1 No previously identified ecological or bat survey information has been identified associated with building JE 0 060. The building is not known to be listed on the TidNBul Garrison Restricted Areas (Protected Species) Register.

1.4 Personnel

- 1.4.1 The field survey and subsequent assessment was conducted by Principal Ecologist Jonathan Taylor BEng (Hons) PGCert MSc MCIEEM and Consultant Ecologist Ellie Gollop BSc (Hons) PGCert. Jonathan has over 25 years' experience as a professional ecologist and is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). He holds a Natural England Class Licence for bats (2019-39970-CLS-CLS) and frequently designs and implements mitigation under European Protected Species Development Licences. Ellie has over 6 years' experience as a professional ecologist and holds a Natural England Class Licence for bats (2025-12605-CL17-BAT).

1.5 Legislation

Bats

- 1.5.1 All seventeen species of bat, their roosts and resting places are protected in the UK under Schedules 5 & 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The relevant sections of this legislation make it an offence to deliberately take, injure or kill a wild bat, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats, damage or destroy a place used by bats for breeding or resting (roosts) (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time), possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat of a species found in the wild in the EU (dead or alive) or any part of a bat, or intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost. Offences under this legislation carry a maximum penalty of imprisonment for up to six months and/or a fine not exceeding Level 5 on the standard scale (currently up to £5000), or both.
- 1.5.2 Causing 'damage' to a roost, even when the animal is not present, is an absolute offence, with no defences available in law. Disturbance however is only considered an offence when caused intentionally or recklessly. A person would be acting recklessly if they could reasonably have been expected to foresee that an operation could cause disturbance or harm to a protected species but took no action to assess the risk and consider what to do about it.

Nesting Birds

- 1.5.3 All nesting birds, their nests, eggs and young receive legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Hence any work where nests could be present during the bird nesting season (mid-March to end August) has the potential to impact on nesting birds. It is an offence (with certain exception), to:
- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird.
 - Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.
 - Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.
 - Have in one's possession or control any wild bird, dead or alive, or any part of a wild bird, which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954.
 - Have in one's possession or control any egg or part of an egg which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954.
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.
- 1.5.4 Bird species listed within Schedule 1, Part 1 receive additional protection. These are birds which are rarer or have specific nesting requirements that have led to a significant decline in population sizes. Penalties that can be imposed for criminal offences in respect of a single bird, nest or egg contrary to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is an unlimited fine, up to six months imprisonment or both

2. Methodology

2.1 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

- 2.1.1 The methodology used in this report was based on the guidance included in the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023) and Bat Workers Manual (Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (eds.), 2010). The ecological appraisal process is as defined within the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM 2017). The desk study was conducted in line with CIEEM's UK Guidelines for Accessing and Using Biodiversity Data (CIEEM, 2016).
- 2.1.2 Following the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) process, initially a desk study was conducted based on the TidNBul Garrisons Restricted Areas (Protected Species) Register (an ongoing document which collates the results of bat surveys across the Garrisons), records obtained from Wiltshire & Swindon Biological records Centre, aerial maps and the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) maps. This enabled identification of any historical use of the building by bats, along with information on any past use of nearby buildings and trees, along with contextual information on the site.
- 2.1.3 The second part of the PEA process is a Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW) survey, which aims to observe, assess and record habitats suitable for bats to determine if further assessment is required. Given the building had already been identified as requiring a further assessment, the process progressed directly to the next step, with a full Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) carried out.
- 2.1.4 The PRA, which was conducted on 18th July 2025, consisted of a non-invasive, systematic visual inspection of the external elevations and interior of the building, together with an assessment of the quality of the surrounding environment for bats. The building was examined for signs that would indicate the presence of bats or the presence of Potential Roost Features (PRFs), that could be used by roosting bats, including:
- Bat droppings. These are found both externally in sheltered areas such as windowsills, underneath roost entrances and/or internally within a roof space.
 - Piles of insect remains such as butterfly or moth wings, indicative of regular feeding locations.
 - Staining at roost entrances or within the roost. Often urine and oil from fur can leave stains on timbers when bats are gathered for long periods.
 - Live bats, or the remains of deceased bats.
- 2.1.5 Buildings may offer potential roosting sites in a number of locations.
- Gaps and cracks in brick and/or block work, which provide access to a wall cavity or crevice.
 - At the eaves behind wooden barge boards and soffits. uPVC does not tend to be used by bats given the slippery surface.
 - At the top apex of gable elevations on pitched roofed buildings, where access is typically gained through gaps in the brickwork, often behind barge boards or end tiles.
 - Under lead flashing, roof and ridge tiles.
 - Within an enclosed roof space. Roof void dwelling species of bats will typically enter the roof space and gather around the ridge beam or at gable ends.
- 2.1.6 The appraisal was undertaken sensitively and, in a manner to ensure that should bats be present, no disturbance would occur. The exterior and interior, along with any roof voids, were examined consecutively. A standard variable output LED torch was used both externally and internally to search for PRF's or any evidence of use by bats, supplemented with a head torch to allow safe movement around the roof space. Where bat (or suspected) bat droppings were found either internally or externally, these were collated with gloved hands into a sample container and labelled. These were then submitted for DNA analysis to confirm species identification to Surescreen Scientifics Forensic Ecology Laboratory in Morley, Derbyshire.
- 2.1.7 The assessment of the quality of the surrounding environment for bats was based on the likely levels of artificial lighting around potential roost entrances, the expected levels of disturbance to any potential roosts from nearby activities, and the quality of habitat for roosting bats in the immediate area, focussing on the potential bat foraging habitats and/or commuting routes in accordance with the following categories.
- **High quality** = the exterior of the structure is expected to be unlit by artificial lighting, and there is continuous habitat within 30m that is well connected to the wider landscape and is likely to be used regularly by commuting and/or foraging bats (e.g. broadleaved woodland, intact or species-rich hedgerows, vegetated streams and water bodies, or other habitats likely to be rich in invertebrate prey);
 - **Moderate quality** = the exterior of the structure is unlit by artificial lighting on at least one aspect, and there is continuous habitat within 100m that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging and commuting; and
 - **Low quality** = the exterior of the structure may be lit by artificial lighting on all aspects, and/or it is isolated, with the surrounding habitat suitable only for use by small numbers of commuting and/or foraging bats (any moderate or high quality habitat within 100m is separated from the structure by a barrier, such as medium to high levels of artificial lighting).

2.1.8 An evaluation of the likelihood of bat presence was then undertaken and summarised using the following potential suitability criteria (adapted from Collins J. (ed.), 2023).

- **None** – no habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting, commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year.
- **Negligible** – while presence cannot be absolutely discounted, no obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting, commuting or foraging bats. A small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
- **Low** – on-site habitat of poor quality and isolated but could be used by a small number of foraging bats. The structure has one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. 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 number of bats.
- **Moderate** – on-site habitat is continuous and connected to the wider landscape that could be used by foraging and commuting bats. The structure has one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
- **High** – on-site habitat is continuous, high quality and connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging and commuting bats. The structure has 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. They have the potential to support high conservation status roosts.
- **Confirmed Roost** - In addition to one of the above grading assessments, presence is confirmed from the current survey or by recent records.

2.2 Nesting Bird Appraisal

2.2.1 At the same time as the PRA was conducted, the building was inspected for evidence of current or historical use by nesting birds. The survey was conducted on 18th July 2025, which is during the bird nesting season (mid-March to August inclusive). Hence the survey was based on both the identification of past nesting activity, such as the remains of nests from previous seasons and congregations of droppings and searching for evidence of current use by nesting birds, which is then combined with an assessment of the suitability of the building to provide opportunities for nesting birds. This involves a thorough inspection of all buildings and trees on the site looking for specific evidence that points to use of the site by nesting birds.

2.2.2 Evidence of nesting birds can include, feathers, droppings, nesting materials, or the presence of old birds' nests. However, it should be noted that evidence of bird nesting is not always readily identifiable on complex buildings, and evidence of past nesting can disintegrate quite quickly. Many factors can influence the suitability of a structure to provide bird nesting opportunities, with the most significant being the presence of sheltered, undisturbed locations or openings, with access to suitable feeding areas.

2.2.3 Where the nesting bird inspection is conducted during the active bird nesting season, the appraisal includes a systematic observation of the area, with the surveyor periodically stationary at vantage points around the building to observe the bird activity within each section. Any activity was recorded that could indicate the presence of an active bird's nest using binoculars to minimise disturbance to potentially breeding species, and to observe behaviour.

2.2.4 Evidence of likely bird nesting would include observations of birds exhibiting territorial behaviour, courtship or observed visiting probable nesting site, agitated behaviour or anxiety calls from adults, or nest building being observed. Active bird nesting would be confirmed where distraction display/injury feigning is observed, recently fledged young, adults on nest, adult carrying faecal sac or food, nest containing eggs or nest with young that was observed or heard.

2.2.5 The survey was conducted by an experienced qualified ecologist familiar with the likely species assemblage for this geography and habitat type.

3. Survey Results

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1 While the building is not listed on the TidNBul Restricted Areas (Protected Species) Register, several species of bat are known to be present around and in the wider Tidworth Camp.
- 3.1.2 A review of the records held by ourselves and those previously provided by Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre identified records of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), brown long eared (*Plecotus auritus*), natterers (*Myotis nattereri*), western barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) and serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) within 1km of the building.

3.2 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA) Results

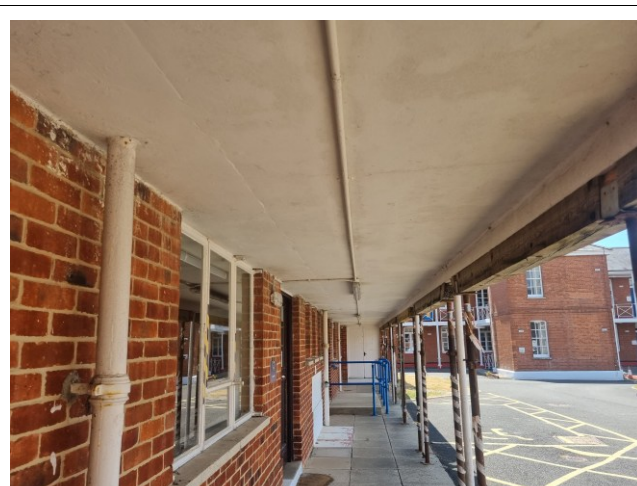
- 3.2.1 The PRA survey and nesting bird appraisal was conducted on 18th July 2025, during fine and stable weather conditions. All external elevations were accessible and could be inspected from ground level. The flat external roof of the building was also viewed from the ground level, and from a ladder placed at eaves height. An internal inspection for the presence of evidence of use by bats was also undertaken. Whilst the building lacked a roof void, the full internal was accessible with the horizontal and vertical surfaces checked for any evidence that might indicate bats were entering the building.
- 3.2.2 Generally, there are two main types of bats that use buildings, roof void dwelling species and crevice dwelling species, which use cracks, crevices or openings that provide shelter and dark spaces in which to roost or use access points into wall cavities or similar enclosed spaces. In addition, artificial bat roost features, of which there are three main types, can be installed in buildings. The most common are simple bat boxes placed on the outside of the buildings and are usually constructed from concrete or woodcrete (a combination of wood and concrete). Where more permanent bat features are required, integral bat boxes are also commonly used which are built into the wall of the building, often with just a small opening visible which the bat uses for access and egress. These are self-contained and do not allow bats to enter the roof space or wall cavity. The last type of artificial bat features is those which are designed to permit bats to enter the roof space of pitched roof buildings or less commonly the wall cavity. These are usually installed on the roof as bat access tiles, and permit direct access down into the roof space, and allow roof void dwelling bats to utilise the interior. The legislation protecting bats (Section 1.5) applies equally to installed artificial bat features, and hence any artificial bat roost features present were identified during the field survey.

External Inspection

- 3.2.3 The brickwork was inspected externally for any potential roost features (PRF's). Located under the veranda at the front of the building were a series of bespoke wall vents (photograph 3). The vents lacked any screen, and hence each one was closely inspected to determine any signs of use by bats or if they could provide access into the wall cavity. The vents were found to be either blocked by old bird nesting material (photograph 10), or were full of debris, with no indications of use by bats.



Photograph 3. Bespoke wall vent under the veranda.



Photograph 4. General view under the veranda at the front.

- 3.2.4 The windows throughout the building were constructed from a metal frame and were single glazed, and well-sealed into their openings, with a concrete lintel above. It was noted that some windows to the rear and along the northern end of the building contained weep vents above the concrete lintel (photograph 5). On more modern buildings it is common for weep vents to have a plastic insert, however these were open and could provide a route towards the wall cavity.

- 3.2.5 Each one was visually inspected, with the majority considered too small to be use by bats, either being too narrow or partially blocked internally with mortar, with the few remaining blocked with debris and dense cobwebbing (photograph 6). No indication of use by bats was found, with the weep vents not considered to constitute a PRF.



Photograph 5. Location of weep vents above a rear window.



Photograph 6. Weep vent blocked with debris and cobwebs.

- 3.2.6 The remaining external brickwork was in good condition, and there was no openings or gaps identified that would allow bats to enter the interior of the building, with all windows closed at the time of the visit. A cast flat concrete roof sat on the top of the brick wall plate, and preventative bird netting had been installed under the eaves to prevent bird nesting (photograph 9). Hence there were no potential roost features associated with the eaves. The cast concrete roof was covered in standard roofing felt, extending over the roof edge and attached to the underside of the overhang.
- 3.2.7 Overall, given the wall vents at the front and the weep vents over the windows were discounted as potential roost features, there were no habitat features around the building likely to be used by roosting bats. The absence of a roof void also significantly lowers the potential for roosting bats.

Internal Inspection

- 3.2.8 Access was gained to the interior of the building, which comprised of a series of office rooms off a central corridor (photograph 7). Internally the walls were rendered and painted, and it was noted that centrally along the corridor were a series of circular skylights (photograph 8). It is likely that this design aimed to permit natural daylight into the corridor, considering rooms were located on both sides. All external windows were also uncovered, and combined with the roof lights above the corridor, this arrangement would ensure the interior was well-illuminated throughout the day. Bats need a dark place to roost, and the absence of any dark locations internally further lowers the likelihood of use.
- 3.2.9 All horizontal and vertical surfaces were inspected for evidence of use by bats, such as bat droppings or feeding remains, and none were identified. Within the interior of the building were the remains of office furniture and equipment, and hence there was an abundance of horizontal areas where bat droppings would have been identified, should bats have been gained access to the interior of the building.



Photograph 7. Internal view along the central corridor.



Photograph 8. Light from the roof skylight in the corridor.

Wider Area

- 3.2.10 The building was located centrally within Tidworth Camp, within a predominantly built-up area. Immediately surrounding the building to the front was a large car park which was illuminated with streetlamps, and to the rear was the main Kirkee Road, again illuminated with streetlamps. Hence the building was located with an area with a high level of artificial light, and an absence of any significant foraging or commuting habitats for bats. The area is also subject to a high level of disturbance, given its central location.
- 3.2.11 With the exterior of the building being lit by artificial lighting on all aspects, with no moderate or high quality habitat within at least 100m, it was considered that the building was within low quality habitat, as defined in Section 2.1.7.

3.3 Nesting Bird Survey Results

- 3.3.1 Externally, it was noted that preventative bird netting has been installed under the eaves of the building on all elevations (photograph 9). The netting was attached to a tensioned wire along the underside of the concrete roof, and to the face of the brickwork. The area is known for its use by house martin (*Delichon urbica*), with nests present on the adjacent buildings to the west. Hence it is considered likely that previous attempts had been made by house martins to nest under the eaves of the building, resulting in the netting being installed.
- 3.3.2 In terms of evidence of use of the building by nesting birds, old nesting material was identified within the wall vents along the front of the building, under the veranda (photograph 10). The holes in the vents were suitable for small cavity nesting birds, such as blue tits (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), great tits (*Parus major*) or house sparrows (*Passer domesticus*). There was no evidence of use at the time of the survey, which was conducted towards the end of the bird nesting season.



Photograph 9. Preventative netting installed under the eaves.



Photograph 10. Nesting material within the wall vent.

- 3.3.3 No further evidence of nesting birds was identified. However, it should be noted that external evidence of bird nesting is not always readily identifiable, and evidence of past nesting can disintegrate quite quickly. As the building was in a central area of the garrison, away from and significant area of foraging habitat for birds, it was considered that the wider area was of limited suitability for birds, although common bird species can utilise a range of habitats.

4. Evaluation and Requirements

4.1 Evaluation - Bats

- 4.1.1 No evidence of use of the building by bats was identified during the survey visit. The wall vents at the front and the weep vents over the windows were discounted as potential roost features, with the absence of a roof void significantly lowering the potential for roosting bats. There were no identified routes for bats to the interior of the building, which was considered unsuitable for use by bats given the light interior. In addition, the immediate surrounding habitat was of low value for foraging and commuting bats.
- 4.1.2 No bat boxes or other artificial bat features were present.
- 4.1.3 Therefore, it was concluded that the likelihood of bats roosting within JE 0 060 was negligible.

4.2 Requirements – Bats

- 4.2.1 In accordance with the recognised guidance (Bat Conservation Trusts Bat Surveys - Good Practice Guidelines, Collins J. (ed.), 2023), buildings assessed as having negligible bat roost potential require no further surveys. However, the legislation protecting bats is particularly strict, being protected under both UK and European legislation. Hence, it should not be assumed that bats are certain to be absent, as bats can find opportunities to roost that are not always identifiable.
- 4.2.2 As a precaution, prior to the commencement of works it is good practice for a site briefing to be conducted by a competent person. A toolbox talk is provided in the Appendix for this purpose. The site briefing must include the legal protection afforded to bats (Section 1.5), and what to do in the unlikely event that a bat is found (see below). This report should be handed over to the demolition contractor before work commences.
- 4.2.3 If bats are discovered unexpectedly, including during periods of adverse weather, then the following steps must be taken:
- Works to that building/structure must stop immediately. The Aspire Helpdesk should then be informed who will contact the ADSL Project Manager and Health, Safety & Environmental Advisor. If a licensed ecologist is not on site, they must be contacted immediately for further advice. The bat must not be exposed or be encouraged to fly out of the roost on its own accord.
 - Any underweight or injured bats will be taken into temporary care by an experienced bat carer and looked after until such time that the bat can be transferred to a suitable replacement roost at the same site, or weather conditions are suitable for release at the same site.
- 4.2.4 Should any further advice be required, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

4.3 Bat PRA Validity

- 4.3.1 Owing to the highly mobile nature of bats, and the inherently unpredictable nature of their roosting habits, it is considered that this assessment will be valid for 12 months. The 12 month period is considered acceptable where the condition(s) of the building on site remain unchanged since the survey and the proposals for the site are unchanged.
- 4.3.2 The PRA only provides a 'snapshot' in time and do not account for seasonal variation, as bats may have not been identified due to seasonal constraints. Where no evidence of bats has been identified, it is not possible to have complete certainty that bats are not present, rather, that there was no indication of bats at the time of survey.

4.4 Evaluation - Nesting Birds

- 4.4.1 As the assessment was conducted during the bird nesting season, the building was inspected for evidence of current use by nesting birds and none was found. However, there was evidence that cavity nesting birds had been using the wall vents on the front elevation under the veranda (photograph 10). Hence should these nests be re-used, or additional nests constructed, and the demolition takes place during the bird nesting season, there is the potential for impact.
- 4.4.2 All nesting birds, their nests, eggs and young receive full legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The bird nesting season is generally considered to be mid-March to August inclusive (although it may extend longer depending on local conditions). All nesting birds are protected from the point at which they start to construct the nest, to the point at which the chicks have fledged.
- 4.4.3 It was also noted that preventative bird netting had been installed under the eaves of the building on all elevations (photograph 9). Whilst this will prevent nesting by house martins in the short term, following a number of occurrences where birds (and other wildlife) have become trapped in netting, both the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) now strongly advise against the use of flexible netting.

- 4.4.4 The netting tends to lack durability and degrades, with either the netting itself or the fixtures failing. This then creates gaps in the netting where birds and potentially bats can gain access and subsequently get trapped. While the use of preventative netting on buildings is legal, it requires frequent monitoring and repair to ensure that it remains intact and doesn't create a threat to wildlife.
- 4.4.5 There were two locations where the netting had come away, and here the potential for entrapment, with the greatest risk during at the start of the bird nesting season, when birds are looking for locations to nest (Section 4.5).

4.5 Requirements - Nesting Birds

- 4.5.1 Where possible, the demolition should be planned to take place out of the bird nesting season. This avoids the potential for the demolition to impact on nesting birds, ensuring compliance with the legislation.
- 4.5.2 Should this not be possible, the site set up work should be preceded by a thorough, careful and quiet examination of the building for wild nesting birds, their eggs, nests or young, with a particular focus on the wall vents under the veranda at the front of the building. This must be conducted by a qualified ecologist or competent member of the site team before major work commences and then at regular intervals as the demolition progresses.
- 4.5.3 In addition, before the start of the bird nesting season, the failed areas of the existing preventative bird netting should be repaired to prevent birds gaining access and getting trapped. The netting should then be monitored and its integrity checked until demolition commences.



Photograph 11. Gaps in the netting around a down pipe.



Photograph 12. Larger gap adjacent to a downpipe hopper.

- 4.5.4 Should nesting activity be detected, work in that area will need to stop and be rearranged until all young birds have fledged or nesting activity ceases, to comply with the legislation. The discovery must be reported to the ASDL project manager and further advice from a qualified ecologist sought.

Old Nests

- 4.5.5 Once the main work is underway, or as required above, it is likely to be necessary to remove old bird nesting material from the wall vents (photograph 10). There is also the potential for guano (bird droppings) to be encountered in other parts of the building. Old bird nests and guano can contain microorganisms including salmonella that can be harmful and can result in psittacosis.
- 4.5.6 Hence all elements of the work where bird nesting material or guano could be encountered should be risk assessed, and appropriate measures taken as detailed within the submitted RAMS. In most cases respiratory protective equipment will be required and the old nest material double bagged and put in general waste. Guidance from the Health and Safety Executive on working with/near old birds' nests and guano is provided in the link below.
- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/healthrisks/hazardous-substances/harmful-micro-organisms/other-diseases.htm>
- 4.5.7 In accordance with the above, old nesting material should only be removed outside of the bird nesting season, or where it can be certain that it is not in use.

Nesting Bird Appraisal Validity

- 4.5.8 The assessment of the presence or absence of active nesting birds is only valid at the time the survey was conducted, as during the nesting season new nests can be established or old nests abandoned anytime. However, in terms of the appraisal of the suitability of the building to be used by nesting birds, it is considered that this assessment will be valid for 12 months.

5. References

- Collins J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust London.
- CIEEM (2016). Guidelines for Assessing and Using Biodiversity Data. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- CIEEM (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.
- Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. [eds.] (2010). The Bat Workers Manual (4th edition). Joint Nature Conservancy Council, Peterborough.

6. Appendix

6.1 Tool Box Talk on Bats

Bats Site Information

There are 18 species of bat in the UK, 17 of which are known to be breeding; they all receive legal protection in the UK from intentional killing or injuring, and from disturbance.

Bats use roosts seasonally and tend to return to the same roost each year, so these sites are also protected whether the bats are present or not.

The most common British bats are the pipistrelles, which weigh around 5 grams (same as a 20p piece) and are around 40mm long.



Work on buildings/bridges/tunnels and trees that have the potential to have bat roosts must be inspected by an ecologist before any activity commences. Things to look out for are gaps, holes crevices, or fissures.

- Every building or mature tree is a potential bat roost. Smooth, stained areas may be found around the entrance to roosting sites.
- Look out for bat droppings - dark brown or black, about 4-8mm in length. They look like mouse droppings but crumble easily, as they are made up of insect fragments. In well-established roosts, droppings may be several centimeters deep.
- Other signs include a sharp characteristic odour and large numbers of moth wings discarded by feeding bats.
- Bats can crawl into crevices 15mm wide.



What do I need to do?

- Conduct a site briefing to all members of the site team on bats: what to look for and what to do if a bat is encountered during the site clearance or construction work. Include it as part of the site induction.

If individual bats are discovered unexpectedly:

- Works to that building/structure must stop immediately. If a bat licensed ecologist is not on site, they will need to be contacted immediately for advice. The bat must not be exposed or be encouraged to fly out of the roost on its own accord.
- The bat must only be handled by the licensed ecologist unless it is in immediate danger. The bat must be carefully placed in a lidded ventilated box with a piece of clean cloth and a small shallow container with some water. The box must be kept in a safe, quiet location. The licensed ecologist will then transfer the bat to one of the temporary bat boxes, or advise otherwise.
- Any underweight or injured bats will be taken into temporary care by an experienced bat carer and looked after until such time that the bat can be transferred to a suitable replacement roost at the same site, or weather conditions are suitable for release at the same site.

As natural roosting sites have become scarce due to development and land use changes, bats have increasingly become accustomed to roosting within buildings, to the point that roosts within structures are becoming essential in the survival of many bat species. However, the demolition of old buildings, renovations, changes in use, artificial lighting, and the move towards air-tight buildings, can have a significant impact on bats.

For further information in the first instance contact your site supervisor.

Further advice can be sought from the project ecologist.

LEGAL PROTECTION

All species of bat, their roosts and resting places are protected in the UK under **Schedules 5 & 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017**, making it illegal to:

- deliberately take, injure, or kill a wild bat, intentionally or recklessly
- disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats, damage or destroy a place used by bats for breeding or resting (roosts) (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time),
- possess or advertise/sell/ exchange a bat of a species found in the wild in the EU (dead or alive) or any part of a bat, or intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

PENALTIES

Offences are punishable by fines or up to £5000 per offence, or imprisonment for up to 6 months. In addition, any vehicle or equipment used to commit the offence may be forfeited. Penalties may be higher where dealt with in the crown court.

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