



Hundred Acres Farm, Sopworth, Chippenham,
SN14 6PP

Dusk Emergence Survey for Bats



June 2026

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The results of the survey and assessment work undertaken by All Ecology are representative at the time of surveying.

Every endeavour has been made to identify the presence of protected species on site, where this falls within the agreed scope of works.

The flora and fauna detailed within this report are those noted during the field survey and from anecdotal evidence. It should not be viewed as a complete list of flora and fauna species that may frequent or exist on site at other times of the year.

Up to date standard methodologies have been used, which are accepted by Natural England and other statutory conservation bodies. No responsibility will be accepted where these methodologies fail to identify all species on-site.

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Reference to sections or particular paragraphs of this document taken out of context may lead to misrepresentation.

Contents

Contents	1
1.0 Introduction	3
Background	3
Objectives and Aim	3
Site Location	4
2.0 Legislation and Status	5
Bats	5
3.0 Methodology	7
Personnel	7
Dusk Emergence Survey	7
Equipment	7
Assessment	7
Limitations	9
4.0 Results	10
Dusk Emergence Survey (Bats)	10
5.0 Evaluation	11
Dusk Emergence Survey (Bats)	11
Site Status Assessment	11
6.0 Impacts and Recommendations	12
Impacts	12
Further Surveys	12
Legal Compliance	12
Mitigation	12
7.0 References	15

8.0	Plans	16
9.0	Appendix 1	17

1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 All Ecology was commissioned to undertake a Dusk Emergence Survey for Bats of a barn at Hundred Acres Farm, Sopworth, Chippenham, SN14 6PP.
- 1.2 The site is the subject of a planning application for conversion of the barn to provide ancillary accommodation to the main house, and access road alterations.
- 1.3 A previous inspection of the building carried out by ACD Environmental Ltd in April 2025 found potential roosting features for crevice dwelling bats associated with raised/missing tiles; damaged roofing felt; missing stones within the stone walls; wooden beams and ivy on the external walls of the building. The building interior was easily accessible through wall openings allowing direct flight access to internal features. Given the number of potential access points to potential roosting features and lack of evidence of bats, the building was classified as providing moderate potential for roosting.
- 1.4 In accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition (Collins, 2023), where a building is deemed to have moderate potential for roosting bats, the building should be subject to two dusk emergence surveys between May – August inclusive to give confidence in a negative result. The building was therefore subject to these surveys.
- 1.5 It appeared that some repair/renovation of the barn had been carried out in the time between the Preliminary Roost Assessment and the present dusk emergence surveys as well as some surrounding landscaping.

Objectives and Aim

- 1.6 The main objectives and aim of the surveys were to establish the following:
 - Presence/absence of bat roosts.
 - Status of roosts if present.
 - Whether a European Protected Species (EPS) licence is required to ensure legal compliance.
 - Which type of mitigation measures would need to be employed.

Site Location



Figure 1: Site location.

2.0 Legislation and Status

Bats

- 2.1 All species of bat are listed on Schedule 5 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and as such receive protection under Section 9 of this Act. This has been amended several times, most recently by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which added 'or recklessly' to Section 9(4) (a) and (b). In summary, it is a criminal offence to:
- Intentionally kill, injure or take a wild bat.
 - Be in possession of, or control, any live or dead wild bat or part of, or anything derived from a wild bat.
 - Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection.
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bat whilst it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.
 - Transport for sale or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, a live or dead bat or any part of a bat.
- 2.2 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, in respect of England and Wales. It is an offence to possess, sell or offer or transport for sale any European species of bat or any part derived from such a species. These Regulations also remove the 'incidental result defence'. In other words, it is no longer a defence to show that the killing, capture or disturbance of a species covered by the Regulations or the destruction or damage of their breeding sites or resting places was the incidental and unavoidable result of a lawful activity. Natural England can grant European Protected Species (EPS) licenses in respect of development to permit activities that would otherwise be unlawful.
- 2.3 Under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) public bodies, including Local and Regional Planning Authorities have a duty to 'have regard' to the conservation of biodiversity in England when carrying out their normal functions, which includes consideration of planning applications. In compliance with Section 41 of the Act, the Secretary of State has published a list of species considered to be of principal importance for conserving biodiversity in England. This is known as The England Biodiversity List, all of which make up the UK BAP Priority Species. This list forms the basis of the UK Biodiversity Framework, and in England, Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (Defra, 2011). Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities will use it to identify the species that should be afforded priority when applying the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to maintain, restore and enhance species and habitats.
- 2.4 Seven bat species are NERC Priority Species (JNCC, 2007). These are:
- Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*
 - Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*
 - Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*

- Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown Long-eared *Plecotus auritus*
- Greater Horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser Horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

2.5 Greater Horseshoe, Lesser Horseshoe, Barbastelle and Bechstein's, are afforded greater protection under European legislation, being listed under Annex II of the EC Habitats Directive which lists species whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

3.0 Methodology

Personnel

- 3.1 The surveys were carried out by Daniel Roberts BSc Hons ACIEEM, an experienced consultant ecologist, as well as other experienced bat surveyors, and was overseen by James Godbeer BSc Hons MCIEEM, an ecologist with over 19 years' experience working as a consultant. James has extensive experience of managing environmental contracts, and particular experience in surveying, assessment and mitigation for rare and protected species. He has considerable knowledge of the development and planning process including Ecological Impact Assessments, sustainable ecological design and he has completed ecology chapters of Environmental Statements. James holds a number of protected species licences including bats (all species, all counties, Class Licence Registration No. 2015-12313-CLS-CLS), and Great Crested Newts (Class Licence Registration No. 2019-44282-CLS-CLS). He has successfully obtained European Protected Species mitigation licences for a number of bat species including Lesser Horseshoe, Greater Horseshoe, Serotine, Brown Long-eared, Common Pipistrelle and Natterer's bats, for a number of roost types including maternity and hibernation sites.

Dusk Emergence Survey

- 3.2 The building was subject to dusk emergence surveys on the 20th May & 10th June 2026. In order to adequately cover the building and potential roosting features, three surveyor positions were used.
- 3.3 In accordance with Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. 4th Ed (Collins, 2023), dusk surveys should begin 15 minutes before sunrise and continue for 1.5 – 2 hours after sunset with the survey start time adjusted on subsequent surveys or a repeat of the survey should bats already be in flight at 15 minutes before sunset. The dusk surveys therefore began 30 minutes before sunset to avoid the risk of having to repeat the survey as species such as pipistrelles will often emerge well before sunset.

Equipment

- 3.4 Surveyors were equipped with Echo Meter Touch 2 Pro bat detectors. Registrations are recorded on the devices and notes made on species recorded, behaviour, time of registration, location and direction of flight where possible, including incidental observations from surrounding habitats. Canon XA60 video cameras in infrared mode with Nightfox Arc Infrared Floodlights and Nightfox Spectrum Infrared (850nm) Torches, were used to assist with the survey. Darkest point photos from each surveyor position are presented in Appendix 1.

Assessment

- 3.5 The surveyed building has been evaluated to assess which of the following categories it falls into, if any (Mitchell-Jones, 2004 & Collins, 2023):
- **Transitional roost** (April-September/October) - On waking from hibernation or in the period prior to hibernation, bats search for roosts in which they stay for only a few days or on some occasions several weeks. These transitional roosts can be occupied by a few individuals or occasionally small groups. The transitional roosts used prior to hibernation

are generally cool and thus may allow bats to reduce their energy requirements before going into hibernation.

- **Maternity roost** (May-August) - Breeding females gather together around the beginning of May to form nursery colonies. During this period gestation begins with births typically occurring between June and July. The females and their young remain within the maternity roost until the young are weaned and independent (late July-August). These roosts tend to break up between August and September. Adult males are rarely found within these colonies. However, the adult males of long-eared bats, Daubenton's, Natterer's, and horseshoe bats can be found roosting within maternity colonies with their numbers increasing throughout the active season.
- **Satellite roost** (May-August) - Breeding females may have alternative roost sites in close proximity to the main nursery colony. These are referred to as 'satellite roosts'. The numbers of bats using these roosts can vary greatly, from a few individuals, to small groups.
- **Mating roost** (September-November) - All British bats are polygynous i.e. males mate with several females. Mating generally takes place from late summer and can continue through the winter. A number of different mating strategies are used by bats, though males of some species establish mating roosts, whereby they defend territory and display/call to females to mate.
- **Hibernation roost** (October-March) - Depending on the weather and food availability, bats tend to move to hibernation sites from October. Hibernation roosts can vary greatly in terms of the number of individuals and the diversity of species that occupy them. However, they tend to have a constant cool temperature and high humidity, which allows the bats to use less energy regulating their temperature. Bats will wake occasionally during hibernation to drink and feed.
- **Night roost** (March-November) - Bats may use roosts other than traditional day roosting sites to rest in during the night. These roosts vary in their conservation significance. Night roosts may be used by a single individual on occasion or they could be used regularly by the whole colony. Studies have shown that night roosts may be of particular importance to some species i.e. the Lesser Horseshoe, providing key resting places within core foraging areas.
- **Day roost** (March-November) - These roosts are used during the day to rest in. Males of most British species spend the summer roosting alone or in small groups with other males in such roosts. Bats may regularly use a number of day roosts, switching between them on a daily basis, though conversely, they may occupy the same roosting site for several weeks.
- **Feeding roost** (May-November) - These roosts can be occupied by a single animal or a few individuals throughout the active season. They vary in their significance as they may be used by the whole colony or just a few individuals to feed, to shelter from the weather or to rest temporarily. Feeding roosts are often used by long-eared and horseshoe species.
- **Other considerations, Swarming sites** - Swarming takes place between August and November, whereby large numbers of bats from several species gather, generally around caves and mines. They are often dominated by the *Myotis* species and appear to be

important mating sites with some bats travelling several kilometres to reach these areas. A proportion of the bats that travel to these sites will remain to hibernate.

Limitations

- 3.6 There were no limitations to carrying out the dusk emergence survey in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. 4th Ed (Collins, 2023).
- 3.7 The survey only provides a 'snapshot' of the bat activity associated with the building and immediate surroundings and although the absence of a maternity roost can be determined with a high level of confidence as well as other roost types at the time of the survey, it is possible that bats could roost at other times of the year.

4.0 Results

Dusk Emergence Survey (Bats)

4.1 No bats were recorded emerging from, or entering the building during the surveys.

Table 1: Survey results for 20th May 2026 dusk survey.

Species	Times	No. Passes	Comments
Common Pipistrelle	21:32 – 22:08	7	Individual pipistrelles were recorded in the local area and foraging over short grassland surrounding the barn.
Soprano Pipistrelle	22:00	1	One brief recording of a bat in the local area.

Table 2: Survey results for 10th June 2026 dusk survey.

Species	Times	No. Passes	Comments
Common Pipistrelle	22:01 – 22:28	5	Individual pipistrelles were recorded in the local area. The majority of this activity was brief foraging passes of bats which appeared on site from the south and east.
Serotine	22:21 & 22:46	3	Foraging bat(s) over the field east of the site. A maximum of one bat recorded at any one time.

Table 3. Weather conditions and sunset time.

Date	Temperature (°C)	Sunset Time	Wind	Cloud Cover (%)
20/05/26	13	21:01	Light	90
10/06/26	12 - 11	21:25	Light	20

Birds

4.2 During the initial dusk emergence survey two active Jackdaw nests were recorded in the barn interior. Jackdaws appeared to have fledged by the time of the second survey visit on the 10th June.

5.0 Evaluation

Dusk Emergence Survey (Bats)

- 5.1 No bats were recorded emerging from, or entering, the building and it is therefore concluded that roosting bats were absent from the building at the time of the surveys. The presence of a maternity roost can be ruled out with a high level of confidence and although individual bats could roost at any time, the present surveys indicate general absence.
- 5.2 Three confirmed species of bat was recorded: Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and Serotine.
- 5.3 Pipistrelles dominated activity over the site, although the level of overall activity was not deemed significant with only occasional foraging passes of individual bats, with most recorded entering the site area from the south and east. Although pipistrelles dominated activity, only individual bats were observed and it is likely that foraging recorded was of small numbers of bats making repeated foraging passes. The first pipistrelle recorded over the site was observed at 31 minutes after sunset that suggests that this bat was likely roosting in the local area but not likely to be roosting on the wider site or in the immediate vicinity. Pipistrelle bats are the most common species of bat in the UK with widespread distributions and roosting in a wide range of habitats and building types (BCT, 2010).
- 5.4 Three foraging passes of serotine were recorded to the east of the application site. These bats had no association to the site or building.

Site Status Assessment

- 5.5 No roosts have been identified within the building on site. It is not possible to determine the value of the site for foraging and commuting bats based on the dusk emergence survey alone, although foraging activity recorded was likely low numbers of bats making multiple foraging passes and no significant activity was observed.
- 5.6 Jackdaws are known to use the barn interior for nesting with potential for other species to nest within the barn in future.

6.0 Impacts and Recommendations

Impacts

- 6.1 The site is the subject of a planning application for conversion of the barn to provide ancillary accommodation to the main house, and access road alterations.
- 6.2 In the absence of mitigation, the following impacts and potential impacts with regard to bats have been identified:
- Possible loss of features suitable for roosting bats; no roosts have been identified within the building during the survey. No impact.
 - Potential for disturbing bats that could roost at other times of the year or those that could begin roosting at any time. Likely negligible impact.
 - Temporary/permanent disruption of small areas of bat foraging habitat on site through changes increase/changes in external lighting. Impact likely to be negligible and mitigation possible.

Further Surveys

- 6.3 No further surveys are required at this time. Sufficient surveys have been carried out to satisfy the recommended survey effort and repeat surveys would not be required unless the proposals are delayed by one year or more.

Legal Compliance

- 6.4 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by The CROW Act 2000 and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 makes it illegal to recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection, whether the bat is occupying the shelter at the time or not.
- 6.5 European Protected Species (EPS) Licences to permit the above for the purposes of development must be obtained from Natural England. To gain a licence the scheme must have been issued with detailed planning permission and must not result in a loss of conservation status of the species concerned. Based on the survey evidence presented in this report, it has been concluded that roosting bats are likely to be absent from the building and an **EPS Licence will not be required** to permit the works.

Mitigation

Timing of Works

- 6.6 There are no restrictions on the timing of works with respect to bats.
- 6.7 Works should avoid the nesting season for birds (March – September). Works to be building during this time should be preceded by a nesting bird survey to confirm they are absent. If nesting birds are discovered then the nest and surrounding habitat must be left undisturbed until the young have fledged.

Care and Vigilance During Works

- 6.8 It should be noted that although there was nothing to indicate the presence of roosts within the building, it is possible that crevice-dwelling bats e.g. pipistrelles, could be present at other times or could begin roosting in crevices at any time, although any potential is low. As a precaution, the contractor(s) should therefore be advised to carry out all work with care and vigilance for bats.
- 6.9 During the works the contractor should be advised to adhere to the following procedures in the unlikely event bats are found during works:
- If the roost is still in the structure and bats are not injured, stop work and contact a licensed ecologist. If help is not available, allow bats to fly out of harm's way and seek advice from a licensed ecologist before works continue.
 - If material containing a roost has been removed, the roost is not exposed and the bats are not injured, temporarily seal and isolate the roost, stop work and seek advice from a licensed ecologist. If advice is not readily available, re-open it and allow bats to relocate of their own accord.
 - If the roost has been exposed, and especially if bats have been injured, stop work, collect bats in a secure box or bag (using a glove) and contact a licensed ecologist

Habitat Creation

- 6.10 No roosting bats were recorded using the building during the survey but pipistrelles and Serotine bats were recorded foraging over or close to the site. As no bats were found to be roosting within the building, no specific recommendation is made for new roosting features but the works would provide an opportunity to enhance the site for roosting bats by incorporating a new roost(s) onto external walls. There are many ways that a building can be enhanced for crevice-dwelling bat species (virtually all UK bat species) without inconveniencing occupants or requiring any significant design considerations. Bat tubes, panels, shelters or boxes can be installed. New roosting features should be installed away from sources of light and a variety of aspects increases the likelihood of colonisation. Bat boxes could be installed on mature trees, these should be installed at a minimum height of 3 m.
- 6.11 The following options should be explored for inclusion on the north to east sides of the converted building:
- Nest boxes for Swifts could be incorporated into the eaves. These not only provide nesting sites for Swifts but can also be used by other species such as House Sparrows and Starlings.
 - House Martin nests could be provided under the eaves or on the north to east sides of the building.
 - Individual boxes, such as the Schwegler Bird Home 1MR, could also be installed at a height of at least 2 m.
 - Groups of multiple small bird boxes could also be installed at a height of least 2 m to provide nesting sites for birds such as House Sparrows.

Lighting

- 6.12 Pipistrelle and Serotine bats are generally light tolerant; but as other less light tolerant species may forage over the site at other times, it is recommended that external lighting be kept to minimum in line with best practice to minimise skyglow and impacts to nocturnal wildlife in general.

7.0 References

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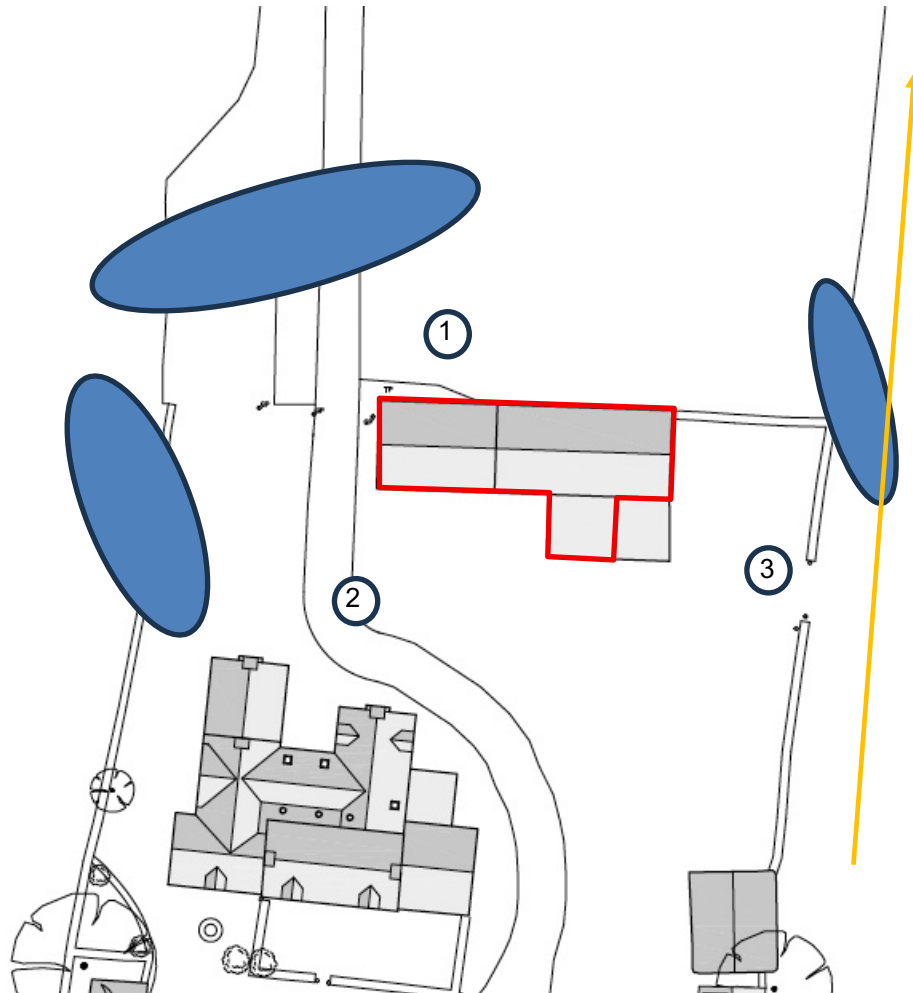
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8.0 Plans

Plan 1 – Survey Results



Surveyed Building 

Surveyor Location 

Pipistrelle Foraging Activity 

Serotine Foraging Pass 

9.0 Appendix 1

Darkest Point Photos



Photograph 1: View of the barn from surveyor position 3.



Photograph 2: View of the barn from surveyor position 1.



Photograph 3: View of the barn from surveyor position 2.