

Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS)

Survey site:

Guest farm, 1A Rixton Gate, Ashton Keynes, Swindon SN6 6PH

Client:

J West Developments Ltd

Report date:

2nd September 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application for the proposal described as:

The proposed development is for the demolition of the existing agricultural buildings present onsite and subsequent erection of 4 residential dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping.

This report is supplementary to the Preliminary Roost Assessment report completed by Arbtech Consulting Ltd (2025).

BERS survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [BERS Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

This report is an addendum to and must be read in conjunction with the Preliminary Roost Assessment completed by Arbtech Consulting Limited (2025) for the same site address. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the consultant for advice.

Executive Summary

Report Validity: This report is valid for up to 18 months for the purposes of planning/LBC applications. For the purposes of bat licencing, the report is considered 'up to date' and suitable for licence application until the start of the following bat activity season. After those timeframes, some level of updated surveys will be required. The level of survey effort will depend on the specific circumstances of the site.

Results

The surveys undertaken to date have demonstrated that there is still risk to bats as a result of the proposed works, therefore precautionary working measures are needed to reduce risk to an acceptable level.

The soft removal of the potential roosting features of B1-B3 will be conducted under ecological supervision (following a visual inspection by a qualified ecologist or accredited agent) immediately prior to mechanical demolition of the buildings.

Background

PRA – The PRA was carried out by Arbtech on the 16th July 2025. There were seven buildings (B1-B7) assessed as a part of the preliminary survey. These buildings were categorised based on their individual suitability for roosting bats. B1-B3 were considered to have a low value for roosting bats and B4-B7 were considered to have a negligible value. Of the seven buildings on site, B1-B3 were subject to a single further emergence survey, whilst the remaining buildings (B4, 5, 6, 7) were not surveyed as they provided a lack of suitable roosting features for bats.

Scope of works

The following buildings were subject to emergence survey:

B1 – Low value – 1 survey

B2 – Low value – 1 survey

B3 - Low value – 1 survey

Proposed development

Current use of buildings – Disused agricultural, currently utilised for storage

Structural changes to buildings – All existing buildings are to be demolished in full to facilitate the development. Type of permission required – Full planning permission	
The site surveys were designed and managed by Assistant Ecologist Kristian Bullard. Olga Hermann, accredited agent to Natural England Level 2 bat licence number 2019-41480-CLS-CLS, provided technical advisory oversight and ensured compliance with ecological standards.	
See surveyor locations in the BERS plan in Appendix 1, proposed plans in Appendix 2	
<i>Limitations</i>	No specific limitations encountered during the survey.

Field Survey					
Dusk Emergence Survey 1					
Building B1					
<i>Building inspection prior to survey</i>	An internal inspection was carried out on all surveyed buildings prior to the survey, undertaken by Olga Hermann [accredited agent to Natural England Level 2 bat licence number 2019-41480-CLS-CLS]. This revealed no physical or material changes to any building since the time of the original survey (16 th July 2025), and no evidence of roosting bats on or within, in the form of live or deceased bats, droppings, feeding remains or urine/fur straining. No active bats roosts were found throughout any of the interior spaces.				
<i>Surveyor and position</i>	Surveyor Position	Name	BERS Experience / Bat Licence	BCT Competency	Elevation
	1 - Lead	Kristian Bullard	1 Year	Level 2	Southeastern and northeastern of B1
	2	Sam Tofts	1 Year	Level 2	Southwestern of B2/northwestern of B1
	2a	Additional IR camera			Southwestern of B1
	3	Kiera Horman	1 Year	Level 2	Southwestern and northwestern of B2
	4	Isabel Whitaker	2 Years	Level 1	Southwestern and northwestern of B3
	5	Oliver Drew	1 Year	Level 1	Northeastern and northwestern of B2
	6	James Pitter	1 Year	Level 2	Northeastern and northwestern of B1
	7	Olga Hermann	5 Years	Level 3	Eastern of B3
<i>Weather (start/end)</i>	Temperature (°C): 23 Relative humidity (%): 66 Cloud cover (%): 80 Wind (m/s): 0.7 Rain: None			Temperature (°C): 20 Relative humidity (%): 74 Cloud cover (%): 80 Wind (m/s): 0.6 Rain: None	
<i>Equipment used</i>	Equipment	Make	Model	Count	
	NVAs	Nightfox	Whisker	8	
	Additional Illumination	Nightfox	XB5 PRO	8	
	Bat Detector	Wildlife Acoustics	Echo Meter Touch 2	7	
		Magenta Electronics	Magenta Bat4	5	

	Two Way Radio	BAOFENG	FV-88E	7
Results				
Date of survey		Sunset; Start - End		
13/08/2025		Sunset 20:33; 20:18 – 22:03		
Surveyor observations				
Surveyor 1	No emergencies or re-entries observed. Summary of general activity: The first recorded bat activity was a soprano pipistrelle (SP) commuting west to southeast towards the treeline to the southeast of the site at 20:55. Continued SP activity was observed until the end of the survey with the main foraging and commuting lines including west to east over the ridgeline of B1, northeast to southwest along the southeastern elevation and foraging stints over the vegetation to the fore of the southeastern elevation. A myotis species was HNS twice at 21:10 and 21:20. At 21:32 a myotis species was seen commuting west to east over the ridgeline of B1. A noctule was HNS at 21:23 shortly followed by a serotine HNS at 21:24.		Full elevation photo showing surveyors view. 	
IR position 1	No emergencies or re-entries observed Camera position: observing Southeastern and northeastern of B1 No emergencies were observed and the footage was in line with the observations of surveyor 1 with no additional activity.		Screenshot of darkest part of survey. 	

<i>Surveyor 2</i>	No emergences or re-entries observed. Summary of general activity: At 21:05 a SP was observed commuting south past B2s Northwest elevation. At 21:14 a SP was observed foraging in a northeast direction past B2s northwest elevation. Soprano pipistrelle calls were heard not seen regularly from 20:57 – 21:59. At 21:11 a common pipistrelle was observed foraging north past B2s southwestern elevation. Calls were then heard not seen at 21:29 and 21:40. At 21:12 and 21:23 a noctule was heard not seen. Between 21:15 and 21:57 a Daubenton's was regularly heard not seen. At 21:21 a Nauthusius's pipistrelle was heard not seen. At 21:27 a serotine was heard and not seen.	Full elevation photo showing surveyors view. 
<i>IR position 2</i>	No emergences or re-entries observed Camera position: observing southwestern of B2/northwestern of B1 elevation of B1 No emergences were observed and the footage was in line with the observations of surveyor with no additional activity.	Screenshot of darkest part of survey. 
<i>Unmanned IR 2a</i>	No emergences or re-entries observed Camera position: observing southwestern elevation of B1 No emergences were observed and the footage was in line with the observations of surveyor with no additional activity.	Screenshot of darkest part of survey.

		
Surveyor 3	No emergences or re-entries observed. Summary of general activity: The first bat activity recorded was a soprano pipistrelle seen foraging above B1 continuously from 21:52 till 21:58. From 21:00 there was continuous common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle activity until 21:15. Activity was heard and not seen as well as bats seen foraging throughout the small, vegetated garden in front of the western elevations of B1 and B2. At 21:15 a myotis species was seen foraging throughout the garden continuously until 21:17. A serotine was heard and not seen at 21:17. The final bat seen was a soprano pipistrelle commuting from east to west above B1 at 21:19. There was a period of constant common and soprano pipistrelle heard and not seen activity from 21:16 till 21:22. From 21:20 till 21:57 there were thirteen occurrences of bats heard and not seen: nine myotis species, one noctule, two soprano pipistrelles and one serotine.	Full elevation photo showing surveyors view. 
IR position 3	No emergences or re-entries observed Camera position: observing Southwestern and northwestern of B2 elevation of B1 No emergences were observed and the footage was in line with the observations of surveyor with no additional activity.	Screenshot of darkest part of survey.

		
Surveyor 4	No emergences or re-entries observed. Summary of general activity: The first bat seen was a SP at 20:56, commuting east from west behind position 4 and then back South between B2 and B3. This was followed by five more SP following the same flight path until 21:06. At 21:05 a SP flew west from near B3. Soprano pipistrelle calls were recorded at 21:09 and 21:18. A common pipistrelle was heard not seen at 21:11, and this was followed by a common pipistrelle commuting from the south between B2 and B3 and then foraging around the vegetation north of B3. At 21:14 a myotis species commuted from the south between B2 and B3 and then commuted West. A serotine was seen commuting East at 21:16 and then serotine calls were recorded again at 21:27 and 21:40. At 21:19, another myotis species was observed foraging around position 4, followed by a HNS call at 21:23 and 21:32. A noctule was heard not seen at 21:23. A common pipistrelle was heard not seen at 21:21, 21:23, 21:39 and 21:56. The last bat recorded was a common pipistrelle, heard not seen at 21:56.	Full elevation photo showing surveyors view. 
IR position 4	No emergences or re-entries observed Camera position: observing south and western elevations of B3.	Screenshot of darkest part of survey.

	No emergencies were observed, and the footage was in line with the observations of surveyor with no additional activity.	
<i>Surveyor 5</i>	No emergencies or re-entries observed. Summary of general activity: The first bat recorded was a soprano pipistrelle, seen and heard at 20:56 commuting from east to west in front of the northeast elevation of B2. Soprano and common pipistrelles were frequently seen commuting and foraging across and between buildings in several directions until 21:18. Myotis species were also seen and heard foraging between buildings at 21:19. Noctules and serotines were also occasionally heard foraging and commuting across the site throughout this period, though not seen. The last bat recorded was a soprano pipistrelle heard at 21:58, though not seen.	Full elevation photo showing surveyors view. 
<i>IR position 5</i>	No emergencies or re-entries observed Camera position: observing northeastern and northwestern of B2 elevation No emergencies were observed and the footage was in line with the observations of surveyor with no additional activity.	Screenshot of darkest part of survey. 

<i>Surveyor 6</i>	No emergences or re-entries observed. Summary of general activity: The first bat activity recorded was a SP commuting from east to west between the B1 and B2 at 20:56. Another SP was seen commuting in the same direction at 21:00 and 21:03. SP were heard not seen regularly throughout the survey with the last detection at 21:22. Common pipistrelles were regularly heard not seen between 21:23 and 21:59. A Noctule was HNS at 21:20 and 21:22. A myotis species was HNS at 21:15 and between 21:32-21:45. A Serotine was HNS at 21:17. A Nathusius' pipistrelle was HNS at 21:20. The last recorded bat activity was a common pipistrelle HNS at 21:59.	Full elevation photo showing surveyors view. 
<i>IR position 6</i>	No emergences or re-entries observed Camera position: observing northeastern and northwestern elevations of B1 No emergences were observed and the footage was in line with the observations of surveyor with no additional activity.	Screenshot of darkest part of survey. 

<i>Surveyor 7</i>	No emergences or re-entries observed. Summary of general activity: The first bat activity recorded was of a soprano pipistrelle commuting east to west at 20:56. Frequent commuting and foraging soprano and common pipistrelles were then observed until 21:12, foraging throughout the site and utilising a key flight path of southwest to northeast, with commuting corridors between surveyed buildings. Two myotis sp. were seen at 21:14, which displayed constant foraging and commuting activity until 21:32. Further, activity from serotines was also observed throughout this time, as well as several distant noctule calls. The last bat activity recorded was of a common pipistrelle heard not seen at 21:56, which concluded the survey effort.	Full elevation photo showing surveyors view 
<i>IR position 7</i>	No emergences or re-entries observed Camera position: observing south and eastern elevations of B3 No emergences were observed and the footage was in line with the observations of surveyor with no additional activity.	Screenshot of darkest part of survey. 

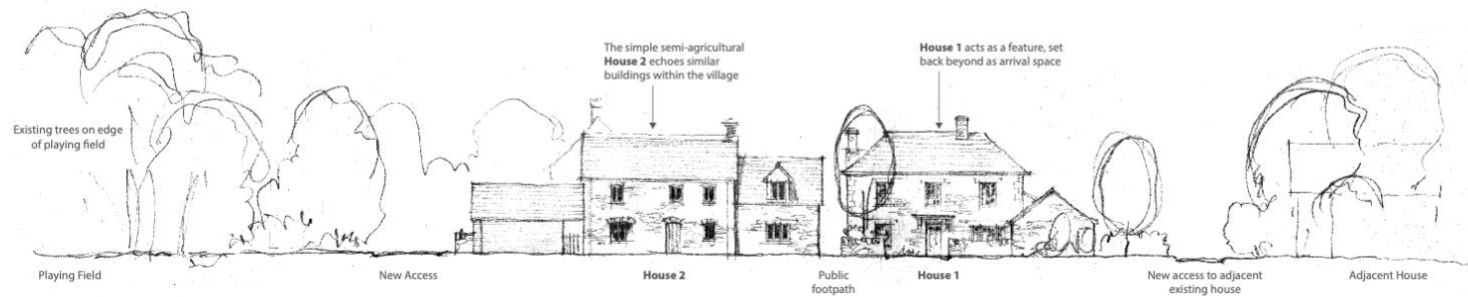
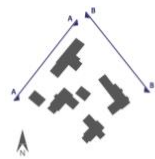
Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations	
<i>Survey Results Summary</i>	No roosts were confirmed on site at the time of the surveys, however, the survey undertaken to date only provides data from a snapshot in time, whilst bats are known to regularly switch roosts. Due to the number of buildings on site, with high level of bat activity throughout compounded with the presence of valuable foraging and commuting habitat surrounding the site, roosting of low numbers or individuals for transient periods or use of the open interiors for foraging and/or night roosting cannot be discounted entirely. General bat activity on site: Key foraging areas – Garden area of existing residential dwelling to the southwest of B1 and above the vegetated area to the southeast of B1. Key flight lines – Southeast to northwest utilising the treeline to the east of the site. Species observed – Common, Nathusius and Soprano pipistrelles, noctule, serotine, myotis.
<i>Impact Assessment</i>	Whilst no bat roosts were identified, the proposed development will result in full demolition of all buildings on site. Due to the large scale of the site and the surrounding habitats, such as tree lines, hedgerows and Thames Link stream directly north offering high quality foraging and commuting opportunities, the possibility for roosting bats being present within the buildings remains, albeit low. Whilst no bat evidence was identified within B1, the large open structure could be utilised as a feeding roost for transient periods for a number of bat species. The unkempt floor with debris and rubble contributes a lower likelihood of uncovering evidence, should this be present, and it is considered historic evidence may be concealed within the floor materials. Any roosting individuals could potentially be injured or killed as a result of the demolition, if present at the time of works Foraging and commuting bats could also be impacted by additional lighting on site which can reduce resources for the local population. Only common and widespread species were identified on site, therefore no impacts at population level are anticipated. Impact site level only.

<i>Recommendations</i>	Due to the buildings on-site presently holding potential for roosting bats and the high habitat value of the surrounding landscape, there remains an elevated risk that bats could be present during the works, as bats are highly mobile creatures known to roost switch regularly. Prior to demolition, cladding and any roofing material on/within B1, B2 and B3 will be removed by hand under ecological supervision of a licenced ecologist or accredited agent prior to any mechanical demolition. If works are started prior to May 2026 - This visual inspection using torch and endoscope will be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to inspect the identified crevices to check for any bat presence on the day of and immediately prior to the soft demolition of the potential roost features. If works are started after May 2026 – an updated inspection and dusk emergence survey will be carried out prior to the start of works to check for any changes in roost status. If evidence of roosting bats is found then a full suite of further surveys and a license application will be required to proceed with the works. Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Strategy A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, and this should be designed in accordance with Guidance Note GN08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2023). The following measures could be included: • Light spill on to the surrounding tree lines, stream and other vegetation should be avoided. • Use narrow spectrum light sources to lower the range of species affected by lighting. • Use light sources that emit minimal ultra-violet light. • Avoid white and blue wavelengths of the light spectrum to reduce insect attraction and where white light sources are required in order to manage the blue shortwave length content they should be of a warm / neutral colour temperature <4,200 kelvin. • Not use bare bulbs and any light pointing upwards. The spread of light will be kept in line with or below the horizontal.
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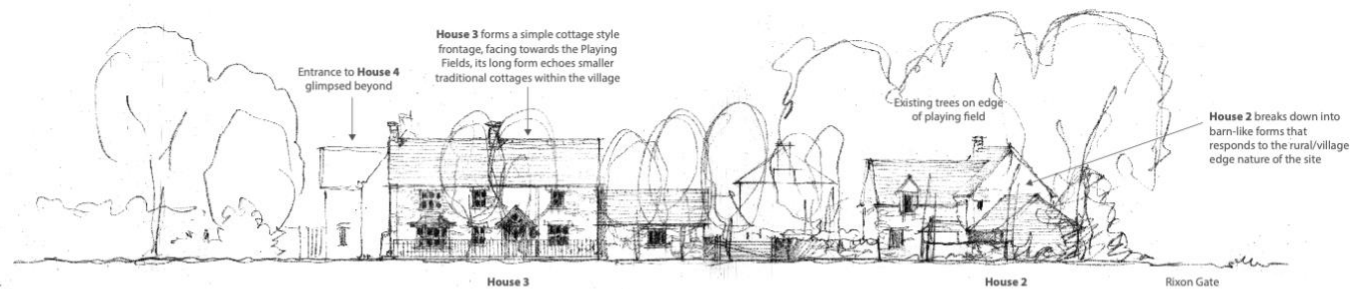
	• Light spill will be reduced via the use of low-level lighting used in conjunction with hoods, cowls, louvers and shields. Lights will also be directional to ensure that light is directed to the intended areas only. • External lighting will be on PIR sensors that are sensitive to large objects only (so that they are not triggered by passing bats) and will be set to the shortest time duration to reduce the amount of time the lights are on. • Wall lights and security lights will be 'dimnable' and set to the lowest light intensity settings. There are several products on the market that allow the control of the light intensity and the duration that the lights are on. All lighting on the developed site will make use of the most up to date technology available.
<i>Enhancements</i>	The installation of four bat boxes at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat boxes will be integrated within the new residential buildings. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level (at the eaves of buildings), facing in a south or south-westerly direction (or facing vegetated areas/gardens), with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from and unlit by artificial light, and not above any windows. The bat boxes will be a specification suitable for crevice dwelling species such as Vivara Pro Build-In Woodstone Bat Tube (integrated), Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box 'C' (integrated), or a similar alternative brand.

Appendix 1: BERS plan

Appendix 2: Proposed Plans



North / Street Elevation along Rixton Gate (AA)



East Elevation facing playing field (BB)

Planning

This drawing has been prepared for work to planning application purposes only and is not intended for construction. The scale bar should only be used to check the drawing has been reproduced to the current size. No responsibility can be accepted for errors made by others in 'scaling' from this drawing.

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PRELIMINARY Indicative Elevations

Guest Farm, Rixton Gate, Ashton Keynes

James West

Scale: 1:200@A2

Drawn/Checked: MS/SC

Date: February 2025

Drg No: 3208-0045K Rev:

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Version control			
Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Kristian Bullard- Assistant Ecologist	02/09/2025
Proof	0.2	Olga Hermann, Consultant Ecologist	02/09/2025
Review	0.2	Jonathan Kewell; 11 Years' Bat Survey Experience, L2 Accredited for N. Evans	05/09/2025
Final	1.0	Kristian Bullard- Assistant Ecologist	05/09/2025