

Technical Note

Project:	Land at Blackmore Farm, Melksham
Title:	Update Bat Roost Survey
Date:	10 June 2026
Client:	David Wilson Redrow South West
Reference:	260110_P1476_Bat TN_Final
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. EAD Ecology was commissioned by David Wilson Redrow to undertake update bat surveys of three agricultural buildings requiring demolition ahead of a proposed residential development at Land at Blackmore Farm, Melksham (Planning Reference: PL/2023/11188); refer to Figure 1.
- 1.2. No bat roosts were identified during previous inspection and emergence surveys of the buildings undertaken by EAD Ecology in 2024. The update surveys were undertaken as a precaution to ensure that no new roosts had established in the interim, which would necessitate a Natural England Bat Mitigation Licence to be obtained prior to demolition.

2. Methodology

2.1. *Update building inspections*

- 2.1.1. Update building inspection surveys were carried out on the three agricultural buildings, hereafter referred to as Buildings 7, 8 and 9. The building inspections were undertaken on 2 June 2026 by a Natural England-licensed bat ecologist.
- 2.1.2. The inspections followed Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines (Collins [ed.] 2023) and involved a search of the interior and exterior of the structures for evidence of bats such as droppings and feeding remains. Ladders, binoculars, high-powered torches and an endoscope were used as necessary.
- 2.1.3. The buildings were each assessed against BCT criteria (refer to Table 2.1 below) to determine their suitability for roosting bats on a scale from 'None' to 'High'. If evidence of roosting bats was identified during the survey, buildings were classed as 'Confirmed' roosts.

Table 2.1: Guidelines for assessing the bat roost suitability of buildings (adapted from Collins [ed.] 2023).

Suitability	Description – roosting habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices / suitable shelter at all ground / underground levels).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with 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 ^b and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.

^a Negligible is defined as ‘so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant’. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).

^b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

2.2. Update dusk emergence survey

- 2.2.1. One building was considered to have Low bat roost potential (see Section 3 below). In accordance with BCT guidelines, a dusk emergence survey was carried out on 2 June 2026.
- 2.2.2. Surveyors were positioned around the building to adequately cover all potential bat access points identified during the building inspection; refer to Figure 1. The emergence survey started 15 minutes before sunset and continued for up to 90 minutes after sunset. Anabat Scout bat detectors were used; bat registrations were recorded for later analysis using ‘Analook Insight’ software. One surveyor (P1; refer to Figure 1) was stationed with a thermal camera, which was positioned to record the bat potential bat access points on the northeastern gable; refer to Table 3.1.

2.3. Limitations

- 2.3.1. There were no limitations to the surveys.

3. Results

3.1. Update building inspections

- 3.1.1. During the previous survey, carried out in 2024, Buildings 7 and 8 were assessed as having Negligible bat roost suitability and Building 9 was assessed as Low.
- 3.1.2. The results of the update survey are provided in Table 3.1. As a result of structural changes to Building 7 its bat roost suitability was assessed as having reduced from Negligible to None. Building 8 (previously categorised as Negligible) and Building 9 (previously categorised as Low) showed no structural changes and their bat roost suitability was considered to be the same as in 2024.

Table 3.1: Results of update building inspections

Building reference	Building description	Roost suitability
7	Steel frame and wood purlin building frame. Photograph 1: View form north of Building 7. 	None
8	Agricultural building used for hay and machinery storage. The building was open sided on all elevations, with more agricultural buildings alongside the northeastern elevation. The roof material was corrugated asbestos, the frame was steel and concrete, and there were corrugated metal doors on the northwest and southeast elevations. Photograph 2: Northwestern elevation of Building 8.	Negligible

Building reference	Building description	Roost suitability
	 Photograph 3: Interior of Building 8.  Photograph 4: Southeastern elevation of Building 8.	

Building reference	Building description	Roost suitability
		
9	Agricultural building used as cattle shed. The building was open-sided on northeastern elevation. The roof material was corrugated asbestos. The frame was steel and concrete, and there were corrugated metal doors on the northwest and southeast elevations. Limited potential for roosting bats was noted under the fascia boards on the northeastern gable (southern section); refer to Photograph 9. Photograph 5: Southwestern elevation of Building 9.	Low

Building reference	Building description	Roost suitability
	 Photograph 6: Northwestern elevation of Building 9.  Photograph 7: Northeastern elevation of Building 9 (northern section).	

Building reference	Building description	Roost suitability
	 Photograph 8: Northeastern elevation of Building 9 (southern section).  Photograph 9: Internal view of the southern section of Building 9.	

Building reference	Building description	Roost suitability
	 Photograph 10: Southeastern elevation of Building 9. 	

3.2. *Update dusk emergence survey*

- 3.2.1. No bat emergences were recorded during the survey. However, multiple common pipistrelle bats were recorded foraging in and around Building 9 and surrounding agricultural buildings, including Building 8, between 21:55 and 22:20.
- 3.2.2. The weather conditions during the emergence survey are detailed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Weather conditions during emergence survey

Date	Time at start/end of survey period	Sunset	Cloud (Oktas)	Wind speed (Beaufort)	Temperature (°C)
02 June 2026	21:01	21:16	7	2	15
	22:46		6	2	14

4. References

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

Figure 1: Bat Roost Survey Plan



Key

- Phase 1 survey boundary
- Building - no bat roost suitability
- Building - negligible bat roost suitability
- Building - low bat roost suitability
- Surveyor positions