



**Fenswood
Ecology**

**Lodge Farm, Poulshot
Preliminary Roost Assessment
July 2026**

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Summary

Fenswood Ecology was commissioned by Mr. Tim Hues, to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (RPA) of barns at Lodge Farm, Poulshot (centred around Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: ST 97286 60812). An assessment of the site was undertaken by Fenswood Ecology in June 2026.

There are nine agricultural buildings across the site, in a range of styles, compositions and conditions.

All nine buildings were made from materials unsuitable for roosting bats and also lacked features, such as cracks, gaps and voids. No evidence of bats was found in any of the buildings and therefore all nine buildings are considered to have negligible bat roosting potential and no further surveys are recommended.

Although the onsite buildings were not identified as a bat roosting site at the time of survey, it should be appreciated that almost any structure may be used by an individual or transient bat from time to time. Bats require very limited cavity space and only very small roost entry gaps and can be found in any structure which provides close shelter. Should bats be discovered on site at any time, works should be halted in the immediate area and an appropriately trained, qualified and licensed ecologist consulted immediately.

Due to the buildings being in an area that is considered to be suitable for commuting and foraging bats, it is recommended that a sensitive lighting plan is in place for the development to minimise disturbance to local bat populations from introduced light spill.

Buildings 1, 2, 4 and 8 had evidence of nesting birds with other buildings also having some suitability. Where possible construction should start outside of the nesting season (March – August, inclusive). If this is not possible then a nesting bird check must be completed prior to work commencing. If an active nest is discovered then site works will stop and the nest be monitored by the site ecologist until the chicks have fledged or the nest has been naturally abandoned.

Introduction

Fenswood Ecology was commissioned by Mr. Tim Hues, to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (RPA) of barns at Lodge Farm, Poulshot (centred around Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: ST 97286 60812). An assessment of the site was undertaken by Fenswood Ecology in June 2026.

Bats are protected and considered to be of primary importance under UK legislation, namely the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

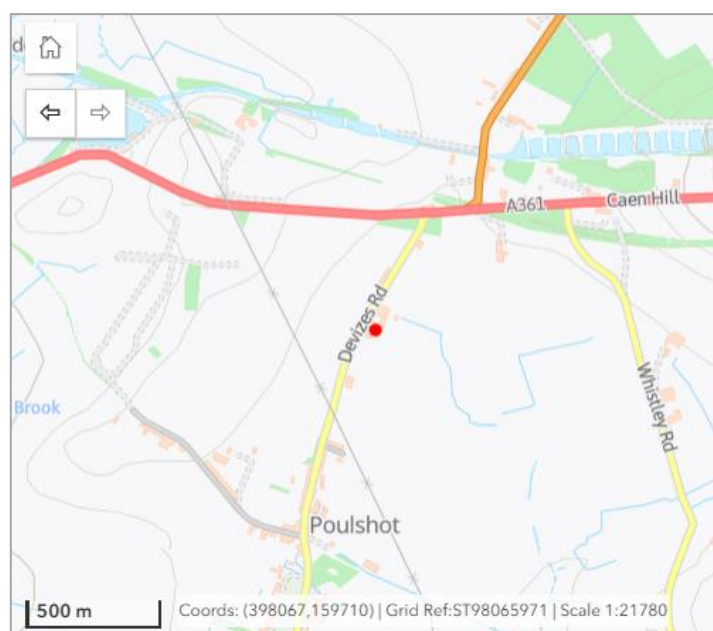
All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) against destruction of the nest during the bird nesting season, which falls between March and August, inclusive.

This report details the findings of the survey work, methodologies employed are described including site surveys and evaluation and the need for any further survey work and/or mitigation measures are included, where appropriate.

Site Location

The site is situated at near Poulshot, which is a rural farming area approximately 3km west of Devizes. The site is surrounded by open countryside comprising mainly of arable and pasture-land divided by a matrix of treelines and hedgerows. There are scattered waterbodies and small woodlands to the north.

Figure 1: MAGIC map showing surrounding landscape in relation to the survey site



Project Overview

The planning application includes the demolition, extension and conversion of existing agricultural buildings to a farm shop/café. Drawings were provided by Dolman, drawing number: 4476-sk02 (March 2026).

Methodology

Desk Study

Records held on Magic.gov.uk on Designated Sites and granted European Protected Species Licences were reviewed in July 2026.

Field Study

The survey was undertaken by Fenswood ecology on 30th June 2026

The site was inspected to assess its potential to support roosting bats, in accordance with current best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023).

An internal and external inspection of the buildings was undertaken during daylight to determine the suitability for bats and establish if bats are using the building or have been using the building in the past.

All accessible parts of the buildings were inspected, to look for bats and signs of the presence of bats, including:

- Droppings.
- Feeding remains including moth and butterfly wings.
- Staining from urine or oils near crevices or holes or on timber (such as roof beams), walls, chimney breasts etc.
- Scratch marks on walls and timber.
- Squeaking or chattering calls.

The systematic search inside the buildings included inspection of the ceiling, walls, floor and surfaces.

The assessment outside the buildings included inspection of all walls, including a search for any crevices under roofing sheets, missing mortar, gaps in the gable end of the roof, and any other potential bat roost opportunities.

A building may have several features of potential interest to roosting bats. It is not always possible to confirm usage of a feature by bats as often the animals may be present on one day and no evidence of occupation may be found on the next. Consequently, it is normal practice when undertaking such surveys to assign each feature to a defined category of roosting potential as follows:

Negligible: Negligible habitat features onsite likely to be used by roosting bats

Low: A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. 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 numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation.)

Moderate: A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are 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 and surrounding habitat

Confirmed: This category is used where positive evidence of bats usage has been recorded from a feature. For example, bats or bat droppings may be present, or existing bat records may be associated with the feature. A licence from Natural England is likely to be required if the bat roost is to be disturbed by the development.

Whilst completing the survey for bats the opportunity was taken to systematically search for birds' nests and other evidence of occupation such as:

- Droppings/ white washing
- Pellets
- Feathers
- Egg shells
- Feeding remains

Limitations to Survey

Access to the full application site was provided.

Due to the small scale and nature of the proposed project, it was not considered necessary to complete an environmental records data search for bat roosts and records in the area.

The survey was undertaken within the optimal survey season and it is considered that a robust evaluation of bat roosting potential within the site character has been made.

Findings and Evaluation

Designated Sites

There are no statutory designated site within 2km of the proposed site.

See appendix 1 for closest designated site locations.

European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licences

There are no records of granted European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licences for bats shown on MAGIC within 2km of the site.

See appendix 1 for closest EPSM licence locations.

Field Survey

Preliminary Roost Appraisal

There are nine agricultural buildings across the site (see Figure 1), in a range of styles and compositions, these are summarised in table 1 below. No evidence of bats was found inside or outside of any of the nine buildings within the site boundary.

Figure 1 – Building Locations (MAGIC, 2026)

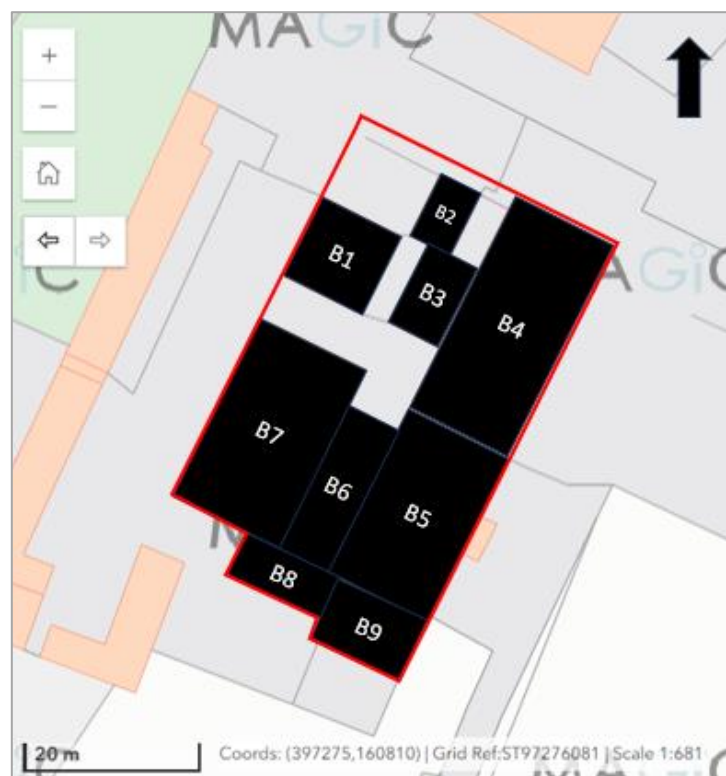


Table 1 – Building Summary

Building	Composition	Comments	Risk Rating
1	Block lower walls, wooden cladding upper walls. Fibrous cement roof over a metal frame	Modern building. In good condition. Open fronted on western side. Light, open and drafty. Birds nest on structural beam	Bats – negligible Birds – moderate (confirmed)
2	Block walls with fibrous cement roof. Sliding metal door at front	Old building. Rear door left open. Materials not suitable for bats. Moderately open and drafty. Birds nest on electrical switch	Bats – negligible Birds – moderate (confirmed)
3	Block walls with fibrous cement roof. Large roof lightpanels	Old building. Materials not suitable for bats. Very light inside. Highly disturbed by human activity	Bats – negligible Birds - negligible
4	Red brick walls, with a metal roof and wooden beams. Large roof lightpanels	Missing windows on the eastern elevation and open in the middle. Light, open and drafty. Birds nest on structural beam	Bats – negligible Birds – moderate (confirmed)
5	Red brick walls, with a fibrous cement roof and wooden beams. Large roof light panels.	Missing windows on the eastern elevation and open in the middle. Light, open and drafty. Partial collapse at southern end	Bats – negligible Birds - low
6	Metal framed lean-to building with fibrous cement roof, with light panels.	Fully open at the northern end with some roof panels missing. Open, light and drafty.	Bats – negligible Birds - negligible

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7	Metal frame, open sided barn with fibrous cement roof.	Materials not suitable for bats. Very open, light and drafty	Bats – negligible Birds - negligible
8	Block walls, with a fibrous cement roof and wooden beams. Three stable doors on southern elevation	Materials not suitable for bats. Very open, light and drafty. Highly disturbed. Three birds nests recorded.	Bats – negligible Birds – moderate (confirmed)
9	Block lower walls with fibrous cement upper walls and roof over a metal frame. Open fronted on southern elevation	Materials not suitable for bats. Very open, light and drafty. Partial collapse of roof	Bats – negligible Birds - negligible



Photo 1. Southern and eastern elevation of B1

Lodge Farm, Poulshot, Preliminary Roost Assessment



Photo 2. Inside of B1



Photo 3. Birds nest inside of B1

Lodge Farm, Poulshot, Preliminary Roost Assessment



Photo 4. Western elevation of B2



Photo 5. Northern and eastern elevation of B2

Lodge Farm, Poulshot, Preliminary Roost Assessment



Photo 6. Birds nest within B2



Photo 7. Northern elevation of B3

Lodge Farm, Poulshot, Preliminary Roost Assessment



Photo 8. Inside of B3



Photo 9. Northern and eastern elevations of B4

Lodge Farm, Poulshot, Preliminary Roost Assessment



Photo 10. Inside of B4



Photo 11. Two birds nests within B4

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Photo 12. Eastern elevation of B5 and B9



Photo 13. Inside of B5



Photo 14. Looking south into B6



Photo 15. Roof structure of B6



Photo 16. Western and southern elevations of B7



Photo 17. Southern elevation of B8



Photo 18. Inside of B8 with birds nest



Photo 19. Southern and eastern elevations of B9



Photo 20. Inside B9, showing partial roof collapse.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Due to the small scale of the proposed project on existing developed land it is not foreseen that any impacts will jeopardise the designations of locally protected sites, which are more than 2km from site.

All nine buildings were made from materials unsuitable for roosting bats and also lacked features, such as cracks, gaps and voids. No evidence of bats was found in any of the buildings and therefore all nine buildings are considered to have negligible bat roosting potential and no further surveys are recommended.

Although the onsite buildings were not identified as a bat roosting site at the time of survey, it should be appreciated that almost any structure may be used by an individual or transient bat from time to time. Bats require very limited cavity space and only very small roost entry gaps and can be found in any structure which provides close shelter. Should bats be discovered on site at any time, works should be halted in the immediate area and an appropriately trained, qualified and licensed ecologist consulted immediately.

Due to the buildings being in an area that is considered to be suitable for commuting and foraging bats, it is recommended that a sensitive lighting plan (see Appendix 2) is in place for the development to minimise disturbance to local bat populations from introduced light spill.

Buildings 1, 2, 4 and 8 had evidence of nesting birds with other buildings also having some suitability. Where possible construction should start outside of the nesting season (March – August, inclusive). If this is not possible then a nesting bird check must be completed prior to work commencing. If an active nest is discovered then site works will stop and the nest be monitored by the site ecologist until the chicks have fledged or the nest has been naturally abandoned.

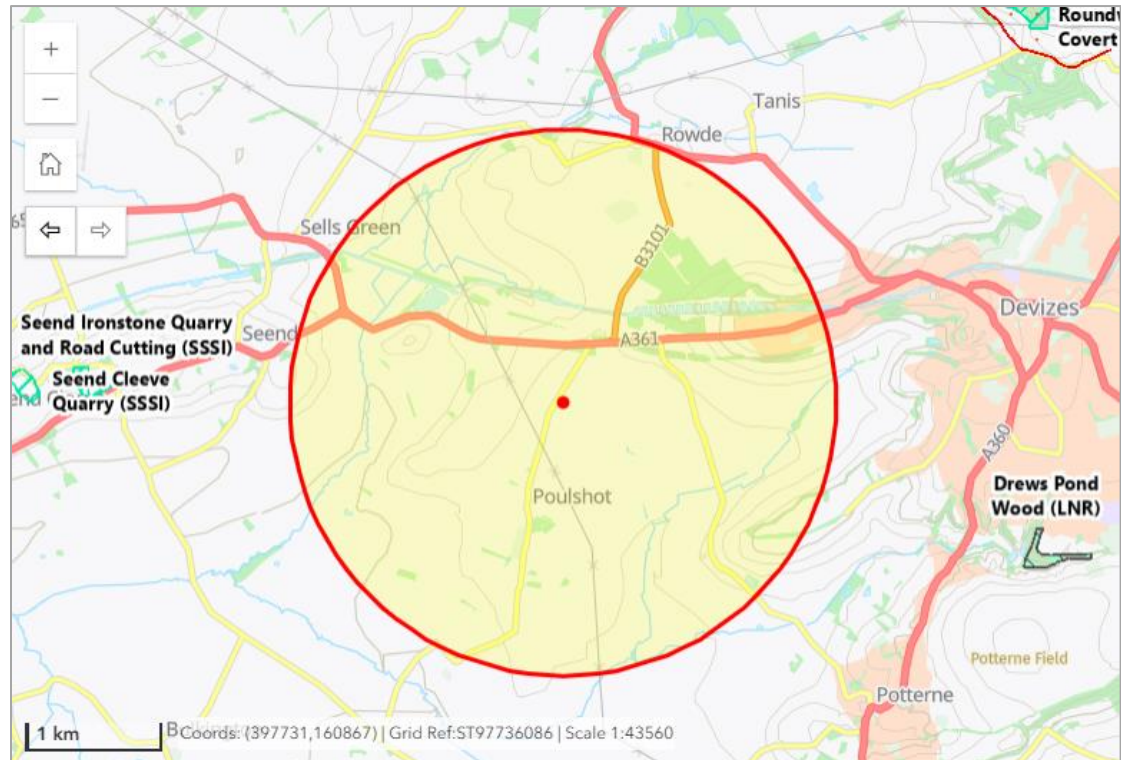
References

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

Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC),
<http://magic.defra.gov.uk>
accessed July 2026

Appendix 1 – Online Search Results

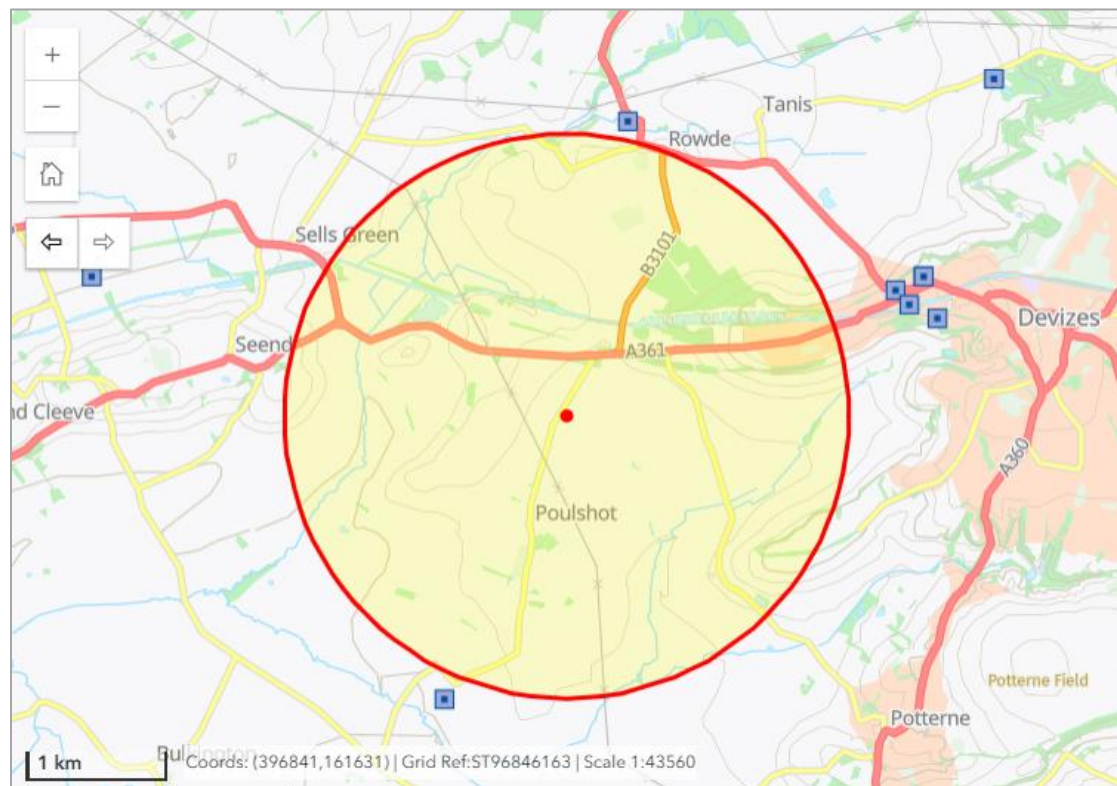
Designated Site Map (2km buffer) – (MAGIC, 2026)



Legend

-  Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (England)
-  Local Nature Reserves (England)
-  National Nature Reserves (England)
-  Ramsar Sites (England)
-  Special Areas of Conservation (England)
-  Special Protection Areas (England)

Granted European Protected Species Licences (2km buffer) – (MAGIC, 2026)



Legend

Granted European Protected Species Applications (England)

- Amphibian
- Bat
- Cetacean
- Invertebrate
- Other Mammal
- Plant
- Reptile

Appendix 2 Sensitive lighting for bats guidance

Bats and lighting

Artificial lighting is known to have significant impacts for slower-flying, rarer species, and even for fast-flying species, potentially affecting reproductive, foraging and roosting opportunities. On a population and ecosystem level, impacts may affect the overall genetic pool of bat species and their prey species (BCT, 2018).

Studies have shown that continuous lighting in the landscape, such as along roads or waterways, creates barriers which many bat species cannot cross, especially the slower-flying species (Fure, A. 2012), even at very low light levels. Lesser horseshoe bats have been shown to move their flight paths which link their roosts and foraging grounds to avoid artificial light installed on their usual commuting route. Significant impacts have been recorded from as low as 3.6 lux (Stone *et al* 2012). Furthermore, the average light level on hedgerows most regularly used by this species has been recorded at 0.45 lux (Stone *et al* 2009).

Another group of studies have shown that noctule, Leisler's bat, serotine and pipistrelle bats can congregate around white mercury streetlights (Rydell *et al* 1993, Blake *et al* 1994) and white metal halide lamps (Stone *et al* 2015b) feeding on the insects attracted to the light, but this behaviour is not true for all bat species. The slower flying broad winged species such as long-eared bats, *Myotis* species (which include Brandt's bat, whiskered, Daubenton's bat, Natterer's bat and Bechstein's bat), barbastelle, and greater and lesser horseshoe bats generally avoid all streetlights (Stone *et al* 2009, 2012, 2015a). Consequently, bat species less tolerant of light are put at a competitive disadvantage and are less able to forage successfully and efficiently. This can have a significant impact upon fitness and breeding success (BCT, 2018)

Mitigation and lighting design

Bat friendly lighting plans should firstly look to avoid lighting where possible and minimise lighting impacts by adopting the following measures:

- **Lighting curfews or use of PIR sensors.** Lighting curfews can be an effective way of avoiding impacts on bats. These curfews may involve either turning off lighting or dimming light units at specific times of the night, dimming units at key times of the year, providing the luminaire allows for this option via a control unit. Lighting to be triggered by PIR sensors can be expected to be illuminated only when required and for a low proportion of the overall time.
- **Consider no lighting solutions where possible.** Options such as white lining, good signage and LED cat's eyes, should be considered as preferable, especially within Zones 1 and 2. Reflective fittings may help make use of headlights to provide any necessary illumination in some areas.
- **Use only high-pressure sodium or warm white LED lamps where possible.** High pressure sodium and warm white LED lamps emit lower proportions of insect attracting UV light than mercury, metal halide lamps and white LED lighting. Generally, lamps should have a lower proportion of white or blue wavelengths, with a colour temperature <4200 kelvin recommended (BCT, 2014).
- **Minimise the spread of light.** Light spread should be kept at or near horizontal in order to ensure that only the task area is lit. Flat cut-off lanterns or accessories should be used to shield or direct light to where it is required.

Baffles, hoods, louvres and shields should be used where necessary to reduce light spill.

- **Consider the height of lighting column.** Whilst downward facing bollard lighting is often preferable, it should be noted that a lower mounting height does not automatically reduce impacts to bats as bollard lighting can often be designed to provide up-lighting. Where bollard lighting is considered to be the most appropriate system, bollard spacing, or unit density should be kept to a minimum and units should be fitted with the appropriate hoods/deflectors to reduce up-lighting. Column height should be carefully considered to balance task and mitigation measures.
- **Avoid reflective surfaces below lights.** The polarisation of light by shiny surfaces attracts insects increasing bat activity (BCT, 2012). Consequently, surface materials around lighting require consideration.

References

BCT (2018) *Bats and artificial lighting in the UK* Guidance Note 08/18. Bat Conservation Trust.

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