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Ecological Impact Assessment

Kings Farm
Back Drove
Winterslow
SP5 1RG

June 2026

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QUALITY CONTROL		
The information which we have prepared and provided is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.		
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Checked by	Principal Ecologist Olatz Gartzia BSc MSc ACIEEM	June 2026
This report remains valid for 2 years from date of issue. Survey data are valid for 12-18 months from the date the survey was undertaken.		

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The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to works.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Darwin Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Mr Mark Austin to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of proposals for the building(s) at Kings Farm, Back Drove, SP5 1RG. The assessment was required to support a planning application for demolition and rebuild of the existing Extension (a garage and utilities building linked to the Main House), and was informed by a desk study, internal and external building inspection and emergence surveys for bats.
- 1.2. During the building inspection, no evidence of bats was found. The building is brick, flint and cob with a shallow-pitched corrugated composite roof with a clay tile mortared ridge, a shallow pitch of clay tiles on the link building, and wooden lean-to sheds. Overall, the building had **moderate potential** to support roosting bats due to a small number of crevices and potential entrance points; however, no evidence of bats was found.
- 1.3. During the emergence surveys, no bats were observed emerging from the Extension; therefore, bats are considered likely absent from this part of the building. The Main House was not surveyed, but was noted to support a day roost for common pipistrelle bats, with a peak count of two bats recorded emerging from the fascia of the dormer window.
- 1.4. As bats are considered to be likely absent from the Extension building, the demolition and rebuild of the Extension are not anticipated to result in an offence under the relevant wildlife legislation.
- 1.5. No impacts to the Main House are currently proposed; however, the roost noted on the dormer is close to the working area, therefore, impacts to this must be avoided during construction. Further roosts on the Main House may also be present; therefore, if any works to the Main House are proposed, further surveys and an impact assessment must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist for this part of the building.
- 1.6. **In the unlikely event that any bats or evidence of a roost (such as droppings) are found at any time during the works, all work must cease immediately, and a licensed ecologist should be contacted for advice.**
- 1.7. Mitigation and compensatory measures to ensure the avoidance of impact to the nearby roost on the adjacent Main House include:
 - Education of contractors on the protection afforded to bats through a Toolbox Talk.
 - Consideration of any scaffold to avoid impacts to the nearby roost on the Main House.
 - Any new external lighting will be fitted with downward-facing baffles and will be directed to avoid light spillage.
- 1.8. Recommendations for enhancements have also been made, which include integrated bat and bird boxes within the new extension.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Darwin Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Mr Mark Austin to undertake an EclA of proposals for the building at Kings Farm, Back Drove, SP5 1RG (hereafter referred to as 'the site')¹. The assessment was required to support a planning application for demolition and rebuild of the existing Extension (a garage and utilities building linked to the Main House) and was informed by a desk study, internal and external building inspection and emergence surveys for bats.
- 2.2. No proposed plans have currently been provided. This assessment is based on the proposal to demolish and rebuild the existing Extension (location shown in **Figures 1 and 3**).
- 2.3. The internal and external building inspection and emergence surveys follow the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines (2023). The subsequent EclA follows the roost assessment methodology set out by Wray *et al.* (2010) and the CIEEM Guidelines for EclA in the UK and Ireland (2018).

Site Overview

- 2.4. The site is a 15th-century house located in a rural setting on the outskirts of West Winterslow in Wiltshire.
- 2.5. The site comprises a residential house with a southwestern extension, a vegetated garden and a small driveway. Immediately surrounding the site are other residential buildings with vegetated gardens, hedgerows and trees. Beyond these, Livery Road is located 46m eastward, and fields can be found approximately 60m to the north, west and south (see **Figure 1**).
- 2.6. The wider landscape comprises agricultural fields, farmhouses, residential buildings, gardens, hedgerows and mixed woodland patches including plantation areas. The village of West Winterslow is approximately 800m northeast (see **Figure 2**).

Scope of Assessment

- 2.7. The process of EclA aims to identify, quantify and evaluate the potential effects of development-related or other proposed actions on habitats, species and ecosystems.
- 2.8. Potential effects on the following ecologically sensitive receptors have been considered during the EclA of Kings Farm:
- Statutory designated sites; and
 - Features of potential importance (such as loft voids or external crevice features).
- 2.9. The aim of this report is to:

¹ Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference SU 23292 32064.

- Identify and describe bats roosts present within the site;
- Classify the the type of roost present (e.g. day roost, maternity roost etc);
- Carry out an impact assessment of the proposed works and how they will directly / indirectly affect bats and their roosts;
- Outline the relevant legislation and protection afforded to bats; and
- Provide avoidance, compensation, mitigation and enhancement measures recommended to avoid harm / injury to roosting bats.



Figure 1: Site location within the local landscape with Extension building marked in red (Copyright Google Earth, May 2026).



Figure 2: Site location within the wider landscape (Copyright Google Earth, May 2026).

3. LEGISLATION & POLICY

General Wildlife Legislation

- 3.1. Wildlife in the United Kingdom (UK) is protected through European and national legislation, supported by national and local policy and guidance. Development can contribute to conservation and enhancement goals outlined by these various legislation and policies by retaining and protecting the most valuable ecological features within a site and incorporating enhancements to provide biodiversity net gain.
- 3.2. This section provides a brief summary of the principal legislation and policy that triggers the requirement for PRA and further ecological assessments in the UK. The presence of protected species within a site is a material consideration during the planning process. PRAs and any necessary further ecological assessments provide an ecological baseline for a site and evaluation of the potential impact of proposals.
- 3.3. It is the responsibility of those involved with development works to ensure that the relevant legislation is complied with at every stage of a project. Such legislation applies even in the absence of related planning conditions or projects outside the scope of the usual planning process (i.e. permitted development projects or projects requiring Listed Building Consent only).

Bat Legislation

- 3.4. In England and Wales, all bat species and their roosts are legally protected under the European *Habitats Directive (1992)*; the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)*; the *Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)*; the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000*; and the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006)*.
- 3.5. Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, and noctule *Nyctalus noctula* bats are all species of principal importance in England under *Section 41* of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*.
- 3.6. You will be committing a criminal offence if you:
 - Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat;
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats;
 - Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time);
 - Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat; or
 - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

- 3.7. The government's statutory conservation advisory organisation, Natural England, is responsible for administering European Protected Species (EPS) licences that permit activities that would otherwise lead to an offence.
- 3.8. A licence can be obtained if the following three tests have been met:
- Regulation 53(9)(a) - there is “no satisfactory alternative” to the derogation, and;
 - Regulation 53(9)(b) - the derogation “will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range” and;
 - Regulation 53(2)(e) - the derogation is for the purposes of “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”.

National Planning Policy

- 3.9. The *National Planning Policy Framework (2024)* aims to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity. Chapter 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' details what local planning policies should seek to consider with regard to planning applications.
- 3.10. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- 187 a) Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - 187 b) Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - 187 d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
 - 188) Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and local designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement

of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries;

189) Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their settings should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

3.11. Specific policies regarding habitats and biodiversity comprise:

192) To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation and
- b) Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

193) When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoid (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) Development on land within or outside of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the feature of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs.
- c) Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees)

should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

d) Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around development should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

194) The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

a) Potential Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and possible Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);

b) Listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and

c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential SPAs, possible SACs, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.12. The local planning policy for the site is the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015). In particular, Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) provides guidelines for protection and enhancement of the natural environment and refers to the planning guidance for Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in Wiltshire, designated for the presence of nationally important bat species.
- 3.13. Wiltshire County Council (WCC), Natural England (NE) and local experts and researchers have jointly prepared the Bat Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Planning Guidance for Wiltshire (2015). It is aimed at applicants, agents, consultants and planners involved producing and assessing development proposals in the landscapes surrounding Wiltshire's most sensitive bat roosting sites, which are protected by European wildlife legislation and applies to all types of developments that are subject to planning control.
- 3.14. The guidance gives details on how to mitigate any potential impacts on Wiltshire Bat SACs and to ensure that any potential issues are identified as early in the planning process as possible to prevent unnecessary delays to development projects. The guidance also outlines the ecological documents and plans, which should be submitted in support of planning applications, so as to ensure that the council has all the information required to undertake a reliable Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) should one be required.
- 3.15. In addition to policies relating to bat SACs, the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) includes Core Policy 51 (Landscape), which provides guidance for protecting, conserving and where possible, enhancing landscape character, including locally distinctive patterns and species composition of natural features (such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and waterbodies). Core Policy 69 (Protection of the River Avon SAC)

provides guidelines for the incorporation of measures during construction and operations to avoid and prevent pollution and to minimise disturbance effects.

Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan

- 3.16. The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan was published in 2002 and reviewed in 2008 by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and over 40 delivery partners who make up the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership. It includes habitat action plans for 11 of the most significant of the UK Priority Habitats in Wiltshire, which include woodland, wood-pasture, parkland and ancient trees, hedgerows, calcareous grassland, neutral grassland, traditional orchards, farmland habitats, built environment, standing open water and rivers, streams and associated habitats. In addition, a bat species action plan has also been included, covering all bat species found in Wiltshire, while other priority species have been included under the appropriate habitat action plans.
- 3.17. The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan species list includes species that have national priority and also species having local importance in Wiltshire, including county notables. A total of 260 species have been included on the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan species list.
- 3.18. The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan aims to achieve the following:
- Enable prioritisation and define actions for priority habitats and species in Wiltshire;
 - Create a plan of action that can be delivered through a partnership of statutory, private and third sector organisations;
 - Provide a baseline of current knowledge and a tool to help monitor key habitats and species; and
 - To link objectives, targets and actions to report nationally and enable conservation work carried out in Wiltshire to contribute to national targets and reporting.
- 3.19. In 2012, a landscape scale framework for conservation in Wiltshire was developed, identifying 11 Landscape Biodiversity Areas across Wiltshire and Swindon, made up of a number of priority habitats, designated sites and other areas of conservation significance. This aims to encourage landscape scale planning for species and habitat conservation across Wiltshire.

4. METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

- 4.1. A desk study was undertaken for designated sites and bat species and habitat records within 2km of the site:
- The MagicMap website was reviewed to obtain information on any designated sites of nature conservation interest within 2km of the site and details of any EPS licences issued within 2km;
 - The Wiltshire Council Planning Portal was searched for past and pending planning applications that may have associated ecological documents detailing results of bat surveys; and
 - Google Maps was utilised to view aerial photographs and maps to assess the ecological context of the site within the wider landscape.
- 4.2. Natural England has developed a tool to help assess the potential risks to SSSIs by proposed developments. These are known as 'Impact Risk Zones' (IRZs) and they define the area around a SSSI that could be sensitive to development, considering the particular sensitivities of the feature for which the site is designated.
- 4.3. The IRZs help inform whether a development proposal may affect a SSSI and if so, whether it is necessary for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to seek pre-application advice from Natural England. Information on the IRZs was determined from the MAGIC website to determine if the LPA is required to seek consultation for the current development.

Building Inspection

- 4.4. Senior Ecologist Jessie Forster BSc (Hons) conducted an internal and external building inspection at the site at Kings Farm on 11th December 2025. The weather conditions at the time of the survey were dry with a light breeze and approximately 9°C. The following methodology was followed:

External Survey

- 4.5. An investigation was carried out of external features with potential for use by roosting bats, such as gaps under the roof and ridge tiles, gaps at soffit boxes or fascias. A search for bat droppings was made beneath each potential entry/exit point identified, where accessible. The surveyor used binoculars and a powerful, low-heat LED torch.

Internal Survey

- 4.6. An investigation was carried out of the roof void (including the floor and walls) for signs of bats roosting and the access potential into the roof void for bats. The surveyor looked for bats, bat droppings, likely access points, signs of feeding, dead bats, scratch marks and staining, and made a suitability assessment of the structure of the roof.

Potential to Support Roosting Bats

- 4.7. Each building was assessed for its potential to support roosting bats as detailed in **Table 1** below which is taken from the Bat Conservation Trust 2023 guidelines Table 4.1, Table 7.1 and Table 7.2.

Table 1: Roost classification from the Bat Conservation Trust (2023) guidelines.

Category	Description of roosting habitat	Number of surveys required
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).	No further surveys
Negligible	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.	No further surveys
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, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by large numbers of bats.	Single survey between May to August
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, condition and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	Two surveys with at least one survey between May to August.
High / Confirmed	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by a larger number of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts.	Three surveys with at least two surveys between May to August.

Emergence Surveys

- 4.8. Two dusk emergence surveys and a dawn re-entry survey were conducted during the 2026 survey season. Surveys were undertaken in line with BCT Good Practice Guidelines (2023), with any limitations outlined below.
- 4.9. Surveyors were positioned strategically around the building(s) in order to provide adequate coverage of all elevations. Surveyors focused on any features identified during the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) as having potential to be used as bat access points. The location of the surveyors are shown on **Figure 3, Bat Survey Results**.
- 4.10. Dusk surveys began 15 minutes prior to sunset and lasted 1.5 hours after sunset. Surveyors recorded bat activity using hand-held Echometer Touch detectors connected to Android or iPhone devices. Analysis of recordings was undertaken after the surveys to confirm species identification. Observations recorded during surveys included bat access points, bat species, time, and type of activity (e.g. emergence, re-entry, commuting, foraging, etc.). Incidental records of bats within the vicinity of the building (but not necessarily roosting) were also recorded.

- 4.11. Each surveyor used a night vision aid (NVA) to aid in their visibility during each survey. Equipment used consisted of Nightfox Whisker night vision binoculars/Canon AX20 video camera/Black Sun 2 B502 infra-red illuminator/ Nightfox Arc infra-red floodlight/ PixFra Thermal Camera Model: PF1-A613, and these were used to film bat activity for the duration of the survey at a fixed position.
- 4.12. All recorded video footage was reviewed in full following the survey to identify any bat activity captured, and any significant activity patterns and access points were identified and recorded.
- 4.13. A summary of the surveyors, survey dates and weather conditions are provided in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Emergence and re-entry survey dates and weather conditions

Date	Survey type	Sunset/sunrise time	Start weather conditions	End weather conditions	Surveyors
07/05/26	Dusk	20:38	Rain: 0 Wind: 0 Cloud cover: 6 Temperature: 12°C	Rain: 0 Wind: 0 Cloud cover: 3 Temperature: 9°C	Jessie Forster (Licence no: 2025-86026-CL17-BAT) Faye Sheriff Ella Ralph
02/06/26	Dusk	21:13	Rain: 0 Wind: 1 Cloud cover: 1 Temperature: 15°C	Rain: 0 Wind: 1 Cloud cover: 0 Temperature: 14°C	Jessie Forster (Licence no: 2025-86026-CL17-BAT) Faye Sheriff
Rain: a scale of 0 to 5 (e.g 0 (dry) - 5 (very heavy rain), Wind: a Beaufort scale of 0 to 12. (e.g 0 (calm) - 6 (strong breeze) - 12 (hurricane)) Cloud cover: an Okta scale of 0 to 8 (e.g 0 (no cloud) - 4 (half visible sky) - 8 (no visible sky))					

Evaluating Bat Roosts

- 4.14. The value of the bat roosts on site was assessed in accordance with the article published in the CIEEM, In Practice Magazine - *Valuing Bats in Ecological Impact Assessment* (Wray, et al., 2010).
- 4.15. Roosts are assigned a relative ecological value based on the rarity of the species (**Table 3**) and categorisation of roost type (**Table 4**), informed by survey results. Once a value has been calculated, robust mitigation for any impacts identified from the proposed development can be determined.

Table 3: Categorising bat species by distribution and rarity

Rarest	Rare	Common
Greater horseshoe Bechstein's Alcahoo Greater mouse-eared Grey long-eared Barbastelle	Lesser horseshoe Whiskered Brandt's Daubenton's Natterer's Leisler's Noctule Nathusius' pipistrelle Serotine	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Brown long-eared

Table 4: Valuing bat roosts

Geographic Frame of Reference	Roost Type
District, Local or Parish	Feeding perches (common species) Individual bats (common species) Small numbers of non-breeding bats (common species) Mating sites (common species)
County	Maternity sites (common species) Small number of hibernating bats (common and rarer species) Feeding perches (rarer/rarest species) Individual bats (rarer/rarest species) Small numbers of non-breeding bats (rarer/rarest species)
Regional	Mating sites(rarer/rarest species) including well-used swarming sites Maternity roosts (rarer species) Hibernation sites (rarest species) Significant hibernation sites for rarer/rarest species or all species assemblages
National/UK	Maternity sites (rarest species) Sites meeting Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) guidelines
International	Special Areas of conservation (SAC) sites

Limitations

- 4.16. Ecological surveys are limited by factors that affect the presence of plants and animals such as the time of the year, weather, migration patterns. The surveys was undertaken in December, May and June and therefore represent a valid sample of ecological evidence present on that date/season.

- 4.17. Ecological data is typically deemed valid for 18 months. This report remains valid for 2 years from the date of the survey, however, a walkover survey after 18 months may be required to demonstrate whether or not the habitats have remained as described.
- 4.18. The desk study does not include data from the local environmental records centre (LERC). However, following CIEEM guidelines (2017) it is possible to conduct a robust assessment without the need of LERC data, for example for small-scale projects or on sites such as;
- A field in active arable cultivation where there is no impact on any hedges, trees or water bodies;
 - A small area of cultivated garden/amenity grassland, as above; or
 - A small urban site comprising mostly asphalt or compacted hardstanding.
- 4.19. The site is a small plot set comprising an outbuilding and small area of amenity garden and therefore the lack of LERC data is not considered a limitation to the ecological assessment of the site.
- 4.20. Many species of bat in the UK are crevice-dwelling, and bats or signs of bats can be difficult to find within a building. In addition, there may be areas that are inaccessible to the surveyor, for instance the western aspect was visually obscured by dense ivy cover, and the central section of the void was inaccessible.
- 4.21. It is noted that some UK bat species are easier to detect than others; for example the noctule can be detected at a significantly greater distance when compared to the quieter brown long-eared. This can result in the undercounting of some bat species when compared to others.
- 4.22. The surveys were undertaken in accordance with the best practice guidelines within the peak bat activity period (May to September inclusive). The results are therefore considered to be an accurate representation of the general use of the building(s) by roosting bats.
- 4.23. Nevertheless, bats may use roosting features intermittently throughout the year and may be present in larger or smaller numbers depending on their breeding cycle, weather conditions and in response to disturbance. Bats may be present at other times of the year and the results in this report should therefore be viewed in the context intended.
- 4.24. No other limitations were encountered, or assumptions made during either the desk study or the field survey and it is considered that with the access gained and recording undertaken an accurate assessment of the site's ecological importance has been made.

5. SURVEY RESULTS

Desk Study

- 5.1. The data search using MAGIC found one statutory designated site within 2km of the site. Details of this can be found in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Statutory designated sites within 2 km of the site.

Name and designation type	Reason for designation	Approximate distance from site
<i>Bentley Wood SSSI</i>	<i>Large complex of woodland on former ancient woodland site replanted during the post-war period with oak, beech, Norway spruce, Scots pine and Corsican pine.</i> <i>Noted in 1983 for having 300 moth species and 35 breeding species of butterfly many of which have suffered marked declines in Britain. Species include various fritillary species like the pearl-bordered, small pearl-bordered, silver-washed, high brown, marsh and dark green. In addition it has a large population of purple emperor, white admiral and purple hairstreak.</i>	<i>1.68km east</i>

- 5.2. The data search using MAGIC maps found no previous EPS licences within 2km of the site for bats.
- 5.3. The site lies within 'Impact Risk Zone's (IRZ) for Bentley wood SSSI and within the inner and outer zone of New Forest (SAC, Ramsar, SPA) consultation zone.
- 5.4. A search in the Wiltshire Council Planning Portal found 4 planning applications within the last 5 years supported by an ecological report within a 2km radius of Kings Farm:
- PL/2024/08826 - A Preliminary Roost Assessment in 2024 approximately 0.8km northeast, found a confirmed bat roost (droppings), emergence surveys were recommended, but not carried out due to the implementation of a condition.
 - PL/2021/04954 - Emergence surveys approximately 1.4km southeast in 2020 found a summer roost for serotine and brown long-eared bat, as well as day roosts for CP and a single barbastelle day roost. This was repeated in 2022 with one survey reconfirming common pipistrelle, serotine and brown long-eared bat roosts (PL/2022/05651).
 - PL/2025/02747 - Confirmed barn owl roost, common lizard and slow worm, and two active badger sets identified during Phase 2 surveys (July 2025 - approximately 1.9km northeast).
 - PL/2024/10952 - Phase 2 emergence surveys in 2024 approximately 1.2km northwest confirmed the site as a maternity roost for brown long-eared bat and common pipistrelle.
- 5.5. There are 41 areas of priority deciduous woodland within 1km of Kings Farm. The closest is an unnamed patch approximately 200m east of the site, which is also registered on the

National Forest Inventory (Woodland - Broadleaved). Further priority habitats within 1 km of the site comprise three sites of calcareous grassland. The closest of these is an unnamed site approximately 720m northwest, and two additional sites are 1km northwest of the site.

- 5.6. There are three areas of ancient woodland within 1km of the application site, comprising Hound Wood located 700m south, Church Copse 850m southward and Brown's Copse approximately 950m northeast.

Building Inspection

External Assessment

- 5.7. The target building is an extension built of brick, flint and cob with a shallow-pitched corrugated composite roof with a clay tile mortared ridge. There is a small link building on the eastern aspect with a mostly flat roof and a short, low pitch of interlocking clay tiles. To the south and west aspects, there are wooden lean-tos with corrugated metal and felt roofs.
- 5.8. The western gable end had crevices above the wall plate at the ridge and purlins, potentially suitable for crevice-dwelling bats. A climbing plant was recorded above the lean-to at this end, creating a suboptimal flight space. Crevices were recorded at the purlins of the eastern gable above the wall plate. A crevice was also recorded in the plaster above the window located lower down on the gable. The link building had several lifted tiles.
- 5.9. The northern aspect of the building had ivy growing along the eaves as well as tightly fitting fascia boards. The southern lean-to is built up to the eaves of the garage and utility room. The mortar at the ridge of the building had a small number of crevices; however, the roof had a very shallow pitch, providing sub-optimal associated flight space. Small crevices between the roof panels were recorded. Significant moss growth was noted throughout the roof. Rural gardens surround the building, providing excellent foraging opportunities for bats.
- 5.10. The main house was not surveyed, but was noted to be partly thatched and partly clay tiled roof. The client reports seeing bats flying in the garden.

Internal Assessment

- 5.11. There was a small enclosed loft void measuring 3m long by 2m wide by 1m tall above the utility room. This was well sealed with a ceiling. No evidence of bats was recorded, but significant amounts of rodent droppings were present. An additional enclosed space was located above this void, which would be less than a metre tall and was not accessible.
- 5.12. A partially enclosed void measuring approximately 4m long by 4m wide by 1.2m tall was above the rest of the utility room. This was unlined, and separated from the adjacent open garage area by a close-fitting wire mesh. Access was not possible, so this area could not be fully inspected, however, visual inspection of the area visible through the wire mesh noted no evidence of bats. A rat was seen, as well as rodent droppings. Light ingress was

recorded under the eaves, providing potential access. There was a brick chimney present at the wire in good condition with minimal gaps or cracks.

- 5.13. The garage was open to the apex, approximately 4m long by 4m wide by 4m to the apex, with a wooden ridge beam and multiple additional supports. Holes in the cob walls and crevices within the brickwork were recorded. Potential access at the gable end above the wall plate was noted, and internal crevices were present between the end rafters and walls. No evidence of bats was recorded.
- 5.14. The wooden lean-to on the western gable end of the garage had a metal roof at the level of the garage's eaves. A small number of low level internal crevices were recorded, but no evidence of bats using the space. The southerly wooden lean-to had a glass front and felt roof with internal crevices where the roof met the wall on the north aspect. Cobwebs were recorded within these crevices; however, gaps in the cobwebs were present in places. There was potential fly-in access through the open door to the south-west. No evidence of bats was recorded.
- 5.15. Overall, the building had **moderate potential** to support roosting bats with small numbers of crevices suitable as roosts and potential entrance points into the building being recorded throughout. The surrounding vegetated gardens, fields and hedgerow habitats are also suitable for supporting foraging and commuting activity.

Building Inspection Photographs



Image 1: Northern aspect of target building showing garage and eastern link structure.



Image 2: View of eastern gable, with crevices at purlins.



Image 3: Southwest aspect of the southern wooden lean-to with open door.



Image 4: Southern aspect of garage and lean-to roofs.



Image 5: Western aspect of lean-to at western gable.



Image 6: Western gable end with crevices by purlins.



Image 7: Crevice between southeast wall of garage leading into southern lean-to.



Image 8: Crevices above window on eastern gable.



Image 9: Crevice leading above wall plate to the purlin on the east gable



Image 10: Crevices beneath tiles of eastern link roof.



Image 11: Interior garage roof.

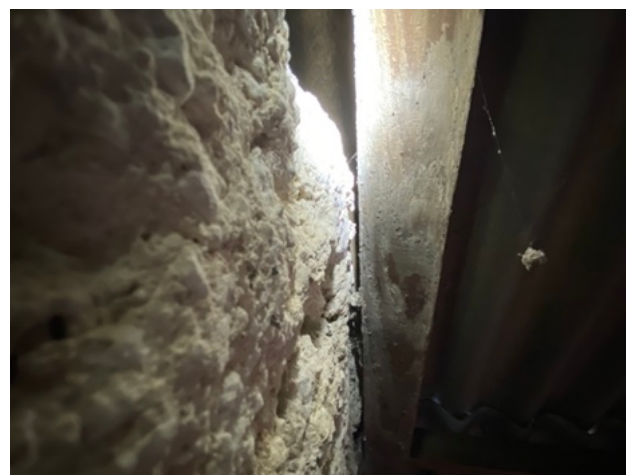


Image 12: Internal crevice at western gable end of garage



Image 13: Void space above utility room connected to the garage through metal mesh.



Image 14: Interior of southern lean-to.



Image 15: Crevice where the southern lean-to roof meets the garage wall.



Image 16: Interior of western lean-to.



Image 17: Utility room loft.

Emergence Survey Results

- 5.16. *Dusk survey - 7th May 2026* - No bats were observed emerging from the extension during the first survey. Periodic passes of common pipistrelle were recorded throughout the survey, with low numbers of individuals observed passing by the building, and associated with the attached main house. No other species were recorded.
- 5.17. Two common pipistrelles were noted emerging from the fascia of the nearby dormer window on the main house, with one re-entering and emerging again at that point. This dormer is not part of the target building but is situated on the attached main house section.

Table 5: 07/05/2026 - Dusk emergence survey.

Timing	Species	Roost type	No. of bats	Structure	Location on structure	Roost description
Start: 20:23	No bats recorded emerging from the target building					
Sunset: 20:38						
End: 22:08						
Observations: No emergences were observed from the extension. A common pipistrelle was noted emerging from the barge board of the nearby dormer window on the western elevation of the main house. Generally, fairly low bat activity was recorded, with low numbers of common pipistrelles recorded passing the building throughout the survey.						



Image 18 - 7/5/26 NVA survey start



Image 19 - 7/5/26 NVA survey end



Image 20 - 7/5/26 NVA survey start



Image 21 - 7/5/26 NVA survey end

- 5.18. *Dusk survey - 2nd June 2026* - No bats were observed emerging from the extension during the second survey. Occasional passes of common pipistrelle were recorded throughout the survey, with low numbers of individuals observed passing over the building and foraging in the nearby gardens. Single passes of serotine, brown long-eared, soprano pipistrelle and noctule were also recorded.

Table 6: 02/06/2026 - Dusk emergence survey.

Timing	Species	Roost type	No. of bats	Structure	Location on structure	Roost description
Start: 20:58	No bats recorded emerging from the building					
Sunset: 21:13						
End: 22:43						
Observations: No emergences were observed from the extension. Generally, low levels of bat activity were recorded, with occasional passes of common pipistrelle, with brief foraging in nearby gardens. Single passes of serotine, brown long-eared, soprano pipistrelle and noctule were also recorded.						



Image 22 - 2/6/26 NVA survey start



Image 23 - 2/6/26 NVA survey end



Image 24 - 2/6/26 NVA survey start



Image 25 - 2/6/26 NVA survey end



***NOTE** Areas are indicative and are not shown to exact scale.



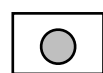
Building surveyed



Surveyor Location



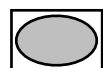
NVA Location



Emergence/Re-entry Location
(coloured by species)

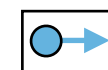


Bat Flight Path (coloured by species)



Area of Continuous Bat Activity
(coloured by species)

Bat Species



Common
Pipistrelle



DARWIN
ECOLOGY

integrating nature conservation

Info@darwin-ecology.co.uk
www.darwin-ecology.co.uk

Project: Kings Farm, SP5 1RG

Figure 3: Emergence Survey
Results

Date: June 2026

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Designated Sites

- 6.1. Bentley Wood SSSI is the only statutory designated site located within 2km of the site. The site lies within the 'Impact Risk Zone's (IRZ) for this SSSI as well as within the inner and outer zone of New Forest (SAC, Ramsar, SPA) consultation zone.
- 6.2. Certain developments may have a negative impact on the aforementioned designated sites. All development which results in a net increase in residential or visitor accommodation units within the inner zone of the New Forest protected sites is subject to mitigation measures to manage recreational pressures on the New Forest protected sites. All applications resulting in an increase in units must contribute financially towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM). If new units are to be created on site, contributions to the above mitigation measures may be required.
- 6.3. Due to the nature of the works being a small-scale demolition and rebuild of a residential extension, the application does not fall into the categories listed as requiring consultation with Natural England.

Evaluation of Bat Roosts on Site

- 6.4. No bats or droppings were discovered within the Extension during the building inspection, and no bats were observed emerging from this building during the emergence surveys. Therefore, bats are considered to be likely absent from the Extension at Kings Farm.
- 6.5. The Main House was not surveyed, but is noted to support a day roost for common pipistrelle bats, with a peak count of two bats recorded emerging from the fascia of the dormer window.

Roost Impact Assessment

- 6.6. As bats are considered to be likely absent from the Extension building, the demolition and rebuild of the Extension are not anticipated to result in an offence under the relevant wildlife legislation.
- 6.7. No impacts to the Main House are currently proposed, but any future proposed works to the dormer window may destroy a roosting site, with potential for disturbance, injury or killing of bats in their roosts during works, which would result in an offence under the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)*.
- 6.8. As the Main House was not surveyed, further roosts may be present on this part of the building. Therefore, if any works to the Main House are proposed, further surveys and an impact assessment must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 6.9. Below is a summary of the recommended mitigation measures proposed in relation to bats.

Mitigation

- 6.10. *Toolbox Talk:* Before commencing any work on site, all contractors will be inducted by a licensed bat ecologist or accredited agent in a tool box talk, to ensure they are aware of the risks to wildlife on site, particularly the presence of the nearby bat roost on the Main House, legal protection and of working practices to avoid harming bats and other species in order to ensure working practices on site follow legal requirements.
- 6.11. *Scaffold:* Due to the presence of a bat roost within the nearby dormer window on the Main House, any scaffolding required for the works to the Extension must avoid blocking the area around the dormer window to ensure bat access points are not obstructed. If scaffolding is required in that area, an ecologist must be consulted to ensure impacts to the roost are avoided.
- 6.12. **In the unlikely event that any bats or evidence of a roost (such as droppings) are found at any time during the works, all work must cease immediately, and a licensed ecologist should be contacted for advice.**
- 6.13. *Lighting:* Any new external lighting must be directed to avoid light spillage onto vegetation, particularly linear habitat features such as woodland edges or known or potential roosting sites within trees and buildings. Bats are sensitive to light and could potentially avoid the area if access points or the surrounding areas become lit. Appropriate lighting options will prevent a negative impact on bats potentially using the habitats on site and should be approved by a suitably qualified and licensed bat ecologist. Lighting plans should be approved and signed off by a licensed bat ecologist prior to submission, to ensure the scheme is suitable for bats. If appropriate measures are taken to reduce light spillage from the development, it is likely that there will be no negative impacts on local bat populations.
- 6.14. See **Appendix 1** for further information on designing lighting to minimise impacts on bats.
- 6.15. *Habitats:* The proposals are not anticipated to result in significant loss of foraging habitat for bats; however, a wildlife-friendly landscaping scheme is recommended to enhance the site for bats and other wildlife.

7. ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1. National planning policy states that all developments should seek to enhance on-site biodiversity, whether impacts on protected species are recorded or not. Incorporating enhancement features into new or renovated buildings should be carefully considered. These features can be simple and inexpensive. Please see below for specific recommendations.

Bats

- 7.2. It is recommended that an integrated bat box, such as a Green and Blue Bat Block or similar, be incorporated into the new extension. Integrated boxes should be installed at a height of at least 4m, preferably on a gable, sited away from windows and doorways, with clear flight access and with connectivity to nearby treelines or hedgerows.

Birds

- 7.3. To enhance the site for nesting birds, it is recommended that a universal nest brick be incorporated into the new extension. This should be sited at a height of at least 5m, on a north or east elevation, with clear flight space, away from doors or windows.

Wildlife Beneficial Landscaping Scheme

- 7.4. Any future landscape planting should seek to enhance biodiversity, improve connectivity to the surrounding habitats and provide food and shelter for a wide range of wildlife. All amenity planting and formally landscaped areas should be designed using a variety of plant species beneficial for wildlife. These do not necessarily have to be native, but should be chosen for their ability to provide nectar or fruit, and should be non-invasive species. There are a number of specialist seed mixes available specific to certain soil types, growing conditions and designed to benefit different groups of species such as bees, butterflies and moths.
- 7.5. All habitats should be managed in a suitable way to encourage a wide variety of insects and other wildlife to use the site.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - BATS & LIGHTING



THE IMPACT OF LIGHTING ON BATS

Bats favour a dark environment for both roosting and foraging as they are adapted to low-light conditions. Artificial lighting will disturb bats if the lighting covers roost access points, flight paths or foraging habitats.

The main peak of nocturnal insect abundance occurs at dusk and a delay in emergence results in a lower foraging rate for bats.

Artificial lighting creates a 'vacuum effect' for nocturnal insects. During the night nocturnal insects use the light of the moon* to navigate. However, artificial lighting and even sky glow above cities obscures the natural moonlight as it is closer

and radiates light in multiple directions.

Some species of bats have been recorded foraging around street lights such as *Pipistrellus* species and *Nyctalus* species. However, species that are less tolerant of artificial light are at a disadvantage when foraging as insects are drawn away from these species usual foraging grounds into the zones of artificial light.

Lighting must be considered in context to any development as increased lighting may cause roost abandonment, reduced reproductive success, and reduced foraging. Mitigation to reduce the impacts of lighting for bats is therefore of great importance in bat conservation.

Table 1: Summary of predicted impact of lighting for each species/genus

Impact	High	Medium	Low
Behaviour			
Maternity roost	All species	-	-
Night roost	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> <i>Myotis</i> spp. <i>Plecotus</i> spp.	<i>Pipistrellus</i> spp. <i>Nyctalus</i> spp. <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	-
Emergence	All species	-	-
Foraging	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> <i>Myotis</i> spp. <i>Plecotus</i> spp.	-	<i>Pipistrellus</i> spp. <i>Nyctalus</i> spp. <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>
Commuting	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> <i>Myotis</i> spp. <i>Plecotus</i> spp.	-	<i>Pipistrellus</i> spp. <i>Nyctalus</i> spp. <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>
Swarming	All species	-	-
Hibernation	All species	-	-

*For more information see Warrant, E., and Dacke, M. (2016) Visual Navigation in Nocturnal insects. *Physiology*, 31, 182-196.



Sources of light that can disturb bats include; light spill via windows, sport floodlighting, car headlights, roadside lighting, security lighting, aesthetic lighting of waterways, and aesthetic illumination of buildings. Glare will affect bats over greater distance than the target area directly illuminated.

Avoidance is the most effective method, but if this is not possible the following measures should be considered.

What lighting should I use?

- Low pressure sodium lights or 'warm' LEDs
- Wavelength above 540nm
- Colour temperature below 2700K
- Shielded lights that prevent light spill above a 70 degree angle
- Passive infrared (PIR) motion sensors



What to avoid:

- Lighting roost entrances, flightpaths, and foraging or commuting routes
- Reflective surfaces beneath lighting
- High level lights
- Non-directional lighting

Lighting should be considered at an early stage allowing impacts to be minimised through the design of the site.

Key Points

- Keep lighting intensity to the minimum level required
- Limit the times that lights are on to provide some dark periods (e.g. switching installations off between midnight and 5am)
- Dim lighting according to demand
- As an alternative to lighting pathways use paving materials that reflect moonlight
- Low level lighting allows darkness to be retained within higher vegetation
- Set dark habitat buffers - lighting should always be a minimum of 25m from vegetated margins and 40m from waterbodies
- Incorporate dark corridors within the site
- Compensate for the loss of dark areas by enhancing other dark areas
- Consider building design - install internal lighting away from windows

APPENDIX 2 - ENHANCEMENTS



How to Install



Integrated bat boxes can be installed into the brickwork of buildings to provide a roosting spot for bat species.

Being embedded in the masonry of a building, they do not impact the exterior seal of structure and are commonly integrated in new builds.

With some modification or bespoke design, integrated bat boxes can be installed in such a way that it does not interfere with a building's exterior facade.

The 1FR bat tube has a 45 degree angle for bats to land on and crawl upwards into the bat tube. It has been designed to be installed within or adjacent to the the external skin of the block work or brickwork.

For a rendered finish, the 1FR bat tube can be built into the external skin of breeze blocks (acting as a block) and be rendered over (ensuring the access point is left clear). Ridges should be created in the render immediately below the access point, which will aid the bats when crawling into the bat tube.

For a brickwork finish, the 1FR bat tube should be installed within the brickwork, set back slightly to allow the front to either be rendered over or for a continuity of brick slips to be mortared over the top of the tube. The upper brick slip should overlap the access point and the lower brick slip should be in line with the 45 degree angle of the bat tube.

Alternatively, **Habibat** bat tubes can be purchased that are designed for brickwork design and can be custom made.





TYPES OF BIRD BOXES



Vivar Pro Seville 32mm WoodStone Nest Box

- Manufactured from woodstone - increases longevity and provides a consistent internal temperature
- The nest box compensates for the lack of natural cavities that are found in trees
- Suitable for blue tits, tree sparrows, house sparrows, great tits, crested tits, nuthatches, coal tits and pied flycatchers
- Should be installed between 1.5m and 3m high



House Martin Nest Cups



Swallow Nest Bowl

- Suitable nest building mud is difficult for house martins and swallows to find
- Alterations to house construction and roof design have resulted in a decrease of suitable nesting sites
- Install swallow nest bowls within an outbuilding or garage that has flight access - 6cm below the ceiling
- Install house martin nest cups under the eaves of a house - minimum of 2m high



Swift Nest Box

- Swift numbers are declining partly due to a loss of nesting sites
- The entrance hole discourages other birds such as starlings and sparrows
- Install a minimum of 5m high with unobstructed airspace in front of the nest
- Integrated models of swift nest boxes are also available



5KL Schwegler Nuthatch Nest Box

- Manufactured from woodcrete
- Nuthatches prefer nest boxes with larger cavities. They will often occupy owl nest boxes and fill the entrance hole with mud reducing the size to approximately 32mm
- Nuthatches plaster mud on the internal walls of the cavity and line the floor with wood chipping and leaves to nest
- To discourage nuthatches from using owl nest boxes try installing the 5KL immediately adjacent



Open-fronted Nest Box

- Manufactured from woodstone - lifetime of 20-25 years
- Suitable for robin, wren, spotted flycatchers, and black redstart
- Best installed hidden from view on the wall of a building or hidden within ivy/honeysuckle as the boxes open-front may attract predators
- Install at a height of 1-3m



Sparrow Terrace Next Box

- Sparrow populations are decreasing due to a lack of nesting sites
- Sparrows are a sociable species and prefer to nest in a colony
- Likelihood of uptake is increased if more nesting chambers are available (the example nest box shown contains three nesting chambers)
- Various other nest box designs are available
- Install at a minimum of 2m high



Tawny Owl Nest Box

- Install on a mature tree within a woodland (not on the outskirts)
- Install a minimum of 3m high
- Face the box entrance away from prevailing wind (generally avoiding west/south-west)



Little Owl Nest Box

- Prefer areas of mixed farmland and orchards
- Essential features; small entrance hole (70mm), narrow tunnel, and a dark nesting chamber
- Install on a horizontal tree branch/wall top or beam so that owlets can walk in/out prior to fledging
- Can be installed on any tree species apart from cherry - the cherry harvest coincides with the little owl breeding season
- Entrance hole should face the tree trunk
- Install at a minimum height of 3m