

BLADE

PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT AND BAT EMERGENCE SURVEY REPORT

LAND OFF ASHBY ROAD, MARKFIELD

ON BEHALF OF

ALLISON HOMES

JUNE 2026

V1

BIODIVERSITY
LANDSCAPE
ARBORICULTURE
DESIGN
ECOLOGY

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CONTENTS

1.0	Executive Summary	4
2.0	Introduction.....	5
	Background to the Development.....	5
	Previous Survey Work	6
	Survey Objectives.....	6
3.0	Planning Policy and Legislation.....	8
	National Planning Policy.....	8
	Legislation	11
4.0	Methodology	14
	Desk Study.....	14
	Preliminary Roost Assessment.....	14
	Emergence and Activity Surveys	16
	Assessment	17
	Limitations.....	20
5.0	Results	21
	Preliminary Roost Assessment.....	21
	Nocturnal Survey.....	22
	Assessment	22
6.0	Conclusion and Recommendations.....	23
7.0	References	24

APPENDIX A Plans

APPENDIX B Photographs

APPENDIX C Qualifications and Experience

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 A Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken of the Land off Ashby Road, Markfield in March 2021 by Aspect Ecology Ltd. An update Preliminary Roost Assessment was then undertaken on 07 May 2026 by BLADE Ecology. The survey was completed by E. Seaton BSc MCIEEM and I. Moorton MSc in accordance with best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023) and
- 1.2 The site is approximately 3.67ha in area and the existing ecological baseline of the site consists of horse-grazed grassland split by native hedgerows with trees and line of trees. Four buildings are present on site, with small areas of dense scrub, bare ground and tall ruderal habitats also present.
- 1.3 Planning consent is being sought from both Charnwood Borough Council and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for "for 93 dwellings (outline ref: P/21/1260/2)".
- 1.4 This report has been based on the following plans produced by BLADE Landscape Architects: Illustrative Landscape Masterplan Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-200 dated November 2025.
- 1.5 The Preliminary roost assessment classified Building B1 as holding negligible suitability for roosting bats, with no evidence of roosting bats recorded during either surveys in 2021 or 2026.
- 1.6 Building B2 has been classified as holding 'moderate' suitability for roosting bats. As it was considered that the above proposals had the potential to impact the identified potential roost features and/or any roosting bats using them, two dusk emergence surveys were recommended to confirm presence/absence of roosting bats, in line with best practice guidelines.
- 1.7 Dusk emergence surveys were completed on 07 May and 28 May 2026.
- 1.8 No bats were confirmed roosting during either of the surveys. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest Building B1 or B2 support a bat roosts.
- 1.9 A low level of commuting/foraging bat activity was detected with only one species (common pipistrelle) being recorded during the surveys. Bat activity was concentrated around Building B2, where two bats were observed foraging around the grassland fields.
- 1.10 No further work for bats is recommended for this site.
- 1.11 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Aspect Ecology Ltd, 2021) should be referred to for other recommendations.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Background to the Development

- 2.1 BLADE Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Allison Homes to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment and Bat Emergence Survey at land off Ashby Road, Markfield, Leicestershire (centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference SK 48816 10701).
- 2.2 The site is located to the north of Markfield, a small village within the Hinckley & Bosworth district of Leicestershire. The A50 dual carriageway represents the site's northern boundary, whilst Ashby Road represents the southern boundary. Altar Stones Nature Reserve is located to the west of the site, whilst private rural residences are present to the east.
- 2.3 The wider site is approximately 3.67ha in area and the existing ecological baseline of the site consists of grassland dominated parcels (horse grazed, modified grassland), split by native hedgerows with trees and line of trees. Four buildings are present on site, with small areas of dense scrub, bare ground and tall ruderal habitats also present.
- 2.4 The application site boundary is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Application Site Boundary

- 2.5 Outline planning consent has been granted by both Charnwood Borough Council and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for *"residential development of up to 93 dwellings, public open space, landscaping and associated works. All matters reserved*

except for access.". Reserved matters approval is now being sought (Ref: P/25/2604/2). This report has been based on the following plans produced by BLADE Landscape Architects: Landscape BNG Strategy Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-201-V1 dated June 2026 and Detailed Soft Landscape Proposals Drawing No. 1880-L-D-PL-301-V3 sheets 1,2 and 3.

Previous Survey Work

- 2.6 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken of the Land off Ashby Road, Markfield in March 2021 by Aspect Ecology Ltd. The following has been quoted from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
- 2.7 *'Building B1 provides negligible suitability for roosting bats, and no evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the survey work undertaken'.*
- 2.8 *'Building B2 provides moderate suitability for roosting bats and further survey work, in the form of an internal inspection and dusk emergence and dawn re-entry surveys, is recommended, in accordance with best practice guidelines'.*
- 2.9 *'The trees, hedgerows and scrub within the site offer potential foraging and commuting habitat for bats, as do the grassland paddocks; albeit to a much lesser extent due to the rotational grazing. The site is relatively isolated from higher quality habitat in the surrounding area due to the surrounding road network. The combination of habitat types present occurs relatively frequently in the surrounding area and the site is unlikely to be of more than local level value for foraging/ commuting bats'.*
- 2.10 Therefore, due to Building B2 holding moderate suitability for bats, further surveying is required.

Survey Objectives

- 2.11 The objectives of the survey were to:
- Undertake an internal and external inspection of the building to assess for bat roosting suitability in line with best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023).
 - Assess the suitability of surrounding foraging and commuting habitat for bat species.
 - Advise on any requirement for further nocturnal survey work.
 - Carry out nocturnal bat surveys based on the suitability of the structures based on these recommendations in line with best practice guidelines (Collins, 2016; Mitchell Jones, 2016).
 - Where bats are present, identify the species involved and where possible the population size, type of roost and access points utilised.

- Assess the need for application of a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL).
- Identify to identify appropriate avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures as required to demonstrate compliance with the 'mitigation hierarchy' and requirements of local and National biodiversity policies (e.g. S.40 of the NERC Act 2006, NPPF etc).
- Identify opportunity for post-development biodiversity enhancement to ensure compliance with local and national Government policies (e.g. NPPF).

3.0 PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government) provides guidance for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in creating development plans and determining applications.

Paragraph 8

- 3.2 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Paragraph 33

- 3.3 Local plans and spatial development strategies should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains). Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).

Paragraph 151

- 3.4 Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

Paragraph 187

- 3.5 Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with the statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising 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;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - 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;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

Paragraph 188

- 3.6 Plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental value 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.

Paragraph 189

- 3.7 Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes 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 the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

Paragraph 190

- 3.8 When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:
- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
 - b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
 - c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

Paragraph 191

- 3.9 Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 189), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

Paragraph 192

- 3.10 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.

Paragraph 193

- 3.11 When determining planning authorities should apply the following principles:
- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (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 a Site of Special Scientific Interest, 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 features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

- 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 developments 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.

Paragraph 194

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

- a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
- c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

Paragraph 195

3.13 The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Legislation

Habitats and Species of Principal Importance

3.14 The NERC Act, 2006 requires the Secretary of State to publish lists of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England, Wales and Scotland. The lists replace the UK Biodiversity Action Plans (UK BAP) and have been drawn up in consultation with Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage as required by the Act. Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act, 2016 has now replaced the duty in section 41 of the NERC Act in relation to Wales, with a duty on public authorities to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity. The lists are used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 41 of NERC Act and section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act, 2016, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their normal functions.

- 3.15 Habitats of principal importance (HPI) are included on the lists. These are all the habitats in England, Wales and Scotland that were identified as requiring action in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) and continue to be regarded as conservation priorities in the subsequent UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.
- 3.16 Species of principal importance (SPI) are included on the lists. These are the species found in England, Wales and Scotland which were identified as requiring action under the UK BAP and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Habitats and Species

- 3.17 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (HMSO 1995, 1998; UKBAP 2007) lists species and habitats which have undergone significant declines in recent years and for which conservation is a priority in order to preserve biodiversity in the UK. The BAPs provide a list of actions to be implemented to halt or reverse these declines. These species and habitats are identified as Habitats and Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biological diversity in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Section 40 of the NERC Act, planning policy and underpinning guidance (ODPM, 2005)

Bats

- 3.18 All species of bat in Britain are 'European Protected Species' and are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. These pieces of legislation combine to give substantial protection to bats and their habitats, as the places use for shelter or protection i.e. roosts, receive European also receive protection. This protection means that bats, and the places they use for shelter or protection, are capable of being a material consideration in the planning process.
- 3.19 Regulation 43 of the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended), states that a person commits an offence if they:
- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat;
 - Deliberately disturb bats; or
 - Damage or destroy a bat roost (breeding site or resting place).
- 3.20 Disturbance of animals includes any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong. It is an offence under the Habitats Regulations 2017 for any person to have in his possession or control, to transport, to sell or exchange or to offer for sale, any live or dead bats, part of a bat or anything derived from bats, which has been unlawfully taken from the wild.

3.21 Whilst broadly similar to the above legislation, the WCA 1981 (as amended) differs in the following ways:

- Section 9(1) of the WCA makes it an offence to intentionally (rather than deliberately) kill, injure or take any protected species.
- Section 9(4)(a) of the WCA makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy, or obstruct access to, any structure or place which a protected species uses for shelter or protection.
- Section 9(4)(b) of the WCA makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any protected species whilst occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.

3.22 Reckless offences were added by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. As bats re-use the same roosts (breeding site or resting place) after periods of vacancy, roosts are protected whether or not bats are present.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

- 4.1 Existing ecological and nature conservation data relevant to the site was collated from various sources including the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) online database (<http://magic.defra.gov.uk>).
- 4.2 A 2km third-party data search was undertaken by Aspect Ecology Ltd as part of their Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. This was undertaken by Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Record Centre in March 2021. It should be noted that the absence of biological records for an area does not imply that taxa are not present.
- 4.3 A search of European statutory designated sites such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA) within 2km of the site boundary was also undertaken.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 4.4 An updated internal and external inspection of the buildings within the application site was undertaken by E. Seaton (Natural England bat licence ref: 2025-86572-CL18-BAT on 07 May 2026 following best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023). The following were identified and considered:
- Evidence that bats have or are using the building (e.g. bat droppings, feeding remains, oil staining)
 - Potential roosting features (e.g. gaps under tiles, damaged stonework)
 - The surrounding area's suitability for commuting and foraging bat species.
- 4.5 Based on the above, a level of suitability was assigned determining the requirement for further nocturnal survey work. The guidance for assessing suitability of structures for roosting bats is shown in Table 1, of trees for roosting bats is shown in Table 2 and the habitat for commuting and foraging bats in Table 3¹:

Table 1: guidelines for assessing the potential suitability for roosting bats of structures.

Potential Suitability	Description
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).

¹ Taken and adapted from: Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London, UK.

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.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year. 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 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 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 conditions (i.e. size, protection, shelter) and surrounding habitat.

Table 2: guidelines for assessing the potential suitability for roosting bats of trees.

Potential Suitability	Description
None	Either no potential roost features in the tree or highly unlikely to be any.
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if potential roost features are present in the tree.
PRF	A tree with at least one potential roost feature present.
PRF-I	Potential roost feature is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	Potential roost feature is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

Table 3: guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of habitats for commuting and foraging bats.

Potential Suitability	Description
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.

Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

Emergence and Activity Surveys

- 4.6 The nocturnal surveys were completed by licensed and/or appropriately experienced ecologists using a range of full spectrum bat detectors. Surveyors were situated strategically around the structures to allow maximum visual coverage. All bat activity observed during the surveys was recorded and the time and species noted (e.g. emerging/returning to roost, commuting, foraging). The weather conditions were also recorded for each visit. A plan of the area to be surveyed was used by each surveyor to show bat emergence locations and flight lines. Dusk emergence surveys commenced for 15 minutes before sunset and continued for 90 minutes after sunset. Details of the surveys, timings, surveyors and equipment can be seen in Table 4:

Table 4: details of survey parameters

Date	Survey Type	Timings	Surveyors	Equipment
07 May 2026	Dusk Emergence	20:42 – 22:37 (sunset 20:42)	E. Seaton (2025-86572-CL18-BAT) I. Moorton	Canon XA60 x 4, 20 LED IR illuminator (x8).
28 May 2026	Dusk Emergence	21:14 – 22:59	E. Seaton	Canon XA60 x 4, 20 LED IR illuminator (x8).

		(sunset 21:14)	(2025-86572-CL18- BAT) I. Moorton	
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Assessment

- 4.7 Best practice guidelines (CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (2006), Reason and Wray (2023)) are used to determine the importance of the site for roosting bats. These guidelines state that the geographical importance of a specific site for roosting and foraging bats should be assessed with regards to the following factors:
- Relative levels of bat activity across the features being surveyed, indicating reliance (or otherwise) on specific habitat/features. The guidelines suggest The Mammal Society's Ecobat tool is used to assess relative activity.
 - The species assemblage and their conservation status, and whether any species are edge-of-range.
- 4.8 The categorisation for these systems are shown in Tables 4-5:

Table 4: Rarity of bat species within England (adapted from Reason & Wray, 2023)

Rarity Category	South-west England to South Wales	Southern England	South-eastern / East Anglia to The Wash	Central England / Midlands	Northern England
Widespread	Common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> Soprano pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> Brown long-eared bat <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Brown long-eared bat	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Brown long-eared bat	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Brown long-eared bat	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Brown long-eared bat
Widespread in many geographies, but not as abundant in all	Brandt's bat <i>Myotis brandtii</i> Daubenton's bat <i>Myotis daubentonii</i> Whiskered bat <i>Myotis mystacinus</i> Natterer's bat <i>Myotis nattereri</i> Noctule <i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Brandt's bat Daubenton's bat Whiskered bat Natterer's bat Noctule	Daubenton's bat Natterer's bat Noctule	Brandt's bat Daubenton's bat Whiskered bat Natterer's bat Noctule	Brandt's bat Daubenton's bat Whiskered bat Natterer's bat Noctule
Rarer or restricted distribution	Serotine <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> Leisler's bat <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i> Nathusius' pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i> Lesser horseshoe bat <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	Serotine Alcathoe's bat Myotis alcathoe Leisler's bat Nathusius' pipistrelle	Whiskered bat Brandt's bat Serotine Leisler's bat Nathusius' pipistrelle	Serotine Leisler's bat Nathusius' pipistrelle	Alcathoe's bat Leisler's bat Nathusius' pipistrelle
Rarest Annex II species and very rare	Barbastelle <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i> Bechstein's bat <i>Myotis bechsteinii</i> Grey long-eared bat <i>Plecotus austriacus</i> Greater horseshoe bat <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>	Barbastelle Bechstein's bat Grey long-eared bat Greater horseshoe bat Lesser horseshoe bat	Barbastelle Alcathoe's bat	Barbastelle Alcathoe's bat	

Table 5: assessing importance of roosts.

Rarity Category	Feeding perches Night roosts Individual / very small occasional / transitional / opportunistic roosts	Non-breeding day roosts (small numbers of species)	Mating sites (excluding individual trees and larger swarming sites) Small numbers of hibernating bats	Larger transitional roosts	Hibernation sites	Autumn swarming sites	Maternity sites
Widespread	Site	Site	Site	Site / Local	District / County [Larger hibernation sites rare in the UK]	District / County [Very large pipistrelle swarming sites appear uncommon in the UK]	Unlikely to exceed District importance unless colonies are atypically large; importance increased for assemblages
Widespread in many geographies, but not as abundant in all	Site	Site	Site / Local / District dependent on local distribution [For <i>Myotis</i> see swarming column]	District	District / County dependent on relative size and number of species	County / Regional dependent on relative size; importance increased for larger sites that serve larger numbers/species	Unlikely to exceed County importance unless colonies are atypically large; importance increased for assemblages
Rarer or restricted distribution	Site (very well-used night roosts may be of district importance for some species)	Site / Local / District dependent on local distribution	Site / Local / District dependent on local distribution	District	District / County dependent on relative size and number of species; increased value for assemblages	County / Regional dependent on relative size and local distribution; increased value for assemblages	County / Regional dependent on relative size and local distribution; increased value for assemblages
Rarest Annex II species and very rare	Site (very well-used night roosts may be of district importance for some species)	Site / Local / District dependent on local distribution	Site / Local / District dependent on local distribution	District	District / County dependent on relative size and number of species; increased value for assemblages	County / Regional dependent on relative size and local distribution; increased value for assemblages	County / Regional dependent on relative size and local distribution; increased value for assemblages

Table 6: level of importance of species assemblage

Species Rarity	Score
Widespread in (almost) all geographies	1
Widespread in many geographies, but not as abundant in all	2
Rarer or restricted distribution	3
Rarest Annex II species and very rare	4
Total Score	Importance
Assemblage score meets or exceeds 45% of the maximum score	County Importance
Assemblage score meets or exceeds 55% of the maximum score	Regional Importance
Assemblage score meets or exceeds 70% of the maximum score	National Importance

Limitations

- 4.9 The detection of activity is biased towards bat species that have louder echolocation calls. Species such as the brown long eared bat *Plecotus auritus* that produce very quiet calls may be under recorded as a result. However, visual cues indicating the presence of quiet calling species were noted to reduce this limitation.
- 4.10 It is not always possible to identify all bats to species level using sound analysis techniques. For example, the calls of *Myotis* species can demonstrate a large number of overlapping parameters making species level identification difficult. In this situation, bats have been identified as *Myotis* sp.
- 4.11 The boundaries between regions and rarity categories are not absolute and should be treated with caution, particularly where species are the edge of their range and with climate change and other pressures are affecting species distribution.

5.0 RESULTS

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Building B1

External & Internal Description

- 5.1 Building 1 is a shed is located at the eastern boundary of the site. The structure is single storey, composed of wooden boards and a pitched roof of onduline roofing sheets. There is a wooden door located on the western elevation of the building, which is unable to close and allows full access into the internal space. On the eastern elevation of the building there is an extension, which is constructed of a wooden frame with plastic netting, and onduline roofing sheets.
- 5.2 Overall, this structure is in very poor condition, with sustained damage to the wooden boarding of the structure, particularly on the northern elevation where at least a quarter of the boarding is missing. Additionally, small areas of the pitched roof have slightly caved in, allowing for access into the internal space.
- 5.3 No suitable bat roosting features or signs of bats were noted during the external or internal inspection and due to the level of damage the structure has sustained high levels of internal illumination.

Building B2

External & Internal Description

- 5.4 Building 2 is a stable block located to the south of the site, along the central hedgerow. The outbuilding is single storey, with the outside clad in wooden weatherboarding over an internal wall. The roof is composed of a pitched corrugated metal panelling.
- 5.5 Externally, there are small gaps between the weatherboarding and small areas of damage around the entirety of the building, allowing for bats to access the cavity between the internal and external weatherboards. There is an additional gap located on the eastern elevation which allows for potential internal access. Overall, due to the structure of the building, there are low levels of lighting within the outbuilding, keeping the internal space dark.
- 5.6 Internally, the outbuilding is separated into a kitchen/ utility space, with the remaining area composed of stable blocks, each separated by wooden panelling. The gap between the wooden panelling and corrugated metal panels could provide limited suitability for roosting bats. No other suitable bat roosting features or signs of bats were noted during the internal inspection.

Foraging and Commuting Habitat

- 5.7 The site is composed of horse-grazed grassland, which is the core preferred foraging habitat for four species recorded in Leicestershire, serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, Leisler's *Nyctalus leisleri* and noctule *N. noctule* (Collins, 2023). The northern, southern and western boundaries of the site include

hedgerows and tree lines, which are the habitat preference for seven species including, *Rhinolophus* sp., whiskered bat, Leisler's, serotine and *Plecotus* sp. There are also additional hedgerows located centrally within the application site, connecting the southern and northern boundaries.

- 5.8 Given this, the site and its immediate surrounding habitat have been classified as holding moderate suitability for commuting and foraging bats (with reference to Collins, 2016).

Nocturnal Survey

- 5.9 A summary of the results of each nocturnal survey is provided below alongside recorded weather conditions:

Table 7: summary of survey results.

Structure	Survey date	Survey type	Weather conditions	Roosts confirmed
Building B2	07 May 2026	Dusk Emergence	Temperature: 14°C Wind (Beaufort):0-1 Cloud Cover: 30% Humidity: 66% Precipitation: none	No roosts recorded
Building B2	28 May 2026	Dusk Emergence	Temperature: 19°C Wind (Beaufort):0 Cloud Cover: 20% Humidity: 57% Precipitation: none	No roosts recorded

Assessment

- 5.10 As no evidence of roosting bats has been recorded the site has been assessed as being unimportant for roosting bats.
- 5.11 Two common pipistrelles were observed on both surveys foraging within the area around the building and the grassland field, but neither were observed emerging from or returning to the building.
- 5.12 The automatic static detectors which were active during the surveys, also picked up a low number of calls from both noctule and *Myotis* sp. during the second survey.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The detailed surveys found no evidence to suggest that the Land off Ashby Road, Markfield supports roosting bats.
- 6.2 A low level of commuting/foraging bat activity was detected with only one species (common pipistrelle) being recorded during the surveys. Bat activity was concentrated around Building B2, where two bats were observed foraging around the grassland fields.
- 6.3 On this basis, no impacts upon bat species are predicted as a result of the proposals. No further survey work is required to support the planning application.
- 6.4 To pursue gains for biodiversity and ensure compliance with local and national Government policies (e.g. NPPF), provision should be made for bats within the post-developed scheme. This could include the provision of an integrated bat box (e.g. Habibat bat box) and / or bat access points (ridge and slope access) within the development site. Alternatively, a tree mounted bat box (e.g. Schwegler 2F) could be placed upon a mature tree within the land ownership of the Land off Ashby Road, Markfield.
- 6.5 As bats are present within the local area, re-development should also seek to implement a sensitive lighting strategy to prevent illumination of commuting and foraging habitat (i.e. hedgerows). Any lighting should be low level and of the minimum wattage, as recommended by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) & Institute of Lighting Professionals (2020).
- 6.6 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Aspect Ecology, 2021) should be referred to for other recommendations.

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APPENDIX A

Plans

Building Location Plan

Dusk Emergence Survey Plan I

Dusk Emergence Survey Plan II



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Key

-  Red Line Boundary
-  Buildings



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Building Location Plan

DRAWING STATUS
Planning

DRAWING NO.
269-E-RP-PL-2246BES

REVISION
V1

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Key

-  Red Line Boundary
-  Building B2

Bat Flight Lines

-  Common pipistrelle

Bat Registrations

-  Common pipistrelle
-  Camera angle



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APPENDIX B

Photographs



Photograph 1: The northern and western elevation of Building B2. Photograph taken facing south.



Photograph 2: The southern elevation of Building B2. Photograph taken facing north-east.



Photograph 3: The eastern elevation of Building B2. Photograph taken facing north.



Photograph 4: The internal area of Building B2. Photograph taken facing north.



Photograph 5: The northern and western elevation of Building B1.



Photograph 6: The internal area of Building B1. Photograph taken facing east.



Photograph 7: Internal area of Building B1.
Photograph taken facing west.



Photograph 8: Extension built onto the
eastern elevation of Building B1.
Photograph taken facing east.

APPENDIX C

Qualifications and Experience

BLADE Ecology Ltd is Registered Practice of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). A comprehensive range of ecological services are offered including Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) and European Protected Species (EPS) Surveys / Licensing.

The practice works closely work closely with clients to achieve their aspirations alongside securing the best outcomes for the environment. With wildlife legislation and policy as its basis; commercial awareness, pragmatism and defensible advice is combined to form BLADE Ecology's approach.

As well as offering a wide range of ecological services, BLADE Ecology offers an in-house collaborative approach in conjunction with BLADE Landscape Architects and BLADE Trees.

Emma Seaton BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

Emma holds a BSc (Hons) degree in Biology from the University of Sheffield and has since gained a postgraduate certificate in Ecological Consultancy. Her ecological experience includes Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, Ecological Impact Assessments (EclA), surveying for notable / European Protected Species, mitigation / licensing advice and providing Continued Professional Development (CPD) sessions for developers on Biodiversity Net Gain. She has held Natural England survey licences for bats (Class 2), great crested newts and white-clawed crayfish since 2015. She is also a Registered Consultant under the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) licence and Earned Recognition consultant under the Natural England bat pilot project. Emma is a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

Izzy Moorton BSc (Hons) MSc

Izzy joined BLADE Ecology in 2025 as a Seasonal Ecologist. She holds a BSc (Hons) in Zoology from Aberystwyth University and an MSc in Global Conservation Science from The University of Leeds. She also has experience carrying out ecological research in the Lake District National Park within woodland and moorland habitats, as well as previously contributing to conservation efforts in Canada by interning in wildlife rehabilitation.

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