

**Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Bird Survey
for,
Mr. and Mrs. Taylor.
Building at,
Dovecott Barn,
Ravenstone Farm,
Main Street,
HIGHAM ON THE HILL,
Leicestershire,
CV13 6AH.**

Map Ref SP 3814 9541

11th September 2025.

S. Christopher Smith MRICS MSc CEnv.

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Natural England License Number 2016-23395-CLS-CLS

Natural England Bat Mitigation Class License

Registered Consultant RC133

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Contents.

Summary	Page 2.
Introduction.	Page 3.
Legislation concerning bats.	Page 3.
Legislation concerning birds.	Page 4.
Methodology for bats.	Page 4.
Constraints.	Page 5.
Building survey.	Page 6.
Birds.	Page 11.
Emergence surveys.	Page 11.
Conclusion.	Page 16.
Method of working.	Page 18.
Bibliography.	Page 22.
Appendix 1.	Page 23.

Summary.

- **There is evidence of bats using the buildings as a place of shelter.**
- **There was evidence of birds nesting in the building.**
- **There definite bat roosting between the rear of the breathable roofing membrane and the plasterboard of the ceilings. Bat droppings have been sent for eDNA analysis and this has confirmed the presence of Common pipistrelle bats. The emergence surveys have shown that there is a Maternity Roost of Common pipistrelle bats with the maximum count being 110 bats. The installation of a roof light close to the Maternity roost must be undertaken after the beginning of September in any year when the roost has vacated the place of shelter, and before the roost returns in May of any year. This can be undertaken during this period using the Natural England Bat Notification as the new roof light will be close to the Maternity Roost location but will not result in the destruction of the roost.**
- **There is a bat roosting opportunity above the door to the kitchen at the rear of the property. This area will be affected by the proposed extension. Emergence surveys have not shown any bats using this area as a place of shelter and the extension of the property will not affect a place of shelter for bats.**
- **The extension of the building, if approved by the Local Authority must not occur if birds are nesting in the building until the young have fledged.**
- **A method of working must be put in place with contractors to ensure that in the event of bats being found they will not be injured.**

Introduction.

An inspection and building survey for bats and birds was requested by Lawrence Finlay Architects on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor. The survey was to be undertaken in relation to the submission of a planning application to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council to extend the existing dwelling. The property was visited on the 27th February 2025 and the surveyor spent 1.25 hour on site.

Temperature; 8°C

Wind; 0-1 Beaufort Scale

Cloud Cover; 0/8th.



Dovecott Barn.

Legislation concerning bats.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) protects bats and their roosts in England, Scotland and Wales. Some parts have been amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) which applies only in England and Wales, and by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 which applies in Scotland.

The Conservation and Habitats Regulations 2010 (better known as the Habitats Regulations) implements the Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora. All bats are listed as 'European protected species of animals'

Under Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 it is illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European Protected Species (EPS),

- Deliberately disturb wild animals of an EPS (affecting ability to survive, breed or rear young) – disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young,
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of an EPS (impairing ability to migrate or hibernate) – disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability in the case of hibernating or migratory species to hibernate or migrate,
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of an EPS (affecting local distribution and abundance) – disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong,
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of an EPS (whilst occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection) – intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection,
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a wild animal an EPS.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is illegal to:

- Recklessly or intentionally kill, injures or take any wild animals included in Schedule 5.
- Recklessly or intentionally damage or destroy, or obstruct access to any structure or place which any wild animal included in Schedule 5 uses for shelter or protection,
- Recklessly or intentionally disturb any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/11/housebuilder-fined-600000-destroying-bat-roost-south-london-bellway>

Legislation concerning birds.

All common wild birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- kill, injure or take any wild bird
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built
- take or destroy the egg of any wild bird

Certain rare breeding birds are listed on Schedule 1 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended). Under this legislation they are afforded the same protection as common wild birds and are also protected against disturbance whilst building a nest or on or near a nest containing eggs/unfledged young.

Methodology for bats.

The building surveys have been undertaken in accordance with Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists- Good Practice Guidelines, 2023, the Bat Conservation Trust. Surveys of the buildings were undertaken during the daytime to look for evidence of bats using the buildings, or likely roosting sites. The evidence of bats using a building as a place of shelter can include bat droppings, grease marks, urine stains or actual bats. This evidence is then considered when

planning evening emergence counts and activity surveys, using bat detectors. These surveys provide evidence of where bats are roosting and activity across the site by foraging or commuting bats.

The Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists- Good Practice Guidelines, 2023, specify that emergence surveys are undertaken dependent upon the roost potential of the buildings on the survey site, as set out below;

Roost potential.	Number of surveys.
High.	3
Low to moderate.	2
Low.	1

The surveys are started at sunset, with bats emerging from roosts at different times, dependent upon the species, and continued for two hours. Emergence surveys can only be undertaken from the beginning of April to the end of September when bats are active. The optimum period of undertaking surveys is the beginning of May to the end of August. Their emergence is dependent upon the weather, the bats only leaving their roost on warm nights when there will be sufficient insect prey around to make flight worthwhile. While bats will emerge in light rain and moderate winds, the surveys would not be undertaken when there is heavy rain and/or strong winds as this would not provide reliable data upon which to base the conclusions of the surveys. Mild weather in April and September will produce bat activity, particularly providing information on forage areas, commuting routes and pre-maternity group roosting.

Any trees on site are surveyed following the methodology set out in the Bat Tree Habitat Key, Henry L Andrews et al 2022, which produces a key for identifying Potential Roost Features in trees and their likelihood of being used by bats. Trees on any site being surveyed will have Potential Roost Features identified from ground level surveys and highlighted in the report.

Constraints.

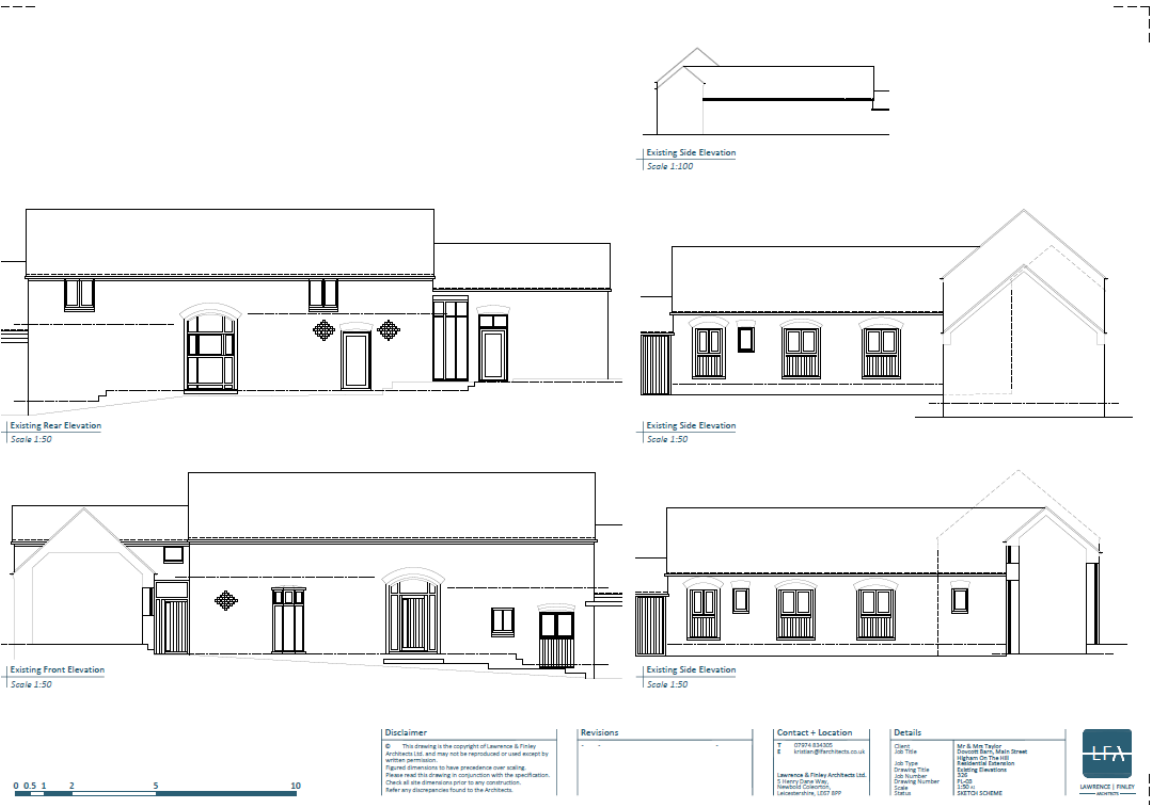
The building survey was undertaken in the winter when evidence of bats internally can still be seen but external evidence may be unavailable after heavy rain. The surveyor does not believe that the weather masked any evidence or access points for bats. There were no constraints to the surveyor for access in the building survey for bats.

Building Survey.

The buildings to be surveyed consisted of a two storey solid brick and block building with a pitched roof covered with slates.



Dovecott Barn.



The results of the building survey are presented as the likelihood of bats using an area/feature;

None.	Bats are unlikely to use the feature/area in any way.
Low.	Bats may use the feature/area but it is not thought to be likely.
Moderate.	The feature/area provides an area that may be used by bats and no direct evidence of occupation was found.
High.	The feature/area provides an area or feature that may provide very good potential to be used by bats but no direct evidence of occupation was found
Definite.	Clear evidence of the use of a feature/area as a place of shelter, such as droppings.

These are based on the Bat Survey Guidelines (2023) recommended scale of assessment for potential bat roosting.

The building is being used by bats as a place of shelter during the summer months. The bats are accessing the space between the rear of the breathable roofing membrane and the internal ceiling plasterboard in gaps at the eaves on the rear elevation.



The bat accesses are three gaps to the west of the first floor window.



The bat roosting is on the southern elevation and is likely to be a maternity roost, used between May and September.



There were a small number of small, elongated bat droppings caught on cobwebs around the access points. These have been connected and sent for DNA analysis.

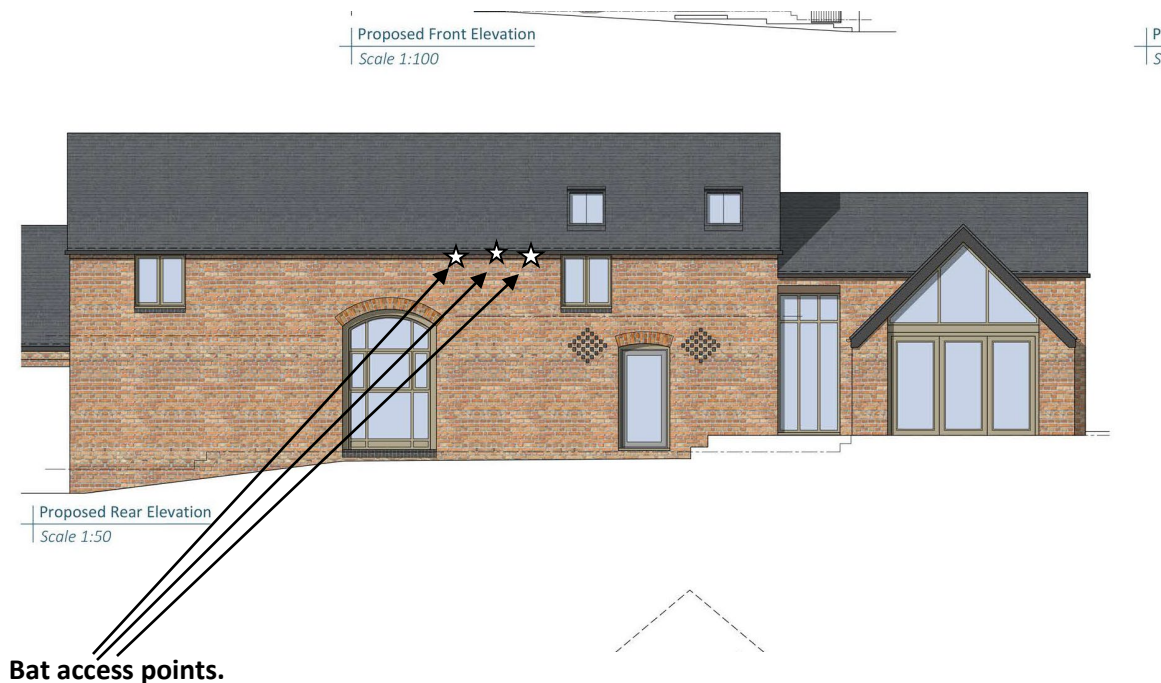
These access points were investigated with an endoscope and a number of possible bat droppings seen internally.



The bats are using the space between the rear of the breathable roofing membrane and the plasterboard of the ceilings. One gap where bats had previously accessed the inside of the dwelling has been closed off.



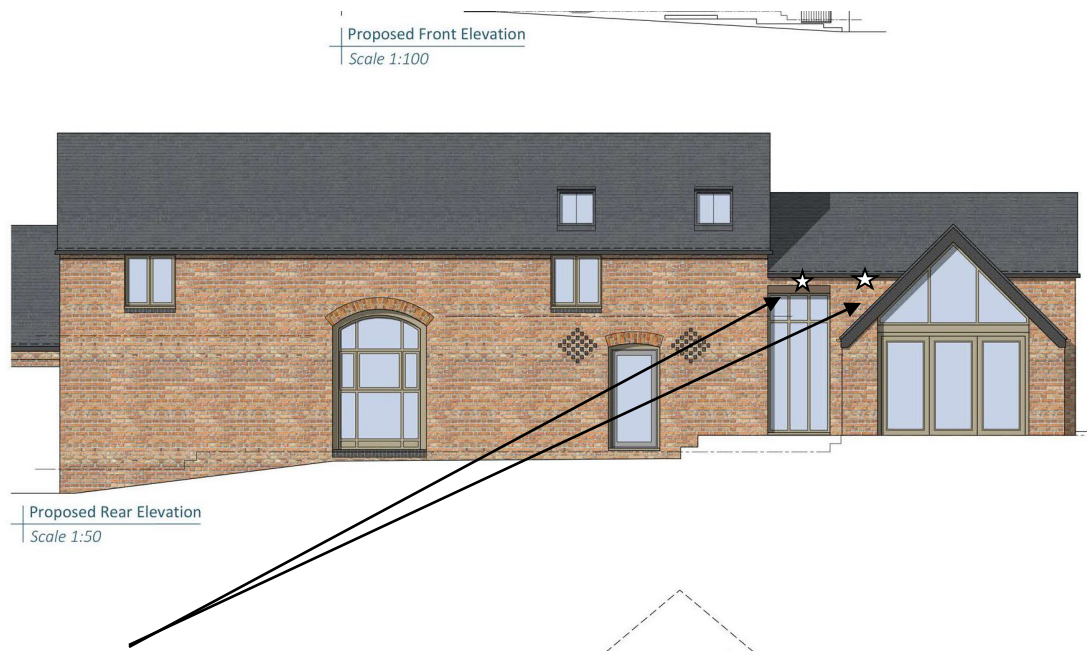
The proposal is to install a Velux style window above the existing southern elevation window. This will be close to the area being used by the bats but if the roost is a maternity roost then it would be possible undertake the work in the winter, when bats are unlikely to be present, using the Natural England Bat Notification under section 10 (5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This allows roofing works to be undertaken at a time when they are unlikely to disturb bats which would be present if the works were not undertaken a certain times of the year. By undertaking the works between the end of September and the end of April in any year it is highly unlikely that bats would be disturbed. This work could be done therefore under a Bat Notification.



The proposal is to build an extension that would enclose the kitchen external door. Above and to the left of the kitchen external door are two potential bat roosting opportunities. These provide access to the space between the rear of the breathable roofing membrane and insulation and the plasterboard of the ceilings.



These gaps are all above the external door and the glazed panel. The proposed extension is to encompass this door and it is possible that the extension will disturb a place of shelter for bats. The bat roosting opportunities are High in view of the known Maternity roost in the building. Three emergence surveys are necessary to determine if bats are using these areas as a place of shelter. If bats are using them then a license from Natural England will be required.



Bat access points.

Bat roosting opportunities where the extension is to be built; High.

Birds.

There are no bird nesting opportunities where the extension is to be built.

If birds begin to nest in any of the areas being developed for the first floor extension then work must stop until the young have fledged.

Emergence surveys.

In order to provide data upon bat movements on site, to determine whether bats are roosting in buildings and to allow the identification of bats emerging from buildings, two evening emergence surveys were undertaken. The number of surveys undertaken on the area of the building where the extension is proposed was determined with reference to the Bat Survey Guidelines for properties with moderate roost potential.

The aim of each survey was to look at these potential areas of the building to determine if bats were emerging from a roost and to assess bat activity across the site. The surveys were undertaken using heterodyne and frequency division bat detectors from which it is possible to identify bats by their different ultrasound call. Separate bat passes are recorded where the echolocation ends for more than 5 seconds. Where a bat was seen it was recorded on a plan of the site to provide information upon movements across the site. As bats close in on their prey their echolocation calls get closer together sounding like a buzz. These feeding buzzes are recording as they confirm the presence of prey and bats feeding in the area.

In addition a count was made of the Maternity roost.

The surveys were undertaken using Batbox Duet frequency division bat detectors with an Edirol R09 recording device, a Batbox Baton frequency division bat detector with an Olympus WAV sound recorder, a Batbox Baton XD Time Expansion bat detector with Olympus wav recorder , an Elekon Batscanner and Magenta 5 heterodyne bat detectors.

29th May 2025.

Sunset. 21.15
Air Temperature. 18°C at the start of 16°C at the end of the survey .
Wind. Beaufort Scale 0-1.
Cloud cover. 4/8th.

Survey started 21.00 and ended at 23.05.

Surveyors; Katy Smith (10 years bat work experience), Sharon Redfern (5 years bat work experience).

Katy Smith

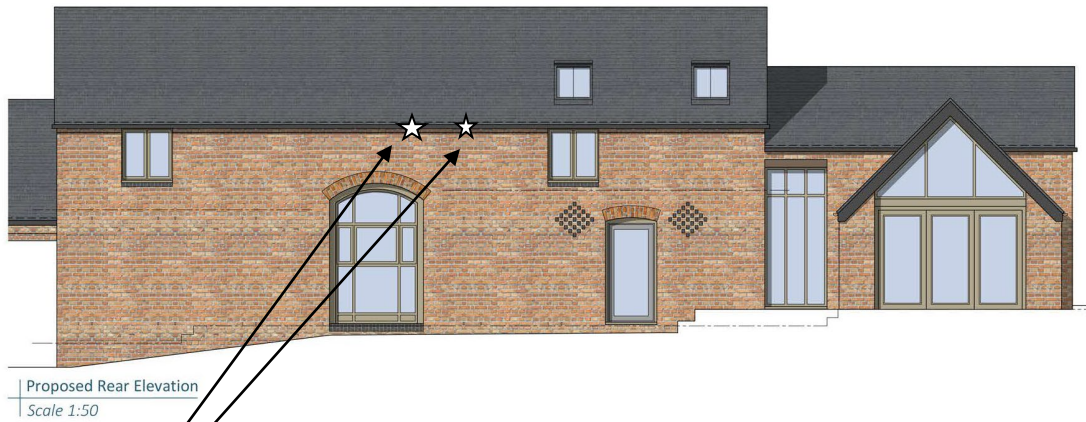
Time.	Direction.	Activity.	Species.	Notes.
21.30	A	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
21.30	B	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
21.32	C	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
21.33	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
21.35	C	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.12	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.18	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.19	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.28	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.31	Not seen	Foraging	Brown long eared	Very faint
22.31	Not seen	Foraging	Noctule	
22.37	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.39	Not seen	Foraging	Soprano pipistrelle	

Sharon Redfern.

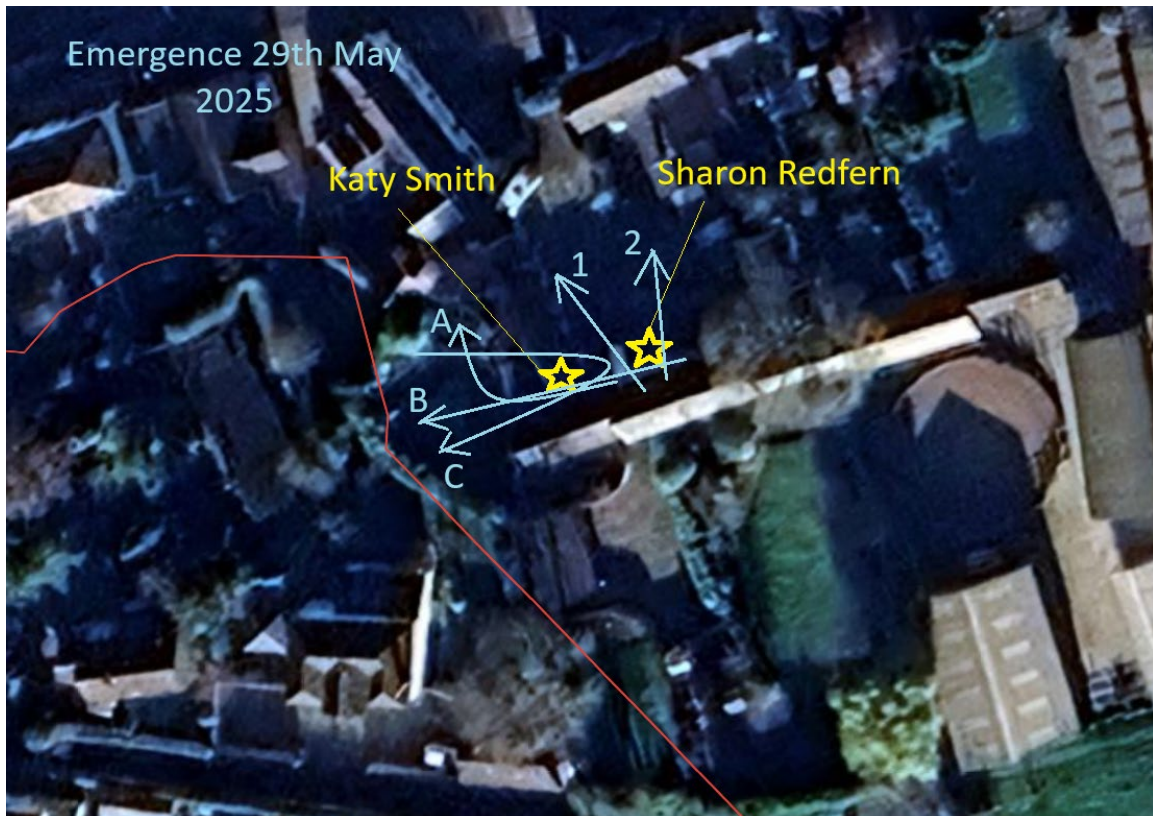
73 Common pipistrelle bats emerged then 2 bat returned and a further 39 Common pipistrelle bats emerged, a total of 110 bats.

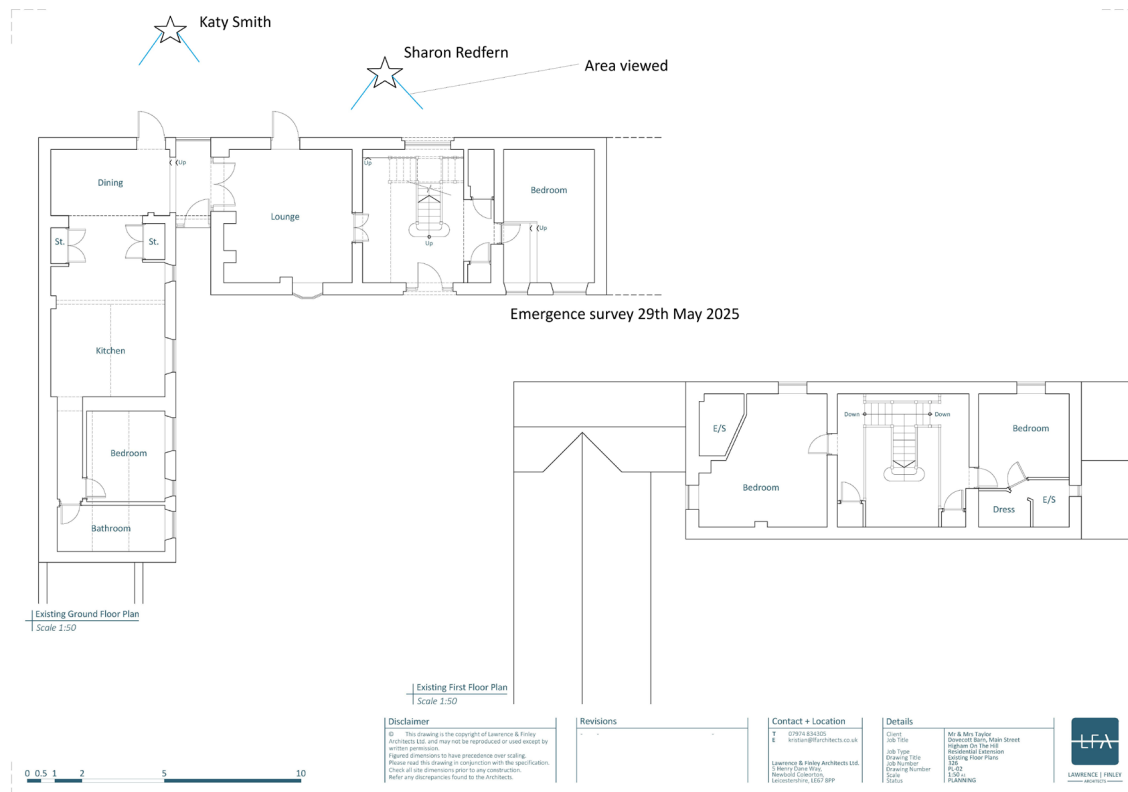
Proposed Front Elevation
Scale 1:100

P
S



Bat access points used.





26th June 2025.

Sunset. 21.33
Air Temperature. 20°C at the start of 19°C at the end of the survey .
Wind. Beaufort Scale 0-1.
Cloud cover. 8/8th.

Survey started 21.18 and ended at 23.15 when rain started.

Surveyors; Katy Smith (10 years bat work experience), Sharon Redfern (5 years bat work experience).

Katy Smith

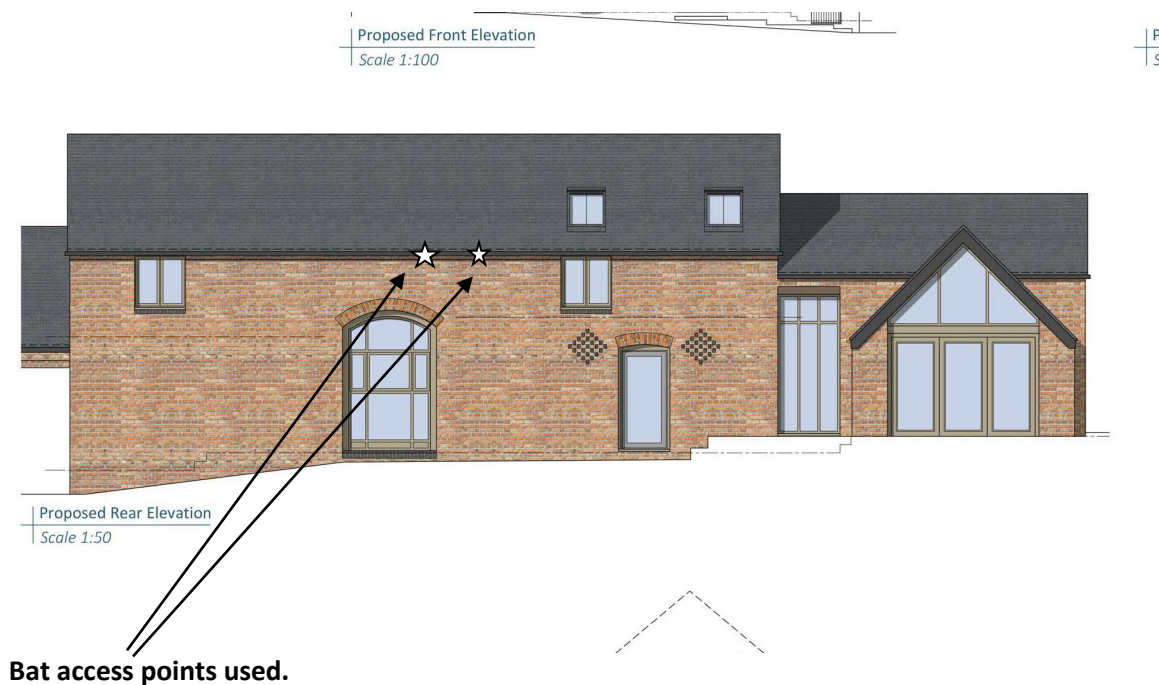
Time.	Direction.	Activity.	Species.	Notes.
22.01	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.02	1	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.05	Not seen	Foraging	Noctule	
22.05	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.09	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.16	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.19	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.21	Not seen	Foraging	Noctule	
22.22	2	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.24	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.35	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	

22.39	Not seen	Foraging	Common pipistrelle	
22.45	Not seen	Foraging	Soprano pipistrelle	

Sharon Redfern.

Time.	Direction.	Activity.	Species.	Notes.
22.01	A	Commuting	Common pipistrelle	
22.02	B	Emerged	Common pipistrelle	4 bats
22.03	C	Emerged	Common pipistrelle	4 bats
22.19	D	Commuting	Common pipistrelle	
22.22	A	Commuting	Common pipistrelle	
22.34	Not seen	Commuting	Common pipistrelle	
22.35	Not seen	Commuting	Common pipistrelle	
22.37	Not seen	Commuting	Common pipistrelle	
22.38	Not seen	Commuting	Common pipistrelle	
22.45	Not seen	Commuting	Noctule	

8 Common pipistrelle bats emerged from the same emergence points as the first survey.



Conclusion.

There was evidence of bats using the dwelling as a place of shelter. DNA analysis has confirmed the presence of Common pipistrelle bats. Emergence surveys have shown a Maternity roost of Common pipistrelle bats using the space between the rear of the breathable roofing membrane and the plasterboard of the ceiling with the maximum count being 110 Common pipistrelle bats. On the second visit there were only 8 Common pipistrelle bats, the majority of the Maternity roost having moved on.

Biological Sample Analysis

Summary

Most biological materials (tissue, feces, hair, blood, etc.) contain small amounts of DNA from the organism of which it originated. Using molecular methods such as PCR (polymerase chain reaction) and DNA sequencing, SureScreen Scientifics are able to analyze an unknown sample to determine which species the sample originates from our methods are optimized for the detection of species including bats (over 92% of bat species worldwide can be identified including all 18 UK bat species), mammals; bees, wasps & hornets; birds; fish; plants (from roots, leaves, stem and even dried wood) and many more species.

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Sample Type	Species Name	Match(%)
B4454	Dovecott Barn 1	SP 3814 9541	Bat Dropping	Common pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus)	100.00
Genetic Sequence AATTGGGAGGATTGGAACTGACTAGTTCCACTAATAATTGGAGCCCCTGACATGGCATTTCCTCGTATAAATAA TATAAGTTTCTGACTCCTACCTCCTCTTTTCTACTACTACTAGCCTCGTCTATAGTAGAAGCGGGAGCGGGTACA GGCTGAACAGTCTACCCCCCTCTAGCAGGAAACCTAGC					
B4455	Dovecott Barn 2	SP 3814 9541	Bat Dropping	Common pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus)	100.00
Genetic Sequence GTAGGCCTAATTATAATTGGGAGGATTGGGAACTGACTAGTTCCACTAATAATTGGAGCCCCTGACATGGCATT TCCTCGTATAAATAATAAGTTTCTGACTCCTACCTCCTCTTTTCTACTACTACTAGCCTCGTCTATAGTAGAAG CGGGAGCGGGTACAGGCTGAACAGTCTACCCCCCTCTAGCAGGAAACCTTGC					
B4456	Dovecott Barn 3	SP 3814 9541	Bat Dropping	Common pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus)	100
Genetic Sequence GCTATTATTAATTGGAGGATTGGAACTGACTAGTTCCACTAATAATTGGAGCCCCTGACATGGCATTTCCTCGTA TAAATAATATAAGTTTCTGACTCCTACCTCCTCTTTTCTACTACTACTAGCCTCGTCTATAGTAGAAGCGGGAGC GGGTACAGGCTGAACAGTCTACCCCCCTCTAGCAGGAAACCTAGCCCA					

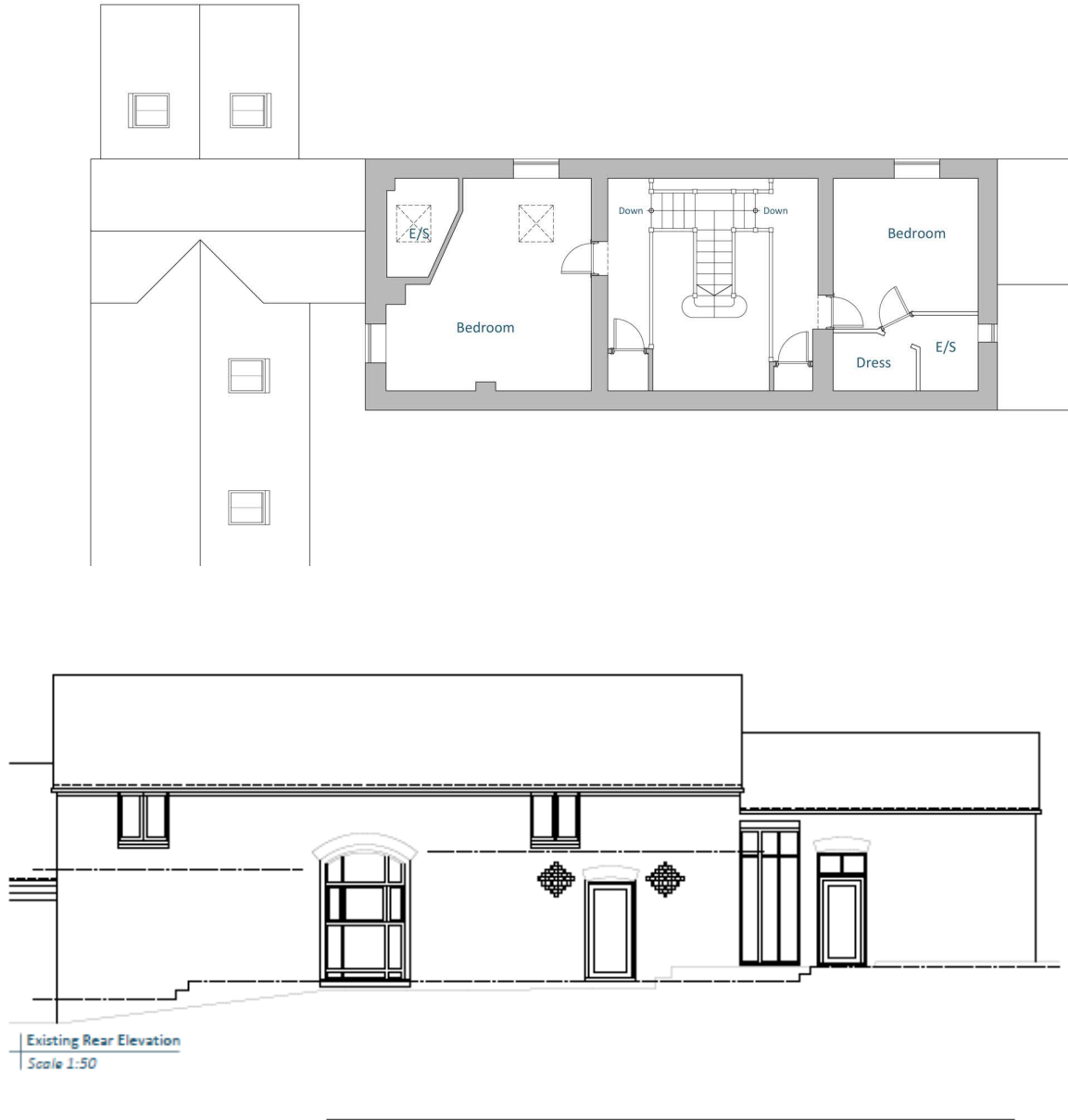
Matters affecting result: none
Reported by: Consuela Sopronyi

Approved by: -

The roof lights are to be installed into the bedroom and bathroom at first floor.

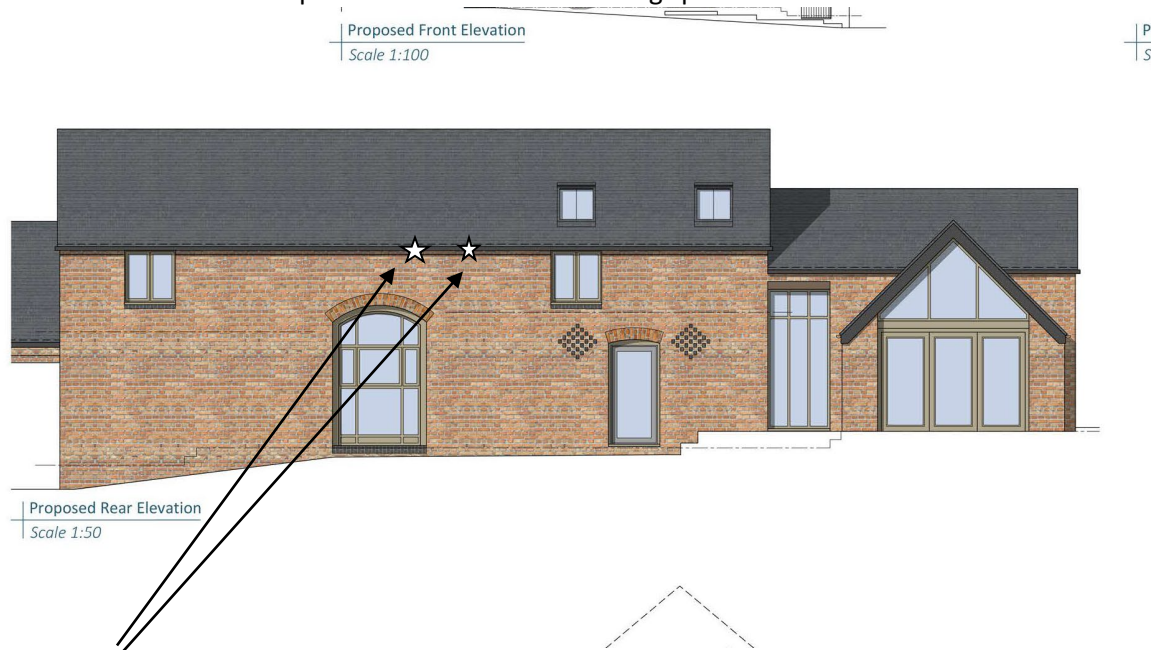
If the roof lights are installed between the end of September and the beginning of May in any year then while they will disturb a place of shelter for bats the work can be done under the Bat Notification system as the bat roosting can be maintained and only disturbance will occur. By timetabling the work to the period between the beginning of September and the end of April in

any year then disturbance of the Maternity roost will be avoided. There are unlikely to be bats during the autumn, winter and spring as this is a hot roost that supports a Maternity roost. The removal of the slates for the roof lights must be undertaken under the supervision of the Bat Consultant to ensure that bats are not harmed during the installation of the roof lights.



A question has been raised about whether the installation of the roof light will affect the climatic conditions in the roof space by Leicestershire County Council Ecology Team. The surveyor does not believe there will be any change. All roof lights are sealed units to stop water ingress to ceilings and to meet strict Building Regulations requirements regarding heat loss when installed. The installation of the roof light therefore will not introduce any new wind or cold egress points. The bats are roosting between the underside of the breathable roofing membrane and the plasterboard ceilings. The plasterboard is fixed to the underside of the rafters and therefore the bats are restricted to an area from the eaves to the ridge between the

rafters. There is no access across the rafters. This is an enclosed area and the introduction of timber to fix the roof light in place will not extend within 1.2m of the known roosting area and will therefore have no impact on climate in the roosting space.



The extension will not affect a place of shelter for bats and can be built without disturbing bats.

The bat roosting will be maintained in the property.

The method of working has been set out so that it can printed and handed to contractors on site.

Method of working.

There is potential for bats to use the buildings as a place of shelter but it is possible that individual bats may use the possible roosting sites uncovered during the installation of the roof lights at different times of year. Because of this possibility a method of working must be put in place when there are contractors on site. This would cover work to the roof or demolition where there was access for bats.

The common species of bats that are likely to roost in buildings of this nature and are evidenced from the regional records, are crevice dwelling bats, such as the Common Pipistrelle. These bats are small and can use accesses as little as 50mm x 20mm. When found in buildings they appear no bigger than a thumb and have dark brown fur.



It is common to find bat droppings in places used by bats. These are small and often confused with mouse droppings. It is possible to distinguish between them as mouse droppings are hard whereas bat droppings, being only insect remains, crumble when rubbed between the fingers.



- When slates are removed they should be lifted away from the roof and not slid or twisted to avoid injuring any bats roosting beneath the tiles.
- Ridge tiles should be lifted without sliding so as to avoid injuring any bats roosting beneath them.
- If a bat is found under a slate or ridge tile, the tile should be carefully replaced and work in that area stopped until such time as a licensed bat worker can attend the site and contact Natural England to discuss how the work can proceed.
- The bat can then be removed to a place of safety until such time that it can be released at night.
- The demolition of any part of the building where bats could potentially roost should be by hand. This includes the removal of roof tiles, ridge tiles, soffits, gutter fascia boards and hanging tiles. If a bat is found the work should be stopped immediately and a bat worker called to come and deal with the bat. The bat should not be handled except by a licensed bat worker. Any bats found will be taken into care for release on site later dependent upon the time and weather.
- Bats discovered during the winter period will be taken into care, feed and kept healthy until they can be released on site in the Spring.

- Bats will not be released on site until evening temperatures are consistently above 6°C, at least three nights, the wind is light, and there is no rain.
- Bats taken into care over the winter will be released to the new roost opportunities in Spring if they are available using the same release criteria as above.

Legislation concerning bats.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) protects bats and their roosts in England, Scotland and Wales. Some parts have been amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) which applies only in England and Wales, and by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 which applies in Scotland.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (better known as the Habitats Regulations) implements the Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora. All bats are listed as 'European protected species of animals'.

It is an offence for any person to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats, where that disturbance may significantly affect the ability of those bats to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young, or is likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of any bat species, whether in a roost or not.
- Damage or destroy a place of shelter (roost) of a bat, be that a resting or breeding place.
- Possess a bat, whole or in part, alive or dead.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a roost.
- Sell or offer for sale or exchange whole or parts of bats, alive or dead.

The fine for committing an offence is £5,000 per bat.

If a bat is found on site, work should stop in the area where the bat was found and the contractor should call the Bat Consultant; S. Christopher Smith 07967636115.

Breathable Roofing Membranes-Info Sheet

What are they?

- ✦ Traditional roofing felt was bitumen based
- ✦ Modern membranes are made from very fine and long plastic fibres that are spun into thin sheets. They be single ply or have various layers to provide a more complex membrane.
- ✦ They are known as Breathable roofing membranes or Vapour permeable underlay's (BRMs/VPUs)

Who Makes them?

- ✦ When most people talk about BRMs, they will call it Tyvek as this is the most famous brand name
- ✦ There are over 70 products in the UK alone, made by 20+ companies – never assume the product is Tyvek unless there is proof.



Why are they used?

- ✦ Modern houses are designed to be more energy efficient, meaning they tend to be warmer.
- ✦ Along with human activities this means increased levels of water vapour in the air
- ✦ When this passes up into the cold roof space, it forms condensation, which can lead to problems
- ✦ In the past gaps would have been left near the ridge and eaves to allow ventilation, but increased insulation often means this isn't possible. A breathable membrane aids this as it allows water vapour to pass out of the loft into the external air

Potential Problems

- ✦ There have been reports of bats becoming entangled in fibres pulled from the membranes
- ✦ Possibility of Temperature and humidity change
- ✦ A lot of membranes are white or brightly coloured

Advice

- ✦ At present we cannot recommend specific brands that are considered safe for use in bat roosts, as such it is recommended that bitumen felt be used where possible
- ✦ It is not against the law not to install a BRM
- ✦ If the planner insists on a BRM, suggest a dark coloured and reinforced membrane

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S.Christopher Smith MRICS MSc CEnv.

Appendix 1.

Roost Types as designated by Natural England and the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines.

- A. Day roost: a place where individual bats, or small groups of males, rest or shelter in the day but are rarely found by night in the summer.
- B. Night roost: a place where bats rest or shelter in the night but are rarely found in the day. May be used by a single individual on occasion or it could be used regularly by the whole colony.
- C. Feeding roost: a place where individual bats or a few individuals rest or feed during the night but are rarely present by day.
- D. Transitional / occasional roost: used by a few individuals or occasionally small groups for generally short periods of time on waking from hibernation or in the period prior to hibernation.
- E. Swarming site: where large numbers of males and females gather during late summer to autumn. Appear to be important mating sites
- F. Mating sites: sites where mating takes place from later summer and can continue through winter.
- G. Maternity roost: where female bats give birth and raise their young to independence.
- H. Hibernation roost: where bats may be found individually or together during winter. They have a constant cool temperature and high humidity.
- I. Satellite roost: an alternative roost found in close proximity to the main nursery colony used by a few individual breeding females to small groups of breeding females throughout the breeding season.
- J. Other – Explain what the roost type is if not one of the above (it is recognised that roost types are interchangeable and not always easy to classify according to the nuances of certain species).