



BJ Collins
PROTECTED SPECIES SURVEYORS

UPDATED EMERGENCE AND ACTIVITY SURVEYS
OF
THE COACH HOUSE
RECTORY LANE
MARKET BOSWORTH
LEICESTERSHIRE

A report to:

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Client:	Mr and Mrs Sherwin
Report Title:	Emergence and Activity Surveys of The Coach House, Market Bosworth

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RELIANCE - The report describes the conditions and ecological features on the site (and possibly its environs) at the time of survey and that this may (is likely to) change over time. Reliance upon the findings of this report should be determined in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management guidance on the longevity of ecological surveys, see Advice Note (April 2019) *On the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys* CIEEM.

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SUMMARY

This report has been prepared by BJ Collins – Protected Species Surveyors Limited to review and assess the likely ecological impacts of the development project for the Coach House in Market Bosworth, Leicestershire.

The development proposal is to convert the Coach House into a residential dwelling. Protected species surveys were undertaken to the former Coach House by this company in 2022, which ultimately confirmed the presence of an individual common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) day roost and night roosting for brown long-eared bat and Brandt's bat (*Myotis brandtii*).

As the previous 2022 surveys are now out of date, B J Collins Protected Species Surveyors Ltd returned to site to undertake two further emergence and activity surveys in the active season of 2024, to update the status of the building with regards to bat roosting.

The coach house was inspected further for evidence of bats prior to the first emergence and activity survey in May 2024. This found a small scattering of droppings and butterfly wings within the southern section of the building, indicative of a brown long-eared bat.

The updating emergence and activity surveys undertaken in 2024 identified active roosting by two individual brown long-eared bats on one visit only, in a result which was partially concurrent with that of the 2022 determinations. In contrast to the 2022 surveys the bats in this instance with day roosting, in that they emerged after sunset at the end of the day, and therefore can be categorised under the licence as being a further roost

This latest discovery creates a delay in the licensing process whilst the level of EPS License is ascertained. The delay is confirming that Natural England will accept the 2 brown long-eared bat roosts, day and night roosting, as a single roost. There is an overlap in the categorisation of day roosting and night roosting bats and it is hoped that this overlap can be used to retain the results as being from 3 bat roosts, Common pipistrelle, Brandt's and Brown long-eared.

The terms of the licence are not flexible and if the two types of use of the building by Brown long-eared bats is categorised as two roosts then it breaches the maximum three roost rule and a full license would be required.

A mitigation strategy formed by this company in 2022 remains relevant but is included in 2024 under a separate report titled "Bat Mitigation Strategy for The Coach House, Market Bosworth, August 2024". This has been submitted to the local planning authority for the sake of good order and in order to demonstrate compliance with planning condition number 9, this is not a pre-commencement condition:

*9. The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in strict accordance with the measures stated in the Section 6 (Bat Mitigation Strategy) of the Ecology and Bat Surveys 2022 report (submitted: 30.11.2022). **Should the building works be delayed for more than 1 year, the Bat Mitigation Strategy should be updated to reflect any changes in bat usage within the building.***

While the development works will require compensation in the form of habitat provisions as outlined below, there would be no constraints to do with timing of works.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to commission

BJ Collins Protected Species Surveyors Ltd was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Sherwin to provide updated ecological support in relation to the development proposal for the Coach House in Market Bosworth, Leicestershire (the 'site').

A suite of protected species surveys were undertaken to the former Coach House by this company in 2022¹, which included a preliminary ecological appraisal of the building and surrounding habitats, subsequently followed up by two emergence and activity surveys after the building was categorised as being of "moderate bat roost suitability" as per the Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016; 2023).

The 2022 surveys recorded the presence of 3 bat roosts including an individual common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) day roost, and brown long-eared bat and Brandt's bat night roosts. Sonogram analysis using the BTO pipeline and further examination separated this species from the other potential candidate, the very similar whiskered bat (*M. mystacinus*).

As the 2022 surveys are out of date, B J Collins returned to site to undertake two further emergence and activity surveys in the active season of 2024 in support of the required European Protected Species Derogation Licence.

1.2 Description of project

The development proposals are for the renovation and conversion of the coach house into a residential dwelling.

1.3 Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to review and assess the likely ecological impacts of the proposed development to ensure works remain lawful. The legislation relevant can be found appended (1) to this report.

1.4 Site description

Figure 1 shows the coach house subject to the development proposals (outlined in yellow). The site is located in the east of Market Bosworth, approximately centred at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) SK 4070 0294. The coach house is immediately surrounded by grassland to the east, woodland to the south, residential gardens to the west and a line of trees to the north.

The wider landscape includes residential dwellings and gardens to the north, east and west, and pasture and arable fields lined with trees to the south. Notable ecological features in the landscape include a large pond surrounded by woodland approximately 370 m to the east.

¹ Ecology Surveys 2022 – The Coach House, The Old Rectory, Market Bosworth – BJ Collins PSS Ltd

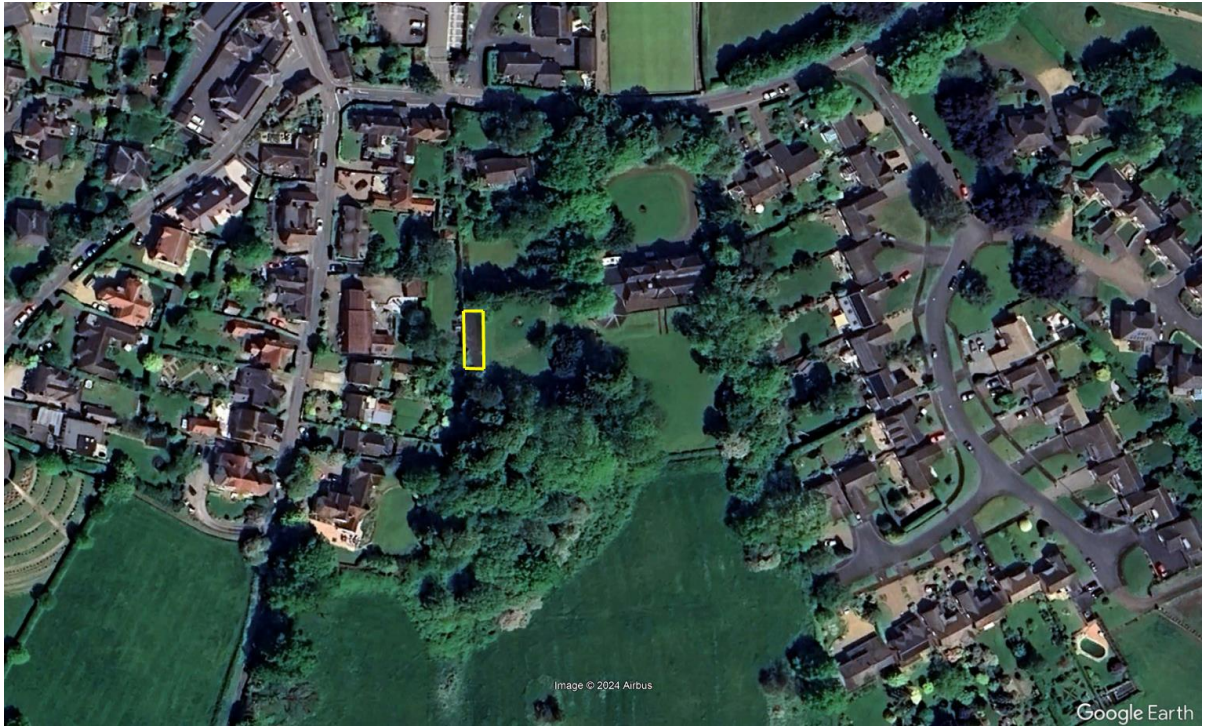


Figure 1: Aerial image of the coach house (outlined in yellow) in relation to the surrounding landscape. Image produced in Google Earth.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desktop study

The preliminary ecological appraisal undertaken in August 2022 included a desktop study. This involved a review of publicly available information including the UK Government's MAGIC² website and Google Earth Pro³. These sources have been reviewed and the results updated in July 2024.

- The MAGIC database was used to establish the presence of statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest and protected species licences within a 2.5 km radius of the Site.
- Google Earth Pro was used to review recent and historical aerial photography of the Site and surrounding area, and to provide ecological context for the results of the Site assessment.

2.2 Preliminary bat roost assessment

A visual inspection of the building was undertaken by an experienced licenced bat ecologist on the 16th of August 2022, which categorised the coach house as being of at least 'moderate bat roost suitability'. A supplementary roost assessment was undertaken prior to the first emergence and activity survey on the 20th of May 2024, to ascertain any changes to the building and look for fresh evidence of bats.

The survey method was based on industry standard guidance (Collins 2023). Equipment used included powerful torches, camera, binoculars and telescopic ladders. The objective of the survey was to inspect the building for evidence of bat-use and to identify features that could potentially support roosting bats and to assess the likelihood of these features being used. This included looking for droppings, urine staining, worn surfaces and the bats themselves (alive or dead).

2.3 Emergence and activity surveys

In accordance with the Good Practice Guidelines (Collins 2023), the coach house was subject to two emergence and activity surveys in the active season of 2024 to provide confidence in the presence/absence of roosting bats, to update the previous survey results.

The survey was completed by deploying two bat ecologists each time, comprising an experienced and licensed bat ecologist and assistant bat worker, to cover all accessible elevations of the survey buildings simultaneously.

The surveyors used a range of equipment including Anabat Scout full spectrum detector and recording units, and Pettersson D240x Ultrasonic Detectors paired with Anabat SD1 recording units.

Night vision aids (NVA's) were utilised alongside the surveyors. These included the Canon XA20 digital camcorders with night vision recording paired with Dedolight Infrared Floodlighting and the Nightfox XB5 Pro Infrared Torches.

The emergence surveys began 15 minutes prior to sunset and lasted for 105 minutes each.

2.4 Survey constraints

The western elevation of the building was not visible as it formed the boundary of the site. The neighbouring residential gardens contain mature trees and shrub which are immediately adjacent to this elevation, reducing roosting suitability. This was not considered to be a significant constraint as the evidence and information obtained from the surveys were sufficient to categorise the roosts.

Weather conditions during the emergence and activity surveys was suitable for bat activity.

² Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside. Available at www.magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmaps.aspx

³ Google Earth Pro 7.3.6.9345

2.5 Weather conditions

Ambient temperature was measured with an ETI Hygro-Therm hygrometer and wind was measured as per the Beaufort scale.

Table 1: Weather data during the emergence and activity surveys.

Date	Sunset	Temperature (°C)		Cloud Cover (%)		Wind (Beaufort)		Precipitation
		Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	
20/05/2024	21:04	15.6	9.5	0	0	1	1	None
10/06/2024	21:29	12.3	9.0	0	0	2	2	None

2.6 Personnel

The 2024 surveys were led by Mr P A Collins BSc (Hons) (Natural England Class License: 2022-10788-CL18-BAT), assisted by Ms R J Gibbs MSc, an ecologist experienced in bat surveys.

2.7 Surveyor and NVA locations

The positions of surveyors (outlined in yellow) and NVA's (outlined in red) during the emergence and activity surveys. Surveyor 1 was positioned at the south-eastern gable and surveyor 2 was positioned at the north-eastern gable.



Figure 2: Surveyor and NVA locations during the emergence and activity surveys.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Desktop study

3.1.1 Statutory designated sites

Ashby Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is approximately 2.4km north-west of the site and is notified for its diversity of aquatic plants and invertebrates.

3.1.2 Non-statutory designated sites

Information on Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are not publicly available.

3.1.3 Ancient woodland

Two blocks of ancient, replanted woodland are present within a 2.5km radius of the site. The closest is Hercules plantation approximately 800m south-east.

3.1.4 Protected species licences

The search identified three previously granted protected species licences within a 2.5km radius of the site (**Table 2**).

Table 2: Protected species licences granted within a 2.5km radius of the Site.

Licence number	Description	Species	Distance and direction from the site
2020-44716-EPS-MIT-1	Destruction of a resting place	Common pipistrelle	370 m west
EPSM2009-1495	Destruction of a resting place	Common pipistrelle	870 m west
2017-31325-EPS-MIT	Destruction of a resting place	Brown long-eared	2.2 km south-west

3.2 Preliminary bat roost assessment

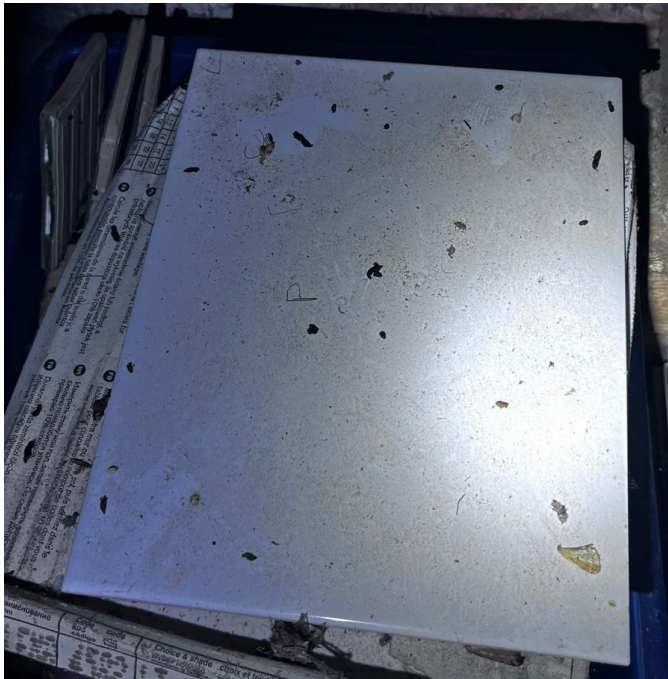
A full description of the preliminary bat roost assessment undertaken in 2022 is provided in the previous report (BJ Collins 2022).

The coach house is constructed of solid brick walls with several timber windows and doors on the north, east and south elevations. The pitched roof has slate tiles and a dormer window on the eastern aspect.

The interior is divided into three sections. The central and southern section is open at the eaves providing fly-through access for bats. The underside of the roof covering is visible from ground level and shows the ceiling joists with no ceiling boards. The pitched roof is constructed of a timber king post with purlins and rafters and

The northern section is separated from the central and southern section by an internal wall, however there is a hole in the lathe and plaster board at the north gable providing access under the roof.

The brief inspection of the coach house undertaken prior to the first emergence survey in May 2024 identified a small number of scattered droppings and butterfly wing feeding remains in the southern section of the coach house.



Photograph 1: Scattered bat droppings in the southern section.

3.3 Emergence and activity surveys

3.3.1 20 May 2024

Two brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) bats were observed emerging from two roost points during the survey.

Surveyor 1 observed a brown long-eared bat emerge from the building through a window in the southern gable at 21:34hrs. Surveyor 2 observed a brown-long eared bat emerge through an open doorway on the northern gable at 21:40hrs. Review of the video footage shows the bat flying around the upper floor for a few minutes prior to emerging.

The most abundant species recorded during the survey was the common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) recorded more than 50 times between the surveyors throughout the survey, including a period of foraging loops over the grassland area to the east of the building.

Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) bats also made foraging loops over the grassland to the east, with more than 20 passes recorded during the survey.

Other species recorded during the survey comprised a single pass for noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) and a bat of the *Myotis* genus.

Table 3: Summary of results from both surveyors on the 20th of May.

Bat Species	Number of passes	Key Notes and Observations
Brown long-eared	5	Two bats emerged out of the window in the southern gable at 21:34. Emerged out of the open doorway in the northern gable at 21:40
Common pipistrelle	61	Multiple foraging loops over the east grassland
Soprano pipistrelle	26	Foraging the east and south
Myotis species	1	Pass at 22:02
Noctule	1	Pass at 21:16

3.3.2 10 June 2024

No bats were seen to emerge from or be associated with the building.

The first bat was recorded at 21:32hrs when a soprano pipistrelle echolocation call was heard in the distance to the west. A bat of this species then made two foraging loops to the south of the building at 21:36hrs.

Soprano pipistrelle was the most abundant species recorded during the survey, including over 200 passes recorded between the two surveyors, the majority of which were recorded between 21:48 and 22:10hrs when individuals were foraging in continuous loops over the grassland to the east.

Common pipistrelle bats were also observed foraging to the east of the building with more than 40 passes between 21:55 and 21:10hrs.

Other species recorded during the survey comprised an individual pass by a noctule.

Table 4: Summary of results from both surveyors on the 10th of June.

Bat Species	Number of passes	Key Notes and Observations
Common pipistrelle	34	Foraging loops between 21:55 and 22:10
Soprano pipistrelle	231	Foraging loops between 21:38 and 22:10
Noctule	1	Pass at 22:16

4. EVALUATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Bats

Evaluations

After the suite of surveys in 2022 by this company, active bat roosting by common pipistrelle plus night roosting by Brown long-eared and Brandt's bat was identified associated with the Coach House.

The updating emergence and activity surveys undertaken in 2024 identified active roosting by two individual brown long-eared bats on one visit only, in a result which was partially concurrent with that of the 2022 determinations. In this instance these bats were day roosting, i.e. they emerge from the building at the end of the day, within the Coach House.

This latest discovery creates a delay in the licensing process whilst the level of EPS License is ascertained. The delay is confirming that Natural England will accept the 2 brown long-eared bat roosts, day and night roosting, as a single roost. There is an overlap in the categorisation of day roosting and night roosting bats and it is hoped that this overlap can be used to retain the results as being from 3 bat roosts, Common pipistrelle, Brandt's and Brown long-eared.

The terms of the licence are not flexible and if the two types of use of the building by Brown long-eared bats is categorised as two roosts then it breaches the maximum three roost rule and a full license would be required.

Recommendations

Bats are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and under Schedules 5 & 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). See Appendix 1 for further details on legislation.

Full planning consent has been granted for this development (22/01133/FUL, 29 November 2022) by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council.

The mitigation strategy formed by this company in 2022 remains largely sufficient for the status of the building in 2024. An updated version of this mitigation strategy for the development proposal is outlined in a stand-alone survey report entitled "Bat Mitigation Strategy for The Coach House, Market Bosworth, August 2024". This is to show conformity to Planning Condition 9, although it should be noted that this condition is not a pre-commencement condition and would therefore not delay the award of a European protected species derogation licence.

While the development works will require compensation in the form of habitat provisions as outlined below, there will be no constraints to do with timing of works.

5. REFERENCES

B J Collins (2022) **Ecology Surveys 2022 – The Coach House, The Old Rectory, Market Bosworth**, BJ Collins PSS Ltd, Nottingham.

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

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Waring S.D., Essah E.A, Gunnell K., and Bonser R.H.C., (2013) **Double Jeopardy: The Potential for Problems when Bats Interact with Breathable Roofing Membranes in the United Kingdom**. *Architecture & Environment*, 1 (1): 1-13.

APPENDIX 1 – PROTECTED SPECIES LEGISLATION

Bats

All species of British bat and their roosts are protected under British law by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and bats are classified as European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the 2017 Regulations'). This has recently been amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019) which continue the same provision for European protected species, licensing requirements, and protected areas after Brexit.

The legislation makes it an offence to kill, injure or disturb a bat and/or to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place for a bat. It is also an offence to disturb the animals such that it impairs their ability to survive, to reproduce, to nurture their young, or such that it impairs their ability to hibernate or migrate. Under this legislation development work that could affect a bat or bat roost can only be permitted under a licence from Natural England.

Licences in respect of European Protected Species affected by development can be granted under Section 55(2) (e) of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019), for the purpose of preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment.

Under section 55(9) of the Regulations licences can only be issued if Natural England is satisfied that:

- there is no satisfactory alternative to the work specification,
- and the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

Natural England aim to process EPS licence applications within 35 working days of receipt and Low Impact Class licenses are typically registered within 14 working days of receipt.