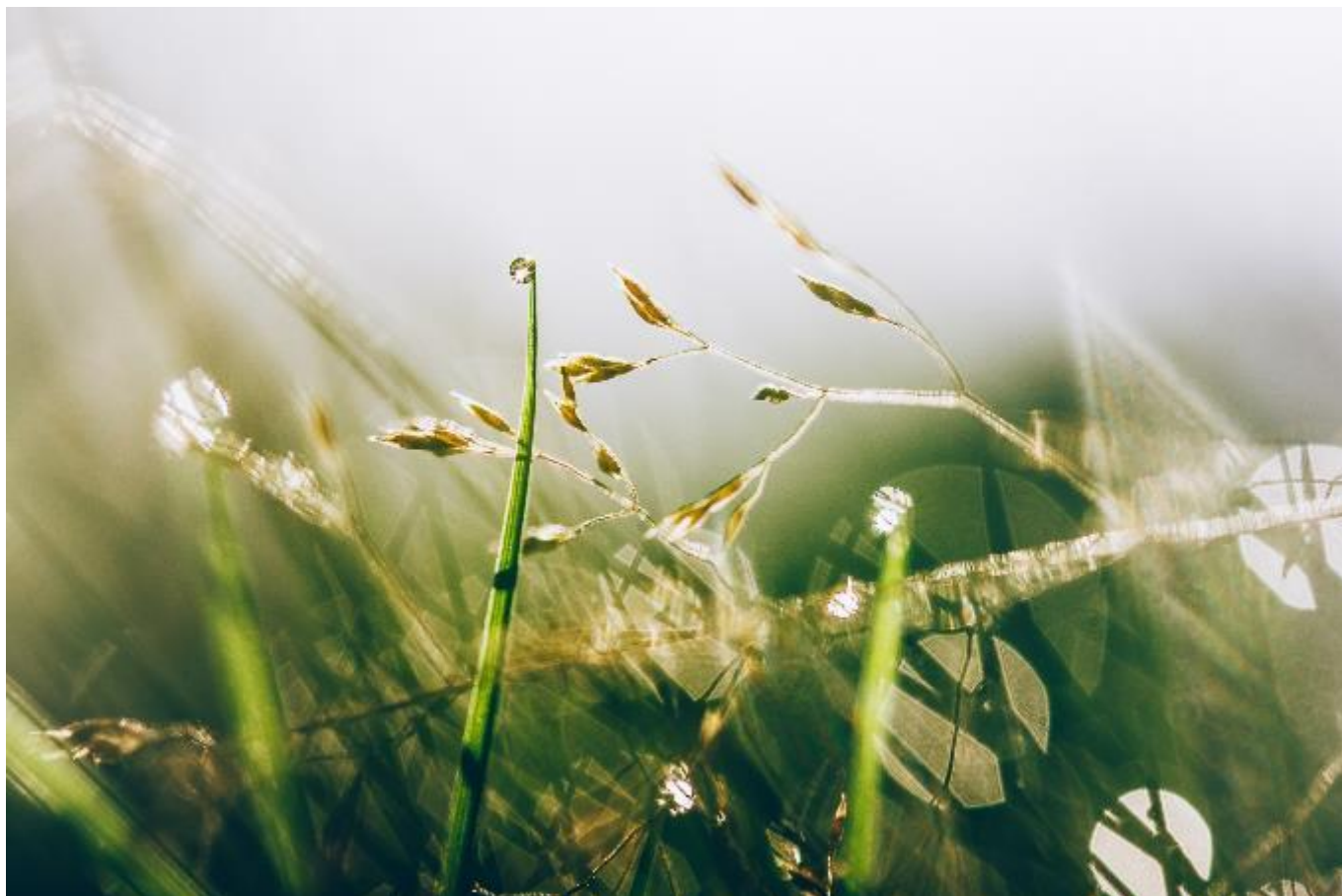




9 Barlestone Drive, Hinckley

Protected Species Survey Report

December 2024



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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings and recommendations from a protected species survey of the dwelling house at 9 Barlestone Drive, Hinckley, Leicestershire, LE10 0XZ, which is hereafter referred to as “the building”. The central Ordnance Survey Grid Reference of the building is SP 41338 94098 and it can be viewed [here](#).

It is understood that an extension and renovations of the building are proposed which require planning consent. The building was therefore subject to a protected species survey (supported by a desk study) because legally protected species are a Material Consideration within the planning system. The survey was focused on roosting bats and nesting birds because these protected animal species are sometimes found in buildings unlike others (usually). The findings of this appraisal dictate any requirements for further protected species survey work and / or mitigation, compensation, or site enhancements.

The protected species survey was undertaken by Matt Cook BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM, a suitably qualified and experienced professional ecologist, on 28 November 2024. The bat survey was undertaken in accordance with Collins, J (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London. There were no survey constraints.

No evidence of bats was identified within the building or on any of its external surfaces. In keeping with many buildings there are some PRF present within the fabric of this building; however, the number, size, and suitability of these PRF is limited and their usage by bats is unlikely. In accordance with Collins (ed.) 2023 – see Table 3.2.1 - the building is classified as having ‘negligible suitability’ for roosting bats i.e. there are “*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*”.

Based on the above findings no further bat surveys or bat mitigation measures are recommended to facilitate the proposals for the building although note the general precautions advised below.

There was no evidence of nesting birds within the building on the survey. In its current condition the building is unlikely to support nesting birds.

Based on the above findings no mitigation measures for nesting birds are required to facilitate the proposals for the building.

The desk study identified no constraints to the proposals for the building.

To provide some additional habitat for wildlife upon completion of this project a bat box or a bird box should be installed on a tree or building on the site.

As a matter of *standard* good practice, all persons working onsite on this project should remain vigilant for the potential presence of roosting or hibernating bats and nesting birds, no matter how unlikely this may seem. Irrespective of the findings of this survey, if any bat or bat roost, or an active bird nest, is discovered during work on this building then work in this area should cease immediately to reduce the risk of committing a legal offence. A suitably experienced ecologist should then be consulted.

Given the inherent time constraints to ecological surveys and advice this report is considered valid for a maximum of two years for planning purposes.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This report presents the findings and recommendations from a protected species survey of the dwelling house at 9 Barlestone Drive, Hinckley, Leicestershire, LE10 0XZ, which is hereafter referred to as “the building”.
- 1.1.2 It is understood that an extension and renovations of the building are proposed which require planning consent. The building was therefore subject to a protected species survey (supported by a desk study) because legally protected species are a [Material Consideration within the planning system](#) - see Section 2.
- 1.1.3 The survey was focused on roosting bats and nesting birds because these protected animal species are sometimes found in buildings unlike others (usually).
- 1.1.4 The findings of this appraisal dictate any requirements for further protected species survey work and / or mitigation, compensation, or site enhancements.

1.2 Site Location

- 1.2.1 The central Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OS GR) of the building is SP 41338 94098. The location of the building is shown in Figure 1.2.1 and it can be viewed [here](#).

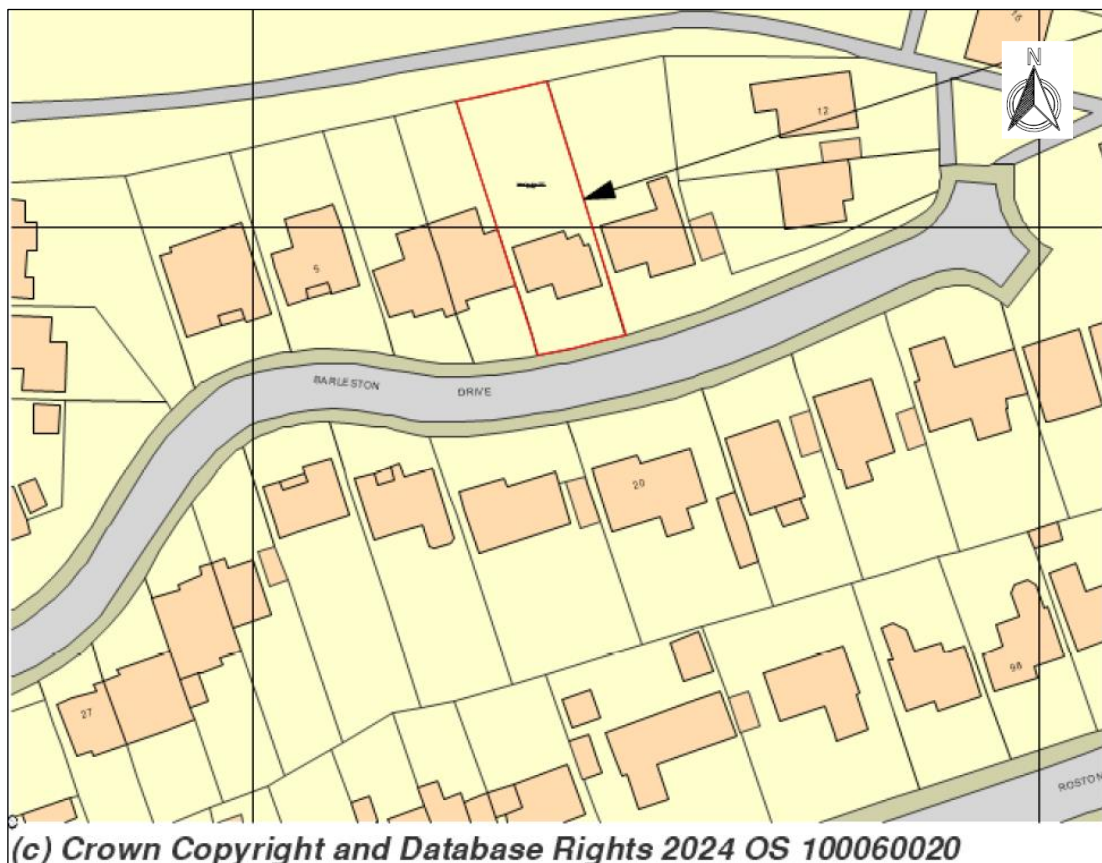


Figure 1.2.1: The surveyed building is shown within the red polygon above. Plan provided by The Design Social (September 2024).

- 1.2.2 The building is located on the north side of Barlestone Drive within a built-up area to the west of Hinckley town centre. Hinckley is a market town in south-west Leicestershire, c.18 km to the south-west of the city of Leicester, and c.5 km to the north-east of Nuneaton in Warwickshire.

1.3 Building and Site Descriptions

- 1.3.1 Photographs 1.3.1 to 1.3.4 show the surveyed building. Further photographs of it in relation to the survey findings are provided in Appendix 1.
- 1.3.2 The building principally comprises a two-storey dwelling house constructed from cavity brick and block walls. The roofs are covered with concrete interlocking tiles with concrete ridge tiles, which are both underlined by bitumen felt. Lead flashing is present where the lower roof meets the wall of the main part of the dwelling.
- 1.3.3 The main roof (with an accessible roof void) is pre-trussed, with the roof c.1 m in height from the joists to the apex. This roof void is partially boarded for access and storage, with fibreglass foam insulation between joists.

Photograph 1.3.1: View of the building from the front (photograph taken facing north).



Photograph 1.3.2: View of the building from the front (photograph taken facing north-west).



Photograph 1.3.3: View of the rear of the building (photograph taken facing south).



Photograph 1.3.4: View inside the roof void of the building (photograph taken facing west).



- 1.3.4 The main roof of the building is finished below the eaves of the front (south) and rear (north) elevations with uPVC soffit boxes. The rainwater goods and the window and door frames are also predominantly uPVC.
- 1.3.5 There is a small single-storey porch with a mono-pitched felt roof attached to the north-east corner of the building.
- 1.3.6 The area around the building predominantly comprises similar dwellings and their gardens, with an amenity grassland field to the north of the building.

2 Relevant Wildlife Legislation and Planning Policy

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 The following section provides a guide to relevant wildlife legislation and planning policies. This report does not provide legal or planning advice, and reference should be made directly to the relevant Acts and policies for precise wording.

2.2 Legislation - Bats

- 2.2.1 All bats and their roosts are principally protected in England and Wales via the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), which are commonly referred to as 'the Habitats Regulations', as well as the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended).
- 2.2.2 This legislation collectively makes it an offence to:
- Deliberately capture, injure, or kill a bat.
 - Deliberately disturb any bat; in particular, any disturbance which is likely to (i) impair a bats' ability to survive, breed, reproduce or to rear or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or (ii) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.
 - To be in possession or control of any live or dead bat or any part of, or anything derived from a bat.
 - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.
 - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place that a bat uses for shelter or protection.
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.
- 2.2.3 The term 'roost' is not used in the above legislation, however, a site that a bat uses for breeding, resting, shelter or protection is called a roost in ecological terms. Bats tend to re-use the same roost sites and sometimes over many years but may not always be in residence. Current legal opinion is that a roost is protected irrespective of whether the bats are present.
- 2.2.4 Note that Damaging or Destroying a place used by a bat for breeding or resting anywhere in the UK is an absolute offence carrying strict liability under the Habitats Regulations. This means that no element of intent, recklessness, or deliberate action needs to be evidenced to establish guilt; the prosecution only needs to demonstrate that the accused performed the prohibited act.
- 2.2.5 Where an activity will result in any Destruction, Damage, or Obstruction of any bat roost, whether occupied or not, or it risks harming or significantly disturbing bats, then a protected species mitigation licence is required from the Statutory Nature Conservation Body, Natural England, to derogate the law to facilitate this activity.
- 2.2.6 A protected species mitigation licence for bats is also sometimes referred to as a 'development licence', or a European Protected Species (EPS) Mitigation Licence (EPSML) because the original legislation which provides the framework for licensing in respect of bats was transposed from European Union (EU) directives.

- 2.2.7 In determining whether to grant a licence for an activity affecting a legally protected species Natural England must apply the requirements of Regulation 53 of the Habitats Regulations, and, in particular, the following three tests set out in sub-paragraphs (2)(e), (9)(a) and (9)(b):
1. Regulation 53(2)(e) states that: a licence can [only] be granted for the purposes of *“preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”*.
 2. Regulation 53(9)(a) states that the appropriate authority (i.e., Natural England) shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied *“that there is no satisfactory alternative”* to the proposed actions; and,
 3. Regulation 53(9)(b) states that the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied *“that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range”*.
- 2.2.8 These three tests are often referred to as the ‘purpose test’, the ‘NSA test’ and the ‘FCS test’ respectively.
- 2.2.9 Additional legal protection for bats in England is provided via the Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) Regulations, 2015, and the Environment Act, 2021.
- 2.2.10 The Environment Act (2021) has also amended parts of the WCA, providing a potential pathway for the derogation of certain disturbance offences for projects with negligible or low bat presence. This may allow for certain low-level or incidental disturbances without a licence, in specific conditions and subject to appropriate measures managed by a suitably qualified professional ecologist (potentially including notifying Natural England in advance of works).

2.3 Legislation - Birds

- 2.3.1 All species of bird are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This protection was extended by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act, 2000. This legislation makes it an offence to:
- Kill, injure, or take any wild bird.
 - Take, damage, or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built.
 - Take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.
- 2.3.2 In addition to the above, certain species of bird (e.g., the barn owl *Tyto alba*) are listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and receive protection under Sections 1(4) and 1(5) of this Act. This protection was extended by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act, 2000. This legislation confers special penalties where the above offences are committed for any such bird, and it also makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:
- Disturb any such bird, while building its nest or it is in or near a nest containing dependant young; and / or,
 - Disturb the dependant young of such a bird.

2.4 Relevant Planning Policy

- 2.4.1 In 2005, ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their impact within the Planning System stated that *“the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result*

in harm to the species or its habitat". It also stated that it is "essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision".

- 2.4.2 In 2006, Section 40 (S40) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 placed a statutory duty on every public authority to have due regard to conserving biodiversity. Furthermore, Section 41 (S41) of this Act required the Secretary of State to publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitats that are of 'Principal Importance' for the purpose of conserving biodiversity, and the Secretary of State must then take steps, as appear reasonably practicable, to further the conservation of the living organisms and habitats in any list published under this Section. The list of Species of Principal Importance currently includes 943 species, including seven bat species and 49 bird species, and the list of Habitats of Principal Importance currently includes 56 habitat types.
- 2.4.3 In 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced to help deliver sustainable development in the UK, and environmental objectives comprise one of three key elements within this policy framework. The NPPF includes a range of statements and policies intended to contribute to conserving and enhancing our natural and local environment (primarily chapter 15), including the protection and enhancement of biodiversity by, for example, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for it, and by promoting the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species. The NPPF has been updated several times since 2012.
- 2.4.4 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) adds further context to the NPPF. In relation to the natural environment, amongst other things, it provides guidance on how protected and priority species and biodiversity should be considered in preparing a planning application. The NPPG states that:
- information on biodiversity and geodiversity impacts and opportunities needs to inform all stages of development (including site selection and design, pre-application consultation and the application itself);
 - an ecological survey will be necessary in advance of a planning application if the type and location of development could have a significant impact on biodiversity and existing information is lacking or inadequate; and
 - where an Environmental Impact Assessment is not needed it might still be appropriate to undertake an ecological survey, for example, where protected species may be present.
- 2.4.5 The NPPG also states, however, that LPAs should only require ecological surveys where clearly justified, and that assessments should be proportionate to the nature and scale of the development proposed and the likely impact on biodiversity.
- 2.4.6 On behalf of the UK Government and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Natural England provides standing advice for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) on where protected species are likely to be present, when to survey for them, and how to assess a planning application when there are protected species on or near a proposed development site. This standing advice, which is also useful for developers, can be viewed [here](#).
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- 2.4.7 In 2019 the UK Government announced that, via Defra and an Environment Bill, it would mandate almost all development in England to deliver net gains for biodiversity using a standard metric - Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

2.4.8 BNG is intended to ensure that all development leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, and as such it is hoped that the current loss of biodiversity through development will be halted, and ecological networks can be restored. The fundamental principle of BNG is that where a development has an impact on biodiversity, planning consent should only be given if the project increases levels of biodiversity present on a site by providing appropriate natural habitat and ecological features.

2.4.9 More information on BNG is available [here](#). It has been mandatory since 12 February 2024 and the only exceptions are in scenarios detailed [here](#). The main exemptions from BNG currently comprise the following:

- If a planning application for a development was made before day one of mandatory BNG on 12 February 2024. Transitional arrangements may also apply for variations to existing planning permissions.
- A development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than:
 - 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat
 - 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows
- Applications made by Householders as defined within article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (e.g., home extensions, conservatories, loft conversions).
- Self-build and custom build applications where the development:
 - consists of no more than 9 dwellings
 - is on a site that has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares
 - consists exclusively of dwellings that are self-build or custom housebuilding as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015
- Developments granted planning permission by a Development Order (including Permitted Development rights)
- Urgent Crown Developments, HS2, and developments undertaken mainly for the purpose of fulfilling BNG conditions for another development.

3 Methods

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 The protected species survey was undertaken on 28 November 2024 by a suitably qualified and experienced professional ecologist – see Section 3.5.

3.2 Bat Roost Inspection and Assessment

- 3.2.1 The bat survey was undertaken in accordance with [Collins, J \(ed.\) \(2023\) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines \(4th edition\)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.](#)
- 3.2.2 The bat roost inspection comprised a thorough search of the building for evidence of roosting bats, as well as accessible external building surfaces and potential roost features – PRF. Evidence of bat roosts typically comprises bat droppings, the remains of their prey (such as moth wings), characteristic staining from their urine or fur, marking from bat movement, a distinctive smell, and / or the presence of live or dead bats.
- 3.2.3 The surveyor also appraised the suitability of the building for roosting and hibernating bats based on the presence or absence of PRF. For buildings, PRF often include, but are not limited to, apertures beneath and between roof tiles, ridge tiles, and lead flashing; cavities in masonry and those associated with roof timbers; accessible soffit boxes and roof voids; gaps behind cladding, bargeboards, and fascia's; and apertures around window and door frames including those associated with lintels.
- 3.2.4 For a bat roost suitability assessment of a building, Collins (ed.) 2023 requires a category from Table 3.2.1 to be assigned. This categorisation applies irrespective of whether a roost is identified.

Table 3.2.1: Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of buildings for roosting bats based on the presence of habitat features, to be applied using professional judgement. Table adapted from Collins (ed.) 2023 (Table 4.1, p.44).

Suitability	Description
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year (i.e., a complete absence of crevices / suitable shelter at all ground / underground levels).
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 building 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 building 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).

Suitability	Description
High	A building with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions**, and surrounding habitat. These buildings have the potential to support high conservation status roosts e.g., maternity, or classic cool / stable hibernation site.

* Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).

** For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels, or levels of disturbance.

3.3 Nesting Birds

- 3.3.1 During the above survey any evidence of nesting bird activity within the building was also recorded, for example, any active or old nests, any accumulations of droppings, or any regurgitated pellets or prey items.
- 3.3.2 The building was also assessed for accessibility and suitability for birds to nest within during the annual bird nesting season, which is typically March to August.

3.4 Desk Study

- 3.4.1 Using an eight-figure OSGR of SP 4133 9409, a search of the Natural England [Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside \(MAGIC\) web portal](#) was undertaken for:
- Any statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance within a 2 km radius of the building e.g., Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR), or Local Nature Reserves (LNR); and,
 - Any mitigation licences issued for bats within 2 km of the building since 2008.
- 3.4.2 Aerial images (Google Earth) and OS maps were also reviewed to assess the value of the habitats surrounding the building for bats and nesting birds.

3.5 Personnel

- 3.5.1 The protected species survey was undertaken by [Matt Cook BSc \(Hons\) MSc MCIEEM](#), who also authored this report. Matt has been licensed by Natural England to undertake professional bat surveys since 2011, and to an advanced level since 2013.
- 3.5.2 Matt has been the Named Ecologist or Registered Consultant on various bat mitigation licences, including Bat Mitigation Class Licences and Bats in Churches Class Licences, covering a range of bat species and roost types since 2013.
- 3.5.3 Matt has been undertaking professional surveys for nesting birds since 2011. Matt has held a barn owl survey licence from Natural England since 2010.
- 3.5.1 Natural England survey licence reference numbers can be provided upon request.
- 3.5.2 Matt is a Full Member of the [Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management \(CIEEM\)](#) and is therefore bound by its professional [Code of Conduct](#).

3.6 Equipment

- 3.6.1 Equipment used on the survey comprised a 450 lumen Lenser P7 LED hand-torch, a Clulite Clu-Briter Sport 1000 lumen cree torch, close-focusing German Precision Optics binoculars, a

telescopic ladder, and an Apple iPad and Panasonic Lumix DC-FZ82 digital camera for taking notes and / or photographs.

4 Findings

4.1 Bat Roost Inspection and Assessment

- 4.1.1 No evidence of bats was identified within the building or on any of its external surfaces.
- 4.1.2 In keeping with many buildings there are some PRF present within the fabric of this building; however, the number, size, and suitability of these PRF is limited and their usage by bats is unlikely.
- 4.1.3 The PRF present are as follows; some example photographs are provided in Appendix 1:
- Some small apertures beneath or between some interlocking tiles – see Appendix 1, Photograph A1.1.
 - Narrow apertures at the ends of the soffit box below the eaves on the rear elevation – see Appendix 1, Photographs A1.2 and A1.3.
 - Some small gaps associated with the verge mortar on both main gables and the west porch elevation, usually between mortar and a roof tile but also some associated with the fibre cement lining – see Appendix 1, Photographs A1.4 and A1.5.
 - A missing brick central to the east gable – see Appendix 1, Photograph A1.6.
 - A small aperture at the apex of the east gable wall (below the fibre cement lining) – see Appendix 1, Photograph A1.7.
- 4.1.4 The above PRF could theoretically provide sufficient shelter for an individual small bat to make use of opportunistically, however, this is reasonably unlikely.
- 4.1.5 There were no other PRF apparent within the building; for example, there were none associated with the roof ridge, the lead flashing, window or door frames, or most of the brickwork.
- 4.1.6 The building does not support any suitably warm, sheltered, and sizeable PRF that could be used by a maternity bat roost of highest conservation significance.
- 4.1.7 Overall, in accordance with Collins (ed.) 2023 – see Table 3.2.1 above - the building is classified as having ‘negligible suitability’ for roosting bats i.e. there are *“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”*.

4.2 Nesting Birds

- 4.2.1 There was no evidence of nesting birds within the building on the survey.
- 4.2.2 In its current condition the building is unlikely to support nesting birds because there are no building features of sufficient size for them, nor any accessible internal spaces.

4.3 Desk Study

- 4.3.1 There are no statutorily designated sites of nature conservation importance within 2 km of the building.
- 4.3.2 There are two sites within 2 km of the building where a bat mitigation licence has been issued by Natural England to allow the damage or destruction of a bat roost (subject to mitigation and compensation) as follows:

- 2016-25946-EPS-MIT covers the period December 2016 through October 2026 and allows the damage and destruction of breeding sites for common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* at a location c.1.34 km to the north-west of the building.
- EPSM2011-3892 covered the period January 2012 through August 2014 and allowed the damage and destruction of breeding sites for common pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat, and Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri* at a location c.1.45 km to the north-west of the building.

4.3.3 The area around the building supports the following habitats that are likely to be important for roosting, foraging, and commuting local bat populations:

- Other buildings, principally dwellings.
- Established and interconnected gardens.
- Scattered trees, tree lines, and hedges.
- Public green spaces.

4.3.4 Many of the above habitat types will also be important for nesting, foraging, and commuting birds.

5 Evaluation

- 5.1.1 The protected species survey was undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced professional ecologist.
- 5.1.2 There were no constraints to the intended survey; all relevant areas could be accessed to inform this appraisal.
- 5.1.3 The bat survey was undertaken in accordance with Collins, J (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London. This document is widely considered best practice guidance regarding professional bat surveys, and as such it should be referenced by all professional ecologists, developers, planners, and the policy-makers responsible for reviewing and assessing the implications of professional bat surveys.
- 5.1.4 Overall, every effort has been made during this study to provide a comprehensive ecological assessment pertaining to the relevant protected species within the scope of the commissioned works. It is considered that the survey findings provide a robust platform for the recommendations contained within this report.
- 5.1.5 Notwithstanding the above it remains important to note that no investigation can completely characterise or predict the natural environment because wild animals are inherently unpredictable, all habitats and sites are subject to change, and species may colonise or vacate areas for a variety of reasons after surveys have taken place. The results, conclusions, and recommendations within *any* ecological report therefore become less reliable over time. This report is therefore considered valid for planning purposes for a maximum of two years.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Bats

- 6.1.1 No evidence of bats was identified within the building or on any of its external surfaces.
- 6.1.2 In keeping with many buildings there are some PRF present within the fabric of this building; however, the number and suitability of these PRF is limited and their usage by bats is unlikely
- 6.1.3 In accordance with Collins (ed.) 2023 – see Table 3.2.1 above - the building is classified as having 'negligible suitability' for roosting bats i.e. there are *"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"*.
- 6.1.4 Based on the above findings no further bat surveys or bat mitigation measures are recommended to facilitate the proposals for the building.

6.2 Nesting Birds

- 6.2.1 There was no evidence of nesting birds within the building on the survey. In its current condition the building is unlikely to support nesting birds.
- 6.2.2 Based on the above findings no mitigation measures for nesting birds are required to facilitate the proposals for the building.

6.3 Desk Study

- 6.3.1 There are no statutorily designated sites of nature conservation importance within 2 km of the building.
- 6.3.2 There are two sites within 2 km of the building where a bat mitigation licence has been issued by Natural England to allow the damage or destruction of a bat roost (subject to mitigation and compensation).
- 6.3.3 Given the negligible suitability of the surveyed building for roosting bats, any impact of the previously licensed roost loss on local bat populations has no bearing on the proposals for this building.
- 6.3.4 On the above basis the desk study identified no constraints to the proposals for the building.

6.4 Biodiversity Enhancements

- 6.4.1 To provide some habitat for wildlife upon completion of this project a bat box or a bird box (made from durable material) should be installed on a tree or building on the site.
- 6.4.2 The box should be installed away from regular disturbance (including from pets) and as close as possible to established shrubs and / or trees to provide commuting and foraging connectivity to the wider area. Any bat box should be installed at a height of at least 3 metres and in an area of darkness.

6.5 General

- 6.5.1 As a matter of *standard* good practice, all persons working onsite on this project should remain vigilant for the potential presence of roosting or hibernating bats and nesting birds, no matter how unlikely this may seem.

- 6.5.2 Irrespective of the findings of this survey, if any bat or bat roost, or an active bird nest, is discovered during work on this building then work in this area should cease immediately to reduce the risk of committing a legal offence. A suitably experienced ecologist should then be consulted.
- 6.5.3 Given the inherent time constraints to ecological surveys and advice – see Section 5 - this report is considered valid for a maximum of two years for planning purposes.

Appendix 1: Photographs

Photograph A1.1: Examples of the small apertures beneath and between some interlocking concrete roof tiles.



Photographs A1.2 (L) and A1.3 (R): The locations of the two narrow apertures at the ends of the soffit box below the eaves on the rear elevation are shown by the red arrows below left, and a close-up of one of these features is shown below right. There are similar apertures on the front elevation, however, those appear too narrow for bats to access.



Photograph A1.4: Examples of missing mortar along some of the main gable verges.



Photograph A1.5: The small aperture on the west verge of the porch.



Photograph A1.6: The missing piece of brickwork within the east gable.



Photograph A1.7: The small aperture at the apex of the east gable wall (below the fibre cement lining).



END OF REPORT



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