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The Old Estate Yard, Shottle – Nocturnal Survey Report

Dear Damion

The following provides details of nocturnal surveys undertaken at a site known as The Old Estate Yard (hereafter referred to as 'the site').

Site Context / Methods

The site lies within a residential setting in the village of Shottle, to the northwest of Belper, Derbyshire (central grid ref SK 31193 49540). The site was subject to a suite of surveys in 2021 by Evolution Ecology Ltd. This included a preliminary roost assessment (PRA) and three nocturnal emergence surveys.

During the previous survey effort, three surveyors were positioned around building B1 on three separate occasions. No bat emergences from B1 were previously recorded during these surveys. Due to the time since the initial Evolution Ecology Ltd report, an update suite of surveys was considered necessary. Two nocturnal surveys were undertaken based on the previous categorisation of moderate potential.

Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken to collate existing information for the site and its surroundings in relation to bat species. This included a review of:

- Granted EPS licences for bats shown on the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website[1];

[1] https://magic.defra.gov.uk

- Statutory designated sites that include bat species as part of their designation from the MAGIC website; and
- Publicly available aerial imagery showing connectivity across the site and to the wider landscape.

Buildings and Structures

Preliminary Roost Assessment

An external and internal building assessment was carried out on the buildings on 18th August 2025, by a licenced ecologist (Level 2 bat survey licence CL18: 2024-12510-CLS-BAT). The assessment was completed considering the guidance provided in chapters 4 and 5 of the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines, 2023[2].

External Building Assessment

The exterior of the building was visually assessed for potential access points and evidence of bat activity. Features such as small gaps under barge/soffit/fascia boards, raised or missing ridge tiles and gaps at gable ends, which have potential to be used as access points, were sought. In addition, structural features were noted that could provide suitable hibernation potential. Evidence that bats actively used potential access points includes staining within gaps and bat droppings or urine staining under gaps, a note being made wherever these were present. Where they could be safely accessed crevices were inspected for the presence of bats or their signs using torches, mirrors and endoscopes.

Internal Assessment

The interior of the buildings, including all accessible roof voids, were also visually assessed with the aid of an endoscope, mirrors and torches to identify potential bat access points and roosting places and for evidence of current or past bat roosts. Definitive evidence of a bat roost was determined by the presence of:

- Dead or live bat(s); and/or
- Droppings.

Other less definitive signs were also sought as indicators of potential roosting bats, these included:

- Urine staining;
- Fur-oil staining;
- Feeding remains such as moth wing fragments;

[2] Collins, J. (ed.) 2023. *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition).* The Bat Conservation Trust.

- Audible calls;
- Bat-fly (Nycteribiid) pupal cases; or
- Odour.

The absence of any of the above evidence was not considered to be definitive evidence that no roosts were present as bats may leave no visible sign of their presence particularly where they occupy inaccessible or hidden spaces within a building.

Subsequently, the buildings (or where relevant, sections of) were categorised according to their suitability to support roosting bats and whether they provide classic or non-classic hibernation potential or not. These were classified according to the features present within the buildings (see Table 1).

Potential Bat Roosting Suitability

Following the internal and external assessments the building was assigned a category according to its roosting suitability which is based on Tables 4.1 and 7.1 of the BCT Guidelines, this potential suitability is used to indicate the likely requirements for any further surveys to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats.

Table 1: Building Bat Roost Habitat Classifications (Based on Tables 4.1 And 7.1 BCT Guidelines)

Roost Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats	Further Survey Requirements to Provide Confidence in the Likely Absence of Roosting Bats Within a Structure
None	No habitat features on site that are likely to be used by bats at any time of the year.	No further surveys or consideration of roosting bats is required.
Negligible	No obvious habitat features are present that are likely to be used by roosting bats, but features may be present where a bat could theoretically roost but it is considered very unlikely.	No further surveys are required, but some vigilance may be required if the feature is impacted.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. 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 or classic hibernation roost).	Up to one single dusk emergence survey undertaken between May and August. (requirement is based on professional judgment). Precautionary method statement if works are to be undertaken during the winter period (where non-classic hibernation potential exits).
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 the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Two separate dusk emergence surveys undertaken between May and September and at least one between May and August and spread at least 3 weeks apart. Precautionary method statement if works are to be undertaken during the winter period (where non classic hibernation potential exits).
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 size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support High conservation status roosts such as those used for maternity or hibernation (classic site).	Three separate dusk emergence surveys undertaken between May and September and at least two between May and August and spread at least 3 weeks apart. Where classic hibernation potential is present hibernation surveys should be undertaken during the winter period.

Roost Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats	Further Survey Requirements to Provide Confidence in the Likely Absence of Roosting Bats Within a Structure
A classic hibernation site is considered to provide stable climatic conditions including temperature humidity, and light level such as, but not exclusively limited to underground structures which are subject to low levels of disturbance or species specific habitual requirements such as where brown long-eared bats often use a the same roosts for maternity and hibernation purposes. A non-classic hibernation site is a location which does conform to the criteria above but could be used by individual hibernating bats. It usually not possible to identify non-classic hibernation sites through surveys work.		

Emergence Surveys

During the nocturnal surveys, three surveyors were positioned so that all aspects of building B1 with the potential to support bats could be observed, as shown in Figure 1. The emergence surveys commenced at least 15 minutes prior to sunset until at least 120 minutes following sunset. The number and species of bats observed emerging or entering the buildings was recorded.

Any notable activity patterns including commuting and/or foraging within the vicinity of the building was recorded.

Echo Meter Touch® (Wildlife Acoustics, Inc.) bat detectors were utilised in conjunction with the Echo Meter Touch® app. Where necessary to confirm species identification bat calls were analysed using the Kaleidoscope Viewer© (Wildlife Acoustics, Inc.) software package.

All surveyors were equipped with night vision aids (NVAs) to enhance visibility of the survey area throughout the survey. NVAs were set to record for the duration of the survey, where roosting bats were observed or uncertain behaviours observed, footage was extracted, analysed and saved. A still shot of the darkest point of the survey was also extracted and saved and are included in Appendix 1. NVAs used were Pixfra A6130.

All of the nocturnal surveys were conducted in appropriate conditions, i.e. ambient temperature exceeding 10˚C and little wind and no rain, details are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of Emergence Survey Dates and Weather Conditions

Survey Date	Buildings Covered	Start / Finish	Sunset	Conditions
19/08/25	B1	20:08 to 22:23	20:23	16°C, 100% cloud cover, 1 Wind, no rain.
11/09/25	B1	19:15 to 21:30	19:30	14°C, 80% cloud cover, 2 Wind, light rain for small period of survey.

Results

Desk Study

No statutory sites that are designated for bats were identified within the Zol (zone of influence). When conducting a search using MAGIC, no Protected Species Licenses were found within 2km of the site.
A known maternity colony for brown long-eared bats are present in the nearby village of Idridgehay.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Building B1 was a two-storey stone brick built former residential house with a pan clay tiled pitched roof. A number or potential access points were noted with missing or lifted tiles, gaps in stonework and missing windows. Two timber annexes were located on the north and eastern aspects with timber frames and metal corrugated roofs.

Internally, building B1 was dilapidated, with the upper ceiling partially fallen, meaning the roof void was partially lit during the day. The ceiling had timber trusses and a timber central beam. Suitable crevice features were present in these areas. No field signs of bats using the building was noted during the survey.

Due to the potential roosting features, it is still considered that B1 has moderate potential to support roosting bats.

Emergence Survey 19.08.25

The first survey started at 20:08 with the first bat recorded at 20:35 which was a foraging common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*. Species assemblage included common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and *Myotis* species with a total of 5 passes registered. Recorded bats were likely foraging/commuting in the surrounding areas.

Emergence Survey 11.09.25

The second survey started at 19:15 with the first bat recorded at 20:58 which was a foraging *Myotis* species. Species assemblage included common pipistrelle and *Myotis* species. Recorded bats were likely foraging/commuting in the surrounding areas.

During both the first and second surveys, no bats were observed emerging or entering the building.

Conclusion

All species of bats and their roosts are afforded protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), making it illegal to deliberately disturb bats or damage or destroy their roosts. Bats are also afforded full legal protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife

and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is illegal to recklessly or intentionally kill, injure or take a species of bat or recklessly or intentionally damage or obstruct access to or destroy any place of shelter or protection or disturb any bat whilst they are occupying such a place of shelter or protection. Some bat species are also Species of Principal Importance under the NERC Act.

During the emergence surveys by Alca Ecology, no roosts were recorded and therefore the proposed works can be carried out without any further mitigation. It is recommended that the works follow best practice methods due to the suitability of the building.

Yours sincerely

Bill Jeffreys



Ecologist / Director

Appendix 1: Darkest Part of the Survey

19.08.2025		
		
11.09.2025		
		

Appendix 2: Best Practice

Removal of all suitable roosting features, including; hanging tiles, barge boards and window frames / associated lead flashing, where no evidence of roosts has been recorded will be removed carefully by hand, as required, taking care that there is a risk bats may be present.

Should bats be discovered in these areas works in that area will halt and the ecologist will be contacted immediately.



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Key

- Surveyor Locations
- Building

client
Damion Wigley

project name
The Old Estate Yard, Shottle

title
Surveyor Location Plan

title
FIGURE 1

date
22/09/25

drawn by
BRJ

scale
1:150@ A3

rev
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