

Land at Rose Farm, Istead Rise 20251233

Bat Tree Roost Assessment – Final Update 15/09/2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought for the proposed development of land at Rose Farm, Downs Road, Istead Rise ('the Site'). Ecological Planning & Research (EPR) has been commissioned by Esquire Developments to assess the suitability of trees which have been identified for removal to accommodate the proposals to support roosting bats.
- 1.2 Relevant background information regarding the statutory protection afforded to bats and their roosts is provided in the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) report.
- 1.3 EPR have previously produced a technical note titled 'Land at Rose Farm, Istead Rise 20251233, Bat Tree Roost Assessment', dated 03/08/2026. This described the results of the first phase of survey work completed for trees likely to be affected by the currently proposed development, including a Ground Level Tree Assessment, the first of a series of three proposed Potential Roost Feature (PRF) Inspection Surveys, and the first of three Emergence Surveys. The results presented in the 03/08/2026 technical note were discussed at a meeting hosted by Gravesham Borough Council and attended by EPR, Esquire Developments, Gravesham Borough Council and Kent County Council Ecological Advice Service on 11/08/2026.
- 1.4 EPR subsequently produced an update technical note dated 02/09/2026, describing the results of the second and third Potential Roost Feature (PRF) Inspection Surveys (which concluded the PRF Inspection Survey element) and the results of the second Emergence Survey.
- 1.5 This technical note provides a final update, describing the results of the third Emergence Survey and the overall conclusion of the bat tree roost assessment exercise.

2. METHODS

Emergence Survey

- 2.1 Trees T24 and T25 have previously been assessed as PRF-M, with the canopy of T24 (tree to be retained) forming a functional part of PRFs in T25 (tree to be removed), due to the close proximity of the two trees. Therefore, trees T24 and T25 have been surveyed together as one potential bat roosting resource.
- 2.2 On account of the poor physiological condition of T24 and T25 arising from Ash Dieback *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* infection, they could not safely be investigated through aerial inspection and were instead made subject to a programme of Emergence Survey visits.

- 2.3 The first and second Emergence Surveys were conducted on 30/07/2026 and 21/08/2026 respectively, with no evidence of bat emergence recorded (as described in previously issued technical notes).
- 2.4 The third Emergence Survey was conducted at dusk on 14/09/2026. T24 and T25 were watched by suitably experienced bat surveyors, equipped with Batlogger M2 and Anabat Scout ultrasound bat detectors and Night Vision Aids (NVA) in the form of Nightfox Whisker IR cameras with supplementary IR lamps.
- 2.5 The locations of T24 and T25 are shown in **Figure 1**. Positions of surveyors and NVA units are indicated in **Figure 1**. Field of view and IR illumination captured by NVA units are shown in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.6 Emergence survey metadata is given in **Table 2.1** below

Table 2.1: Emergence survey metadata

Date	Start/Finish	Sunset	Temp (°C)	Cloud (%)	Wind (BFS)	Rain
14/09/26	19:00 – 21:00	19:15	22 – 18	20	2 – 4	No rain prior to or during survey.

- 2.7 After the survey had been completed, review of NVA footage was carried out manually using Windows Media Player. Footage was watched by an experienced reviewer of NVA footage at 1.5x speed and slowed down and re-watched where any movement was observed and at timeframes highlighted by the surveyors present during the survey.

3. RESULTS

Emergence Survey

- 3.1 Bat activity during the Emergence Survey completed on 14/09/26 was limited to intermittent Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* foraging around T24, T25, and nearby trees between 19:41 and 20:58 (from 21 minutes after sunset to 1 hour 43 minutes after sun set).
- 3.2 A Grey Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* was recorded entering the lower woodpecker hole in T25 at 19:16 (one minute after sun set). The Grey Squirrel was not recorded leaving the hole throughout the rest of the survey. An image showing the squirrel entering the hole is shown in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.3 No bat activity associated with roosting was recorded during the emergence survey or subsequent review of NVA footage.

4. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

T24 and T25

- 4.1 Three Emergence Surveys of T24 and T25 have been completed. This constitutes a full suite of surveys in line with applicable guidance. Across the course of the three Emergence Surveys, no evidence of roosting bats has been recorded.

- 4.2 For the purposes of the current application, roosting bats are considered likely absent from T25 – albeit with the caveat that it is not possible to achieve 100% confidence in a negative result for bat tree roost surveys.
- 4.3 T24 forms part of the potential bat roosting resource associated with T25 but is due to be retained.

Overall Conclusion

- 4.4 As described in the Technical Notes of 03/08/2026 and 02/09/2026, an initial Ground Level Tree Assessment and Potential Roost Feature (PRF) Inspection Survey identified a total of four trees which are likely to be affected by the currently proposed development as supporting PRFs capable of accommodating multiple bats ('PRF-M trees').
- 4.5 A total of three PRF Inspection Surveys was completed for T86 in line with applicable guidance: no bats or evidence of bats were recorded.
- 4.6 The limb containing the PRF in G16c was found to have been removed between the first and second PRF Inspection Survey: no bats or evidence of bats were recorded during the first inspection or upon subsequent examination of the grounded limb.
- 4.7 A total of three Emergence Survey visits has been completed for T24 and T25: no bats or evidence of bats were recorded.
- 4.8 For the purposes of the current assessment, roosting bats are considered likely absent from the PRF-M trees scheduled for removal to accommodate the proposed development.
- 4.9 Update assessment may be required subject to the passage of time before the commencement of site clearance. Without prejudice to the results of any update assessment, T25 and T86 should, on the basis of their current classification, be carefully section-felled under a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS), the details of which can be provided within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (or otherwise secured by condition) and will accord with the approach set out at 6.5.8ff of the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2025) – or any succeeding guidance.
- 4.10 An overall net gain in tree-roosting opportunities can be achieved through the provision of proprietary bat boxes on suitably located retained trees in due proportion to the respective numbers of PRF-M and PRF-I trees removed, with the details of such provision secured by condition.

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Document Dated: 15 September 2026

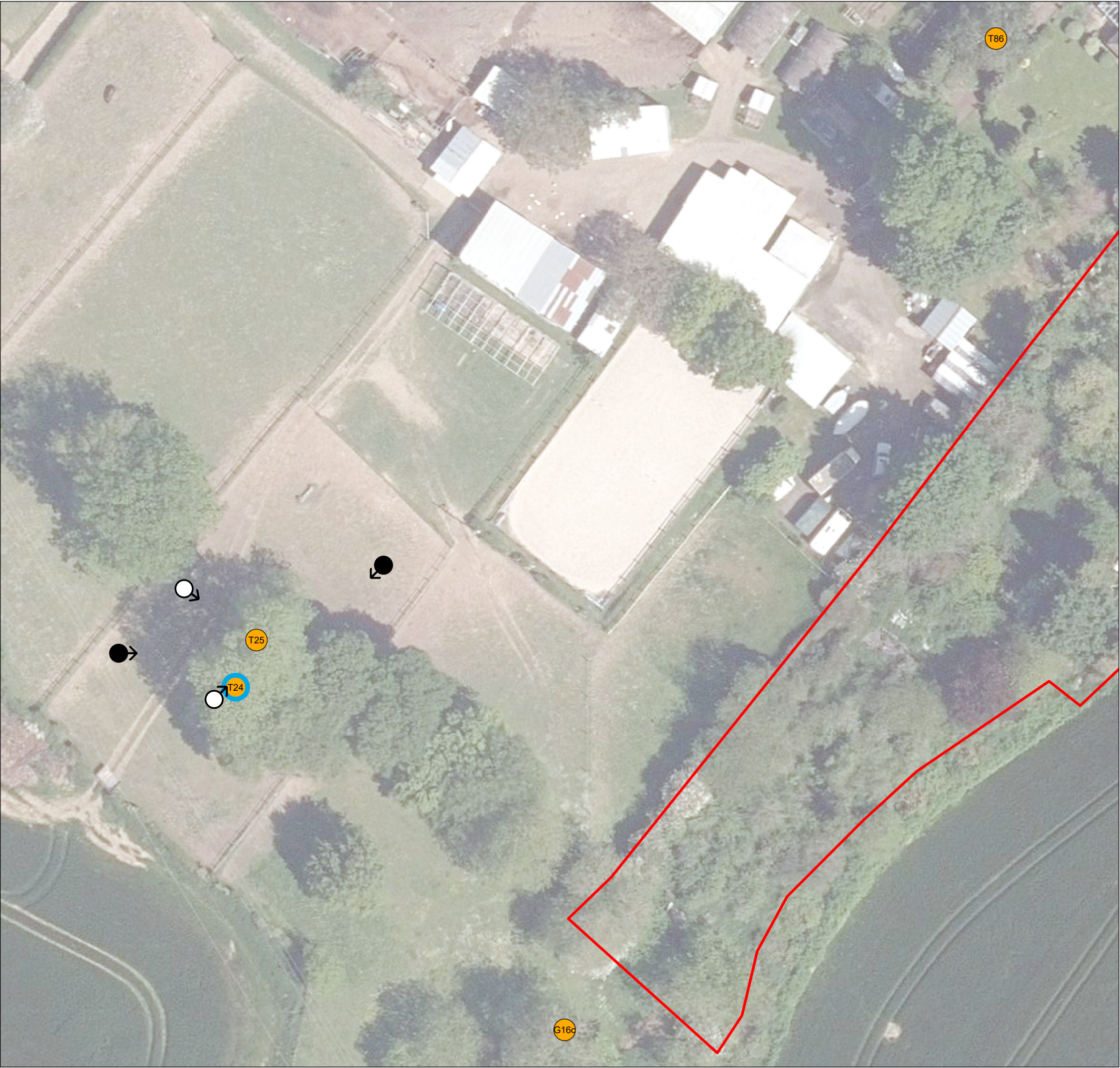


Figure 1 PRF-M Trees

- KEY
- Site boundary
 - Surveyor position
 - Unmanned NVA
 - Retained in AIA, but close to impacts
- Tree suitability:
- PRF-M

SCALE: 1:500 at A3

0 5 10 15 20 Metres



CLIENT: Esquire Developments Ltd

PROJECT: Istead Rise, Kent

DATE: 01 September 2026

Appendix 1

Field of view and IR illumination captured by NVA units at the darkest point of the emergence survey completed on 14/09/2026, plus image of Grey Squirrel entry at 19:16.

NVA 1 – T25, 2x woodpecker holes, with split below (8m west).

Survey Start



Survey End



NVA 2 – T25, 1x woodpecker hole and split from an old tear out (6m south).

Survey Start



Survey End



NVA 1 – T25, Grey Squirrel entering lower woodpecker hole at 19:16.

