



ECOLOGICAL EXPERTISE, EVOLVED

# **Land at Rose Farm, Downs Road, Istead Rise**

## **Bat Survey Report**

Prepared on behalf of

Esquire Developments

Final Report

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# Land at Rose Farm, Downs Road, Istead Rise

## Bat Survey Report

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# **Land at Rose Farm, Downs Road, Istead Rise**

## **Bat Survey Report**

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### **Contents**

1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
2. METHODS .....	4
3. RESULTS .....	8
4. ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION .....	16
5. REFERENCES .....	17

### **Figures**

<b>Figure 1</b>	Site Location
<b>Figure 2</b>	Night-time bat walkover route
<b>Figure 3</b>	Automated bat detector locations
<b>Figure 4</b>	Preliminary Roost Assessment Results
<b>Figure 5</b>	Emergence Survey Results
<b>Figures 6a-6c</b>	Night-time Bat Walkover Results

### **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1** Summary of Relevant Legislation

# Land at Rose Farm, Downs Road, Istead Rise

## Bat Survey Report

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### Executive Summary

Ecological Planning & Research Limited (EPR) conducted bat surveys in relation to the Proposed Development on Land at Rose Farm, Downs Road, Istead Rise.

A Preliminary Roost Assessment, Emergence Surveys, Night-time Bat Walkovers (NBWs), and automated static detector surveys were conducted in 2025.

The on-site habitats are suitable for roosting, foraging, and commuting bats.

Common Pipistrelle were recorded emerging from Building 15 (Evelyn Cottage), as well as from Buildings 8a, 14, and 9. Other bats were recorded flying into the Site from off-site locations close to sunset, indicating that additional bat roosts are likely present within the wider landscape.

Foraging by Common Pipistrelle was observed within the farmyard during the emergence and NBW surveys, and in parts of the garden of Building 15.

At least eight bat species were recorded during the automated static detector surveys, with five recorded close to sunset, again indicating the likely presence of bat roosts nearby. However, static recordings of most bat species were infrequent and irregular, suggesting the Site is of low ecological importance for these species.

Overall, the Site is likely to be of ecological importance at the **Local Level** for bats.

# Land at Rose Farm, Downs Road, Istead Rise

## Bat Survey Report

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Ecological Planning & Research Limited (EPR) was commissioned by Esquire Developments to conduct bat surveys in relation to the Proposed Development on Land at Rose Farm, Downs Road, Istead Rise (hereafter referred to as the 'Site').
- 1.2 **Figure 1** shows the location of the Site.

#### Relevant Legislation

- 1.3 **Appendix 1** provides further information about the below legislation:

- The Environment Act 2021
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (as amended)
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000

#### Likely Biophysical Changes

- 1.4 Biophysical change means an "*alteration in biological and/or physical conditions of the environment (e.g., changes in the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide, altered soil pH or change in the frequency of a plant species in an area)*" (CIEEM, 2018).
- 1.5 The predicted biophysical changes that could be generated from the Proposed Development and be of relevance to bats are provided in **Table 1.1**, along with their likely Zone of Influence (ZoI).

**Table 1.1 Activities and Biophysical Changes associated with the Proposed Development which may give rise to ecological impacts on bats, and the associated Zone(s) of Influence.**

Activity	Potential Impact	Zone of Influence
<i>Site Clearance and Construction Phase</i>		
Vegetation clearance, ground, excavation and structural works, demolition, and alteration operations	<p>Loss and fragmentation of bat habitats used for commuting/foraging.</p> <p>Damage to bat roosting features.</p> <p>Direct harm or death to bats.</p> <p>Noise / visual / vibration/ lighting disturbance bats.</p>	Site and up to the Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of associated bat species present.
Access and travel on / off site	<p>Noise / visual / lighting disturbance of bats.</p> <p>Disturbance of bat flight lines if hedgerow/treeline must be removed for access.</p>	Site and up to the Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of associated bat species present.
Assembly and storage areas for machines and materials; construction compounds	<p>Loss and fragmentation of habitats/flight lines for bats.</p> <p>Noise / visual / lighting disturbance to bats.</p>	Site and up to the Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of associated bat species present.
Lighting of work area	Disturbance	Site and up to the Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of associated bat species present.
Restoration and creation of habitats through the implementation of a soft landscaping scheme	Beneficial impact of restored/new foraging, commuting and/or roosting bats.	Site and up to the Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of associated bat species present.
<i>Operational phase</i>		
Access and travel on / off site	Noise / visual / lighting disturbance of bats.	Site and up to the Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of associated bat species present.
Occupation of new houses: urban effects	Noise / visual / lighting disturbance to bats.	Site and up to the Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of associated bat species present.
Implementation of habitat management plans	Enhancement of existing habitats and the creation of new habitats.	Site and up to the Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of associated bat species present.

## **Zone of Influence**

- 1.6 The Zone of Influence (ZoI) of a development is defined by the EclA Guidelines as “...the area over which ecological features may be affected by biophysical changes as a result of the proposed project and associated activities” (CIEEM, 2018).
- 1.7 For the Proposed Development, the ZoI associated with bats is, for the purposes of this report, considered to be the Site and up to 4km from it.
- 1.8 This distance reflects that some changes that could affect bats, such as light illumination and loss of foraging habitat, can have effects beyond the construction footprint because bats can travel several kilometres to reach foraging sites. For the bat species that are most likely to occur in the landscape surrounding the Site (e.g. Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*) this could potentially be up to 4km, and this is based on Bat Conservation Trust Core Sustenance Zones (CSZs) (BCT, 2016). For other bat species, the CSZ would be less.

## **Survey Objectives**

- 1.9 The objectives for each survey are laid out in **Table 1.2**.

**Table 1.2 Survey objectives**

<b>Survey Type</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
Preliminary Roost Assessment	Classify the buildings within the Site for their suitability to support roosting bats and scope the need for further survey work.
Emergence survey	Identify whether bats are roosting within the internal or external features of the buildings and trees within the Site. Determine whether a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence (or other licence type) is likely to be required to facilitate development.
Night-time Bat Walkover	Identify how bats are using the Site and identify which species are present.
Automated Static Detector Survey	Identify which species are using the Site to forage/commute.

## 2. METHODS

### Desktop Study

2.1 A biological records data search was commissioned from Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre (KMBRC) on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

### Field Survey

2.2 All survey work was informed by guidance in the Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Surveys - Good Practice Guidelines (BCT, 2023).

### Habitat Assessment

2.3 The habitats were assessed for their suitability for bats by Senior Ecologist Sean Manely BSc (Hons) MCIEEM, during the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, and by Principal Ecological Consultant Philip Brown BSc (Hons) MSc (R) MCIEEM during the Day Time Bat Walkover on 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2025. Philip is an experienced and licenced bat ecologist (licence ref: 2015-18270-CLS-CLS).

### Preliminary Roost Assessments

2.4 An external assessment of the structures within the Site boundary was carried out on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025 by Philip Brown to inform requirements for further survey. Where the internal structure of buildings could be readily accessed, this was also assessed during this visit. Further internal assessment by Philip were also conducted on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

2.5 A high-powered torch, camera and binoculars, information on age, type, construction materials, setting, potential roost sites, adjacent habitat, etc. was used to assess the suitability of buildings for roosting bats.

### Emergence and Fixed-Point Landscape Surveys

2.6 Dusk emergence surveys began 15 minutes before sunset and continued for up to 90 minutes after sunset. **Table 2.1** provides further information.

2.7 During the emergence survey, surveyors were equipped with either a Anabat Scout or Bat Logger with in-built recording capabilities. Where appropriate, recordings were analysed using Kaleidoscope analysis software. Each surveyor was accompanied by a night vision camera in accordance with the bat guidelines. Any unsupervised infrared cameras and potential emergences were reviewed post survey to identify if any bats emergence during the survey visit.

2.8 The following information was recorded for any bats seen or heard; species, time, behaviour (whether it was feeding, commuting, social calling, or swarming) and if seen, direction of flight. If a bat was seen emerging or re-entering a roost in a tree or structure this was noted and described. Behaviour was determined by observed flight patterns and call characteristics.

2.9 An additional bespoke survey was conducted on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025, which surveyed the complex of farmyard buildings. This used eight infrared cameras, covering certain features and three surveyors patrolling the area recording the bat activity present.

2.10 Based on some of the observations during the emergence surveys, two fixed-point landscape survey visits were conducted in and around Building 15 (Evelyn Cottage) to better understand the ratio of bats that were coming onto the Site from areas outside of it, and those that were emerging from structures within the Site given the observations of Common Pipistrelles *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* using the garden of Building 15 (Evelyn Cottage) to forage at a time relatively close to sunset. Given the purposes of these fixed-point landscape surveys was to understand how many bats were coming from off-site areas onto the Site, they were shorter than standard surveys and focussed on the period just before and after sunset.

**Table 2.1 Timings of surveys**

EPR Building ID	Date	Sunset	Start	End	Start Temp (°C)	End Temp (°C)	Wind (Beaufort Scale)	Rain
15 (Evelyn Cottage)	03/07/25	21:17	21:02	23:02	19	15	1	None
2 (The outhouse)	03/07/25	21:18	21:02	22:47	21	15	1	None
1 (The bungalow)	09/07/25	21:14	20:59	22:44	21	17	1	None
2	23/07/25	21:00	20:45	22:30	22	17	1-2	None
15	23/07/25	21:00	20:45	22:30	20	18	3-1	None
Bespoke survey of farmyard	28/07/25	20:49	20:34	22:19	21	19	0-2	None
Fixed-point Landscape Survey	12/08/25	20:26	20:13	21:00	22	19	1	None
1	12/08/25	20:28	20:13	21:58	25	20	1	None
Fixed-point Landscape Survey	19/08/25	20:12	19:45	20:40	20	18	2-1	None

#### *Night-time Bat Walkover*

2.11 Three NBWs were completed in 2025 to identify commuting routes, foraging areas and to help locate any on-site or nearby roosts. One transect route was devised to cover most of the Site (see **Figure 2**).

2.12 The transect route was marked on a survey map and it was surveyed for a minimum of two hours after sunset (see **Table 2.2**). The direction of travel for the transect route was alternated between survey visits.

2.13 Surveyors used a handheld bat detector (Anabat Scout or BatLogger M3). Recordings were analysed using Kaleidoscope where necessary. The following information was recorded for any bats seen or heard; species, time, behaviour (whether it was feeding, commuting, social calling, or swarming) and if seen, direction of flight, and if it emerged or re-entered a tree or other roost. Behaviour was determined by observed flight patterns and call characteristics heard on the bat detector.

2.14 During each survey visit, temperature and weather information was recorded to ensure that conditions were suitable for bat activity, to identify trends, and help explain any anomalies in

data or bat behaviour. Weather conditions and sunset/sunrise times for each visit undertaken are given in **Table 2.2**.

**Table 2.2 Timing and weather conditions**

Date	Start	End	Sunset	Start Temp (°c)	End Temp (°c)	Wind (Beaufort Scale)	Rain	Cloud Cover (%)
21/05/25	20:52	22:52	20:52	13	6	1	None	0
24/06/25	21:21	23:21	21:21	18	19	3-1	None	0
04/09/25	19:37	21:37	19:37	16	15	1	None	10-0

*Automated Static Detector Surveys*

2.15 Three automated static full spectrum bat detectors were deployed over five consecutive nights to provide additional information to support the ecological assessment of how bats used the Site. **Table 2.3** provides information about dates and weather conditions.

2.16 The automated static detectors were placed in areas that supported habitats considered suitable for bats (**Figure 3** shows the location of the automated static detectors).

**Table 2.3 Time and weather conditions during Automated Static Detector survey**

Date	Temperature range (°C)	Wind (mph)	Rain
16/05/25 – 21/05/25	20-6	<19	None
18/06/25 – 22/06/25 (redeployed 26/06/25 – 30/06/25)	32 – 14	<19	None
09/07/25 – 13/07/25	27 – 12	<19	None
19/08/25 – 23/08/25	24 – 12	<19	None
16/09/25 – 21/09/25	27 – 11	19 on 16/09, 21 on 20/09, 26 on 21/09	None
13/10/25 – 17/10/25	22 – 10	<19	None

2.17 The recordings were analysed using Kaleidoscope, with the species and any social calling activity noted where possible.

*Ecological Evaluation Methodology*

2.18 Using a combination of the results and professional judgement, the importance of the bat assemblage is valued according to the CIEEM (2018) guidelines.

2.19 The importance value is based on a recommended geographical context. For the purposes of this assessment, the following geographical contexts are used; Zol, Local, County, Regional, National, United Kingdom, European or International level.

2.20 Wray *et al.*, (2010), the criteria used in the selection of Local Wildlife Sites in Kent (Kent Wildlife Trust, 2024) and professional judgement has been used to inform the ecological evaluation with respect to bats

### *Considerations*

2.21 Whilst it is not possible to differentiate, in complete confidence, the calls of Brown *Plecotus auratus* and Grey long-eared bats *Plecotus austriacus*, all calls are very likely to be Brown Long-eared bat because there are no confirmed records of the rarer Grey Long-eared bat within 5km of the Site.

2.22 One of the automated static detectors failed during the June deployment and was redeployed later in June. Therefore, the June results for the eastern static location are not from the same five nights as the other two locations.

2.23 Bats are often nomadic and invariably move between roosts. Therefore, any bat survey visit will only provide a snapshot of how bats are using features at that point in time.

2.24 When analysing data from the static detectors, it is not always possible to assign a call to species level due to poor-quality call data, or large amount of noise distorting the call. In these cases, the call is designated to genus level (e.g. *Myotis* species) or to a group, such as 'Low-frequency bats' (which includes Eurasian Serotine *Cnephæus serotinus*, Noctule, and Leisler's *Nyctalus leisleri*).

2.25 Bat species that typically have quieter echolocation calls, particularly Long-eared *Plecotus* species, may be less likely to be detected compared to other bat species and therefore under recorded across the potential Zone of Influence.

2.26 It was not possible to complete internal inspections of Building 1 (the bungalow), and the inspection of the other residential dwelling had some restrictions due to health and safety considerations.

### 3. RESULTS

#### Desktop Study

3.1 Records of bats within 5km of the Site included the following species.

- Common Pipistrelle
- Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Nathusius Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*
- Noctule
- Leisler's *Nyctalus leisleri*
- Brown Long-eared Bat *Plecotus auritus* (roost adjacent to the Site to the north/ roughly 100m from the Site at TQ 632 699 in 2002)
- Whiskered Bat *Myotis mystacinus*
- Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*
- Natterer's Bat *Myotis nattereri*
- Eurasian Serotine

3.2 The above records included information about hibernation and maternity roosts, however some records were only associated with 'historic records' dating back more than 10 years.

#### Field Surveys

##### *Habitat Assessment*

3.3 Habitats within the site including hedgerows, scrub and mature trees provide some suitable foraging habitat for bats, and manure from livestock appeared to attract insects upon which pipistrelles fed.

3.4 In total there are 27 structures within the Site. The residential dwellings were considered to have moderate suitability to support roosting bats. Three buildings within the farmyard were considered to have low suitability to support roosting bats, and the remaining structures were of negligible bat roosting suitability.

3.5 The Site supports mature trees, some of which provide potential roosting features (PRFs) for bats.

##### *Preliminary Roost Assessments*

3.6 **Table 3.2** summarises the bat roosting suitability of each on-site building/structure, and **Figure 4** shows their location.

**Table 3.2 Initial Preliminary Roost Assessment results**

EPR Building ID	Description	Suitability for bat roost	Suggested Further Surveys
1	Bungalow, viewed from a distance only.	Moderate	Detailed internal and external inspection, and emergence survey visits.
2	Overgrown outhouse, brick covered in vegetation on all elevations. Sagging plywood ceiling with corrugated asbestos roof.	Moderate	Two emergence survey visits.
3	Single skin corrugated metal roof and elevations.	Negligible	None
4	Brick external and render internal, corrugated metal roof on timber frame with no tight soffits or bargeboards. In use by horses with no cavities or crevices observed.	Negligible	To be covered in bespoke survey.
5	Corrugated metal roof and elevations on timber frame. In use by horses and boarded at lower levels but boarding open at top.	Negligible	To be covered in bespoke survey
5a	Metal roof chicken coop of 1.5-2m in height. Single skin timber elevations.	Negligible	None
6	Hay store with corrugated metal on timber frame, partly metal clad at upper elevations.	Negligible	To be covered in bespoke survey.
6a	Metal roof chicken coop of 1.5-2m in height. Single skin timber elevations	Negligible	None
7	Corrugated metal rood and upper elevations on metal and timber frame. Three boxed areas around overhang at front but appear appropriately sealed with no access for bats.	Negligible	To be covered in bespoke survey.
8a	Adjoined to the back of 8b and 8c. Timber weatherboarding with breeze blocks behind, newly constructed. Limited view due to joins of multiple buildings.	Low	To be covered in bespoke survey.
8b	Breeze block base to 1.5m, corrugated metal elevations and roof on timber frame.	Negligible	To be covered in bespoke survey.
8c	Breeze block base to 1.5m, corrugated metal elevations and roof on timber frame.	Negligible	To be covered in bespoke survey.
9	Breeze block wall to 1m and corrugated metal clad upper elevations and roof on timber frame.	Low	To be covered in bespoke survey.
10	Breezeblock external base to 1.5m, single skin corrugated upper levels, corrugated metal roof on timber frame.	Negligible to Low	To be covered in bespoke survey.
11	Breezeblock rendered in concrete with domed corrugated asbestos roof, open at both ends. No timber frame work or gaps in brickwork.	Negligible	None
12	Breezeblock rendered in concrete with domed corrugated asbestos roof, open at	Negligible	None

EPR Building ID	Description	Suitability for bat roost	Suggested Further Surveys
	both ends. No timber frame work or gaps in brickwork.		
13	Metal clad on metal and timber frame with timber shuttering around overhang appears sealed.	Negligible	To be covered in bespoke survey
14	Timber frame, single skin timber plyboard and corrugated metal roof.	Negligible	To be covered in bespoke survey
15	Evelyn cottage	Moderate	Internal inspection and two emergence survey visits.
16	Shed/wendy house, single skinned weatherboard elevations with a bitumen felt on plywood roof.	Negligible	None
17	Single skin timber shed completely overgrown in vegetation.	Negligible	None
18	Timber weatherboard with breezeblock behind at lower elevations.	Negligible	To be covered in bespoke survey.
19	Concrete garage with metal roof and timber construction.	Negligible	None
20	Metal static caravan currently in use.	Negligible	None
21	Shepard's hut, single skinned timber plywood on metal frame with no roof.	Negligible	None
22	Single skin brick and breezeblock with some corrugated metal and pebble dash on upper elevations. Corrugated asbestos roof and metal frame. Internal and external assessed.	Moderate	None
23	Single skin breeze block with pebbledash render timber frame with timber slated roof. On slight plinth with feet. Internal and external assessed.	Negligible	None

**Table 3.3 Internal and external assessment results**

EPR Building ID	Description	Revised Suitability
1	Detailed external assessment undertaken, no internal inspection possible. Roof was prefabricated tiles with the ridge heavily mortared. Timber and lead flashing. No obvious gaps across main roof area. One gap leading to damaged bricks on south gable end. Small gaps under timber flashing on southern gable end. Crumbling mortar on northern gable end providing access under tiles.	Moderate
15	Loft of main house: Only viewed from loft hatch as loft not boarded and advised not to access by residents. Lined with reinforced plastic roof lining. One hole visible in lining visible. No bats or evidence observed. Roof has been retiled recently. Loft in single storey extension: Accessed by loft hatch, Wasps <i>Vespula sp.</i> next present so only viewed briefly. Reasonable deep roof space with bitumen felt lining and timber trussing. Wasps observed near hatch near inside soffits.	Moderate

### Emergence Bat Survey

3.7 The results of the dusk emergence survey are provided in **Table 3.4** below. Any emergences are shown on **Figure 5**.

**Table 3.4 Summary of bat emergence survey results**

EPR Building ID	Summary of bat emergence results
1	<p><b>No emergences</b> were recorded from the building.</p> <p>During the visit on the 9<sup>th</sup> July, the first bat heard was at 21:37, a Common Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>. From 21:52 to 22:17 foraging by Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> was recorded in the back garden of the bungalow and occasionally in the front. Leisler's bat <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i> was also recorded at 22:16 and 22:42.</p> <p>During the visit on the 12<sup>th</sup> August, the first bat heard was at 20:46, a Noctule <i>Nyctalus noctula</i>. Very low levels of activity was recorded during the visit. <i>Myotis Myotis sp.</i> was recorded at 21:32 and 21:36. Common pipistrelle was also recorded intermittently throughout the visit.</p>
2	<p><b>No emergences</b> were recorded from the building.</p> <p>During the visit on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July, the first bat recorded was at 22:04, a Common Pipistrelle. Very low levels of activity were recorded during the visit. A Eurasian Serotine <i>Cephaeus serotinus</i> was recorded at 22:13.</p> <p>During the visit on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July, the first bat recorded was at 21:15, a Noctule. The first Common Pipistrelle was recorded at 21:18. Intermittent foraging was recorded around the building and the trees on the western side by Common Pipistrelle.</p>
15	<p><b>One emergence</b> was recorded from the building from the southern corner above the drainpipe on the main roof area during the visit on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July. A <b>possible emergence</b> was also recorded from the tiled roof above the conservatory during the same visit.</p> <p>During the visit on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July, the first bat recorded was at 21:39, a Common Pipistrelle foraging near the boundary of the Site. Foraging was recorded from 21:44 to 22:13 by Common Pipistrelle around the building and the garden. Long-eared bat <i>Plecotus sp.</i> was heard at 22:29, 22:37, 22:39, 22:40 in the front and back garden.</p> <p>During the visit on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July, the first bat recorded was at 21:14, a Common Pipistrelle foraging along the track. This foraging behaviour continued throughout the visit along the track and close to the building by multiple individuals. A Noctule was recorded at 21:34.</p>
Bespoke Survey of Farmyard	<p><b>Emergences were recorded from Building 8a, 14, and 9</b> by Common Pipistrelles.</p> <p>The emergence from Building 8a was from the wooden cladding next to the stable doors. Two emergences were from Building 9 came from the interior; one was confirmed as being from the horizontal beam near the entrance, the other is from an unconfirmed location. The emergence from Building 14 was potentially from the interior of the barn but it was not possible to confirm the exact location.</p>

EPR Building ID	Summary of bat emergence results
	<p>During the visit on the 28<sup>th</sup> July, the first bat was recorded at 21:05, a Common Pipistrelle foraging under the Lime <i>Tilia sp.</i> tree was constantly foraging for most of the visit. Common Pipistrelle were recorded flying into and around Building 7 from 21:18. Foraging by Common Pipistrelles was recorded across the farmyard throughout the visit, moving from the buildings towards the fields as the visit progressed. A Noctule was recorded at 21:53.</p>
Fixed-Point Landscape Survey	<p><b>No emergences</b> were recorded.</p> <p>During the visit on the 12<sup>th</sup> August, the first bat recorded was at 20:44, a Common Pipistrelle coming from the direction of the house. Most bats recorded were seen coming from the north-east and some from the north-west. Foraging by Common Pipistrelle was recorded from 21:45 to 21:00 under the Lime tree to the south of the house. Some bats seemed to use the track between Downs Road and Building 15 (Evelyn Cottage), to pass east/west through the gardens of adjacent properties.</p> <p>During the visit on the 19<sup>th</sup> August, several bats (3-5) came from the north-west and foraged in the darker corners of the garden associated with Building 15 (Evelyn Cottage) relatively close to sunset. As it became darker, the bats moved away. Some bats passed through the Site from north-west to east.</p>

#### *Night-time Bat Walkover Survey*

3.8 The Night-time Bat Walkover results are summarised in **Figures 6a, 6b and 6c**.

3.9 The NBW surveys established that the Site is being used by four species or groups of bats.

- Common Pipistrelle
- Long-eared bat *Plecotus sp.*
- Noctule
- *Nyctalus sp.*

3.10 Common Pipistrelle and *Nyctalus sp.* were either seen foraging or commuting close to sunset during the visits. Therefore, these records may indicate that roosts for these species are nearby.

3.11 Common Pipistrelle foraging was also recorded around the farmyard.

3.12 **Tables 3.5 and 3.6** summarise the NBW survey results, per season and per species. This information can also be seen within **Chart 1**, which show the overall activity.

**Table 3.5 Summary of NBW survey results across the Site per season**

Season	Summary of NBW results across the Site
Spring	Most of the bats recorded were within the farmyard area. Only Common Pipistrelles <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> were recorded during the survey. The first bat recorded was a Common Pipistrelle at 21:20 near the central woodland band. No bats were recorded in the field in the southern half of the Site.
Summer	Noctule <i>Nyctalus noctula</i> and Common Pipistrelle were recorded during the visit. The first bat recorded was a Common Pipistrelle at 21:48 foraging near the central woodland band. The first noctule recorded was at 22:08 near Building 1. The majority of the activity was recorded around the farmyard with bats also seen along the road.
Autumn	Common Pipistrelle, <i>Nyctalus sp.</i> , Long-eared bat <i>Plecotus sp.</i> , were recorded. The first bat recorded was a non-echolocating bat at 19:54 flying from the off-site school across the Site. The next bat was a Common Pipistrelle flying low near B2 at 20:02. A long-eared bat was recorded along the edge of the central arable field. There was high foraging activity around the farmyard by Common Pipistrelle. The rest of the Site had low levels of activity. The majority of recordings were by Common Pipistrelle.

**Table 3.6 Summary of NBW survey results across the Site per species**

Species	Summary of NBW results across the Site
Common Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	During the spring transect only Common Pipistrelles were recorded. Most recordings, across all visits, were of Common Pipistrelles. They foraged around the farmyard area during all the visits. Common Pipistrelles were also seen crossing the road towards the Site during all the visits.
Noctule <i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Noctule were only recorded during the summer transect near the Building 1.
Nyctalus <i>Nyctalus sp.</i>	A Nyctalus species (either a Noctule or Leisler's <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i> ) was recorded during the autumn transect near Building 1. The non-echolocating bat seen during the autumn visit was probably a Nyctalus species.
Long-eared Bat <i>Plecotus sp.</i>	A Long-eared bat was only recorded during the autumn transect in the arable field along the site boundary at 21:28.

### *Automated Static Detector Survey*

#### *Species Recorded*

3.13 The static detectors identified 11,902 bat passes from nine different bat species and groups (**Table 3.7**).

- Common Pipistrelle
- Soprano Pipistrelle
- Nathusius' Pipistrelle
- Long-eared bat
- Noctule
- Eurasian Serotine
- Leisler's Bat
- *Myotis sp.*

3.14 Common Pipistrelle was the most frequently recorded (90% of all calls recorded) bat species throughout the visits.

**Table 3.7 Number of passes per species**

Site total	P. pip	P. pyg	P. nat	P. sp	My sp	LE sp	My/ LE sp	E. ser	N. sp	N. noc	N. lei	LFB
Total Calls	10,699	64	43	8	449	61	50	11	236	145	82	54
Av.Per Night	2,139.8	12.8	8.6	1.6	89.8	12.2	10	2.2	47.2	29	16.4	10.8
% of total calls	89.89	0.54	0.36	0.07	3.77	0.51	0.42	0.09	1.98	1.22	0.69	0.45

P. pip = Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, P. pyg = Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, P. nat = Nathusius' Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, P. sp = *Pipistrelle sp*, My sp = Myotis species *Myotis sp*, LE sp = Long-eared species *Plecotus sp*, My/LE sp = Myotis/Long-eared species, E. ser = Eurasian Serotine *Cephaeus serotinus*, N. sp = Nyctalus species *Nyctalus sp*, N. noc = Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, N. Lei = Leisler's *Nyctalus leisleri*, LFB = Low-frequency bat (Noctule/Leisler's/Eurasian Serotine).

#### *Geographic Variation in Activity*

**Table 3.8 Number of passes per sampling location (all bat species)**

Location	East	West	South
Total Calls	3854	3837	4211
Av per night	770.2	67.4	842.2
% of total calls	32.38	32.24	35.38

#### *Seasonal Variation in Activity*

**Table 3.9 Number of passes per month (all bat species)**

Month	May	June	July	August	September	October
Total Calls	1881	2316	2050	2271	1689	1695
Av. Per night	376.2	463.2	410	454.2	337.8	339
% of total calls	15.8	19.46	17.22	19.08	14.19	14.24

#### *Social Call Activity Across the Site*

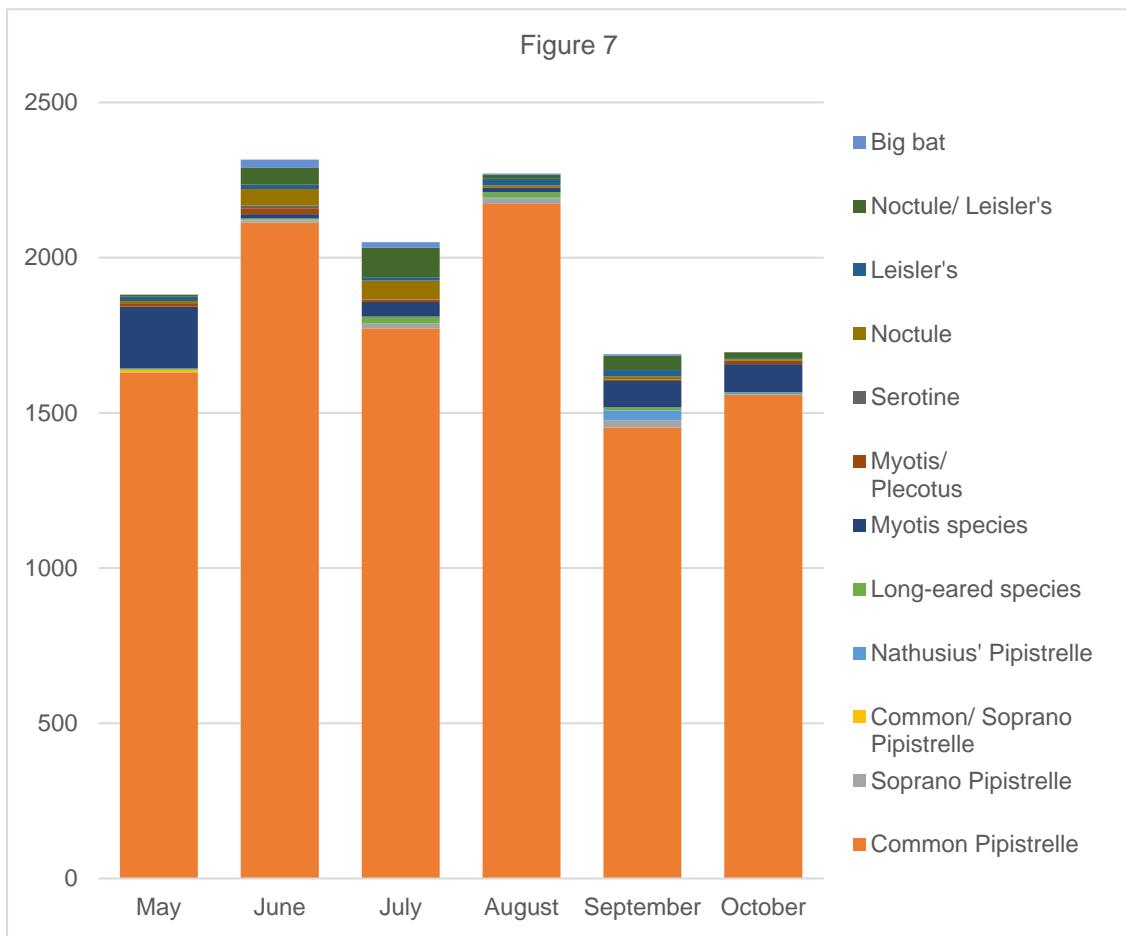
**Table 3.10 Social calls recorded over the year, by location for pipistrelle species (almost all are Common Pipistrelle).**

Location	East	West	South
Total Call	411	263	13
Av Per night	82.2	52.6	2.6
% of total calls	59.82	38.28	1.89

**Table 3.11 Social calls recorded by month, for pipistrelle species (almost all are Common Pipistrelle).**

Month	May	June	July	August	September	October
Total Call	51	25	24	35	178	374
Av. Per night	10.2	5	4.8	7	35.6	74.8
% of total calls	7.42	3.64	3.49	5.09	25.91	54.44

**Chart 1 Number of passes per automated static detector recording month**



#### *Incidental Observations of other Fauna*

3.15 A Tawny Owl *Strix aluco* was heard on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025, and a Little Owl *Athene noctua* was recorded on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025.

## 4. ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION

4.1 The surveys confirmed that the Site provides suitable habitat for roosting and foraging bats. The bat species recorded are shown in **Table 4.1**.

4.2 Emergences by Common Pipistrelle were recorded from Building 15 (Evelyn Cottage), as well as Buildings 8a, 14, and 9. All roosts were of a low number of Common Pipistrelle, indicating the roosts are likely to be of low conservation value.

4.3 Common Pipistrelle were also recorded flying onto the Site, from off-site locations, close to sunset. This indicates that additional roosts are nearby. In addition, livestock kept on-site (cattle and horses and their associated dung) provide conditions which support insects, which in turn attract foraging pipistrelle. This observation is further supported by the results of the NBW survey visits, when several bats were observed foraging around the farmyard for the duration of the surveys.

4.4 The low incidence of other bat species indicates that the Site is of low importance for these species. A similar pattern of results was collected during the automated static detector survey, and whilst eight different bat species were recorded, the records for most species were infrequent and irregular.

**Table 4.1 Bat species recorded within the Zone of Influence**

Bat Species	UK Distribution	IUCN Status	UK Incidence	Use of Site
Common Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Widespread	Favourable	Common	Common
Soprano Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Widespread	Favourable	Common	Infrequent
Nathusius Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	Widespread	Unknown	Unknown	Rare
Leislers' Nectarinia <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Widespread	Favourable	Uncommon	Rare
Noctule <i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Widespread	Favourable	Frequent	Infrequent
Eurasian Serotine <i>Cephaeus serotinus</i>	Restricted	Favourable	Rare	Rare
Brown Long-eared <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Widespread	Favourable	Common	Infrequent
Myotis species <i>Myotis sp</i>	Widespread	Favourable	Frequent	Occasional

4.5 Overall, the Site is likely to be of ecological importance for bats at the **Local Level**.

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## **Figures**

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- Figure 1** Site Location
- Figure 2** Night-time bat walkover route
- Figure 3** Automated bat detector locations
- Figure 4** Preliminary Roost Assessment Results
- Figure 5** Emergence Survey Results
- Figure 6a-6c** Night-time Bat Walkover Results



Figure 1 Site Location

KEY

 Site boundary

Main Map Frame:  
SCALE: 1:3,000 at A3

0 50 100 150 200 Metres



CLIENT: Esquire Developments Ltd

PROJECT: Istead Rise, Kent

DATE: 20 November 2025

Istead Rise, Kent 3272/GIS/Bat/Figure\_1\_SiteLocation\_P3272\_4248\_201125.aprx

Aerial Image: (c) Getmapping plc. & Microsoft, Vanator

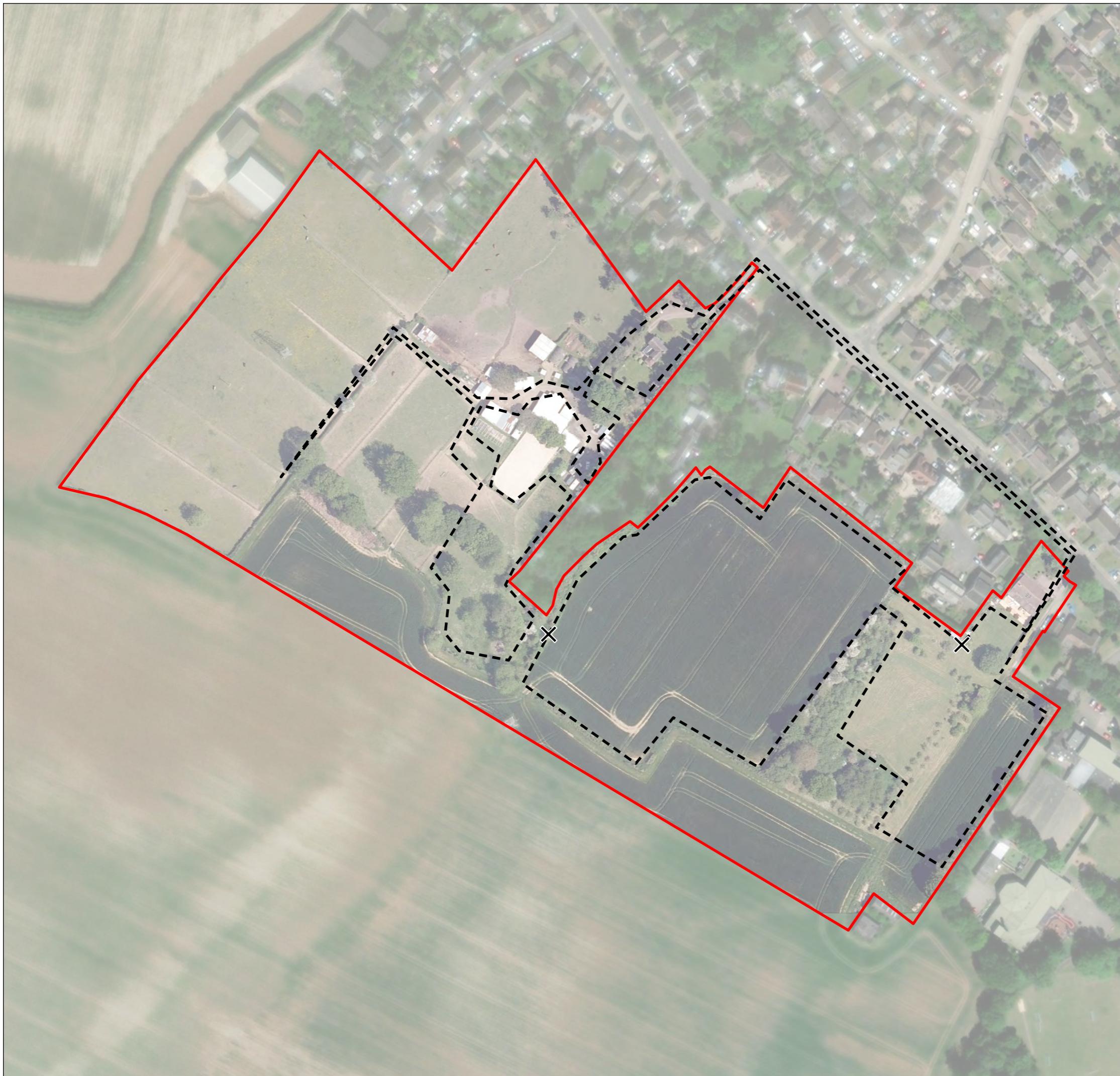


Figure 2 Night-time Bat Walkover Route

KEY

Site boundary

Fixed point survey location

Bat transect route



CLIENT: Esquire Developments Ltd

PROJECT: Istead Rise, Kent

DATE: 20 November 2025





Figure 4 Preliminary Roost Inspection

KEY

- Site boundary
- Building suitability:
- Moderate suitability
- Low suitability
- Negligible suitability



CLIENT: Esquire Developments Ltd

PROJECT: Istead Rise, Kent

DATE: 20 November 2025



Figure 5 Emergence Survey Results

KEY

- Site boundary
- Building outline
- Common Pipistrelle observed emergence
- Common Pipistrelle presumed emergence
- Emergence
- (e) Emergence
- x3 Number of bats

Main Map Frame:  
SCALE: 1:2,000 at A3

0 25 50 75 100 125 Metres



CLIENT: Esquire Developments Ltd

PROJECT: Istead Rise, Kent

DATE: 20 November 2025

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Aerial Image: (c) Getmapping plc. & Microsoft, Vanator

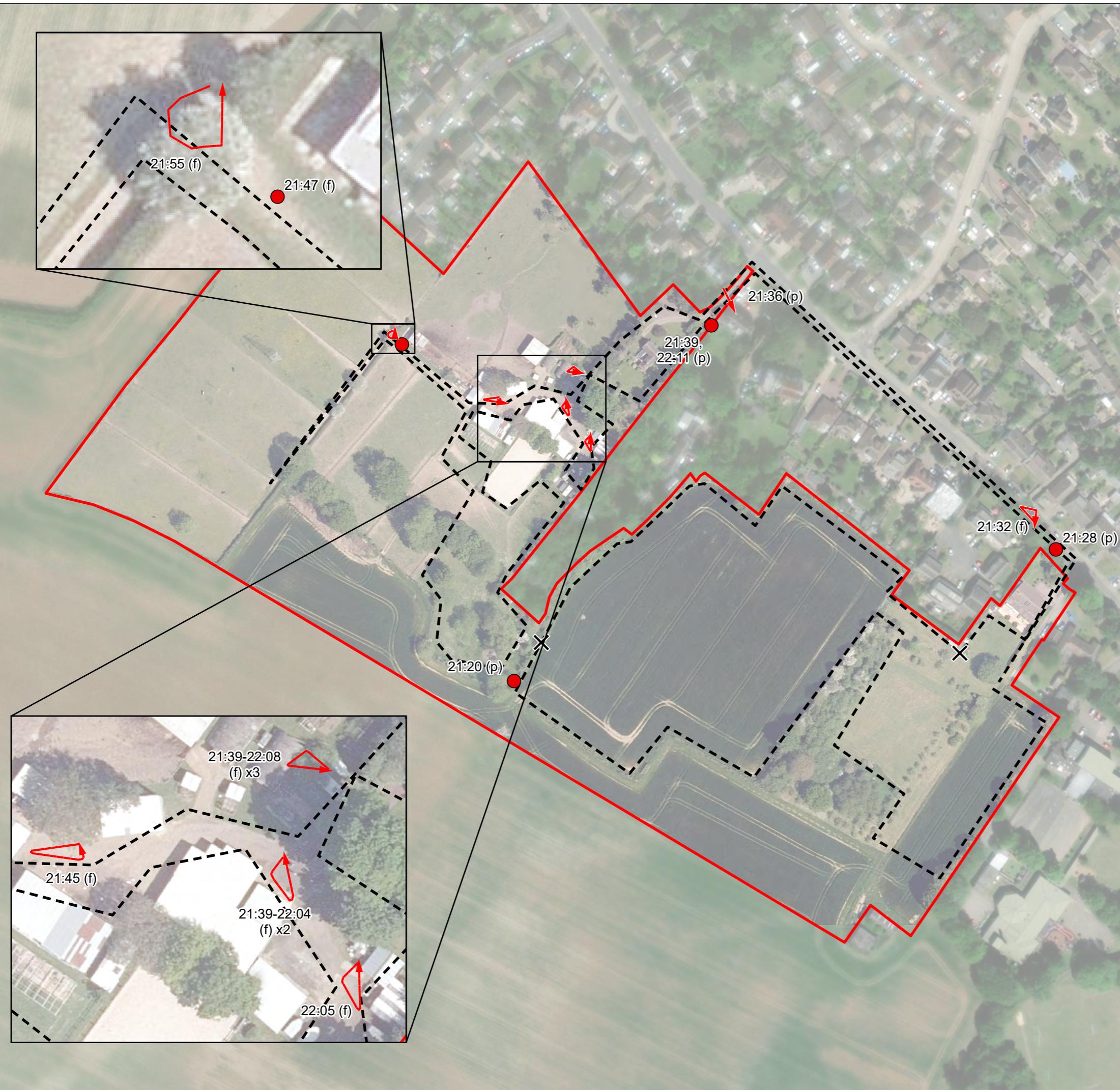


Figure 6a Night-time Bat Walkover Results, Spring

KEY

- Site boundary**: Red line
- Fixed point survey location**: Cross symbol (X)
- Bat transect route**: Dashed line
- Common Pipistrelle (heard not seen)**: Red dot
- Common Pipistrelle observed flight**: Red arrow
- (f) Foraging**: Red arrow pointing up
- (p) Pass**: Red arrow pointing right
- x3 Number of bats**: Red arrow pointing right with a 'x3' multiplier

Main Map Frame:  
SCALE: 1:2,000 at A3

0 25 50 75 100 125 Metres



CLIENT: Esquire Developments Ltd

PROJECT: Istead Rise, Kent

DATE: 20 November 2025

Istead Rise, Kent 3272/GIS/Bats/Figure6a\_BatTransect210525\_P3272\_4248\_201125.aprx

Aerial Image: (c) Getmapping plc. & Microsoft, Vanator



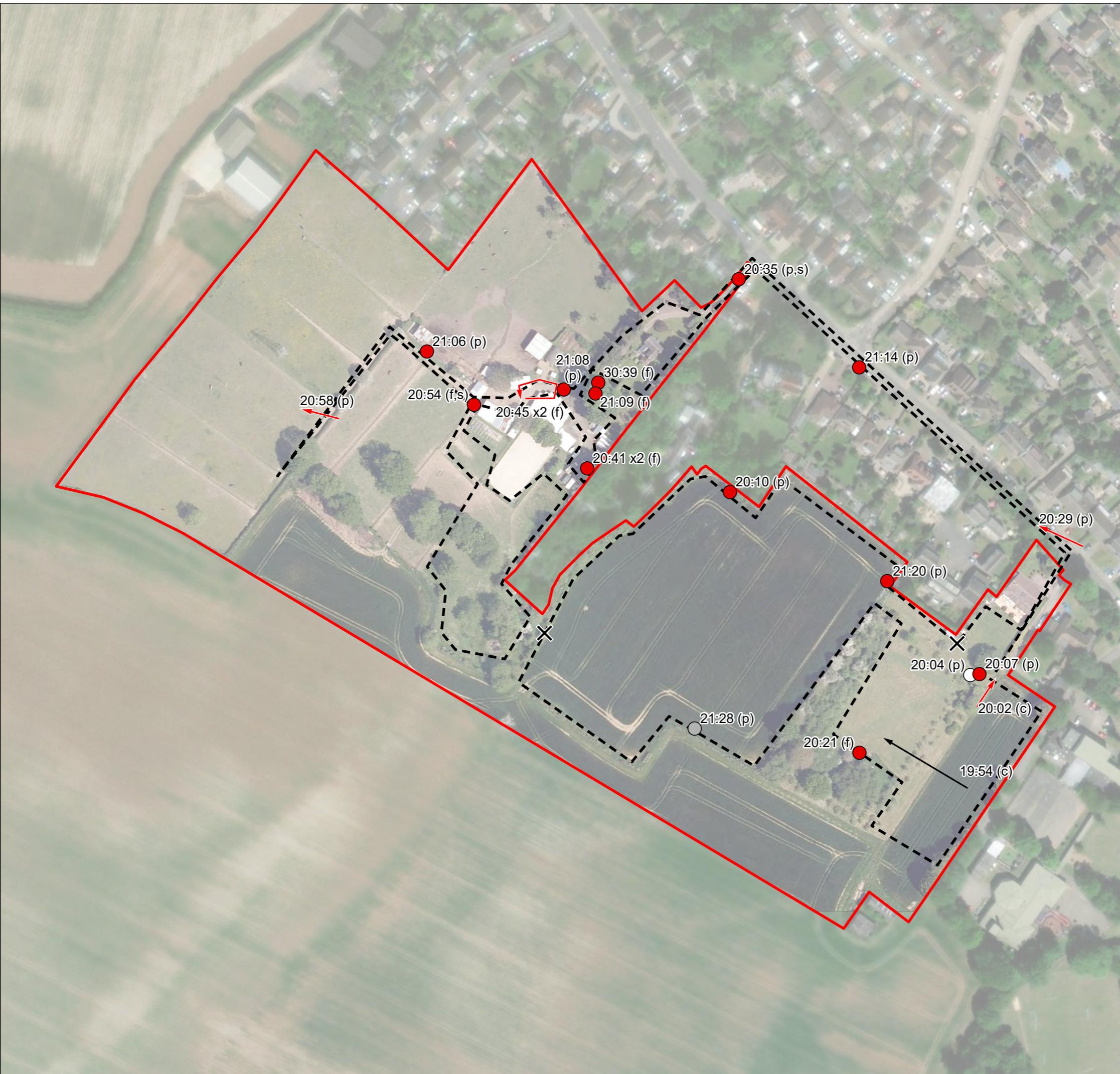


Figure 6c Night-time Bat Walkover Results, Autumn

KEY

- Site boundary
- Fixed point survey location
- Bat transect route
- Common Pipistrelle (heard not seen)
- Long-eared species (heard not seen)
- Low-frequency bat (heard not seen)
- Common Pipistrelle observed flight
- Unidentified bat observed flight
- (c) Commuting
- (f) Foraging
- (p) Pass
- (s) Social calling
- x3 Number of bats

SCALE: 1:2,000 at A3

0 25 50 75 100 125 Metres



CLIENT: Esquire Developments Ltd

PROJECT: Istead Rise, Kent

DATE: 20 November 2025

Istead Rise, Kent 3272/GIS/Bats/Figure6c\_BatTransect040925\_P3272\_4248\_201125.aprx

Aerial Image: (c) Getmapping plc. & Microsoft, Vanctor

# Appendix 1

## Summary of Relevant Legislation

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### **The Environment Act 2021**

The Environment Act 2021 placed a requirement on the Secretary of State to make regulations setting out long-term targets for air quality, water, biodiversity, resource efficiency and waste reduction. It also required the Government to produce an Environmental Improvement Plan, to report on progress towards its goals annually, to meet the targets that are set in relation to the improvement of the natural environment and to produce remedial plans should this not be achieved.

In relation to water quality, the Act placed new duties on the Government, Environment Agency and sewerage undertakers to reduce the frequency and harm of discharges from storm overflows on the environment, and for monitoring the quality of watercourses affected by those overflows.

It also included a requirement for an independent Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) to be established, with responsibilities for monitoring and reporting on progress against environmental improvement plans and targets. The OEP also has investigation and enforcement powers against public authorities failing to comply with environmental law when exercising their functions.

The Act made provision for 10% biodiversity gain to become a condition of planning permission in England, through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These amendments came into force on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (delayed to 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 for ‘small sites’) and are implemented through a series of new statutory instruments collectively referred to in this document as the ‘Biodiversity Net Gain Regulations’ (detailed further below). The 10% biodiversity gain is measured through a biodiversity metric published by the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on behalf of the Secretary of State. The Act also establishes Biodiversity Net Gain as a requirement for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).

The Act also strengthens the biodiversity duty placed on public authorities through amendments to the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 Section 40, requiring such authorities to not only conserve but also enhance biodiversity when exercising their functions. Public authorities will also be required to publish summary reports of actions taken under Section 40 at least every five years.

The Act provides the legal basis for the creation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) for England (including specifying their content), and the preparation and publication of species conservation strategies and protected sites strategies.

The Act also created a new legal vehicle known as a ‘Conservation Covenant’ which is a voluntary, legally binding private agreement between landowners and responsible bodies (the latter designated by the Secretary of State) which conserve the natural or heritage features of the land, enabling long-term conservation. Conservation Covenants are designed to ‘run with the land’ when it is sold or passed on and are intended to become a primary mechanism for the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

The Act provides new powers for the Government to amend in future Regulation 9 and Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the ‘Habitats Regulations’) – but “only if satisfied that the regulations do not reduce the level of environmental protection provided by the Habitats Regulations”.

Several aspects of protected species licensing have also been adjusted by the Act. These include the removal of several inconsistencies between the Habitats Regulations and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), ensuring that licences issued under the former piece of legislation also apply under the latter, and making it now possible for licences to be issued under Section 16(3) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) for purposes of overriding public interest. The maximum term of a licence that can be issued by Natural England has also been extended from 2 to 5 years.

### **The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)**

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (known as the “Habitats Regulations”) were originally drawn up to transpose the European Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the “Habitats Directive”) into UK legislation. Following the UK’s exit from the European Union, the Habitats Regulations – as amended by Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 – remain in force until such a time as they are superseded by new or updated domestic legislation.

The Habitats Regulations provide for the designation of both Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in the UK, which previously formed part of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas across Europe and are now part of the UK’s “National Sites Network”. New National Sites may be designated under the Regulations.

The Regulations also prohibit certain actions relating to European Protected Species (EPS), which include *inter alia* Hazel Dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*, Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*, European Otter *Lutra lutra*, Sand Lizard *Lacerta agilis*, Smooth Snake *Coronella austriaca* and all native species of bat.

### **Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)**

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is a key mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. Various amendments have occurred since the original enactment. Certain species of bird, animal and plant (including all of the European Protected Species listed above) are afforded protection under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. Reference is made to the various Schedules and Parts of this Act (**Table A1.1**) in the section of this Appendix dealing with Legally Protected Species. The Act also contains measures for the protection of the countryside, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and public rights of way as well as preventing the establishment of invasive non-native species that may be detrimental to native wildlife.

**Table A1.1: Relevant Schedules of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)**

<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Protected Species</b>
Schedule 5 Section 9.1 (killing/injuring)	Protects listed animals from intentional killing or injuring
Schedule 5 Section 9.1 (taking)	Protects listed animals from taking
Schedule 5 Section 9.2	Protects listed animals from being possessed or controlled (live or dead)
Schedule 5 Section 9.4a	Protects listed animals from intentional damage or destruction to any structure or place used for shelter or protection
Schedule 5 Section 9.4b	Protects listed animals from intentional disturbance while occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection
Schedule 5 Section 9.5a	Protects listed animals from being sold, offered for sale or being held or transported for sale either live or dead, whole or part
Schedule 5 Section 9.5b	Protects listed animals from being published or advertised as being for sale

Further information on legally protected species is provided in the relevant sub-sections of this Appendix.

### **The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006**

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 was intended to raise the profile of biodiversity amongst all public authorities (including local authorities, and statutory undertakers) and to make biodiversity an integral part of policy and decision-making processes. The NERC Act also improved wildlife protection by amending the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Section 40 (S40) of the Act places a 'Biodiversity Duty' on all public bodies to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their normal functions. This includes giving consideration to the restoration and enhancement of species and habitats.

Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. This was published in 2007 and is commonly referred to as the "S41 list". Public authorities have a responsibility to give specific consideration to the S41 list when exercising their normal functions. For planning authorities, consideration for Species and Habitats of Principal Importance will be exercised through the planning and development control processes. Further information on Species and Habitats of Principal Importance is provided in the relevant sub-sections of this Appendix.

### **Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000**

Many of the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 have been incorporated as amendments into the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and some provisions have now been superseded by later legislation such as The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006).

The most relevant changes provided by the CRoW Act include the added protection given to SSSIs and other important sites for nature conservation. Importantly, under the Act it became a criminal offence to "recklessly disturb" Schedule 1 nesting birds and species protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. It also enabled heavier penalties on conviction of wildlife offences.

## Species Protection

### *Bats*

There are 18 species of bat native in the UK, seven of which are Species of Principal Importance in England under S41 of the NERC Act 2006. All bats and bat roosts are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Bats are also a European Protected Species protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). It is an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly disturb bats in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the ability of any significant group of bats to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young or the local distribution of or abundance of a species of bat;
- Intentionally, or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection (i.e. bat roosts) or intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat whilst it is occupying such a place;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat; and
- Possess, sell or transport a bat, or anything derived from it.

Development proposals affecting bats or their roosts require a European Protected Species mitigation licence (or similar) from Natural England.

## Licences for Development

Licences are required to permit activities prohibited under wildlife legislation, namely the disturbance or capture of protected species or damage to their habitats. Natural England is the licensing authority in England. Licences are only issued for certain purposes, which are set out in the legislation, and only where there is a valid justification. The licences most relevant to development scenarios are discussed below.

### *European Protected Species Mitigation Licences*

A European Protected Species mitigation licence (EPSML) is required from Natural England to undertake any development that is reasonably likely to result in an offence in respect of a European Protected Species protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended); including *inter alia* all species of bats. Natural England must be satisfied that the following three tests are satisfied before it will issue a licence covering a European Protected Species:

1. The proposal is necessary to preserve 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. There is no satisfactory alternative; and
3. The proposal will have no detrimental effect to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.