



BAT SURVEY REPORT

GILES FARM

HIGHAM, KENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report details presence / likely absence survey work for bats undertaken in respect of proposed development at Giles Farm, Higham, Kent, ME3 7LR (Site centred TQ 7157574071).

COMMISSION

- 1.2 Native Ecology was commissioned by Duncan Graham Partnership in April 2024 to undertake bat presence/likely absence surveys for two buildings, B3 and B4, within the Site.

APPLICATION SITE

- 1.3 For Site location plan and survey Site details please refer to the Updated Ecological Appraisal (1512_R01).

PROPOSED WORKS

- 1.4 Proposals include the conversion of a former office building into a residential unit, including replacing materials where needed.

BACKGROUND

- 1.5 A bat survey and Ecological Impact Assessment was conducted by Native Ecology in October 2020 (Native Ecology, 2020). The previous survey work detailed in report 0540_R01_ECIA, recorded the presence of a single day roost at the roof apex on the western elevation of building B4 during surveys undertaken between July and September 2020.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.6 The objectives of the report are to:
- To determine the current status of roosting bats within the Site; and
 - Establish whether the proposed development is likely to impact on roosting bats. The degree of impact is determined by a number of factors:
 - the species present;
 - number of bats present;
 - the type of roost present; and
 - location of roost and access points.

2. METHODOLOGY

PRESENCE/ABSENCE SURVEYS

- 2.1 One dusk emergence survey for building B3 and three dusk emergence surveys for building B4 (detailed in Table 1) were undertaken between May and June 2024 in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Table 1. Survey details for the dusk emergence and dawn re-entry surveys

Survey location	Survey no.	Survey date	Surveyors	Sunrise/sunset	Time		Weather conditions			
							°C	Wind BF	Precipitation	Cloud cover %
B3 and B4	1	09/05/24	MK SC IR6 IR7	20:35	Start	20:20	16	3	None	5
					Finish	22:05	15	2	None	0
B4	2	03/06/24	MK SC	21:08	Start	20:53	18	2	None	95
					Finish	22:38	18	2	None	80
B4	3	25/06/24	DS MJ	21:19	Start	21:04	21	2	None	0
					Finish	22:49	18	1	None	0

- 2.2 The emergence surveys commenced 15 minutes prior to sunset and continued for 1.5 hours after sunset.
- 2.3 Surveyors (listed in Table 2 below) were positioned around the buildings so that the features with suitability to support roosting bats were visible and any emerging or re-entering bats could be observed. A survey plan is available in Appendix 2.
- 2.4 Each surveyor used an EMT Pro and a Elekon Bat Scanner to identify and record bat activity within the Site. Data was recorded as to the species, number of bats, any emergence or re-entry locations, time and general activity.
- 2.5 Night vision aids (NVAs) comprising InfaRed (IR) cameras were used to record bat activity during the first survey only. Cameras comprised Canon XA60 Professional UHD 4K Camcorders with associated appropriate light sources, mounted on tripods and positioned to cover a full surveyor location. An EMT Pro 2 with an associated tablet was also mounted on a tripod close to the camera to record sound files for any bats emerging from or re-entering the building. Appendix 4 includes screen-shots of each IR camera position at the darkest point of the survey to show illumination.
- 2.6 On completion of the survey, the footage was reviewed using appropriate software and any emergence or re-entry activity recorded, including species (cross-referenced with the associated detector), emergence / re-entry location and behaviour. Any emergence / re-entry video clips were cut and saved for reference.

Table 2. Surveyor details

Surveyor name (initials)	Experience
Megan Knapp (MK)	Class 1 bat licence: 2022-10627-CL17-BAT
Dani Sheehan (DS)	2 years bat survey experience

Surveyor name (initials)	Experience
Sam Cole (SC)	3 years bat survey experience
Maia Jones (MJ)	1 year bat survey experience

LIMITATIONS

- 2.7 In accordance with CIEEM guidance, consideration should be given to the validity of survey data after a period of 12 month from the date of the survey. This may require a site visit to assess whether ecological conditions within the Site have changed and may require further ecological survey work due to the transient nature of roosting bats.

3. RESULTS AND ASSESSMENT

PRESENCE/ LIKELY ABSENCE SURVEYS

Dusk Emergence Survey - 9th May 2024

- 3.1 No bats were recorded emerging from B3 or B4 during the survey.
- 3.2 The first bat recorded was a Nathusius' pipistrelle passing over the Site at 21:06, 31 minutes after sunset.
- 3.3 Bat activity was moderate, with passes of Nathusius', common, and soprano pipistrelles and brown long-eared bats.

Dusk Emergence Survey - 3rd June 2024

- 3.4 No bats were recorded emerging from B4 during the survey.
- 3.5 The first bat recorded was a common pipistrelle passing through the Site at 21:47, 39 minutes after sunset.
- 3.6 Bat activity was moderate, with common pipistrelle foraging behaviour continuously recorded between 21:47 and 22:15, concentrated behind the building. A single brown long-eared bat was recorded passing the Site at 22:29.

Dusk Emergence Survey - 25th June 2024

- 3.7 No bats were recorded emerging from B4 during the survey.
- 3.8 The first bat recorded was a noctule passing the Site at 21:47, 28 minutes after sunset.
- 3.9 Bat activity was low, with occasional passes of foraging common pipistrelle, a single soprano pipistrelle pass, and a second noctule pass.

ASSESSMENT

- 3.10 Emergence surveys on B3 and B4 undertaken in 2024 did not record any roosting bats.
- 3.11 During the bat surveys undertaken in 2020, a day roost for a single common pipistrelle was recorded on the western elevation of B4. Given that 5 seasons have elapsed since this result, and based on the updated surveys, it is considered that roosting bats are likely absent from the Site.
- 3.12 As a precaution, mitigation measures (detailed within Section 4) are recommended for roosting bats.

4. MITIGATION AND COMPENSATION

Timetable of Works

- 4.1 There are no restrictions in terms of the timescale for the works.

Watching Brief

- 4.2 A licenced bat ecologist will provide an on Site toolbox talk at the start of the works and will be on Site to supervise the removal of bat roost features on B4.
- 4.3 In the event that a bat is found during demolition works, all works must stop and any features put back to existing positions as far as possible. A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence will be required to recommence works.

New Roost Creation

- 4.4 One integrated bat box, such as the Schwegler 1FR Bat Tube, suitable for use within structures with rendered walls or into the roof, will be incorporated into the western elevation of the converted residential building, close to the existing roost feature.

Lighting

- 4.5 Any external lighting will be directed away from any proposed bat access points.
- 4.6 External lighting will use only the minimum amount of light required and be directed to where it is needed with light spillage avoided. Accessories such as hoods, cowls, louvres and shields will be used where required to ensure that light is directed to the intended areas only.
- 4.7 Any security lighting around the new structure will be operated with motion sensors to reduce the impact on bats by providing predominantly dark periods.

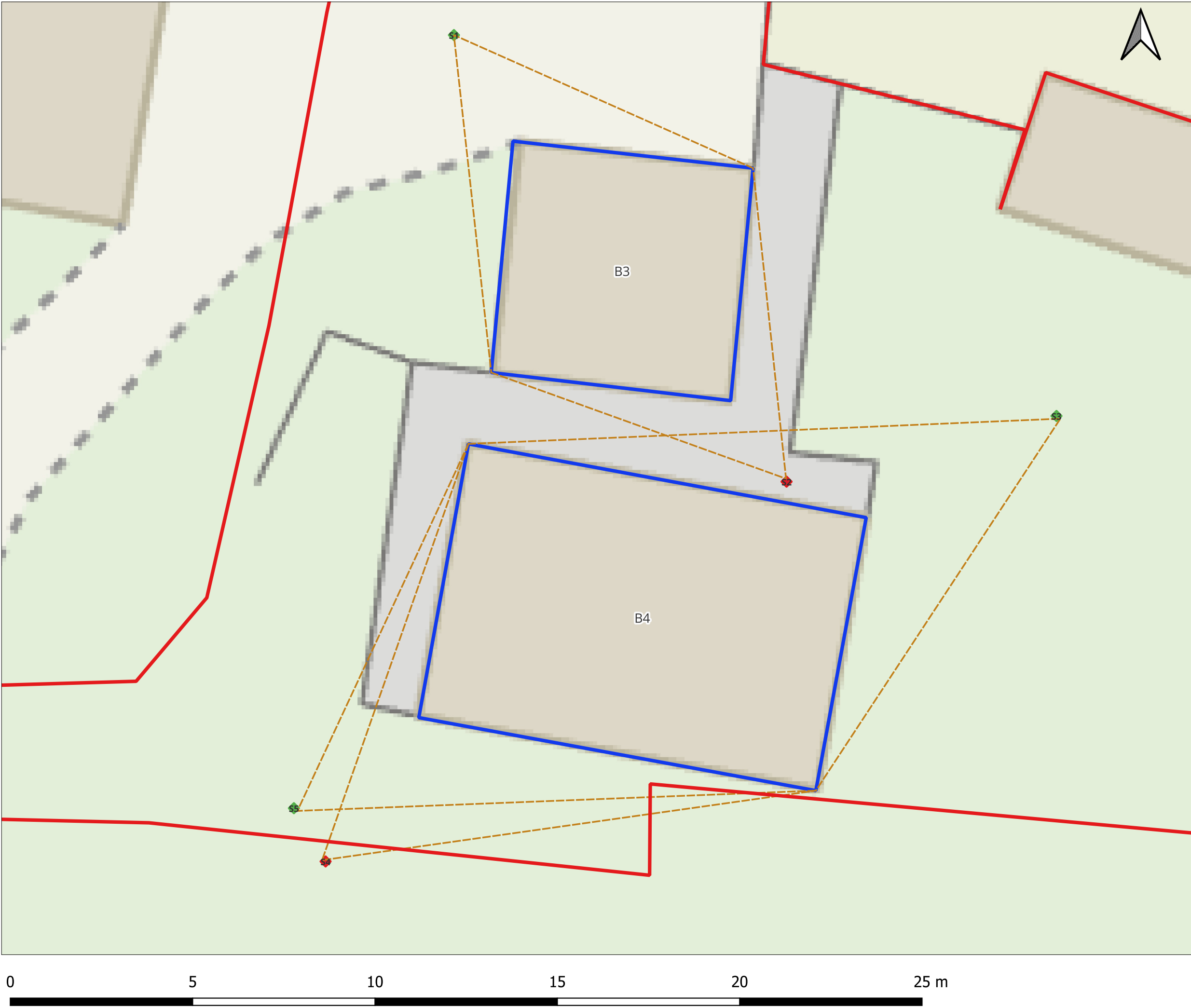
5. REFERENCES

- A. J. Mitchell-Jones (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Version. January 2004). English Nature 2004.
- CIEEM (2017a). Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Native Ecology (2020) Ecological Impact Assessment. Report ref: 0540_R01_EcIA.

6. APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

LEGAL PROTECTION FOR BATS

- 6.1 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 are also known as European Protected Species. European Protected Species include all species of bat.
- 6.2 European Protected Species relate to those listed within the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and are afforded the highest level of protection. These species are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Taken together this level of protection makes it an offence to:
- deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European protected species,
 - deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species
 - damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal
- 6.3 Disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely:
- to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
 - in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
 - to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong
- 6.4 The legislation requires that any derogation be dealt with by licencing through an appropriate licencing body (Natural England in England). In determining whether a licence can be granted the licencing body must apply the requirements of Regulation 53, and in particular, the three tests:
1. Regulation 55(2)(e) states: a licence can 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 55(9) states: The relevant licensing body must not grant a licence under this regulation unless it is satisfied—
 - (a) that there is no satisfactory alternative; and
 - (b) 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.



Legend

Site boundary

Building

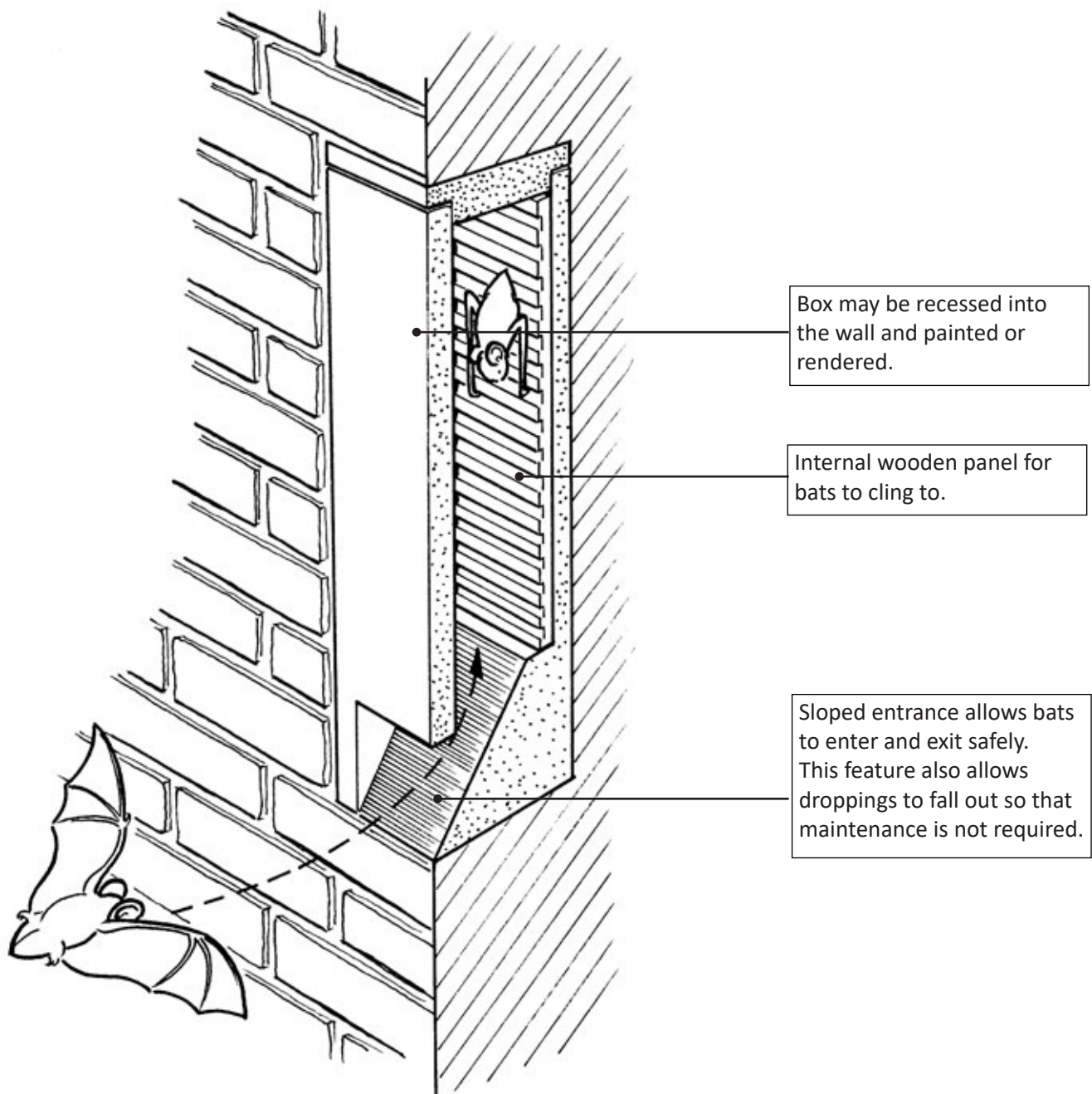
Camera

Person

Field of view

native ecology PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION	
Bat Surveyor Plan - Phase 1	
Giles Farm Higham Kent	
Drawing ref:	1512_DR04
Revision:	-
Date:	15/05/2024
Scale:	1:100
Paper size:	A3

8. APPENDIX 3: INTEGRATED BAT BOX DESIGN



Drawing obtained from: <https://www.schwegler-natur.de/>, 1FR bat box, installation in-render

When rendered only the entrance of the box is visible, providing a discrete solution for bat mitigation.



Photo obtained from: <https://www.nhbs.com/>, 2FR bat box

9. APPENDIX 4: NIGHT VISION AID (NVA) SCREENSHOTS



Photograph 1. NVA view of survey position S4, building B4.



Photograph 2. NVA view of survey position S2, building B3.