



L I Z A R D

Landscape Design and Ecology

BAT EMERGENCE SURVEY REPORT

**Chownes Mead, Chownes Mead Lane, Haywards
Heath**

On behalf of: RCM Partnership LLP

Client:	RCM Partnership LLP			
Project:	Chownes Mead, Chownes Mead Lane, Haywards Heath			
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Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the site visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, and to inform a review of the conclusions and recommendations made.



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SUMMARY

Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by RCM Partnership LLP to undertake bat emergence surveys of Chownes Mead, Chownes Mead Lane, Haywards Heath (*Grid Reference: TQ 31674 23750 – hereafter referred to as ‘the site’*).

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was carried out on 20th of May 2024 which noted a number of buildings on site as containing potential bat roost features. Subsequent emergence surveys were completed between July and August 2024.

The results of the survey suggest the presence of the following roosts within the main building (B1)

- A day roost of common pipistrelle beneath south-facing hanging tile, supporting 4no. individual bats.
- A day roost of natterers beneath south-facing roof tile.
- A day roost of common pipistrelle supporting 2no individual common pipistrelle to the apex of the south-eastern gable.
- A day roost of serotine beneath a west facing roof tile.

No bats were found to be roosting within any other surveyed building.

Proposals are yet to be finalised but are likely to involve external changes / refurbishment which may result in the killing or injuring of individual bats roosting within B1 and the damage, disturbance or destruction of day roosts, with impacts significant at the site / local level.

Should proposed works cause damage or destruction of a bat roost, a licence shall likely need to be obtained from Natural England to allow works to progress. Recommended mitigation measures which would form part of that licence are detailed herein.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by RCM Partnership LLP to undertake emergence surveys of Chownes Mead, Chownes Mead Lane, Haywards Heath (*Grid Reference: TQ 31674 23750 – hereafter referred to as ‘the site’*).
- 1.2 A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was carried out on 20th of May 2024 which noted a number of buildings on site as containing potential bat roost features. The buildings which shall be impacted by the proposals were subject to further survey throughout the summer of 2024. The purpose of the surveys and this report is to establish the presence or absence of a bat roost within the buildings, characterise any roosts present and to allow the full impact of the proposed development to be established.
- 1.3 This report has been compiled in accordance with current guidelines, including British Standard 42020:2013 Biodiversity. Code of Practice for Planning and Development, 2013 and Bat Conservation Trust Best Practice Guidelines 2023.

Site Information

- 1.4 The survey area covers c. 7.4 hectares (ha) of land to the south of Chownes Mead Lane, Haywards Heath. The survey area is bound by large residential properties and their associated gardens to the east and west, Chownes Mead Lane to the north and an area of woodland to the south.

Surrounding Landscape

- 1.5 The site is located c. 0.2km west of Haywards Heath and c.1.0km south-east of the village of Cuckfield. Land to the south and west is formed of areas of woodland, ponds and small field parcels, typical of the High Weald.
- 1.6 The site and immediate surrounding landscape is suitable for all UK bat species. Woodland is prominent within the wider surrounding landscape and provides potential suitable habitat for Annex II species such as barbastelle bats.

Development Proposals

- 1.7 Amendments to hotel layout approved under DM/18/2193 and DM/18/2201, new single storey extension to main building and erection of new detached two-storey spa building, provision of relocated secondary access to Chownes Mead Lane, new parking area and landscaping of the site.

2.0 SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

- 2.1 The aim of the survey has been:

- To assess the buildings for signs of current use by bats.
- To establish the location of any roosts if present.
- To establish the numbers and species of bats present.
- To identify access points and flight lines to and from the building.
- To provide suitable mitigation measures.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Bat Emergence Surveys

- 3.1.1 In accordance with current best practice guidelines (BCT, 2023), 3no. survey visits of B01, 2no. survey visits of B02 and B03 and 1no. survey visit of B05 were completed between 1st of July and the 19th of August 2024.
- 3.1.2 Surveys were led by a licenced surveyor or accredited agent, assisted by experienced ecologists. Surveyors were each assigned a point to adequately cover all potential roost features of each section of building which would be impacted.



Figure No. 01 – Location of Survey Points

- 3.1.3 The emergence surveys started 15 minutes before sunset and terminated 1.5 hours after sunset. Data including species, behaviour and general patterns of activity were recorded throughout the survey. Details of the survey visits can be found in *Table No. 01* below.

Table No. 01 – Bat Emergence Survey Details

Date	01/07/24	04/07/24	29/07/24	19/08/24
Building	B2, B3	B1	B1, B2, B3	B1, B5
Survey	Dusk	Dusk	Dusk	Dusk
Surveyors	HS, SH, WM, BF, AC	CO, HS, JP	WM, SH, FB, EH, KB, MD	CO, HS, WM, AC, LC
Weather	17°C, WF1, 90% cloud, dry	15°C, WF2 80% cloud, dry	26°C, WF1 20% cloud, dry	20°C, WF1 95% cloud, dry
Sunset	21:18	21:16	20:51	20:12
Start	21:03	21:01	20:36	19:57
Finish	22:48	22:46	22:21	21:42

- 3.1.4 Bats were identified using Echo Meter Touch Pro 2 and Peersonic RPA3 full spectrum bat detectors. Each surveyor was also equipped with a Whisker Nightfox infra-red camera to aid the surveys in line with best practice.

Data Analysis

- 3.1.5 Sonogram analysis was undertaken using the Kaleidoscope programme and video footage was reviewed to check any potential emergences identified over the course of the surveys, as well as the darkest half an hour at the end of the emergence survey.

3.2 Limitation and Constraints

- 3.2.1 No limitations to the emergence surveys were encountered, the surveys were undertaken at the optimal time of year and in suitable weather conditions for bats to be active.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Desk Study

- 4.1.1 SxBRC returned records of common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, Daubentons *Myotis daubentonii*, whiskered *Myotis mystacinus*, serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, Bechsteins *Myotis bechsteinii* and brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, from within the search area.

4.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 4.2.1 Numerous buildings are present on site which were subject to an internal and external assessment, a summary of which is included in the table below.

Table No. 02 – Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Results

Ref	Description	Category
B01	Main house of brick and render construction with part Horsham stone and part clay tile roof, many of which were lifted, warped or raised. Hanging tile present to the southern and eastern aspects with numerous gaps.	High
B02	Single-storey extension to main house of brick construction with clay tile roof. Small gaps noted between coping stones and areas of raised / lifted roof tiles noted.	Moderate
B03	Garage building of more recent construction but still containing small gaps to the western gable and small number of raised tiles.	Low / Moderate
B04	Small wooden kennel building of timber construction with corrugated metal roof.	Negligible
B05	Agricultural barn c. 10 years old of timber cladding with corrugated cement roof. Some small gaps recorded at the gable ends which may be suitable for individual pipistrelles.	Low
B06	Flat roof single-storey pool house with small gap between flat roof and wall however this was not found to be substantial on inspection. No other features.	Negligible.
B07	Gate house cottages of brick construction with Horsham stone and clay tile roofs. Numerous gaps beneath tiles noted.	High

B08	Pavilion building of timber construction with felt shingle roof. No potential access points noted.	Negligible
B09	Recently constructed stable block of timber construction with corrugated roof.	Negligible
B10	Dilapidated single storey brick building with slate roof. Significant damage to roof / fascia's to western aspect due to surrounding vegetation. Surrounded by dense laurel scrub.	Low / moderate

- 4.2.2 Trees which have been indicated as requiring removal were subject to a ground level assessment which determined these trees as offering **negligible** suitability. Numerous trees within the wider survey area however contain potential roost features of high suitability for both crevice and void dwelling species.

4.3 Bat Emergence Surveys

Building B1

- 4.3.1 A small number of common pipistrelles emerged from south-facing hanging tile during each survey. During the first survey visit on the 4th of July, 3no. common pipistrelle emerged from differing locations along the southern aspect of the property between 21:16 and 21:23. A single myotis bat also emerged from beneath a south-facing roof tile at 21:32.
- 4.3.2 The second survey visit recorded similar results, with 3no. pipistrelles emerging from hanging tile between 21:03 and 21:06. A single common pipistrelle was also noted as emerging from beneath a south-facing roof tile at 21:04, with an individual serotine emerging from west facing roof tile at 21:06.
- 4.3.3 4no. common pipistrelle emerged from south-facing hanging tile between 20:12 and 20:23, with a further 2no. common pipistrelle emerging from the apex of the south-eastern gable at 21:10 and 21:30.
- 4.3.4 Activity was fairly high during the surveys, with a small number of pipistrelles frequently foraging around the southern section of the building and surrounding garden. Occasional passes by serotine, noctule, leislers and long-eared bats were also recorded.

- 4.3.5 During each survey 2no. kestrels were recorded perched in the eaves at sunset, before flying away to the south. These birds were considered to be actively hunting for bats, suggesting the presence of a long-standing roost within the building.



Figure 02 – Location of bat roosts and access points

Building B2

- 4.3.6 No bats were seen to emerge from the building during the survey period.
- 4.3.7 Moderate levels of bat activity was recorded during the surveys, dominated by common pipistrelle with occasional passes by serotine, soprano pipistrelle and myotis sp.

Building B3

- 4.3.8 No bats were seen to emerge from the building during the survey period.
- 4.3.9 Activity during both survey visits was limited to common pipistrelle. Bats were recorded primarily foraging within the courtyard area and foraging and commuting along the adjacent hedgerows / treelines and woodland edges.

Building B5

- 4.3.10 No bats were seen to emerge from the building during the survey period.
- 4.3.11 Bat activity in general was low. Occasional passes by common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle were noted, with bats foraging or commuting along the gardens and woodland edge. A single Leisler's pass was also noted at 20:49 foraging high over the site.

5.0 EVALUATION AND MITIGATION

- 5.1 The results of the survey suggest the presence of the following roosts within the main building (B1)
- A day roost of common pipistrelle beneath south-facing hanging tile, supporting 4no. individual bats.
 - A day roost of natterers beneath south-facing roof tile.
 - A day roost of common pipistrelle supporting 2no individual common pipistrelle to the apex of the south-eastern gable.
 - A day roost of serotine beneath a west facing roof tile.
- 5.2 Proposals are yet to be finalised but are likely to involve external changes / refurbishment which may result in the killing or injuring of individual bats roosting within B1 and the damage, disturbance or destruction of day roosts, with impacts significant at the site / local level.
- 5.3 Should proposed works cause the destruction or damage of a bat roost (including blocking of access points during works), a licence shall be required from Natural England to allow works to progress. Mitigation measures will be agreed through the application process for a mitigation licence from Natural England but are likely to be as follows:
- Licence application made to NE, once full planning permission is received.
 - Works impacting day roosts can be undertaken at any time of the year (although should aim to avoid the hibernation season). No works to the building are to begin until the licence is received.
 - Bat boxes at a number equivalent to 1no. box per roost to be impacted shall be installed to the southern aspect of adjacent mature trees.

- Once the licence is received, a toolbox talk shall be given to all contractors to make them aware of the legislation relating to bats, and what to do should a bat be unexpectedly found on site.
- Following erection of bat boxes, a soft strip of any roof and hanging tiles in the vicinity of the known roosts required for removal shall be completed. All works shall be undertaken under ecological supervision.
- Any bats found shall be caught by hand and released into the pre-erected bat box.
- Non-bitumen coated roofing membranes (formerly BRMs) shall not be used as this can cause bat entanglement and death. Type 1F felt or a breathable membrane which has passed a snagging propensity test are the only membranes permitted for use under licence.
- Existing adjacent vegetation should be retained to allow the continued use of these areas as foraging and commuting routes.
- Permanent compensatory roost features shall be installed within the building at a rate of 1no. feature per roost which is damaged / destroyed. The exact number and location of features shall be confirmed once designed proposals are finalised.
- Works impacting only 1- or 2-day roosts shall not require any subsequent monitoring. Works impacting a greater number of roosts shall require completion of a monitoring visit in the summer following completion of the works, with any remedial measures identified by the survey completed as soon as possible.

5.4 Any new external lighting should ensure that lighting is kept to the minimum levels and angled down and away from roost access points, bat boxes and surrounding mature trees, hedges and woodland. A lighting plan should be produced to demonstrate how proposed lighting shall comply with best practise guidance regarding bats (ILP Guidance Note 08/23), and how light spill upon adjacent woodland and mature trees shall be avoided.

5.5 Any soft landscaping should include '*bat-friendly*' planting to maintain and enhance the foraging resource on site. This should include the provision of pale and night scented species to increase the abundance of night flying moths. Examples of suitable species include native honeysuckle, jasmine, evening primrose and night-flowering catchfly.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Building B1 supports days roosts of 3no. species of bat, with a total of 8no. individuals. No bat roosts were recorded within any other building on site which may be impacted by the proposed works.
- 6.2 The mitigation measures outlined above shall ensure the protection of bats on site and shall ensure their continued favourable conservation status into the future.
- 6.3 Provision of new pond and invertebrate-friendly planting shall increase the overall invertebrate resource on site for the benefit of bats locally.

7.0 REFERENCES

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