



St. Wilfreds C of E Primary School, Ribchester

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Date: 28/04/2026

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1. Version History

Document Title	St.Wilfreds C of E Primary School, Ribchester
Prepared For	Cassidy & Ashton
Document Reference	PE.2165
Prepared By	Ben Crossthwaite
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2. Executive Summary

- 2.1.1. The site consists of a flat roofed section of a school building, located at St.Wilfreds C of E Primary School, Ribchester, and is the subject of a planning application to replace an existing flat roof and mount an air source heat pump at flat roof level.
- 2.1.2. The building was the subject of a preliminary roost assessment and was found to offer negligible bat roost suitability. No further survey work of mitigation is required at this time.

3. Introduction

3.1. Site location

3.1.1. The site is located at Ribchester St. Wilfrid's C of E Primary School, Ribchester, Lancashire, (OS grid reference: SD 65099 35141).



Figure 1 - Site location

3.2. Background

3.2.1. The site is the subject of a planning application to replace an existing flat roof and mount an air source heat pump at flat roof level.

3.3. Scope of work

3.3.1. Casidy & Ashton commissioned Project Ecology to carry out a Preliminary Roost Assessment of the section of building on site to be affected by the proposals.

3.4. Aims and Objectives

3.4.1. The aims of the survey were to:

- Complete an assessment to ascertain if potential or evidence of use exists for bat species;
- Determine if there are requirements for further and/or more detailed surveys.

3.5. Site Visit

3.5.1. The survey was undertaken on 28th April 2026 by Ben Crossthwaite MCIEEM. Ben has 10 years' professional experience of undertaking similar surveys across the UK and holds a level 2 class survey licence (Reference 2025-83538-CL18-BAT).

4. Survey Methodology

4.1. Bat Survey

4.1.1. A survey of the building/s was undertaken in accordance with the standard methods described in the 'Bat Worker's Manual' (JNCC 2004) and 'Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines' (BCT 2023¹). The survey comprised the following elements:

- A preliminary inspection of the exterior of the building/s to look for obvious signs of bat activity (such as droppings on windowsills) and assessing the potential for entry/exit into the roof. The survey was carried out with the use of binoculars, drone and endoscope where required.
- An assessment of the surrounding habitat quality for bats was carried out by walking the area on foot and later from reference to aerial images (Google Maps). These searches were used to identify important land use and habitat features known to be favoured by bats.

4.1.2. Interpretation of survey findings and assessment of roosting potential was undertaken using professional judgement and criteria described in published guidance²

4.2. Survey Limitations and Constraints

4.2.1. The building was fully accessible and there were no constraints to the internal or external surveys.

¹ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good practice guideline (4th edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London.


² Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

5. Results

5.1. Site Survey

- 5.1.1. The nearest record of a granted European Protected Species Licence for bats is located 0.23km southwest of the site. The record is of a Natterers' and Soprano Pipistrelle 'resting site' dated 2017-2022 (2017-27875-EPS-MIT)
- 5.1.2. The riverine habitats located adjacent to the site provide good bat foraging and commuting habitat.
- 5.1.3. The results of the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the section of building proposed to be affected by the site works are described in detail in Table 1 below.

Table 1. PRA Results

Building Reference	Description	Photographs		Bat Roost Potential Suitability
<p>Flat roof section of the school building</p>	<p>A stone and concrete block-built, section of the school with a flat roof.</p> <p>The masonry and associated mortar are in good condition, free from gaps and cracks.</p> <p>The roof is covered with fibreglass. The fibreglass is in good condition, free from gaps, cracks or pocket features.</p> <p>The roof windows and associated flashings are in good condition and tiles sit flush, with no potential entry points or roost features recorded.</p> <p>The roof edges are sealed with no gaps or perished sections. The flashings, fascia boards and soffits are fitted flush, with no gaps present.</p> <p>Internally, the section of the building with the flat roof consist of corridor spaces typically found in a school. These areas are finished spaces with no habitat features associated with roosting bats.</p>		<p>Negligible</p>	

The internal spaces are open to the underside of the roof with only a few roof void spaces present.

A few service voids are present between the underside of the flat roof and suspended ceilings. These were inspected and found to be sealed with no evidence of bats present.

No access points or evidence of Bats was found during the internal survey or external surveys.



6. Evaluation

- 6.1.1. The property is located within a semi-rural setting, with foraging and commuting opportunities found adjacent to the site and in the wider landscape.
- 6.1.2. The site proposals include works which will affect the flat roof and associated roof void spaces.
- 6.1.3. The building exterior has been assessed and was found to be in good condition with no external roosting features or potential entry points providing access into the roof voids or onward cavities found.
- 6.1.4. UK bat species generally roost in one of two locations;
- open locations, such as roof void, barns or caves
 - and crevice locations, such as under roof slates, between bricks and amongst stonework.
- 6.1.5. The former type of roosting bat is very unlikely to be present within the property. The roof void was found to be sealed, small and did not contain any bat droppings, something which would have been almost certain to be present if an open roosting bat, such as a Brown Long-eared bat were present.
- 6.1.6. No roosting habitat for crevice dwelling bats was found during the internal or external surveys. The masonry and roof tiles were all in good condition, with no features present.
- 6.1.7. It is considered unlikely that the proposed works will have any impacts on foraging bats.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 7.1.1. Taking into consideration the sites location and findings of the external and internal surveys of the property resulting in a negligible bat roost suitability verdict, it is concluded impacts to roosting bats are unlikely.
- 7.1.2. As the building is considered to offer negligible bat roost suitability, no further survey work or mitigation is required at this time.
- 7.1.3. This report is valid for 18 months, at which point a suitably qualified ecologist will assess the validity of the report, with an updated assessment likely to be required.

7.2. Precautions

- 7.2.1. It is not always possible to prove absence of roosting bats. Due to the transitional nature of bats, they can roost in suitable features opportunistically and are not always identified during surveys. It is recommended that roof coverings are removed with due caution. Should a bat/bats be identified at any time, work should stop, and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted to attend site and advise how to proceed.

8. Appendix A: Planning Policy and Legislation

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2025) describes the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. Within this framework, the requirements in relation to biodiversity are included within several policies. The two most relevant to individual planning decisions are Paragraphs 187 and 193, shown below:

- 187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
- 193. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
 - a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
 - b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
 - c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Legislation

All bat species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit), which make is an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat;
- Deliberately disturb bats;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

Proposed development works that are likely to disturb or destroy bats or their roosts will need to obtain a licence from the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (e.g., Natural England) prior to work commencing.

All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage, or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb a species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act while they are nest building or at or near a nest with eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young.