

Proposed Renovations at Bird Place, Henley-on-Thames, Berkshire, RG9 2LN

Bat Emergence Surveys

September 2025

A report to:

Adam Fawsitt

Report Produced by:

Morph Ecological Consultants Limited
380 Nottingham Road
Newthorpe
Nottingham
NG16 2ED

www.morph-ecological.co.uk
info@morph-ecological.co.uk
01773 770772

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SUMMARY

Bats	Survey results	During the bat emergence surveys, four soprano pipistrelle day roosts were recorded using gaps around the windows present at the western gable end wall of Bird Place, and one brown long-eared day roost was recorded within the loft space of Rose Cottage, observed when deploying remote monitoring equipment and later seen emerging from a tile near the roof ridge. General bat activity levels were high around the property, with frequent recordings of pipistrelle bats and commuting noctules.
	Further survey requirements	No further surveys are required.
	Mitigation, compensation, or enhancement recommendations	As five bat roosts were recorded, which will be impacted by the proposed works, a licence from Natural England will be necessary prior to works commencing. Given the low conservation value of the roosts, the Bat Earned Recognition route could be obtained. Works to the roof and windows will need to be supervised by a licenced ecologist, with bat boxes erected nearby as construction phase mitigation. To compensate for any potential roosting features to be lost, three bat boxes should be erected along the western gable end wall of Bird Place, and access features for the brown long-eared bat roost should be retained/incorporated within Rose Cottage.
Birds	Survey results	A possible blackbird nest was observed within the climbing vegetation present at the rear of the property, and the property has potentially bird nesting opportunities.
	Further survey requirements	No further surveys are required.
	Mitigation, compensation, or enhancement recommendations	As a precaution, if works are carried out during the bird nesting season (March to September inclusive), a check should be carried out to ensure no active birds' nests are present before the works commencing. Three bird boxes (including two swift boxes) should be incorporated into the scheme.

1. SITE AND PROPOSALS

1.1 Site Location

The site consists of Bird Place with the adjoining Rose Cottage and associated gardens, located at Bird Place, Henley-on-Thames, Berkshire, RG9 2LN (grid reference SU 76466 82585). The location of the site is shown on Figure 1 in Appendix 1.

1.2 Proposals

The proposals include complete internal renovation works, an extension to the rear, new fenestration and re-roofing works (including insulation in the loft).

1.3 Survey Brief

This report has been prepared by Morph Ecological Consultants for Adam Fawsitt. Morph Ecological Consultants brief was to ascertain whether the works would have an impact on bats. Morph Ecological Consultants was also commissioned to provide recommendations for licensing requirements, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures, as appropriate. To meet the requirements of the brief, three bat emergence surveys of the buildings were carried out by suitably qualified ecologists. Observations of nesting birds was also carried out at the same time. As a complimentary survey method, a period of remote monitoring was also carried out.

Legislation relating to the relevant protected species is included within Appendix 2.

1.4 Previous surveys

Phillips Ecology carried out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in June 2025 (Phillips Ecology 2025¹) of the building and identified approximately 50 bat droppings within the loft space of Rose Cottage, characteristic of long-eared bats. The building was assessed as having a confirmed roost with high potential suitability and as such three bat emergence surveys were recommended.

1.5 Site Description

The site is comprised of a Grade II Listed building, Bird Place, and adjoining Rose Cottage. The property is set on the periphery of Henley-on-Thames, with the River Thames running immediately to the west of the site.

A site plan is included within Figure 2, Appendix 1.

¹ **Phillips Ecology 2025** *Bird Place, Henley Bridge, Henley-On-Thames, Berkshire, RG9 2LN: Extended Phase 1 Ecological Assessment*. A report under contract to Mr A Fawsitt.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

2.1 Bat Emergence Surveys

2.1.1 Survey Details

Bat emergence surveys were carried out in accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins 2023²). The surveys involved ecologists surveying the building at dusk with bat detectors identifying whether any bats enter/ exit the building and what access features the bats are using.

The bat emergence surveys were carried out by five surveyors on the first and second visits, and four surveyors on the third visit. The first survey was conducted by Nikki Morton MSci MCIEEM (bat licence number: 2020-44906-CLS-CLS and Bat Earned Recognition Registered Consultant BER0221), Audrey Bourdais Paull BSc ACIEEM, Suzanne Disney BSc, Callum Waldie MSc and Joel Masters. The second survey was conducted by Nikki Morton MSci MCIEEM (bat licence number: 2020-44906-CLS-CLS and Bat Earned Recognition Registered Consultant BER0221), Audrey Bourdais Paull BSc ACIEEM, Suzanne Disney BSc, Callum Waldie MSc and Jessica Meadows. The third survey was conducted by Nikki Morton MSci MCIEEM (bat licence number: 2020-44906-CLS-CLS and Bat Earned Recognition Registered Consultant BER0221), Audrey Bourdais Paull BSc ACIEEM, Suzanne Disney BSc and Callum Waldie MSc.

The first survey was carried out on the on the 15th July 2025, the second survey on 6th August 2025 and the third survey on 27th August 2025. The surveys were all dusk surveys and therefore started 15 minutes prior to sunset (sunset was at 21:14, 20:27 and 20:00, respectively) and continued until an hour and a half after sunset. Anabat Scout bat detectors were used to record and hear any bat echolocation calls. The building was observed to identify any bats exiting the building and what access features the bats are using. Four Sannce 4CH 1080N infrared cameras and two Canon XA20 camera with additional Infrared lamps were used during each survey to assist in identifying any potential access features.

2.1.2 Weather Conditions

The weather was considered favourable on all survey visits. On the first survey, the temperature at sunset was 17°C, with a light shower at the beginning of the survey, turning dry for the duration of the survey and a slight wind. On the second survey, the temperature at sunset was 19°C, with light breeze and 100% cloud cover. On the third survey the temperature at sunset was 16°C, with a cool breeze and 100% cloud cover.

2.2 Remote Monitoring

2.2.1 Survey Details

As a complimentary survey method, an Anabat Ranger static bat detector and Maxdone motion activated trail camera were deployed in the loft space between the first and second visit. Accessing the loft for the deployment and collection of the equipment also allowed for two further loft inspections to be conducted to search for evidence of bats and live bats.

2.2.2 Weather Conditions

The weather remained largely optimal between the two survey visits during the period of remote monitoring, with only occasional nights of rain.

2.3 Nesting Bird Survey

As the survey was carried out during the bird nesting season (March-September inclusive) bird activity in and around the survey area was noted as well as listening to sounds of young begging for food.

² Collins, J (ed.) 2023 *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edn.)*, The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

2.4 Survey Constraints

2.4.1 Access

The vegetation in the immediately surrounding the southwest corner of Rose Cottage was very overgrown, so the end section of Rose Cottage could not easily be seen. The western gable end of Rose Cottage could also not be monitored during the surveys due to the it only being visible from within the neighbouring property's land. However, the direction of any bat flying near the house could be seen and the surveyor at the front/back could determine if a bat had flown over, therefore information about possible roosting activity could be determined.

2.4.2 Survey Limitations

Three dusk surveys with additional complementary remote monitoring were considered sufficient to characterise the roosts as per the bat survey guidelines (Collins 2023) and rule out the presence of other roosts.

2.4.3 Length of Data Validity

To ensure that survey data remains current and as bats move roosting sites frequently, if works have not commenced by May 2026, an update may be required to fully assess the impacts of the proposals on bats to ensure the data is from the most current survey season (as required for EPS licence applications).

3. SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Bat Emergence Surveys

3.1.1 First Bat Emergence Survey

Two soprano pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) emerged from the Bird Place during the survey.

The first bat recorded was a soprano pipistrelle bat and was seen at 21:24 emerging from the western gable end of Bird Place. A second bat emerged from the same location at 21:27 (the exact emergence locations were not determined as a tree was partially blocking the view of the infra-red camera). To the front of the property, foraging activity was noted to be frequent and primarily from soprano pipistrelles. Two counts of noctule (*Nyctalus noctule*) were recorded commuting over the site.

To the rear of the property, periods continuous soprano pipistrelle foraging were recorded. The vast majority of activity was associated with foraging bats within and along the woodland to the east of the site. Two counts of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) were also recorded.

When deploying the static bat detector and motion camera, one brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*) was observed in the loft space. It was seen flying within the loft space before hanging on a roof rafter at the eastern end of the loft. The bat was not seen to have emerged during the survey so may have remained within the loft space after being disturbed.



Brown long-eared bat roosting on the rafter when deploying the remote monitoring equipment

A hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) was seen in the rear garden during the survey.

3.1.2 Second Bat Emergence Survey

During the second bat emergence survey two soprano pipistrelle bats emerged from Bird Place and one brown long-eared bat emerged from Rose Cottage.

The first bat recorded was a soprano pipistrelle bat and was seen at 20:48 emerging from a gap in the mortar to the right-hand side of a window situated to the right of the western gable end of Bird Place. A second soprano pipistrelle bat emerged from the same window but from a gap in the mortar to the left of the window, at 21:06. At 21:23, a brown long-eared bat emerged from a lifted tile near the roof ridge on the northern elevation of Rose Cottage. Foraging activity was noted to be frequent and primarily from soprano pipistrelles, with occasional recordings of commuting and foraging common pipistrelles. Two counts of noctule were recorded commuting over the site.

To the rear of the property, activity was less frequent than at the front but with some soprano pipistrelle foraging recorded as well as frequently being seen using the tree line to the east of the property.

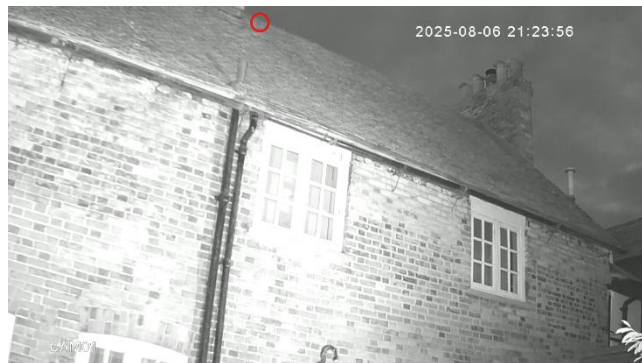
When collecting the static bat detector and motion camera, one brown long-eared bat was observed roosting under the roof ridge in the loft space (a similar location to where the bat was then seen to emerge), with a small cluster fresh droppings identified below the ridge.



First soprano pipistrelle bat seen emerging on the infrared camera during the second survey



Second soprano pipistrelle bat seen emerging on the infrared camera during the second survey



Brown long-eared bat seen emerging on the infrared camera during the second survey

3.1.3 *Third Bat Emergence Survey*

Four soprano pipistrelle bats emerged from Bird Place during the survey and one brown long-eared bat emerged from Rose Cottage.

The first bat recorded was a soprano pipistrelle bat and was seen at 20:06 emerging from a gap in the mortar to the left of a window situated to the left of the western gable end of Bird Place (a different window to the emergence location of Visit 2). Three further soprano pipistrelle bats emerged from the same location at 20:12, 20:15 and 20:20. At 20:31, a brown long-eared bat emerged from the same location as in the second survey, the roof ridge of Rose Cottage. During the survey, several soprano pipistrelle social calls were recorded to the front of the property, with intermittent soprano pipistrelle commuting and foraging activity. Two counts of noctule were recorded commuting over the site.

To the rear of the property, continuous soprano pipistrelle foraging recorded and bats were frequently seen using the treeline to the east of the property.



Location of four emerging soprano pipistrelle bats seen on the infrared camera during the third survey



Brown long-eared bat seen emerging on the infrared camera during the third survey

3.1.4 Remote Monitoring Period

During the remote monitoring period inside the loft space between the first and second emergence survey, the motion activated trail camera was triggered by flying brown long-eared bats, all on 4th August 2025, starting at 21:04 and finishing at 21:22. The bat appeared to be attempting to forage on a moth within the loft. A rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) was also observed on one occasion within the loft.

On the static bat detector a total of 8389 recordings were triggered; however, some the majority of the calls were general 'noise' files and also 1119 recordings were attributable to soprano pipistrelle bats which were likely foraging outside the building during the survey (there were many gaps noted between tiles and no felt lining on the roof likely resulting in echolocation calls being more easily captured inside the loft from outside bats). Two brown long-eared bat recordings were picked up on the nights of the 20th July at 20:39 and 24th July at 20:33. A brown long-eared bat was seen flying around the loft space when deploying the detector on 15th July so this demonstrates that the brown long-eared bat did not echolocate a lot inside the loft (or was particularly quiet). Other recordings (considered to be from commuting and foraging passes around the building) included 15 noctules recordings and 19 common pipistrelle recordings.



Brown long-eared bat in the loft recorded on the trail camera

3.2 Nesting Bird Observations

A possible blackbird (*Turdus merula*) nest was identified within the climbing plant to the rear of the property behind Rose Cottage, although no chicks were heard during the survey.

4. EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Bats

4.1.1 *Evaluation*

Four bat roosts are present at Bird Place and one bat roost is present at Rose Cottage, which will all be impacted by the proposed works, therefore, any works to the buildings can only commence with a European Protected Species (EPS) licence from Natural England. **No works to the building (including works considered to be general maintenance or repair) should be carried out until a bat mitigation EPS licence from Natural England has been granted.**

Over the course of the three surveys, 5 bat roosts were recorded (a maximum count of one brown long-eared bat, and 4 soprano pipistrelle bats in one visit). During the first survey, two soprano pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from the western gable end of Bird Place (the exact location was not seen but likely to be from the same window as seen on Visit 2). A brown long-eared bat was observed flying in the loft space of Rose Cottage but was not seen emerging. During the second survey, two soprano pipistrelle bats were recorded emerging from two areas of missing mortar around the right window at the western gable end of Bird Place, and a brown long-eared bat emerged from the loft space via a gap under a ridge tile of Rose Cottage. During the third survey, four soprano pipistrelle bats were seen emerging from the same area of missing mortar around the left window on the western gable end of Bird Place. A brown long-eared bat was seen emerging from the same location as in the second survey.

As the soprano pipistrelles were only recorded using each feature on one survey, it suggests that the roosts are used as occasional day roosts of a small number of soprano pipistrelle bats. A single brown long-eared bat was recorded within the loft space on all three visits and emerged from the same location on two visits, which suggests the roost is being used as a day roost for an individual brown long-eared bat.

It is not considered that the roosts represent higher conservation value roosts such as a maternity roost, as it would be anticipated that far greater numbers of bats and bat droppings would have been recorded had such a roost be present. The building is also unlikely to support a hibernation roost, as the roosting features present are unlikely to provide the consistent over-winter temperatures required by hibernating bats.

Generally, there was high bat activity onsite, with bats recorded foraging on site (mostly to the front of the property and along the tree line to the east of the property) and commuting via the site. The habitats within the immediate area include the River Thames to the west and a large woodland to the east. The garden also provides optimal foraging and commuting habitat due to the vegetation and lack of night-time lighting. It could therefore be considered that the garden forms a reasonably important site for foraging and commuting bats.

4.1.2 *Mitigation, Compensation and Enhancement Recommendations*

As five bat roosts were recorded, of which four will be destroyed by the proposed works (soprano pipistrelle roosts around the windows to be removed) and one roost will be modified (brown long-eared bat roost within the Rose Cottage roof to be repaired), the building works must only proceed under a licence from Natural England. As only five low conservation value roosts will be impacted, the site is eligible to be registered under level 1 of the Bat Earned Recognition scheme. As Morph Ecological Consultants has a Bat Earned Recognition Registered Consultant, it is proposed to take this approach as the licencing process if more straightforward and less costly to the client.

As part of the Site Registration for the Bat Earned Recognition (BER) Licence, an application needs to be submitted detailing the proposed mitigation and compensation measures. The following information will be contained within the application (subject to Natural England's approval):

- **Works to the building can only commence once the EPS licence has been granted by Natural England. The licence can only be applied for once planning permission has been granted and all wildlife related conditions have been discharged.**
- Works impacting any bat roosts would need to be carried out when overnight temperatures are over 5°C and ideally would be carried out in spring or autumn (although there are no specific timing restrictions attached to the Level 1 BER Licence).
- On the day of the works commencing, a pre-works check will be carried out by the BER Registered Consultant or Accredited Agent to search for evidence of bats.
- A toolbox talk would need to be delivered to the site contractors and will be signed by all attendees.
- One crevice bat box and one cavity bat box would need to be erected on a suitable tree prior to works commencing as construction phase mitigation (a suggested brand is shown below).
- The licenced ecologist will then supervise the removal the key areas which may have roosting bats present (e.g. areas of missing mortar around windows and roof tiles), and in the event that a bat is found, it would be relocated by the licenced ecologist to the relevant pre-erected bat box. If it is not possible to relocate the bat safely from around the windows, it may be decided to install a bat exclusion device which would need to be left in place for a minimum of 5 days of good weather.
- All tiles / features will be carefully removed by hand and checked underneath for bats until the building has been declared free from bats and works can continue without ecological supervision.
- Should at any bats be found during the works when the ecologist is not on site, works should stop, and Morph Ecological Consultants should be contacted to decide a strategy on how is best to proceed.
- Contractors should always wear gloves and not attempt to capture a bat. In the unlikely event of anyone getting bitten or scratched by a bat, they should seek medical advice immediately.



*Improved Cavity Bat Box
(suitable for construction
phase mitigation)*



*Improved Double Crevice Bat
Box (suitable for construction
phase mitigation)*

Due to the number of roosts present, post-development monitoring is required in the form of a check immediately post-development to ensure the compensation features are completed in accordance with the authorised site registration.

Should works not commence before May 2026, then it may be necessary to undertake repeat surveys to ensure the survey data is up to date for the EPS licence application (as required by Natural England). A visit must also occur by the licenced ecologist within 3 months of the licence application to ensure there are no changes on site.

As per the BER guidelines for Minimum Expectations for Bat Mitigation, Compensation, Monitoring and Management, compensation is required as more than 3 roosts are being impacted. As such as a minimum at least one feature suitable for the species concerned per roost is required. It is therefore

recommended that five bat roosting opportunities are incorporated into the scheme. It is recommended that brown long-eared bat roost within the loft space of Bird Cottage is retained so bats can continue to use the loft space. It is understood that new insulation will be installed, but if roof felt is required, only Type 1F bitumen should be used (bats can become entangled in breathable membranes). Ideally the access feature being used by the bat (the lifted tile near the ridge) should be retained or re-created during the re-roofing / repair works, but if this is not possible, then two access features into the loft space should be created, such as lifted tiles or areas of missing mortar. Contractors could advise how best to achieve the lifted tiles but may be possible through placing a small piece of wood / mortar / tile etc behind the tiles, or using a piece of lead to create an access feature. The two features should be created near the ridge on the northern elevation to best replicate where the bats are currently roosting (and provides the bats an option should one become blocked by other animals). Alternatively, specific bat access tiles can be purchased. Examples are listed below, but others are available:



Example of a bat access tile (from Heritage Clay Tiles Ltd) which can be purchased



Access feature created from a gap in the mortar



DIY of a bat access feature in lead

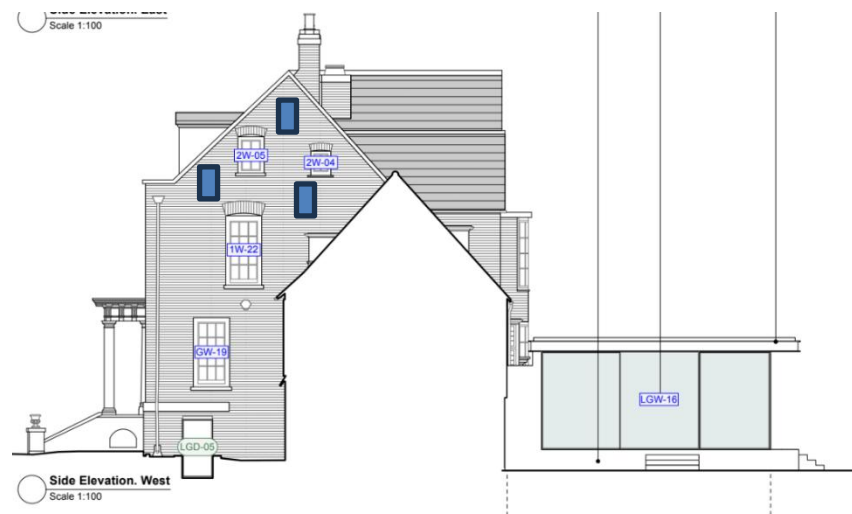
As it is not considered possible to retain the locations of the soprano pipistrelle bat roosts around the windows on the western gable end wall of Bird Place as the windows will be replaced, it is recommended that replacement bat roosting provision be provided by installing three bat boxes. Any feature installed needs to be a minimum of 3m high, and not illuminated by any lighting, with a clear path for the bats to access the boxes. Ideally the bat boxes would be positioned as close as possible to where the bats were recorded roosting on the gable end wall. A suggested brand is shown below where the colour can be selected and the brand of bat box is known to have good uptake of bats. It is not known if there may be restrictions due to the listed building status, therefore alternative designs and locations can be considered if required.



*Greenwood's Ecohabitats
Three Crevice Bat Box*



*Greenwood's Ecohabitats
Two Crevice Bat Box*



Suggested bat box locations

4.2 Nesting Birds

As one potential blackbird nest was recorded during the survey, and the building offers multiple opportunities for nesting birds, any works should ideally avoid the bird nesting season, which runs from March to September (inclusive). If works are to be carried out during the bird nesting season, a check would be required within the 24 hours prior to works commencing to determine if nesting birds would be impacted by the works. If an active nest is recorded, the works in the vicinity of the nest would need to be delayed until the chicks had fledged.

As bird nesting opportunities will be lost, compensation will be required to ensure there is no net loss of bird nesting habitat on site. It is recommended that three bird boxes are installed within the scheme, including two swift boxes and one hole nest box. The swift boxes should be installed at least 3m high and on a north or shaded elevation. Durable materials such as Woodcrete are recommended to provide longevity of the potential nesting habitat. A bird box should be erected on a nearby tree or within vegetation near the building. A range of bird boxes can be purchased from www.nhbs.com, examples and suggested locations are listed below but other equivalent brands are available.



Woodstone Burgos Swift Box



*1B Schwegler Nest Box
(either 32mm or 26mm hole)*



Front Elevation, North
Scale 1:100

Suggested swift box locations

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

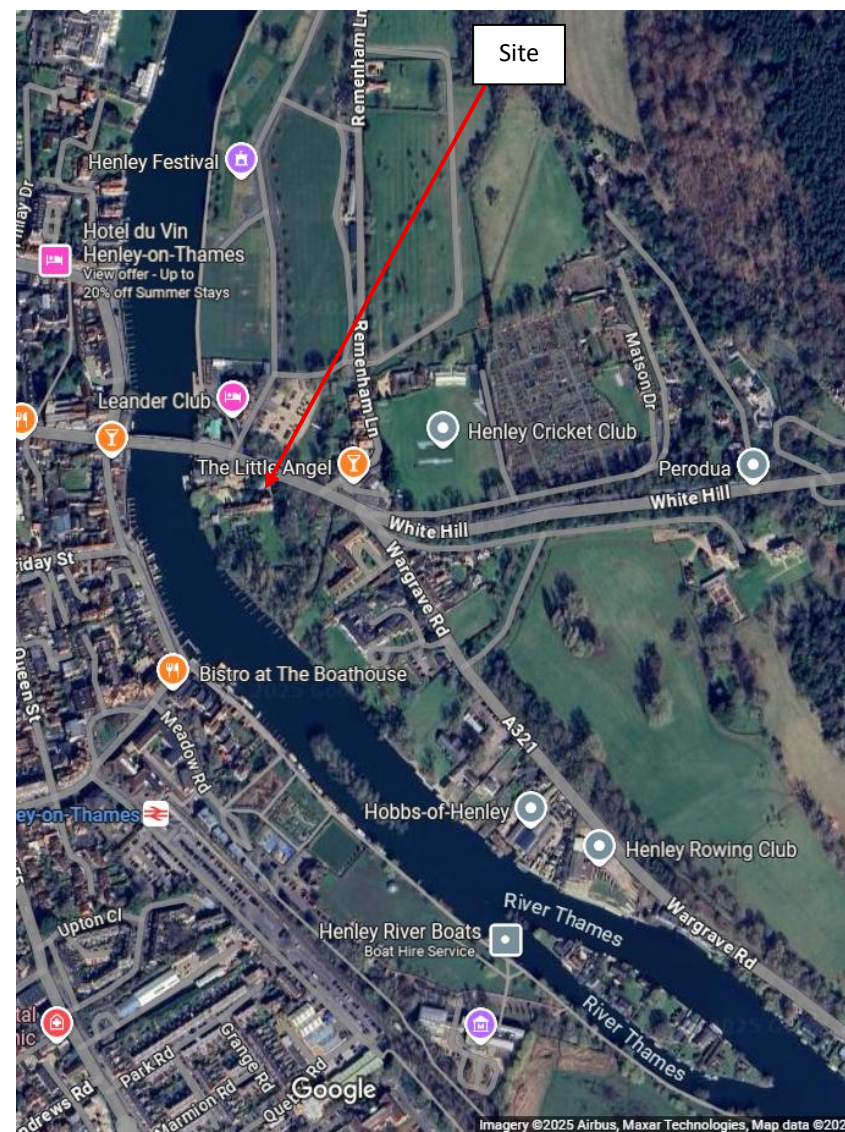


Figure 2: Existing Site Plan

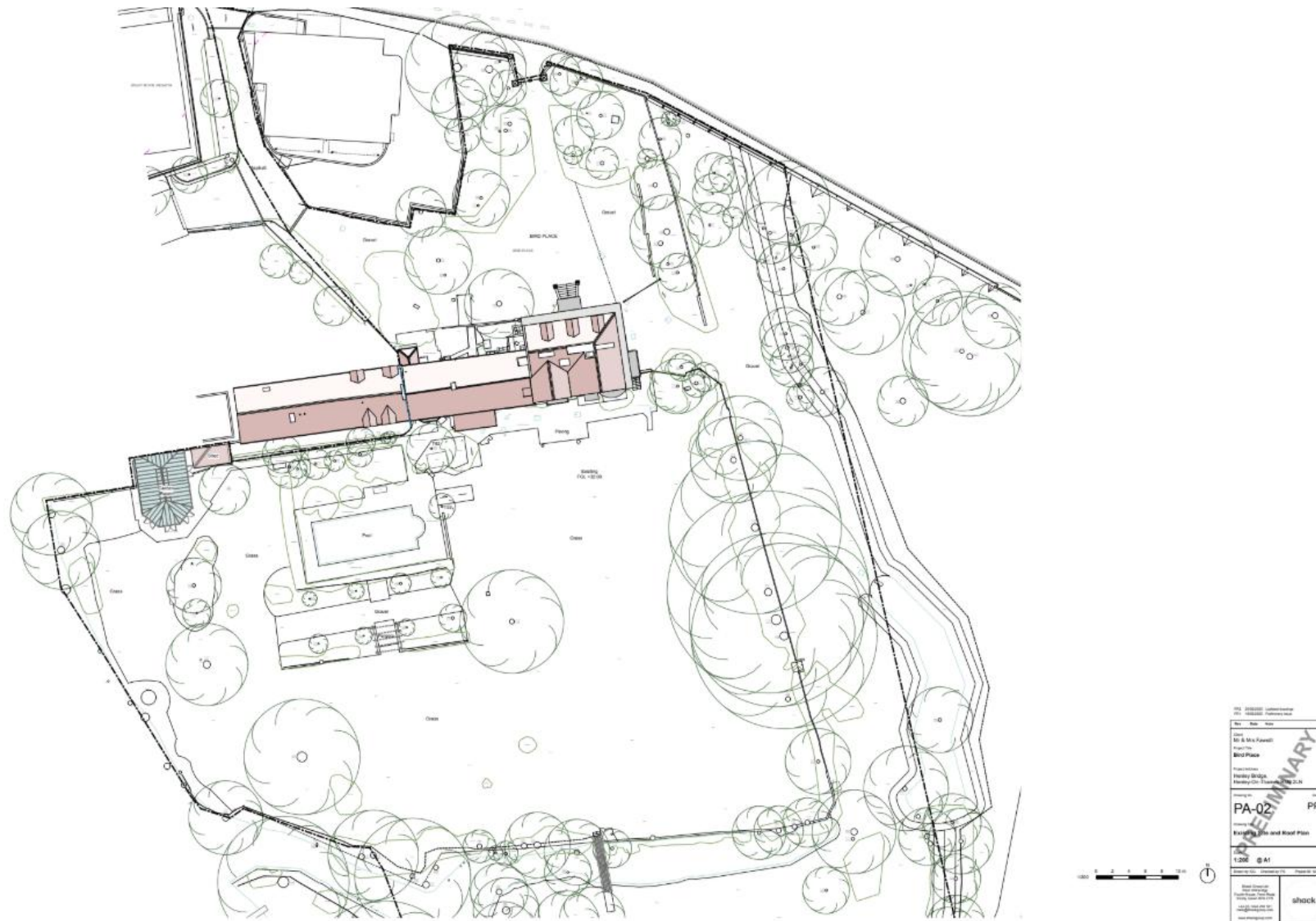


Figure 3: Bat Emergence Locations

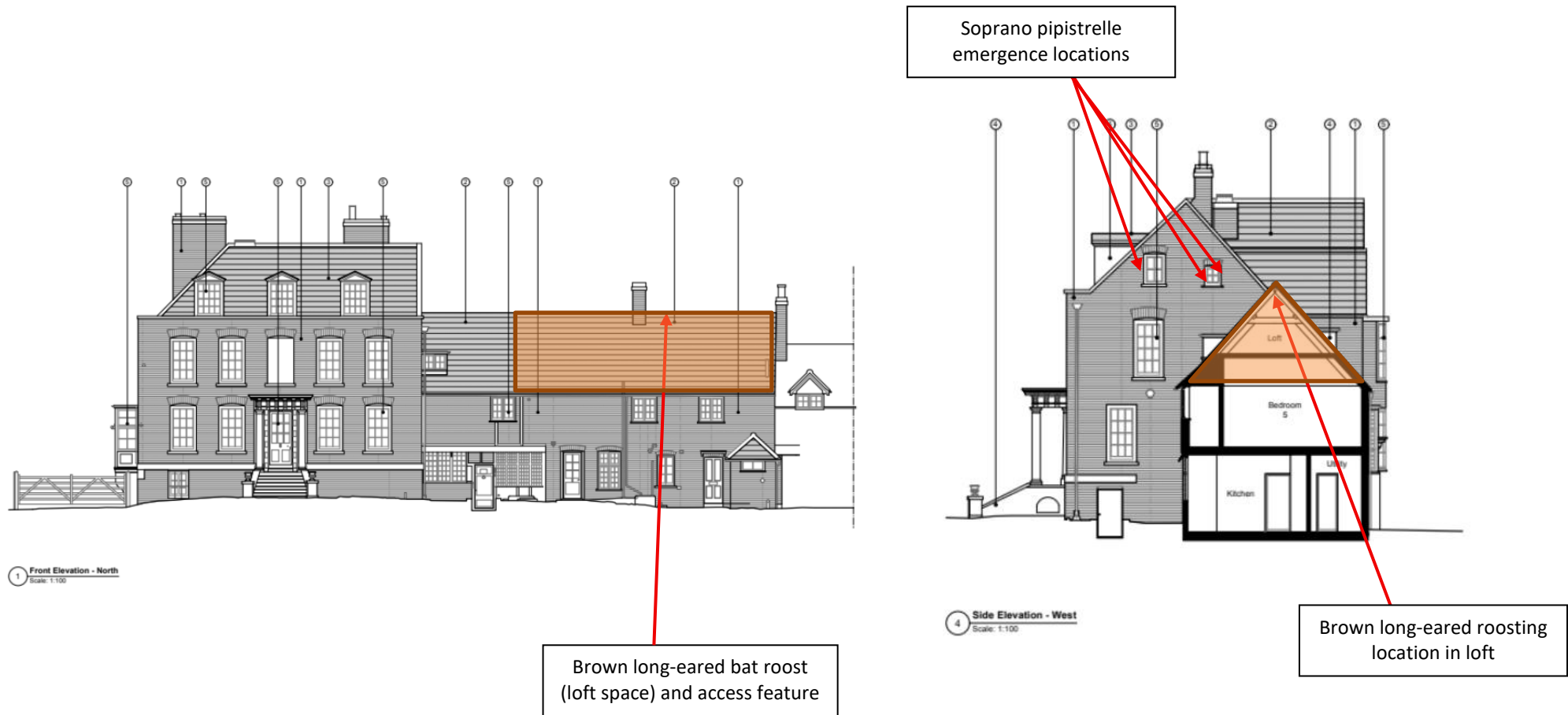


Figure 4: Proposed Site Plan



APPENDIX 2: LEGISLATION

Bats

All bat species are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally or recklessly take, kill or injure a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats.

A bat roost is defined in the legislation as “any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection”. Roosts are protected whether or not bats are present at the time.

If a development activity is likely to result in disturbance or killing of a bat, damage to its habitat or any of the other activities listed above, then a licence will usually be required from Natural England.

Birds

The bird breeding season generally lasts from early March to September for most species. All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it illegal to intentionally:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being built or in use;
- Take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird; and
- Possess or control any wild bird or egg unless obtained legally.

Birds listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are afforded additional protection, which makes it an offence to disturb a bird while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Quality Assurance

Quality Information

Project	Proposed Extension at Bird Place, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2LN: Bat Emergence Surveys
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Prepared by	Audrey Bourdais Paull BSc ACIEEM
Checked by	Nikki Morton MSci MCIEEM
Date Sent	3 rd September 2025

Revision History

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Revision Date			
Details			
Prepared by			
Checked by			

Disclosure

The information, data, evidence, advice and opinions which have been prepared and provided are true, and have been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

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