Bat Activity Survey Report

Petersburgh Farm
Beckermet
Cumbria
CA21 2XW

Prepared for: Adams Planning and Development Ltd
Date: November 2025
Reference: J033

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Ecological Consultancy

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CONTENTS

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Executive Summary	
Background	Natural Ecology were instructed to undertake bat emergence surveys of buildings at Petersburgh Farm, Beckermet, Cumbria CA21 2XW (central grid reference NY 02181 05947, What3Words:/// clever.blindfold.advantage) following a Preliminary Roost Assessment undertaken by Envirotech in October 2023. The result of this PRA confirmed the requirement for further nocturnal bat activity surveys, which were undertaken during the survey season of 2024.
Site Description	The site comprises a series of adjoined buildings including four rendered barns and one stone barn. The buildings lie approximately 800m south of the village of Beckermet.
Development Proposal	Development proposals comprise renovation of the buildings for residential purposes and therefore require change of use planning permission. The proposals will not alter the overall footprint.
Purpose	The purpose of the survey was to: • Assess the potential value of those features for bats following the best practice guidelines; • Assess the potential of the surrounding habitats for foraging and commuting bats; • Undertake a single nocturnal bat activity survey to determine whether the building is in use as a bat roost; • Recommend further surveys, if necessary; and • Recommend mitigation, compensation, and enhancement measures. • A nesting bird check was also completed where possible.
Results	**Nocturnal Survey** No bats were identified roosting within either building during the course of the surveys. Three bat species were observed during the survey: common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. None of these were seen using the building for roosting. All activity was a result of commuting and foraging along the lane and over the site.
Recommendations	Given the survey results, it is considered that bats are not using the buildings for roosting. No further action is required for works to be carried out on site. In the unlikely case that bats are found during works, all works should stop immediately, and a licensed bat ecologist contacted.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 Natural Ecology were commissioned by Adams Planning and Development Ltd to undertake nocturnal bat surveys of buildings at Petersburgh Farm, Beckermet, Cumbria CA21 2XW (central grid reference NY 02181 05947, What3Words: ///clever.blindfold.advantage) during May to July 2024 (hereafter referred to as the 'Building/Site').

1.2 The site was subject to a preliminary roost assessment in October 2023, undertaken by Envirotech. The purpose of the PRA was to establish, as far as possible, whether the site offered any potential to support roosting bats and assess the necessity for any further bat surveys to support a planning application.

Survey Objectives

1.3 The purpose of the nocturnal survey was to:

- Assess the potential value of features highlighted during the PRAs for bats following the best practice guidelines;
- Assess the potential of the surrounding habitats for foraging and commuting bats;
- Recommend further surveys, if necessary; and
- Recommend mitigation, compensation, and enhancement measures.

1.4 The following assessment is informed by the Bat Conservation Trust's publication Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J. (Ed) 2023).

2. FORMER SURVEYS

Preliminary Roost Assessment

2.1 A preliminary roost assessment for the site to be affected by the proposed works was completed on the 19th October 2023 by a different consultancy - Envirotech. The exterior and interior of the buildings were visually assessed for potential access points and evidence of bat activity. Suitable roosting features were noted, and evidence searched for including feeding remains, staining and droppings.

2.2 The surveys were assigned potential using Collins (2016), cross referencing suitability with risk level to produce survey level for each building. **The executive summary appears to not match the field results for recommendations,** and as such the survey effort was taken directly from the field survey section when carrying out emergence surveys.

2.3 Now follows a summary of the details and categorisations found within the original PRA report "BAT, BARN OWL & NESTING BIRD SURVEY AT Petersburgh Farm, Beckermet, CA21 2XW" Envirotech, 26th October 2023:

2.4 Building 1 had **moderate** potential, building 2 had **negligible** potentials, and buildings 3 to 6 had **low** potential. Further details are provided below:

2.5 Building 1 was summarised as being of moderate size with walls in good condition, and well-sealed eaves. No roof voids were present, and the roof coverings were in excellent condition with no raised slates. Bat droppings were observed throughout the first floor and were thought to indicate a bat roost but could not be thoroughly searched for Health and Safety purposes. The building was awarded moderate potential for use by bats, with their categorisation being 6 "Two surveys between May and August".

2.6 Building 2 was summarised as having walls in excellent condition. The eaves had gaps over them which were draughty and cold. The building was awarded negligible potential, with their categorisation being 2 "Surveyor to make judgement as to if additional surveys likely to provide useful information about the site".

2.7 Building 3 was summarised as having walls in good condition with some gaps and cracks and holes for ventilation. The eaves were well sealed, and the roof lined. There were several gaps under the roof coverings, and a large gap under the ridgeline, none of which had indication of use by bats. Some bat droppings were observed scattered intermittently on the floor, indicating the use of the barn for feeding rather than roosting. The building was awarded low potential for use by bats, with their categorisation being 5 "Single survey (dusk or dawn) between May and August."

2.8 Building 4 was summarised as having walls in moderate condition. The eaves were well sealed. No roof voids present, and the roof was lined. The roof tiles were in excellent condition, with only one missing which had no evidence of use by bats. The building was awarded low potential for use by bats, with their categorisation being 4 "Single survey (dusk or dawn) at appropriate time of year May to August".

2.9 Building 5 was summarised as having walls in excellent condition. The eaves were well sealed. No roof voids present and roof coverings in excellent condition. There are no roof voids and the roof coverings are in excellent condition. The building was awarded low potential for use by bats, with their categorisation being 3 "Surveyor to make

judgement as to if additional surveys likely to provide useful information about the site".

2.10 Building 6 was summarised as having walls in excellent condition. The eaves were well sealed. There are no roof voids, and the roof coverings were in excellent condition. The building was awarded low potential for use by bats, with their categorisation being 5 "Single survey (dusk or dawn) between May and August".

2.11 Based on the above result from the original PRA, building 1 was given 3 surveys due to the indication it may have been in use as a bat roost, buildings 3 to 6 were given 1 survey each, and building 2 had no surveys. Due to the close proximity of the buildings to each other, all buildings within eyesight were observed during each of the surveys though only the buildings being formally surveyed were covered by cameras.

3. METHODS

Site Survey

3.1 Natural Ecology visited the site on the 8th, 21st and 29th May, 20th June and 11th July to conduct dusk emergence surveys, by experienced bat surveyors in suitable weather conditions, and following the guidelines set out by the Bat Conservation Trust's "Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists". Observations were made by surveyors situated around the building at locations that were considered most likely for bats to emerge.

3.2 The emergence survey was conducted from 15 minutes before sunset and concluded approximately 1.5 hours after sunset.

3.3 Detectors used for bat observation and identification were Echo Meter Touch 2's with Samsung tablets. Bat passes were observed, and flight paths mapped (commuting, foraging).

3.4 NVAs used included Nightfox Whiskers, Nightfox Cape and Nightfox 110R. All NVAs were mounted on secure tripods and covered all required features of the building/s surveyed, with additional IR lights where needed. Example photos for two of the buildings are included in the appendices showing darkest point with IR on and off.

3.5 Analysis was performed as necessary on calls made.

Limitations

3.6 There were no significant constraints to the nocturnal survey; weather conditions were good for the surveys.

Legislation

3.7 Bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. In summary, this makes it an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct any place used by bats for breeding and shelter, disturb a bat, or kill, injure, or take a bat. Seven bat species including noctule *Nyctalus noctula* (but not common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) are listed at Species of Principal Importance under the provisions of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

3.8 The ODPM Circular 06/05 makes the presence of a protected species a material consideration within the planning process. It states that it is essential for the presence of protected species and the extent they may be affected by proposed development be established through appropriate surveys before the planning permission is granted and encourages the use of planning conditions to secure the long-term protection of the species.

3.9 The NERC Act, as amended, puts an obligation on public bodies to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Under the terms of the Act, conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing populations and/or habitats. The local planning authority (LPA) or other determining authority must therefore consider the effects of planning applications upon biodiversity and how it can be mitigated for or enhances.

3.10 Furthermore, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) required that 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local

environment' and that 'opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity'.

4. Results – Nocturnal Survey

Site Description

4.1 The site is situated 800m south of the village of Beckermet, Cumbria (Figure 1).

4.2 There is fragmented woodland in the local area, but the site is in an exposed position.

4.3 The surveyed buildings comprised three rendered barns under slate roofs, one stone-built barn and one small stone-built building under slate roofs, and on rendered building under a flat corrugated roof.

4.4 It is proposed to apply for change of use and convert the barns into residential dwellings.

4.5 Construction is unlikely to affect any other buildings or landscape in the area.

Figure 1: Petersburgh Farm situated in the wider landscape and approximate site boundary, highlighted in red.


BECKERMET

Nocturnal Activity Survey

4.6 A breakdown of the bat activity can be found below. No bats were observed roosting within the buildings during the nocturnal surveys.

Table 2: Surveyors and Equipment

Survey Date	Surveyor	Experience	Equipment
All Dates.	Lucinda Spencer	10 years survey experience as a bat consultant Licence Number 2022-CL18-BAT	Echo Meter Touch 2, Samsung Tablet, Nightfox Whisker Infra-Red Camera
	David Watson	4 years survey experience	Echo Meter Touch 2, Samsung Tablet, Nightfox Whisker Infra-Red Camera

Table 3: Survey Conditions

Survey Date	Survey Times		Sunset Time	Temperature (C)		Precipitation		Cloud Cover (%)		Wind Speed (mph)	
	Start	End		Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End
08.05.2024	20:45	22:30	21:00	12	12	Dry	Dry	100	100	7	7
21.05.2024	21:05	22:55	21:20	16	15	Dry	Dry	100	100	3	3
29.05.2024	21:20	23:05	21:35	12	12	Dry	Dry	90	90	10	10
20.06.2024	21:35	23:25	21:50	17	15	Dry	Dry	5	5	1	1
11.07.2024	21:30	23:25	21:45	15	15	Dry	Dry	80	50	4	4

Survey 1 – 8th May 2024 Building 1

4.7 Three bat species was observed in total: common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. No more than a single bat was observed at one time. The bats were not associated with the building, and were seen to be flying along the lane, foraging and commuting. Bats were also observed flying along the eastern hedgerow of the property.

4.8 The first bat recorded was at 21:24, with low activity by a common pipistrelle.

4.9 No roosting bats or roosting behaviour was observed during the survey.

Survey 2 – 21st May 2024 Building 4 & Building 5

4.10 Three bat species were observed: common and soprano pipistrelle and noctule. No more than two bats were observed at one time.

4.11 The first bat was recorded at 21:38, a soprano pipistrelle flying over the site. Bats were observed flying along the lane, over the buildings and within the courtyards.

4.12 No roosting bats or roosting behaviour was observed during the survey.

Survey 3 – 29th May 2024 Building 3

4.13 Three bat species were observed: common and soprano pipistrelle and noctule. No more than two bats were observed at one time. Bats were seen to be flying along the lane, over the buildings and within the courtyards.

4.14 The first bat recorded was at 21:55, with two noctules flying down the lane and across the site, foraging.

4.15 No roosting bats or roosting behaviour was observed during the survey.

Survey 4 – 20th June 2024 – Building 1

4.16 Three bat species were observed: common and soprano pipistrelle and noctule. No more than two bats were observed at one time. Bats were seen to be flying along the lane, over the buildings and within the courtyards.

4.17 The first bat recorded was at 22:09, with constant foraging activity from noctules along the lane and over the site. Pipistrelles were first heard on site at 22:10.

4.18 No roosting bats or roosting behaviour was observed during the survey.

Survey 5 – 11th July 2024 – Building 1 & Building 6

4.19 Three bat species were observed: common and soprano pipistrelle and noctule. No more than two bats were observed at one time. Bats were seen to be flying along the lane, over the buildings and within the courtyards.

4.20 The first bat was recorded at 21:56, with noctules foraging over the site.

4.21 No roosting bats or roosting behaviour was observed during the survey.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The PRA identified potential roost features (PRFs) and bat access points into the building.

5.2 Nocturnal bat surveys are carried out to establish if bats are roosting in a structure or tree, and if they do, they help determine species and roost type present, and the level of further survey effort, mitigation and compensation required for the development to lawfully proceed.

5.3 During the bat activity survey, activity from bats was relatively low, with the most recorded species being passes by common and soprano pipistrelles and noctules commuting and foraging along hedgerow and tree lines and through the site.

5.4 Although the internal inspection revealed bat droppings in various area, the activity survey confirmed that bats are not currently using the buildings as no bats were seen to emerge.

5.5 The proposed works will **not** result in the destruction or disturbance of any bat roosts, and as such a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) from Natural England will be **not** be required.

5.6 No roosting activity was observed during the course of the survey.

5.7 As no roosting behaviour was observed, the recommendation for works involving roofs and roof structures of the building, should be for it to be carried out under an **Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW).**

5.8 Due to the legal protection of bats in the UK, if any bats are unexpectedly discovered during works, all activities in that area should immediately cease and the advice of a licensed bat ecologist sought.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Final recommendations are as follow:

- The proposed works will **not** result in the destruction or disturbance of potential bat roosts, and as such no further action is required with regards to licencing.

- The best recommendation for all work involving the roofs for it to be carried out under an **Ecological Clerk of Works.**

- Due to the legal protection of bats in the UK, if any bats are unexpectedly discovered during works, all activities in that area should immediately cease and the advice of a licensed bat ecologist sought.

- As it has been found that breathable roofing membranes (BRM's) pose risk of entrapment to bats, they should not be used in locations where bats are likely to roost. Either Type 1F hessian reinforced bitumen felt should be used within the roof or measures must be taken to ensure that bats cannot come into contact with any BRM's.

- The loss of bat roosting habitat must be compensated onsite by the installation of 3x general purpose bat boxes or alternatively incorporating at least 3 gaps of 20mm into the new build ridge tiles, beneath roofing tiles or soffits.

- External lighting should be kept to a minimum and, where necessary, should be low wattage and should include measures to reduce reflective rebound into the surrounding sky.

- Site lighting will be kept to a minimum during construction and operational phases. If lighting is necessary, there are a number of ways to minimise the effect of lighting on bats. Information can be taken from the Institution of Lighting Professionals and Bat Conservation Trust's Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK (2018). If further clarification is required, the ecologist should be consulted.

- As bats are opportunistic animals, and are transitory in nature, if the start of works is delayed by more than one year (into the summer of 2025 or later) then update surveys of all buildings is likely to be required.

- A Precautionary Working Method Statement and Toolbox Talk has been included as an Appendix within this report which can be used as a site document.

- On a further note, barn owls are breeding within building 5 in a barn owl nest box, the chicks have been heard calling on several occasions. No works can be done to this building until the chicks have fledged. The nest box can then be boarded to prevent further use and put up in a different suitable location on site.

7. REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Bat Ability (2019) Assessing Sites for Hibernation Potential. A Practical Approach, including Proposed Method and Supporting Notes

Bat Conservation Trust (2018) Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK

COLLINS, J. (ED.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines, 4th Edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/09/bat-surveys-for--ecologists-good-practice-guidelines-4th-edition-launched

Envirotech (2023) Bat, Barn Owl & Nesting Bird Survey, Petersburgh Farm, Beckermet CA21 2XW. Report reference: 8912

Grid Reference Finder (2023): GRF, online http://www.gridreferencefinder.com, accessed at report date.

Magic (2023): Magic Maps, NEPS licences and designated sites, online http://www.magic.gov.uk, accessed at report date.

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

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005), Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. Para. 99

8. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1: 08-05-24 Building 1 S1 survey start

Photo 2: 08-05-24 Building 1 S2 survey start

Photo 3: 08-05-24 Building 1 S1 survey end

Photo 4: 08-05-24 Building 1 S2 survey end

Photo 5: 21-05-24 Building 4 S2 survey start

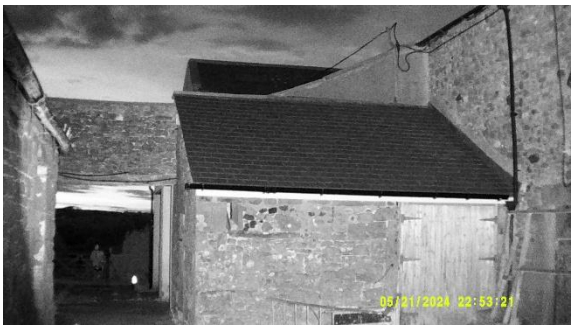


Photo 6: 21-05-24 Building 1 S2 survey end

Photo 7: 21-05-24 Building 5 S4 survey start

Photo 8: 21-05-24 Building 5 S4 survey end

Photo 9: 21-05-24 Building 5 S4 survey end example without IR

Photo 10: 29-05-24 Building 3 S5 survey start

Photo 11: 29-05-24 Building 3 S3 survey start

Photo 12: 29-05-24 Building 3 S2 survey start

Photo 13: 29-05-24 Building 3 S5 survey end

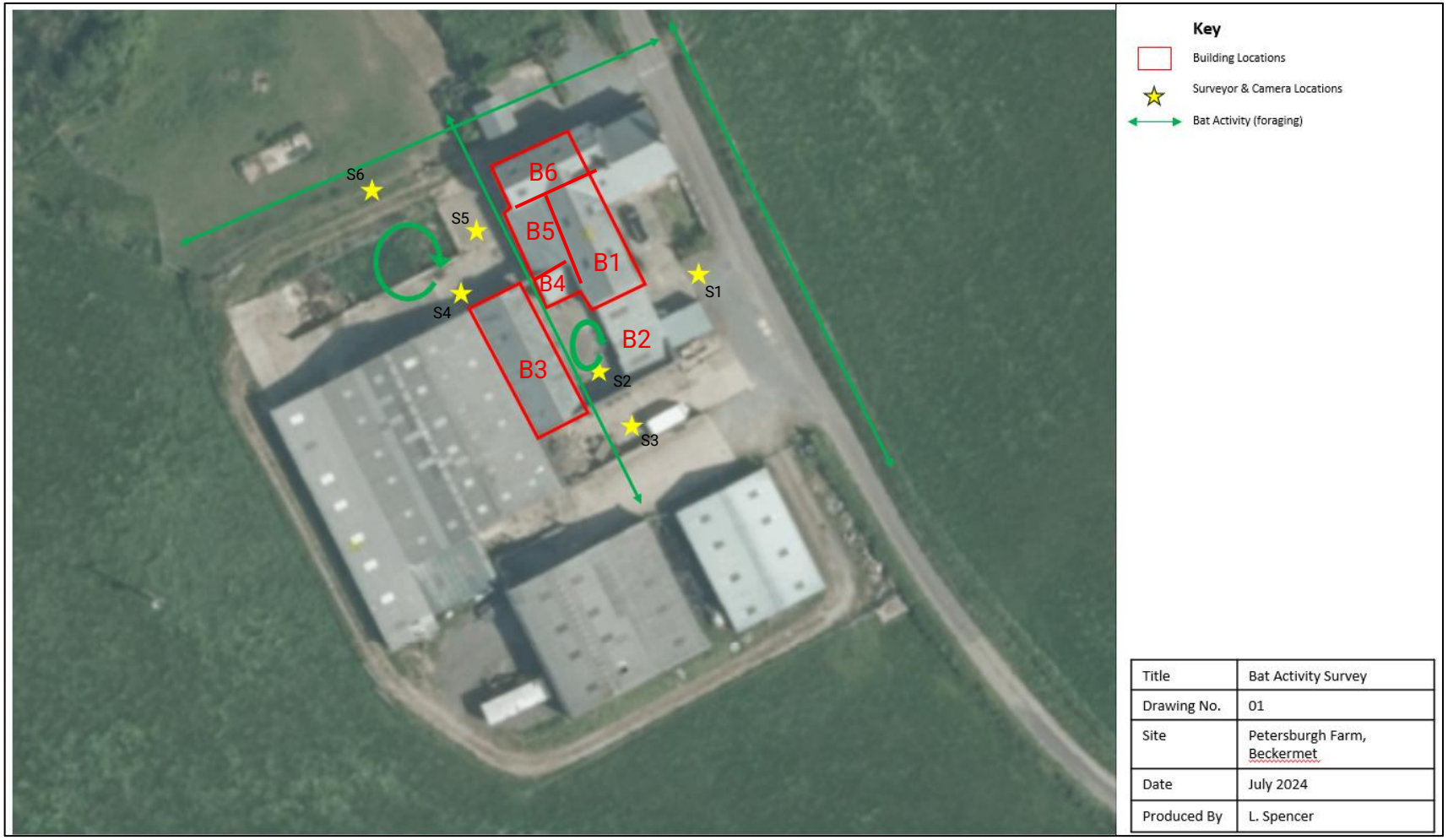
Photo 14: 29-05-24 Building 3 S3 survey end

	
Photo 15: 29-05-24 Building 3 S2 survey end	Photo 2: 20-06-25 Building 1 S1 survey start
	
Photo 15: 20-06-25 Building 1 S2 survey start	Photo 2: 20-06-25 Building 1 S1 survey end
	
Photo 15: 20-06-25 Building 1 S1 survey end	Photo 2: 10-07-24 Building 1 S1 survey start
	
Photo 15: 10-07-24 Building 1 S2 survey start	Photo 2: 10-07-24 Building 1 S1 survey end

	
Photo 15: 10-07-24 Building 1 S2 survey end	Photo 2: 10-07-24 Building 1 S1 survey end no IR
	
Photo 15: 10-07-24 Building 1 S2 survey end no IR	Photo 2: 10-07-24 Building 6 S6 survey start
	
Photo 15: 10-07-24 Building 6 S4 survey start	Photo 2: 10-07-24 Building 6 S6 survey end
	
Photo 15: 10-07-24 Building 6 S4 survey end	Photo 2: 10-07-24 Building 6 S6 survey end no IR

 Photo 15: 10-07-24 Building 6 S4 survey end no IR	

Appendix B - Bat Survey Plan



APPENDIX C – PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHOD STATEMENT

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Precautionary Working Method Statement

Petersburgh Farm
Beckermet
Cumbria
CA21 2XW

Prepared for: Adams Planning and Development Ltd
Date: November 2025
Reference: J033

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Client:	Adams Planning and Development Ltd
Project Name:	Petersburgh Farm, Beckermet, Cumbria CA21 2XW
Project Number:	J033
Report Type:	Precautionary Working Method Statement
Status:	Final
Date of Issue:	19 November 2025

CONTENTS

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Executive Summary		
Background		In October 2023 a preliminary roost assessment was undertaken by another ecological consultancy, EnviroTech, of Petersburgh Farm, Beckermet, Cumbria CA21 2XW (central grid reference NY 02181 05947, What3Words:///clever.blindfold.advantage). The result of this PRA confirmed the requirement for further nocturnal bat activity surveys, which were undertaken during the survey season of 2024.
Site Description		The site comprises a series of adjoined buildings including four rendered barns and one stone barn. The buildings lie approximately 800m south of the village of Beckermet.
Development Proposal		Development proposals comprise renovation of the buildings for residential purposes and therefore require change of use planning permission. The proposals will not alter the overall footprint.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 Natural Ecology were commissioned by Adams Planning and Development Ltd to undertake a nocturnal bat surveys of Petersburgh Farm, Beckermet, Cumbria CA21 2XW (central grid reference NY 02181 05947, What3Words: ///clever.blindfold.advantage) in 2024 (hereafter referred to as the 'Building/Site').

1.2 The site was subject to a preliminary roost assessment in October 2023. The purpose of the PRA was to establish, as far as possible, whether the site offered any potential to support roosting bats and assess the necessity for any further bat surveys to support a planning application. The PRA survey was carried out by EnviroTech, a separate ecological consultancy.

1.3 The site was then subject to nocturnal activity surveys in 2024.

Report Objectives

1.4 This document outlines precautionary working methods and acts as a method statement for works on site

1.5 This report is to satisfy the planning conditions to allow the works to go ahead as planned.

1.6 The purpose of this report is to detail appropriate precautionary working measures to ensure that potential impacts to bats, barns owls, nesting birds and reptiles/amphibians are negligible and that no legislative breach occurs as a result of the proposed works.

2. METHOD STATEMENT

2.1 A method statement is provided below to avoid (through timings of work) a breach of legislation.

2.2 Works to the buildings on site must be supervised by a bat licenced bat ecologist.

2.3 Works impacting potential bird nesting habitat (building, scrub etc) should be undertaken outside of the nesting season (March – September inclusive).

2.4 Any works to suitable habitat for reptiles and amphibians must avoid the hibernation period to avoid disturbance to hibernating individuals.

2.5 Any excavations must be covered overnight and/or a means of escape provided for any wildlife (for example; badger, hedgehog, hare). If excavations left open, they must be inspected first thing daily.

Pre Works

2.6 Prior to works commencing on site, an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will provide any contractors associated with the works with a toolbox talk, to make them aware of the legislation protecting bats, barn owls, nesting birds and reptiles/amphibians, as well as the potential presence of roosting bats and nesting barn owls on site, and measures will then be carried out as detailed within this method statement. The toolbox talk will also include information on how to proceed if a protected species is discovered during the course of the work

2.7 Pre-commencement checks of potential roost features within the buildings are to be undertaken by a licenced bat ecologist.

2.8 If any bats are found during the pre-commencement checks, all work must cease, and guidance sought from the licenced bat ecologist on next steps and licencing options.

2.9 An internal and external inspection will be undertaken of buildings 4 and 5 to determine if the buildings are still being used by barn owls. The nesting box must be checked and blocked off if barn owls are not currently using it for nesting. No work should be carried out on these buildings when they are actively used by nesting birds, and works are to be re-scheduled to an appropriate time.

2.10 If it is not possible to do works outside of the bird breeding season, a nesting bird check must be undertaken immediately before work commences by a suitably qualified ecologist. This gives a 24-hour window in which to start works in that area. If nests are found to be in use, work must cease until chicks have fledged and parent birds have abandoned the nest (on average 21 days).

2.11 Pre-commencement fingertip searches of suitable reptile/amphibian habitat must be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist.

2.12 Directional, staged strimming of vegetation must be undertaken to allow reptiles/amphibians to leave the area safely.

Works Under Ecological Supervision

2.13 A licensed bat ecologist will be appointed as an Ecological Clerk of Works for the proposed works.

2.14 Removal of suitable PRFs are to be supervised by the licenced ecologist, and they will be on call for the duration of the works should a bat be found.

2.15 If bats are discovered during any point of the works, work will cease immediately and further advice sought.

2.16 The barn owl nesting box in Building 5 must be moved to a suitable location, after barn owls have finished nesting in it for the season, and chicks have fledged (to be confirmed and evidenced by an Ecologist during pre-commencement checks). No work should be carried out on these buildings when they are actively used by nesting birds.

Timing

2.17 Due to the areas of the building being affected by the proposed works, the suitability of these areas, and the results of the nocturnal bat surveys, it is considered highly unlikely that bats will be discovered.

2.18 Despite the above, it is recommended that works are undertaken over winter 2025-2026 (between October 2025 and April 2026) to reduce the likelihood of encountering bats, nesting barn owls and nesting birds.

2.19 Vegetation works should be undertaken between March and October to avoid hibernating reptiles/amphibians.

Management

2.20 Any deviation from the Proposed Work and/or schedule of works needs to be reviewed by an ecologist to make sure there are no potential impacts.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 A Method Statement with regards to bats, barn owls, nesting birds and amphibians/reptiles (as detailed within this report) is required to ensure the proposed works does not result in the disturbance of protected species, and subsequently breach legislation.

3.2 Works can only commence in strict accordance with this Method Statement. Any deviation from the Proposed Works and/or schedule of works needs to be reviewed by an ecologist to make sure there is no impacts.

3.3 If bats or evidence of bats are discovered at any point during works, work must cease immediately, and Natural England be contacted for advice.

4. REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

COLLINS, J. (ED.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines, 4th Edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/09/bat-surveys-for--ecologists-good-practice-guidelines-4th-edition-launched

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Grid Reference Finder (2023): GRF, online http://www.gridreferencefinder.com, accessed at report date.

Magic (2023): Magic Maps, NEPS licences and designated sites, online http://www.magic.gov.uk, accessed at report date.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Toolbox Talk

Bats
There are 18 species of bat in the UK, eight breeding species in Cumbria and two vagrant species. Bats rely heavily on the built environment, some roosting almost exclusively in buildings. However, bats are not only found in old buildings, and can be found in virtually all types of built structures, from small bridges to large industrial units.

Bats can be found in the open areas like loft spaces and barns and garages. However, the majority of the bat species in the UK roost in small crevices, such as under roof slates, in pointing, or in wooden features, such as soffit boards. These locations are not often immediately obvious, and bats are not always apparent from the outside.

Legal & Protection
UK Bats are classed as a European Protected Species and are protected by schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) and schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994.

Through these legislations, it is illegal to;

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat,
- Intentionally or *recklessly* disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats,
- Damage or destroy a bat roosting place (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time),
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat, or
- Intentionally or *recklessly* obstruct access to a bat roost.

Contravention of these laws carries an unlimited fine and/or a 6 month jail sentence. Further fines can be levied, such as Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) and Corporate Liability. The maximum penalty so far has been over £600,000 for the destruction of a roost; this was not for a rare species, but for a soprano pipistrelle roost, one of the commonest species in the country.

Barn Owls
Barn owl protection involves legal safeguards under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, making it illegal to harm them, their nests, or their eggs. Because barn owls are listed under Schedule 1 of the act, they have additional protection against disturbance, especially during the nesting season. It is illegal to intentionally or carelessly disturb them while they are building a nest or are in or near a nest with young.

Nesting Birds
In the UK, all wild birds, their nests, and eggs are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is illegal to intentionally harm or kill a wild bird, or to destroy or damage its nest while it is in use or being built.

Reptiles/Amphibians
In the UK, common reptiles like the adder, common lizard, grass snake, and slow worm are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) against intentional killing and injury. Common species like common frogs, common toads, and smooth newts are protected from trade (e.g., sale or barter), but not from being harmed or killed. All native amphibians are covered under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and common toads are also listed as a Species of Conservation Concern.

Method Statement
The following method statement must be adhered to, to prevent any offences being committed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act;

- Works are to be undertaken between October and March, when bats, barns owl and nesting birds are less likely to be present and are less vulnerable to disturbance.

- Prior to works commencing, a pre works inspection is to be carried out by a Natural England bat licence ecologist to look for bats or evidence of recent bat activity, barn owls, and nesting birds.

- Site workers are to be made aware of the presence of protected species in the buildings and works to be undertaken slowly, by hand and with care. For example, if applicable, roof slates are to be removed carefully and checked on the underside for the presence of bats before being discarded.

- If bats, or signs of bats, are discovered during works when the ecologist is not present on site, then all work must stop until advice has been obtained from the ecologist or from Natural England (01539 620168).

- The barn owl nest box is to be blocked and moved to another location if **not currently** in use.

- Ground-level vegetation must have a fingertip search for amphibians/reptiles prior to directional, staged strimming. Any works that break the ground of suitable reptile/amphibian habitat must avoid the hibernation period to avoid the disturbance of hibernating herpetofauna.

I confirm that I have read and understood the above and will adhere to the method statement.

Name	Signed	Date