

FAUNA FOREST

ECOLOGY

Bat and Bird Survey Report

Prepared for Kinder Mountain Rescue

14 Church Street

Hayfield, SK22 2JE

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Methods used to prepare this report, including those carried out in the field followed The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.

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SUMMARY

Fauna Forest Ecology Limited carried out bat and bird surveys at Kinder Mountain Rescue, Hayfield, in connection with proposals to extend the existing building. The building contained several features that could potentially be used by bats, including gaps beneath roof slates and ridge tiles, and was therefore assessed as having moderate potential for roosting bats.

Two nocturnal surveys were subsequently completed, during which low levels of bat activity were recorded around the site, comprising common pipistrelle and noctule bats. No bats were recorded emerging from or entering the building and no evidence of a bat roost was found. No evidence of nesting birds was identified during the building inspection.

The proposed development is therefore not considered to be constrained by roosting bats, although precautionary measures for nesting birds and sensitive external lighting are recommended, together with the provision of bat boxes as an ecological enhancement.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents details of bat and bird surveys carried out by Fauna Forest Ecology Limited at Kinder Mountain Rescue, 14 Church Street, Hayfield, SK22 2JE (the site) (grid reference SK 03683 86904).
- 1.2 The surveys were instructed by Kinder Mountain Rescue, and followed a Daytime Bat Survey carried out by Rachel Hacking Ecology in 2023.
- 1.3 Surveys included a preliminary roost assessment (PRA) and two subsequent nocturnal bat surveys of a building used by Kinder Mountain Rescue (the building).
- 1.4 Survey objectives were to:
- assess the building for its potential to support roosting bats and nesting birds.
 - search for evidence of roosting bats and nesting birds in the building.
 - confirm presence or absence of roosting bats in the building.
 - assess the site for its relative ecological importance to bats and birds.
- 1.5 The aim of this report is to:
- present survey findings.
 - highlight any ecological constraints relating to roosting bats, nesting birds and the proposed development.
 - make recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancements where necessary.
- 1.6 Proposals are to extend the building which will impact the roof lines.
- 1.7 Survey and assessment work was completed in accordance with industry guidelines¹ and largely followed that recommended by the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)² and follows the British Standard Code of Practice³.

¹ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edn. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

² CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing. CIEEM, Winchester.

³ British Standards Institution (2013) BS 42020:2013. Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development. British Standards Institution, London.

2 METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

- 2.1 A search was undertaken using desktop resources including the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside⁴ (MAGIC) resource. MAGIC was used to search for records of designated sites and ecologically important habitats nearby. Google Earth⁵ was also used to study the nearby landscape.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 2.2 Ecological consultant David Nixon MSc MCIEEM MRSB (bat licence number 2015-18322-CLS-CLS) undertook the survey on 22nd February 2026.
- 2.3 The survey was carried out using visual encounter survey techniques. Potential bat movement corridors and movement barriers were assessed and noted. During the survey, where possible, all areas of the building were internally and externally examined for evidence of bats and birds. The building survey included an assessment using a powerful torch and endoscope. All holes and crevices considered by the surveyor as likely to be used as a bat roost or provide a suitable bird nesting environment were examined. Visual ground inspections were undertaken using binoculars. Photographs were taken to capture likely features of ecological value to bats and birds, such as missing tiles, damaged or missing mortar, exposed gable ends, gaps within soffit boards, rotten timbers and other potential entry points. Other aspects of the buildings were surveyed, including windows, window sills, external doors, and the ground within close proximity of the structure was thoroughly inspected for bat droppings and feeding remains.
- 2.4 Following a detailed assessment of the building in association with roosting bats, it was classified according to its roosting suitability based on the presence of features within the structures and/or surrounding landscape (Table 1).

Table 1: Guidelines summary for assessing potential bat roost suitability

Suitability	Description of building or structure
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or

⁴ Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC). Crown Copyright and database rights [2015]. Ordnance Survey 100022861. Available at: <http://www.magic.gov.uk/>

⁵ https://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/

	suitable surrounding habitats to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. maternity or hibernation).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time.
Confirmed roost	Evidence of bats or use by bats found.

Nocturnal bat surveys

- 2.5 Two nocturnal bat surveys were undertaken due to the building providing bats with moderate roosting potential. They were completed by suitably experienced surveyors in accordance with current industry guidelines⁶. The first survey was carried out on 29th May 2026 by ecological consultant David Nixon MSc MCIEEM MRSB (bat licence number 2015-18322-CLS-CLS) and ecologist, experienced bat surveyor Jenna Lovatt. The second survey was carried out by the same surveyors on 20th June 2026. Each surveyor was equipped with EM Touch 2 Pro full spectrum bat detectors and a Pixfra thermal Night Vision Aid (NVA) to ensure visibility at night. An additional thermal NVA coupled with a full spectrum bat detector was positioned at the southeastern side of the site and the footage was reviewed the following day.
- 2.6 Surveyors took up separate positions surrounding the buildings for 15 minutes prior to, and for 1.5 hours after sunset. At any one time between surveyors, aspects deemed to hold risk of bat emergence were being observed. Visual observations of bat activity were noted and bat species were identified using the bat detectors. Information recorded included weather, timings, whether bats emerged from or entered the building, direction of travel, species and activity (e.g. foraging or commuting).
- 2.7 All hand-held bat detectors are calibrated annually as per industry guidelines and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to ensure they remain accurate and fully functional.

⁶ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edn. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

3 RESULTS

Desk Study Results

- 3.1 According to MAGIC, the site is not located within or adjacent to any statutory designated sites.

Nearby Habitats and General Site Description

- 3.2 The site is in a suburban village setting located in the centre of Hayfield, behind the George Hotel adjacent to the A624 (Chapel Road). It is surrounded by a mix of residential dwellings and relatively small commercial properties, as well as a network of roads throughout the village. Regardless, a number of nearby ecologically notable habitats were recorded, including trees and other semi-natural habitats within the grounds of St Matthew's Church, less than 100m north of the site, and the River Sett, also less than 100m to the north. Further afield, much of the wider landscape beyond Hayfield village is characteristic of the Dark Peak, with steep gritstone hills, incised valleys and cloughs rising to extensive areas of open moorland around Kinder Scout and Bleaklow. Lower slopes are dominated by grazed farmland enclosed by dry-stone walls, with scattered woodland along watercourses and valleys.

Preliminary Roost Assessment Results

- 3.3 The building was a single-storey stone structure with a timber-framed pitched roof clad with slate, with a single ridge covered with concrete overlapping ridge tiles. The building included two garage doors, with windows and access doors for staff. Bargeboards were present to the front and rear elevations, and the eaves featured fixed soffits and fascias. Internally, the building contained three accessible roof voids extending across the roof space. The roof was lined and insulated, with exposed timber roof joists and internal masonry walls.
- 3.4 The building was in good condition overall. Some of the roof slates were raised and gappy, and gaps were also present beneath some ridge tiles where the mortar had failed over time. The stonework was generally well-pointed, with few gaps present, and the eaves were boxed in and tightly fitted.
- 3.5 Gaps between roof slates and ridges provided bats and nesting birds with some degree of access to the roof. However, no evidence of bats or nesting birds was discovered during the PRA.

Nocturnal Bat Survey Results

Table 2: Nocturnal survey weather conditions

Date	Start	Finish	Sunset	Temp °C	Wind 0-5	Cloud %	Rain Yes/No/Note
29/05/2026	20:45	22:35	21:01	15	0	30	No
20/06/2026	21:25	23:10	21:40	19	0	20	No

Dusk Survey – 29th May 2026

- 3.6 Bat activity was low during the survey. Species recorded included common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. At 21:10, a single noctule was recorded commuting high above the site in a northwesterly direction, followed by another two at 21:22 and 21:23. After a brief gap in activity, a common pipistrelle was recorded by the surveyor positioned behind the building in Steeple End Fold. It flew from a northerly direction and proceeded to forage back and forth along the narrow street adjacent to houses, before vanishing without further trace towards the church. From then on, occasional common pipistrelle foraging and commuting activity was recorded north of the building near the end of the street close to the church grounds. Even fewer passes were recorded by the surveyor positioned on the car park south of the building. No bats were recorded emerging from or entering the building during the survey.

Dusk Survey – 20th June 2026

- 3.7 Bat activity was low like the previous survey. Species recorded included common pipistrelle and noctule. Again, more than one noctule was recorded commuting high above the site soon after sunset at around 21:50. Noctules were also recorded foraging over the site at 22:07 to 22:20, although these observations may have been the same individual. Common pipistrelle activity was similar to the previous survey, with occasional commuting passes recorded by the surveyor on the car park south of the building, and more frequent activity noted by the surveyor in Steeple End Fold over to the north. The majority of activity north of the site occurred near the end of the street close to or within the church grounds. No bats were recorded emerging from or entering the building during the survey.

Limitations

- 3.8 Bat droppings deposited in or around the exterior can often degrade quickly due to weather. The presence of bats or their roost must not be disregarded in the absence of droppings.
- 3.9 For Health and Safety purposes, ladders were not used to gain close views of the external roof structure. All external aspects of the survey building were assessed from ground level.

4 DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The site is not situated on a designated statutory site and the proposals are relatively small-scale. Provided waste is appropriately disposed of and there is no inappropriate use of nocturnal lighting, the proposed work will not impact habitats or wildlife beyond the site boundaries.
- 4.2 Although it is best practice to obtain local biological records when compiling an ecological report, in this instance, records would unlikely influence any mitigation measures and recommendations for follow-up surveys already included in this report and therefore the absence of such records is not considered a limitation at this stage.
- 4.3 Most ecological data remain valid for only short periods of time due to the inherently transient nature of many protected fauna species. Where the species or group being surveyed for is present within the site, data are typically considered accurate for 12-18 months⁷.
- 4.4 The surveys followed a Daytime Bat Survey completed by Rachel Hacking Ecology in 2023, who concluded the building offered negligible roosting value for bats, with no further surveys recommended. However, the site is within near proximity of habitats suitable for use by bats, such as the River Sett (which provides commuting and foraging opportunities) and a range of trees and other semi-natural habitats in St Matthew's churchyard. Furthermore, gappy roof slates and other openings beneath ridge tiles associated with the building were considered ideal for roosting bats. Taking this into consideration and despite no evidence of bats found during the PRA, the building was classified as holding moderate roosting potential and two follow-up nocturnal bat surveys were recommended to confirm presence or likely absence.
- 4.5 Overall, bat activity was relatively low during each nocturnal survey, with only common pipistrelles and noctules recorded, both of which are common and widespread across much of the UK. The latter is typically a tree-dweller, rarely associated with buildings. Most activity involved foraging and commuting common pipistrelles utilising the dark street known as Steeple End Fold, which spans between the rear, northern side aspect of the building to the side of St Matthew's Churchyard. During this period, bats would fly back and forth along the street, rarely as far as the building itself. In contrast, activity recorded by the surveyor on the car park south of the building was much lower, presumably due to artificial lighting which spills over the car park and sides of the building.
- 4.6 Footage watched back from the NVAs (including the stand-alone unit) confirmed no bats emerged from or entered the building during the nocturnal bat surveys.
- 4.7 As the stonework was well-pointed with few gaps between the stonework, and given no bat-related evidence was found during the PRA, the building was considered to offer low hibernation potential

⁷ <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>

because it lacked the deep-set crevices that provide cool, constant and moist environments bats require during winter. As such, no follow-up hibernation surveys are recommended.

- 4.8 Whilst no ecological constraints have been identified in connection with roosting bats and the proposed development, good practice would be to mitigate against inappropriate use of nocturnal lighting. It is therefore recommended that any external lighting associated with the development is kept to the minimum required for safety, security and operational purposes and designed in accordance with current bat-sensitive lighting principles. Lighting should comprise warm-white LED luminaires with a colour temperature of 2700 Kelvin or lower, with no UV component, and the lowest possible lumen output should be specified. Luminaires should be installed at the lowest mounting height and directed vertically downwards, with no upward tilt. All fittings should be fully shielded or baffled, using hoods, cowls, louvres or other appropriate full cut-off fittings to prevent upward and horizontal light spill and to ensure that light is restricted to the area requiring illumination. Lighting should not be directed towards trees, hedgerows, scrub, woodland edges or other semi-natural habitats that may provide commuting or foraging habitat for bats, and these features should remain dark. If lighting is required close to such habitats, illuminance should be minimised and maintained at 1 lux or below at the habitat boundary. Lighting should not operate continuously throughout the night and should instead be controlled through PIR motion sensors, timers or other automatic controls, with short activation periods sufficient for their intended purpose. The final lighting scheme should avoid unnecessary lateral or upward light throw and overspill beyond the developed footprint, thereby retaining dark areas around the site for nocturnal wildlife⁸.
- 4.9 There is opportunity to enhance the site with a view to provide roosting facilities by means of installing bat boxes. The boxes should be ideally 4-5m above ground level, not face north or south and not be surrounded by clutter, such as vegetation or other obstacles that may prevent bats from accessing them. Importantly, bat boxes must be sited away from artificial nocturnal light spill and not be fitted above windows or other building aspects that may lead to bats being disturbed. Schwegler 1FF bat boxes are recommended because they are known to be used by a number of species and roost types including maternity roosts, largely because they retain suitable thermal properties because they are built using a mix of wood and concrete (Woodcrete). In this instance, boxes could be fitted to the side of the building on the northern side aspect.
- 4.10 No evidence of nesting birds was found although the possibility of some small species gaining access to the loft should not be discounted. No specific surveys are recommended, however, best practice would be for works to be undertaken outside of the bird nesting period. Birds typically nest between February through to September. If the works must be undertaken during the bird nesting period, work

⁸ Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) and Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2023). *Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*. Guidance Note GN08/23. Institution of Lighting Professionals, Rugby.

must not commence until a suitably qualified ecologist has confirmed there is no evidence of bird nesting within the area to be impacted by the proposed works.

- 4.11 If an active nest is discovered, an exclusion zone should be established, and works must be halted in that area until the nest is no longer active. Works should not commence without confirmation from a suitably qualified ecologist that no nesting birds exist within the area of impact. An area surrounding the nest site will be protected from disturbance with a suitable fence (not HERAs fencing) that would include an appropriate buffer zone, as determined by the suitably qualified supervising ecologist. Work will then be avoided in this area until the nest is no longer in use. Buffer zones in this respect will normally be 5m in diameter and will be delineated by canes, cordon tape and signage.
- 4.12 Ways to provide birds with additional nesting opportunity would be to install nest boxes on nearby trees in the local area or on the side of buildings. Options would be to fit a number of close and open-fronted boxes to benefit a range of species. Boxes should be sited away from prevailing wind and may be fitted at various heights, ranging between 2 and 4m above ground level. Other options would be to fit sparrow terraces to the side aspects of the building in locations away from open windows, artificial light spill and prevailing winds.

APPENDIX A: LEGISLATION SUMMARY

Bats

In England and Wales, bats and their roosts are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Taken together, this legislation makes it an offence to:

- deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat.
- intentionally or recklessly disturb a group of bats where the disturbance is likely to significantly affect the ability of the animals to survive, breed, or nurture their young or likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species whether in a roost or not.
- damage or destroy the breeding or resting place of a bat.
- possess a bat (alive or dead) or any part of a bat.
- intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.
- sell (or offer for sale) or exchange bats (alive or dead) or parts of bats.

A roost is defined as being 'any structure or place that is used for shelter or protection', and since bats regularly move roost site throughout the year, a roost retains such designation whether or not bats are present at the time.

Birds

All common wild birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.
- take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.
- certain rare breeding birds are listed on Schedule 1 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and as amended). Under this legislation they are afforded the same protection as common wild birds and are also protected against disturbance whilst building a nest or on or near a nest containing eggs/unfledged young.

APPENDIX B: MAPS

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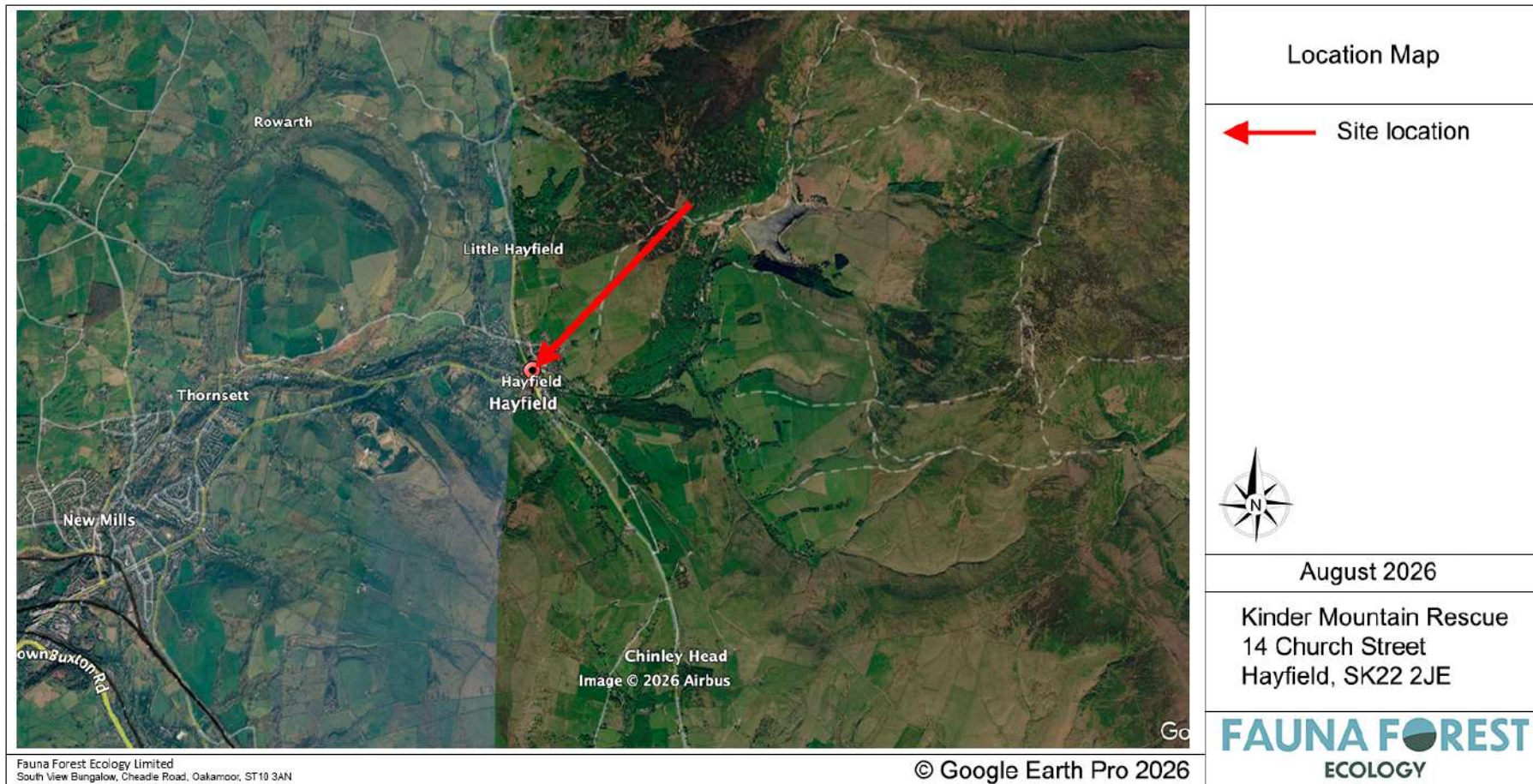


Figure 1: Site Location Map



Figure 2: Survey Map

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APPENDIX C: SITE IMAGES



Image 1: screen shot from the thermal scope of the southwestern side aspect, taken during the darkest part of the night



Image 2: screen shot from the thermal scope of the southwestern side aspect, taken during the darkest part of the night



Image 3: the loft above the building



Image 4: screen shot from the thermal scope of the northern side aspect, taken during the darkest part of the night