

Vanguard Group Developments (Uk1) Limited

**Buxton Museum and Hardwick Hall,
Buxton**

Dusk Emergence Surveys



EPS GENERAL NOTES

Title: Buxton Museum and Hardwick Hall – Dusk Emergence Surveys

Client: Vanguard Group Developments (Uk1) Limited

Date: 24/09/2026

Office: Blackett Street, Manchester, M12 6AE

Status: Version 1

Author	<u>Nick Carter</u>	Technical reviewer	<u>Richard Hart</u>
Signature	<u></u>	Signature	<u></u>
Date:	<u>24/09/2026</u>	Date:	<u>24/09/2026</u>
Project manager	<u>Nick Carter</u>	Quality reviewer	<u>Lucy Brocklehurst</u>
Signature	<u></u>	Signature	<u></u>
Date:	<u>24/09/2026</u>	Date:	<u>24/09/2026</u>

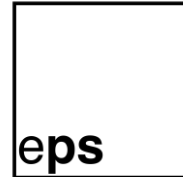
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Executive Summary

Eps Ltd was commissioned by Vanguard Group Developments (UK1) Limited in July 2026 to undertake two dusk emergence surveys at Buxton Museum and Hardwick Hall, Terrace Road, Buxton, SK17 6DY to assess the potential to support roosting bats as part of a planning application for the proposed renovation and conversion of both buildings to residential dwellings.

Following a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal undertaken by CW Ecology Ltd in March 2026, the buildings were assessed as having moderate potential to support roosting bats.

To determine whether the building supported an active bat roost, two dusk emergence surveys were subsequently completed during July and September 2026. All surveys were undertaken during the survey period, in suitable weather conditions and in accordance with the recommended building survey protocol (Collins, 2023).

No bats were recorded emerging from, or re-entering, the buildings during any of the surveys. Furthermore, no evidence of current roost occupation, including bat droppings, feeding remains, staining, audible bat activity or live bats, was identified during inspections.

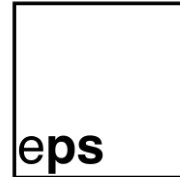
It is therefore recommended the proposed building works can proceed.

Recommendations for appropriate ecological enhancements are provided within this report.



1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 Eps Ltd was commissioned by Vanguard Group Developments (Uk1) Limited to carry out two dusk emergence surveys at the Buxton Museum and Hardwick Hall, Buxton, SK17 6DY (Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: SK 05913 73327).
- 1.1.2 Survey work was undertaken to inform planning of an application convert the existing buildings into residential dwellings.
- 1.1.3 Following a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal undertaken by CW Ecology Ltd in March 2026, the buildings were assessed as having moderate potential to support roosting bats.
- 1.1.4 This report details the findings of the 2026 dusk emergence surveys. Methodologies employed are described including site surveys and evaluation, and the need for further surveys and/or mitigation measures are included where appropriate.



2. Methodology

2.1 Dusk Emergence Survey

- 2.1.1 The dusk emergence surveys were undertaken 6 weeks apart on 24th July and 4th September 2026. The buildings were surveyed from all aspects to ensure complete coverage of the features displaying potential to support roosting bats. Survey details including date of survey, surveyor name and weather conditions are shown in Table 1 below. Surveyor locations are illustrated in Figure 1 and 2 and further details can be found in Appendix 1 and 2.
- 2.1.2 The dusk emergence surveys were undertaken following best practice guidance (Collins, 2023) with each surveyor equipped with an Elekon Bat Logger M bat detector or EMT 2 Pro bat detector and a night vision aid (NVA). During the dusk emergence surveys, surveyors were in position 15 minutes before sunset until 1.5 hours after sunset.

Bat activity, including passes, foraging, roosting locations and species type were recorded onto field maps, along with other incidental bat activity.

Table 1. Survey Timings, Surveyor Details and Weather Conditions

Date/ Time	Survey Type	Surveyors	Air Temp. (oC)	General Conditions
24 th July 2026 21.00 – 10:45	Dusk emergence	Nick Carter Matthew Harrison Wesley McGuire Rebecca Harper Oscar Love Vincent Ruane	15	Mild and calm, 55% cloud cover, light breeze. Beaufort scale: 2 Sunset: 21:15
4 th Sept 2026 19:35 – 21:20	Dusk emergence	Nick Carter Wesley McGuire Oscar Love James Hurst Matthew Harrison Tom Donnai	14	Mild and calm and 50% cloud cover, light breeze. Beaufort scale: 2 Sunset: 19:50

Figure 1. Surveyor locations on 24th July

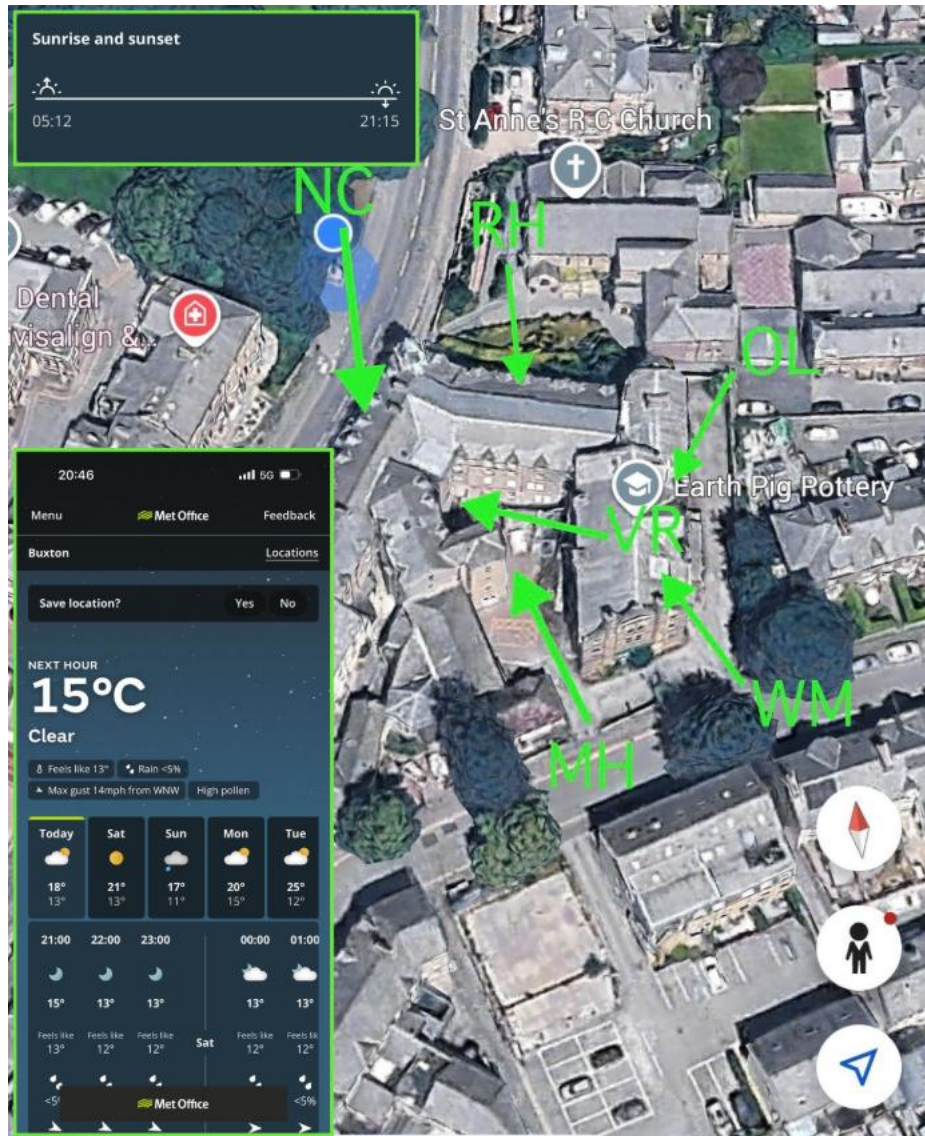
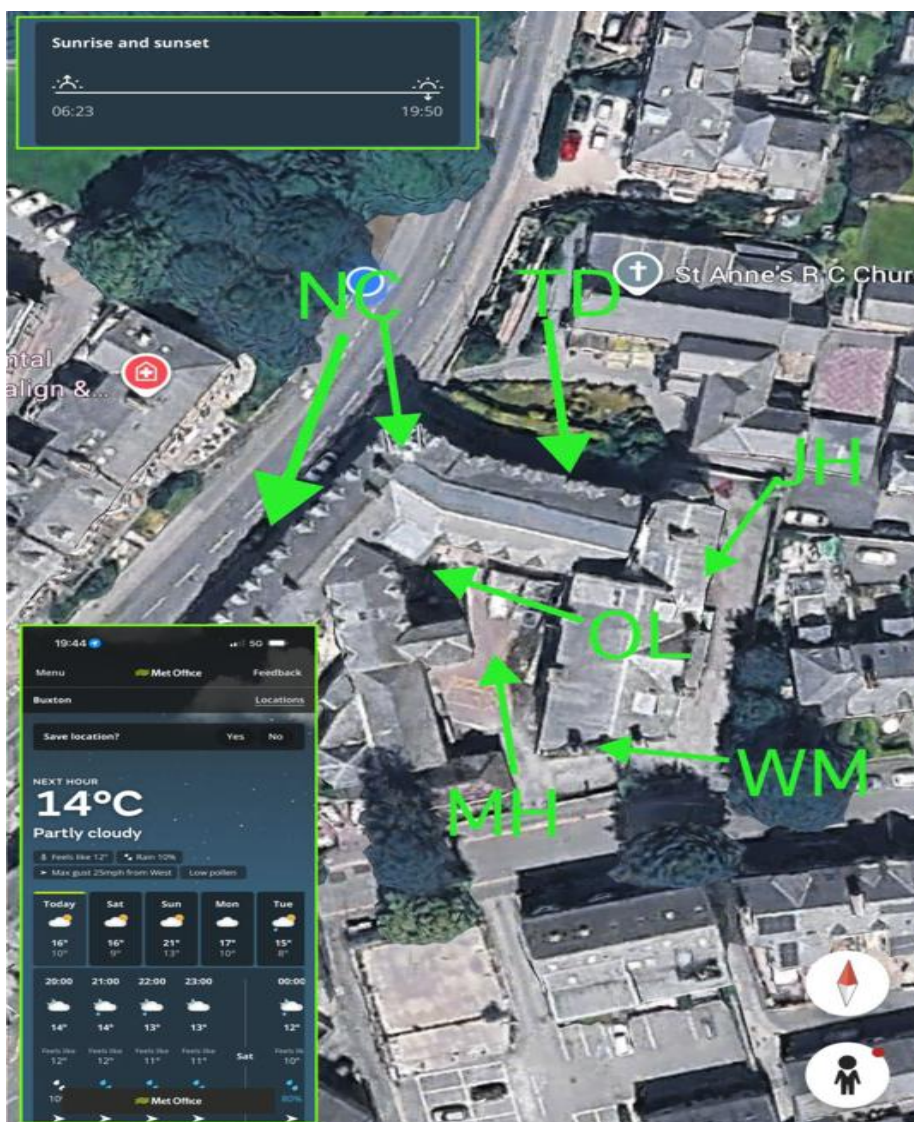


Figure 2. Surveyor locations on 4th September



2.2 Limitations

2.2.1 All surveys were undertaken during the peak bat activity survey season and in accordance with best practice guidelines. As such, no limitations to the bat survey have been identified.

Findings

2.3 General Site Description

- 2.3.1 The site, collectively known as Peak Buildings, comprises the former Buxton Museum and Art Gallery building and the adjoining Hardwick Hall, located on Terrace Road in the centre of Buxton.
- 2.3.2 The site is located on Terrace Road within the historic town-centre of Buxton and Buxton–Hardwick Conservation Area. The surrounding area is predominantly urban in character and comprises a mixture of commercial, retail, leisure, civic and residential properties, together with associated hardstanding, pedestrian routes and areas of public open space.

2.4 Dusk Emergence survey

- 2.4.1 The findings from the dusk activity surveys are presented in Table 3 and summarised below.

Table 3. Dusk activity

Date	Time (h)	Surveyor initials	Species	Activity	Notes
24/07/2026	21.33	NC	P.pip	F	Single P.pip foraging in park
	21.35	MH	P.pip	F	Single P.pip foraging in courtyard
	21.38	OL/WM	P.pip	F	Couple of P.pip foraging between positions
	21.42	MH	P.pip	F	P.pip foraging in courtyard
	21.43	RH	P.pyg	F	Single P.pyg foraging
	21.50	ALL	P.pip	F	All surveyors recorded C.pip foraging activity until survey end.
04/09/2026	20.10	MH	P.pip	F	Single P.pip foraging in courtyard
	20.12	NC/TD	P.pip	C	Single P.pip commuting from direction of park
	20.23	JH	P.pip	F	Single P.pip foraging
	20.24	TD	P.pip	F	P.pip foraging opposite the park
	20.32	TD	P.pip	C	P.pip commuting towards the park
	20.45	MH	P.pip	F	Single P.pip foraging in courtyard
	21.00	ALL	P.pip	F	All surveyors recorded C.pip foraging activity until survey end.

- 2.4.2 **No bats were recorded emerging from the buildings during the dusk emergence surveys.**



3. Legislation & Planning Policy

3.1 Legislation

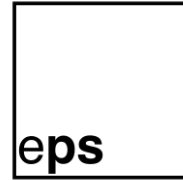
3.1.1 Bats are European Protected Species (EPS) and are protected under both European and UK legislation comprising The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (HMSO, 1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017 (as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (HMSO, 2017) (HMSO, 2019). Offences under the legislation which are potentially relevant to this development include:

- The deliberate capture, injury or killing of a bat;
- The deliberate disturbance of a bat, particularly disturbance which is likely to; impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, to hibernate or migrate, or to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species; and
- The damage/destruction of, or obstruction of access to a breeding site or resting place (even if unoccupied) – referred to within this report as a 'roost'.

3.1.2 Several species of bats are also listed as Species of Principal Importance under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (HMSO, 2006). This legislation requires planning authorities to consider biodiversity when undertaking their duties.

3.1.3 Full legislative text should be referred to as above text is a summary only. Please refer to the online legislation for the most recent legislative updates.

3.1.4 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 provides safeguards for European Protected Sites and Species (as listed in the Habitats Directive). This has recently been amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 which continue the same provision for European protected species, licensing requirements, and protected areas now that the UK has left the European Union.



3.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2026

3.2.1 Planning policies which are relevant to the proposed development are;

- Paragraph 186 of the NPPF establishes the mitigation hierarchy for biodiversity. It states that when determining planning applications, significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development should be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for. Where significant harm cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or compensated for, planning permission should be refused.
- Section 192 of the NPPF states that to protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.
- Paragraphs 187 and 188 set out the policy approach to conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The Framework requires planning policies and decisions to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, recognise the wider benefits of the natural environment and ecosystem services, minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity, and support the establishment and enhancement of coherent ecological networks. Section 193a and 193c (respectively) of the NPPF state:
- Paragraph 188 requires plans to identify and safeguard important components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including internationally, nationally and locally designated sites, wildlife corridors and stepping stones, together with areas identified for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation. Plans should also promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats and ecological networks, the protection and recovery of priority species, and opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.



4. Assessment & Mitigation

4.1 Assessment

- 4.1.1 No evidence of the current use of the building by roosting bats was recorded during the dusk emergence surveys undertaken in 2026.
- 4.1.2 No bats were recorded emerging from, or re-entering, the building during any of the surveys. Furthermore, no evidence of current roost occupation, including bat droppings, feeding remains, staining, audible bat activity or live bats, was identified during inspections.
- 4.1.3 On the basis of the survey findings, it is concluded that there is no evidence of an active bat roost within the building. It is therefore recommended the proposed building works can proceed.
- 4.1.4 Bats are known to frequently become entangled and die in Breathable Roof Membranes (BRMs) due to pilling of the material when subject to frequent passage by bats. As a potential benefit to bats in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) aim that “opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged” (NPPF, 2024) it is recommended that Type 1F bitumastic roofing felt should be used during construction of the proposed buildings.
- 4.1.5 Consideration could be given to creating long term bat roosting opportunities fit to the exterior of the buildings to be retained, thereby conforming with aims for biodiversity within the NPPF. Such roosting provision may comprise woodcrete style boxes such as the Schwegler 1FE bat box with back plate. Bat boxes should be placed a minimum of 4 m from ground level on southerly facing aspects and ideally at eaves level and away from bright light spill. Further information on installing bat roosting provision can be provided by Eps if required.



5. References

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

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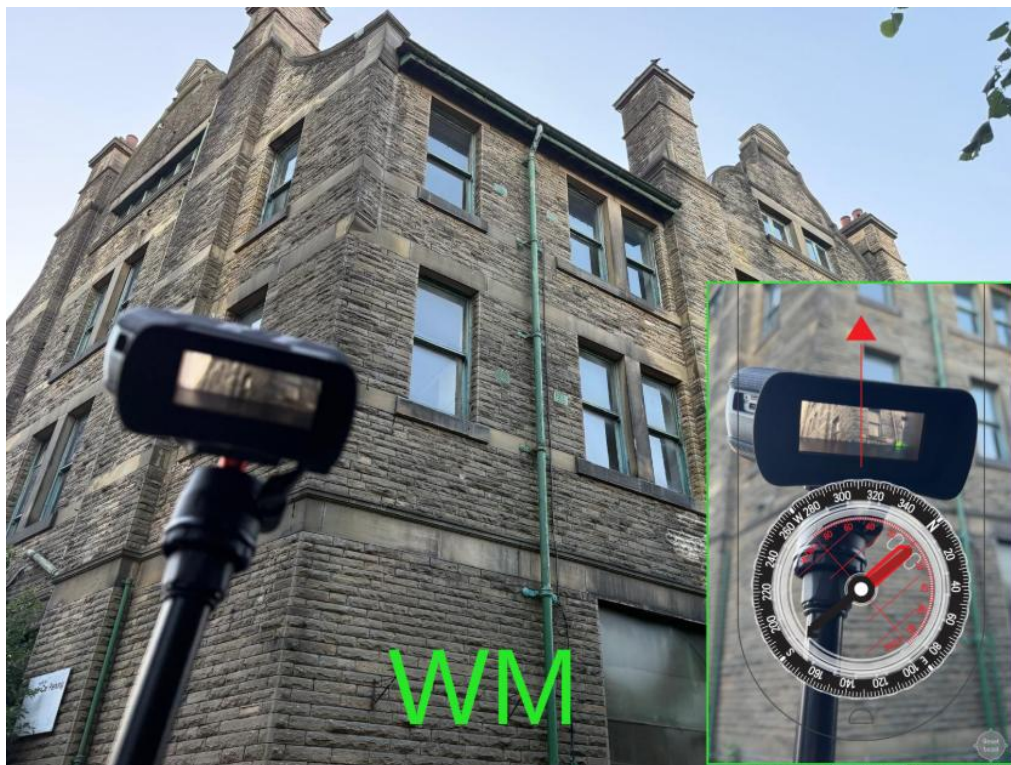
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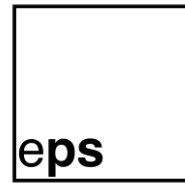
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Appendix 1. Surveyor Locations 24th July







Appendix 2. Surveyor Locations 4th September





