26 – 28 Racecommon Road, Barnsley

Bat Survey Report

24th March 2026

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Document ref: MBE/BAT/2026/030/01				
Purpose and Description	Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Date
For Planning	G Slack MCIEEM	P Middleton MCIEEM	G Slack MCIEEM	24/03/2026

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Contents

1. Summary

1.1.1 A bat inspection of 26–28 Racecommon Road, Barnsley was commissioned by planning consultant Jamie Deakin on behalf of the client Steffan Darlington in March 2026. The survey was undertaken to inform proposals for the creation of two residential units within the upper floors of the buildings, alterations to the ground floor commercial units, and the provision of car parking to the rear.

1.1.2 The site comprised two adjoining mid-terrace buildings with a hardstanding yard to the rear. At the time of the survey, the buildings had undergone recent repair works, including roof replacement, and further renovation was ongoing. The surrounding area comprised predominantly residential and commercial properties, with limited green space although street trees and small areas of amenity grassland were present. Overall, the local habitat was considered to offer limited suitability for foraging and commuting bats, with conditions typical of a relatively urban environment, likely to support only disturbance-tolerant species such as common pipistrelle.

1.1.3 A single low-quality potential bat roost feature was identified externally; however, due to its limited dimensions and position, it was considered to provide negligible bat roost suitability. No bats or signs of bats were recorded during the inspection, and the building as a whole was assessed as having negligible bat roost suitability. No evidence of nesting birds was recorded within the building or on the external structure.

1.1.4 No further survey work was considered necessary for bats or nesting birds. It is recommended that one bat box and one bird box are installed on the rear elevation of the building to provide future opportunities for these species.

1.1.5 This report is considered valid for a period of two years from the date of survey.

2. Introduction

2.1.1 A bat inspection of 26 – 28 Racecommon Road was commissioned by planning consultant Jamie Deakin on behalf of the client Steffan Darlington on 12th March 2026. The survey was undertaken to inform plans for the creation of two residential units in the upper floors of the building and alterations to the downstairs commercial buildings, and car parking to the rear.

2.1.2 The legislative context to the survey and assessment reported here is included in Appendix 1.

3. Habitat Assessment

3.1.1 The site was located to the southwest of the centre of Barnsley. The site comprised two terraced buildings with a hardstanding yard at the rear of the building. The site had been subject to recent repair, including roof replacement, and ongoing renovation works were evident at the time of survey.

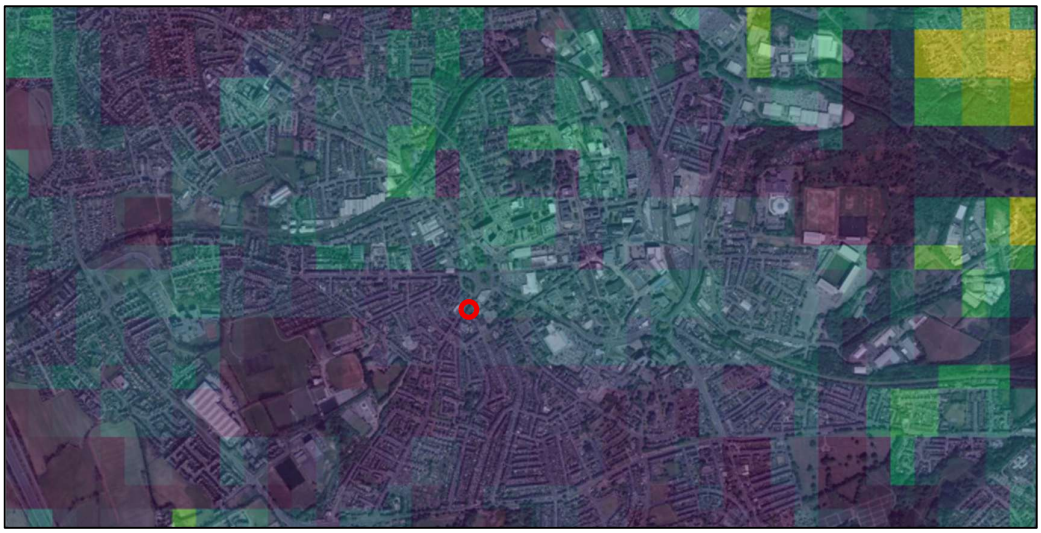
3.1.2 The surrounding area comprised houses, and commercial units. Some street trees and amenity grassland were also present in the local area. More extensive areas of green space particularly sports pitches, were present c. 300 m to the southwest (Figure 1, Plate 1).

Figure 1. The survey area

Plate 1. The site (approximate outline in red) and the surrounding area viewed from the east

3.1.3 The local area was considered to be suitable only for species likely to be present within a relatively urban setting, specifically those such as common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* able to tolerate a high degree of disturbance from lighting, people, and pets. However, even the suitability for roosting common pipistrelle was identified as below average by the Habitat Suitability Modelling undertaken by Slack and Whittle for South Yorkshire (Figure 2)[1].

Figure 2. Habitat Suitability for roosting common pipistrelle within the site (approximate location circled red) and surrounding area



[1] The modelling shows the suitability for roosting common pipistrelle as modelled for the whole of South Yorkshire. The warmer brighter colours (yellow) show areas of relatively high suitability, and the cooler colours (blue and green) show areas of lower suitability. The modelling maps are available at: https://matthewjwhittle.shinyapps.io/sybg-hsm/ (accessed 20/03/2026).

3.1.4 Table 1 summarises the habitats present within, and adjacent to the site.

Table 1. Location and habitat table

Name and address: 26 – 28 Racecommon Road, Barnsley, S70 1BH			
OS Grid Ref. **SE 34007 06158**		Elevation. 108 m	
Local Planning Authority: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council			
Features on site and adjacent to site			
Feature	On site	Adjacent	Comments
River bordered by trees			None.
Standing water			None.
Bridges tunnels and culverts			None.
Trees		✔	Mature trees present within nearby gardens and municipal planning areas.
Woodland			None.
Grassland		✔	Lawns and amenity grassland nearby.

3.2 Aims

3.2.1 The survey was conducted to help determine the:

- Presence/absence of roosting bats within the building.
- Potential roosting areas and roost access/egress points.
- Level of bat roost suitability associated with the building.
- Current or historic use of the buildings by nesting birds.
- The potential presence of other protected and notable species.
- Further survey work or mitigation requirements.

4. Methodology

4.1 Data Consultation

4.1.1 Given the habitat within and surrounding the site, and the recent repair and refurbishment works, no data consultation was undertaken.

4.2 Field Survey

Site Inspection

4.2.1 An inspection of the site, including the building, was undertaken on 19th March 2026 by Greg Slack (MCIEEM; Natural England Bat Class Licence WML-A34-Level 4, 2017-28068-CLS-CLS).

4.2.2 The surveyor methodically covered the site, searching for notable, rare or scarce plant species and evidence of protected species including bats and species of nature conservation importance. The following activities were carried out during the inspection of the building:

- An examination of all parts of the building to record structural features and condition, and features that may be suitable for use by roosting bats. Particular attention was paid to any holes, crevices or gaps in walls, lintels, windows, and windowsills, gaps/holes in cladding and soffits and to the

possibility of finding droppings stuck to walls, floors or other surfaces, or insect remains below features.
- Any signs indicative of a bat roost presence including live or dead bats, droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and staining were recorded.
- An assessment of the bat roost suitability of the building (negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed roost).

4.2.3 The following equipment was used or on hand during the survey:

- a high powered torch;
- binoculars;
- ladders;
- an endoscope;
- a camera; and
- an ultralight drone.

4.3 Survey Limitations

4.3.1 The repair and refurbishment of the building in the recent past, reduced the likelihood that signs of protected or notable species would be present during the survey. The suitability of the site for bats prior to the clearance is considered within the discussion. Where applicable potential enhancement measures are proposed.

5. Results

5.1 Field Survey

Internal and External Visual Inspection

Building description

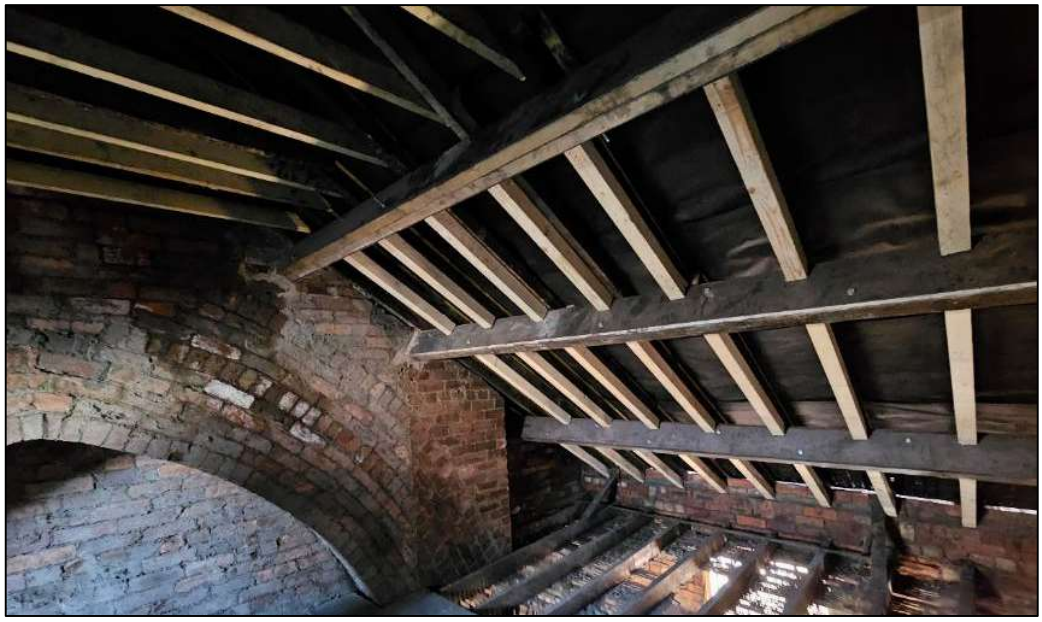
5.1.1 The building comprised two adjoining mid-terrace buildings with a two-pitched roof (Plate 2 and 3). The façade was faced with stone which had been painted white, and the internal and rear walls were constructed from brick. The pitched roof had been recently replaced and was covered with interlocking tiles and incorporated two roof lights. The ridge comprised angle cap tiles and was in the process of being installed.

Plate 2. The dwelling façade viewed from the southeast

Plate 3. The rear of the building (viewed from the southeast)

5.1.2 The roof void was accessible via a staircase with a low brick arched doorway separating the roof spaces above the two terraced properties. The roof was supported by rafters, purlins, and a ridge beam (Plate 4). It had been recently replaced (which included extending the existing rafters and replacing or strengthening the existing purlins). At the time of survey insulation had not been installed and the new breathable roofing membrane, and eaves tray was visible below the tiles.

Plate 4. The interior of the roof void



5.1.3 Photos of the roof void prior to the replacement were available from the client and it can be seen that the roof appeared to comprise slates sitting on battens without underfelt or a membrane with some cobwebbing present between the rafters (Plate 5). An insect mesh was present at the eaves allowing ventilation but providing a barrier to access by insects or other animals.

Plate 5. The roof void prior to reroofing

External inspection

5.1.4 A single low-quality feature was identified. This comprised overlapping roofing felt on the verge of the single-storey lean-to (Plate 6). However, due to its low height, minimal crevice dimensions, and the surrounding hardstanding habitat, suitability was considered negligible. However, it was checked during the survey and no bats or signs of bats were present.

Plate 6. The roofing felt on the verge of the single storey section of the building which comprised the only potential roost feature present

5.1.5 Given that the roof and guttering had been replaced on the two-storey section, and the mortar had been ground out between the masonry on the rear of the building ready for repointing, and there were no obviously suitable features present on the buildings frontage, it was determined that the overall suitability of the building for bats was negligible.

Internal inspection

5.1.6 No bats or signs of bats were recorded within the building. The work that had been undertaken already to renovate the building is likely to have removed some potential bat roost features and would also have been likely to have removed any signs of bats if present. However, the nine photographs provided of the roof void prior to the roof replacement show no signs of bats present and cobwebbing visible between the rafters. There is a good chance that droppings or other signs would have been visible in the photographs, and less likely that cobwebs would have been present if the roof area had been subject to substantial use by bats.

6. Assessment

6.1 Summary and Evaluation of Findings

6.1.1 The buildings were considered to display negligible suitability to support roosting bats. The limited potential bat roost features present were checked and no bats or signs of bats were recorded. Likewise no evidence of nesting birds was present within or on the building at the time of survey.

6.2 Further Survey, Recommendations and Enhancements

Further survey

6.2.1 No further survey is required for bats or nesting birds.

Enhancements

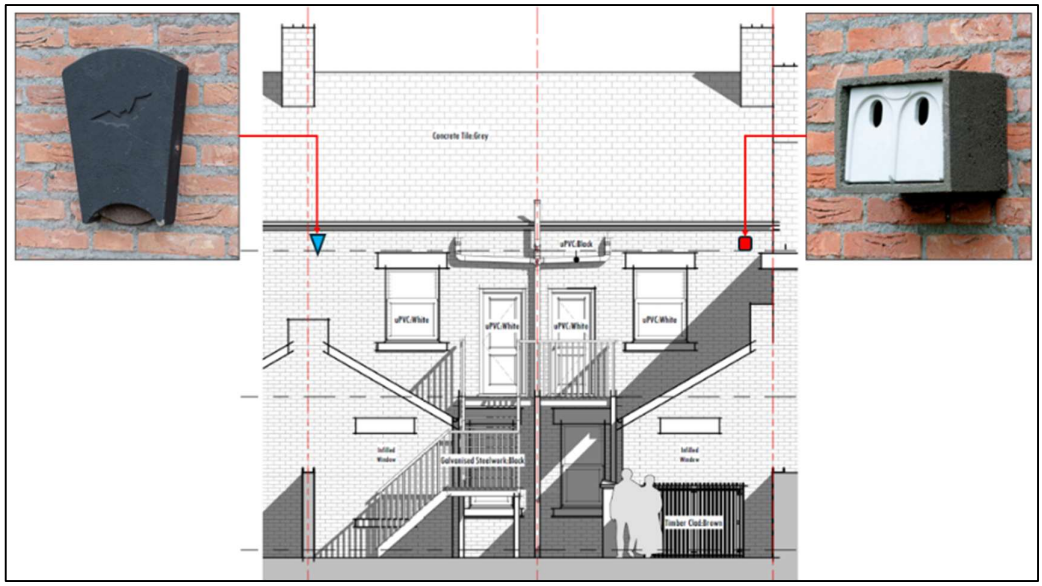
6.2.2 Although no evidence of roosting bats was recorded, it is feasible that potential bat roost features were present within the roof prior to the replacement of the roof.

6.2.3 To enhance the site for bats and birds post development it is recommended that one bat box and one sparrow box are installed on the rear (southeast facing elevation) of the renovated building.

6.2.4 The bat box should comprise either a Brigida Bat Shelter[2] or Beaumaris Woodstone Bat Box[3] and the bird box should be a Woodstone Estella House Sparrow Box[4] or similar. Suitable locations for the boxes are shown in Figure 3 below.

[2] The Brigida Bat Shelter is available from: https://www.nhbs.com/brigida-bat-box?bkfno=260129
[3] The Beaumaris Bat Box is available from https://www.nhbs.com/beaumaris-woodstone-bat-box?bkfno=231796
[4] The Woodstone Estella House Sparrow Box is available from: https://www.wildcare.co.uk/vivara-pro-woodstone-build-in-11265.html

Figure 3. Proposed bat box and bird box locations on the rear elevation



7. Conclusion

7.1.1 Although substantial refurbishment works were ongoing on the property at the time of inspection (March 2026), no potential bat roost features considered likely to be used by bats were present. No bats, signs of bats, or bird's nests (active or historic) were present either.

7.1.2 The previous replacement of the roof and renovation work such as replacement of guttering may have removed some features suitable for bats or birds and it is recommended that this is addressed through the installation of one bat box and one bird box. Suitable locations for the boxes, and suitable makes and models have been recommended.

7.1.3 This report is considered to remain valid for a period of two years from the date of survey.

8. References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. The Bat Conservation Trust.

Appendix 1. Legislation and Policy Guidance

Bats

Bats receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

It is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats whilst they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection or obstruct access to any such place.
- Damage or destroy the breeding or resting place (roost) of a bat.
- Possess a bat (live 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 (dead or alive), or parts of bats.

The Convention on Biological Diversity, signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, requires member states to develop national strategies and to undertake a range of actions aimed at maintaining or restoring biodiversity. The UK Biodiversity Strategy was produced in response to the Convention.

Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 sites termed Special Aeras of Conservation (SACs) may be designated for internationally important populations of greater horseshoe bat, lesser horseshoe bat, barbastelle, grey long-eared bat, and Bechstein's bat.

In England & Wales, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, "to have due regard, as far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity". It notes that "conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat". Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula* and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* are included as priority species within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. At a more local level there are Local Biodiversity Action Plans for smaller geographical areas which may cover a greater or lesser range of bat species.

Where it is proposed to carry out works which will have an adverse impact on roosting bats a European Protected Species (EPS) license must first be obtained from Natural England. This requirement applies even if no bats are expected to be present when the work is carried out.

Birds

All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal (subject to exceptions) to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird.

Common amphibian species

These animals receive limited protection under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), which makes it illegal to intentionally kill or injure any such animal.

Species and Habitats of Principal Importance

Planning authorities have a duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 to have regard to priority species and habitats in exercising their functions including development control and planning. In compliance with Section 41 of the NERC Act, the Secretary of State has published a list of species and habitats considered to be of principal importance for conserving biodiversity in England under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. This is known as the list of Habitats and Species of Principal Importance (HPI/SPI). The HPI/SPI list is used to guide planning authorities in implementing their duty under the NERC Act and includes species such as hedgehog and common toad.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework for England was revised in 2023. This document states that plans should 'promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation 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'.