Bat Activity Survey Report	
For:	CODA Bespoke
Site	Vernon House; Yews Lane, Kendray, Barnsley, S70 3LJ
Report Date:	29th July 2025
Report Reference:	SQ-3323

Client:	CODA Bespoke
Site Name:	Vernon House; Yews Lane, Kendray, Barnsley, S70 3LJ
Grid Reference:	SE 35756 05416
Report:	Bat Activity Report
Date of survey:	26th June & 28th July 2025
Lead Ecologist:	Natasha Estrada MRes, MCIEEM **Natural England Bat Licence :** 2015-12213-CLS-CLS

Issue:	Revision:	Stage:	Date:	Prepared by:	Approved by:
1	-	Draft for review	28th July 2025	Sam Toon BSc(hons)	Natasha Estrada MRes, MCIEEM
2	n/a	FINAL	29th July 2025	Sam Toon BSc(hons)	Natasha Estrada MRes, MCIEEM

The contents of this report have been produced with due consideration of current best practice guidance, and in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct and guidelines, as outlined in Collins 2023.

This report should not be submitted as part of a planning application without any accompanying species-specific reports which may have been recommended herein.

Data within this report is valid for a maximum of eighteen months from the date of the survey. After this period, an updated site visit will be required to determine a new ecological baseline.

Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this report and its contents, in view of potential ecological constraints to development or the presence or absence of species, it must only be viewed as a snapshot in time and, therefore, not be viewed as definitive. Due to external factors, such as seasonality, weather etc, having the potential to affect survey results, no liability can be assumed for omissions or changes that may, or may not occur, after the date this report was produced.

Summary

Estrada Ecology Ltd was commissioned to conduct two bat activity surveys on Vernon House, Yews Lane, Kendray, Barnsley, S70 3LJ (hereafter referred to the site).

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site was conducted by Estrada Ecology Ltd (*Report Ref: SQ-3267, 9th June 2025*). Vernon House was recorded as containing moderate roost suitability and consequently further survey effort was recommended in respect of bats to ascertain presence/ likely absence.

Findings and recommendations

Bats and roosts

Two dusk activity surveys, following BCT Survey Guidelines 2023, were undertaken following suitable weather conditions, as outlined herein.

During the survey, no bats of any species were recorded emerging from or entering the building on site. A low level of bat contacts was recorded throughout the duration of the survey, consisting of predominantly fly bys and short bursts of foraging within the area.

Based on field survey evidence, Vernon House is deemed not to be used by bats for roosting or as a place of shelter. As a result, no further surveys are recommended, and no formal mitigation is proposed, other than standard best practice.

Hibernating bats

Crevice-dwelling bats, such as pipistrelle species, use structures for shelter and protection in winter when they hibernate. During hibernation, bats need roosts that are cool and remain at a constant temperature. They are difficult to detect in hibernation, in well-concealed crevices, and leave no obvious signs of their presence. The building was assessed for its potential to support features which bats could utilise for hibernation. The structure recorded low potential for hibernacula use, due to the absence of crevices or cracks of a suitable depth and thermal mass which could support hibernating bats.

Breeding birds

No evidence of breeding birds was recorded at the time of survey within or upon the building. No impacts are predicted on breeding birds at this juncture.

Contents:

1 Introduction and Site Description

1.1 Estrada Ecology Ltd was commissioned to conduct two dusk bat activity surveys on Vernon House, Yews Lane, Kendray, Barnsley, S70 3LJ (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The survey site's central OS grid reference is SE 35756 05416.

1.2 Under current proposals, it is understood the building is to be demolished and the plot redeveloped for residential use with associated landscaping and infrastructure.

1.3 The site, spanning 0.2078 hectares, is characterised by a mix of habitat types and is surrounded by communal open spaces to the north, south, and west, with residential housing to the east.

1.4 Adjacent areas comprise residential zones and the presence of Barnsley Cemetery to the west. The site lies approximately 1kms southeast of Barnsley Town Centre.

1.5 The primary habitat within the site consists of a partial building that has sustained significant fire damage, effectively leaving it without a roof and with most of its walls collapsed. Noteworthy is the building's southern elevation, which holds numerous features with potential to support bat roosts.

1.6 Previous ecological survey of the site recorded no field sign evidence synonymous with use by bats but a moderate level of features which could support bats, along with an immediate landscape capable of supporting feeding resources for bats in a low light environment.

Figure 1: The building in its wider setting (shown with red keyline).

Google Earth

2 Protected Species Legislation

2.1 All species of bat and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

2.2 The Regulations prohibit: the deliberate killing, injuring or taking of bats; the deliberate disturbance of any bat species, in such a way as to be significantly likely to affect:

- their ability of to survive, hibernate, migrate, breed, or rear or nurture their young, or the local distribution or abundance of that species.
- damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place (roost); and
- the possession or transport of bats or any other part thereof.

2.3 Bats are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) through their inclusion in Schedule 5. Under the Act, they are protected from:

- intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level); obstruction of access to any place of shelter, breeding or rest; selling, bartering or exchange of these species, or parts of.

2.4 Seven British bat species are listed as Species of Principle Importance (SPI) under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. These are: barbastelle *(Barbastella barbastellus);* Bechstein's (*Myotis bechsteinii);* noctule *(Nyctalus noctula);* soprano pipistrelle *(Pipistrellus pygmaeus);* brown long-eared *(Plecotus auritus);* greater horseshoe *(Rhinolophus ferrumequinum);* and lesser horseshoe *(Rhinolophus hipposideros)*.

2.5 Under the National Planning Policy Framework 2021, the presence of any protected species is a material planning consideration. The Framework states that impacts arising from development proposals must be avoided where possible, or mitigated / compensated for, and that opportunities for ecological enhancement should be sought.

2.6 Under certain circumstances, a licence may be granted by Natural England to permit activities that would otherwise constitute an offence. In relation to development, a scheme must have full planning permission before a licence application can be made.

3 Survey Objectives

3.1 The objective of these surveys was to establish if bats were using the site for roosting, or as a place of shelter; and, to identify to species level, determine the population size and nature of the roost within the buildings on site.

3.2 This report presents the findings of bat activity surveys undertaken in June and July 2025 and aims to:

- Outline any potential impacts of the proposed development on bats, as a result of the findings of the desk study and field surveys.
- Provide recommendations for mitigation and / or compensation measures to ensure any impacts on bat activity is avoided or minimised where applicable.
- Provide recommendations for enhancing the site for bat activity where possible; and

- Provide recommendations for mitigation and / or compensation measures to ensure any impacts on breeding bird species is avoided or minimised.

4 Survey Methodology

4.1 Desktop study

4.1.1 A biological data records search was commissioned from Barnsley Biological Records Centre for a 1 km radius from the central grid reference.

4.1.2 Further inspection, using colour 1: 25,000 OS base maps (www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk), MAGIC (www.magic.defra.gov.uk) and aerial photographs from Google Earth (www.maps.google.co.uk), was also undertaken to provide additional context and identify any features of potential importance for nature conservation in the wider countryside.

4.2 Initial inspection survey

4.2.1 An initial inspection survey of the site was undertaken in May 2025. The remains of Vernon House, which has historically been subject to extensive fire damage and subsequent collapse, recorded numerous features which could support bats for roosting or as a place of shelter.

4.2.2 Artificial light levels and splay within the immediate area are low limiting anthropogenic factors which could influence bats. The remaining parts of the building also lie within a landscape that could support minor foraging habitat for bats. As a result, it was concluded that the structure provides moderate suitability for supporting bats and further survey effort should be undertaken to ascertain presence/ likely absence.

4.3 Bat activity surveys

4.3.1 Two bat activity surveys were undertaken on the evenings of 26th June 2025 and 28th July 2025 using guidance from Collins, J., Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines, 4th Edition, 2023.

4.3.2 Prior to the start of the activity surveys an external examination, where accessible, was undertaken of all cavities, holes, cracks and fissures in timber and brickwork (where applicable), using an Explorer Premium Image Recording telescopic borescope, a Seek compact pro thermal camera and close-focusing binoculars. Features were examined for bat field signs to identify bats in situ, potential roost sites and access points and any signs of occupation such as scratch marks; droppings; smudge marks; discarded moth wings; and urine staining etc.

4.3.3 The number of surveys on the building is determined by its potential to support bats; any field sign evidence gathered during the initial inspection survey in May 2025, and any subsequent activity recorded during the activity survey.

4.3.4 The dusk emergence surveys commenced twenty minutes prior to sunset and continued up to two hours after sunset.

4.3.5 Echo Meter Touch 2 Pros were used to aid identification of the species along with Night fox Whisper Infrared cameras.

Figure 2: Location of surveyors and IR cameras(●) over the survey period. Location of standalone IR camera (●).

Google Earth

4.4 Timings

4.4.1 The activity surveys were conducted during suitable weather conditions as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Environmental conditions throughout the survey period.

Date	Sunset / Sunrise	Start time	End time	Weather conditions
26th June 2025	21:39	21:14	22:43	Temp 16°C, Humidity 61%, No precipitation, wind speed 7mph SW
28th July 2025	21:09	20:45	22:31	Temp 17°C, Humidity 61%, No precipitation, wind speed 4mph NW

4.5 Personnel

4.5.1 The bat activity surveys were led by Principal Ecologist Natasha Estrada MRes, MCIEEM, Natural England Bat Licence 2015-12213-CLS-CLS who has been a licensed bat ecologist for approximately twenty years being named on multiple mitigation licenses in respect of several bat species.

4.5.2 Natasha was assisted by ecologist Joanne Toller BSc(hons) who is enrolled on a formal bat licence training programme with Ecology Training UK Ltd and Marie Brown BSc(hons) on a rotational basis to maximise survey effort.

5 Survey Findings

5.1 Desktop study

5.1.1 Eleven bat records were returned for the search radius with the closest recorded being located 768 metres southwest. Two roost records were returned, one for Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and one for Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus)*.

5.1.2 Consultation with MAGIC returned no European Protected Species Mitigation Licence within a 1 km radius from grid.

5.2 Initial inspection survey

5.2.1 Prior to the start of the activity survey, a visual inspection of the building was undertaken, where accessible by licensed ecologist 2015-12213-CLS-CLS.

5.2.2 No field sign evidence to indicate use of any structure was recorded.

5.3 Bat activity surveys

5.3.1 During the first survey, no bats of any species were recorded emerging from or re-entering any aspect of the building. All IR footage analysis recorded negative for bat emergence.

5.3.2 A low level of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) contacts were recorded over the survey period, isolated to:

- 4 x Common Pipistrelles entering the site from the west between 22:01 and 22:05 and foraging within the site until 22:29 before dispersing west.
- 1 x Noctule contact at 22:17 foraging above trees outside the western site boundary.

5.3.3 No evidence of breeding birds was recorded over the first survey period, within or upon any structure within the site.

5.3.4 During the second bat activity survey, no bats of any species were recorded emerging from or entering the building on site throughout the duration of the survey. All IR footage analysis recorded negative for bat emergence.

5.3.5 Bat activity recorded was broadly similar to that recorded during the first survey with low numbers (3) of common pipistrelle bats entering the site from the west and feeding in shorts bursts within the curtilage of the site before dispersing west. Four Noctule bat contacts were recorded, all outside the western site boundary at 21:22, 21:45, 22:04 and 22:08.

5.4 Commuting route assessment

5.4.1 Bats are known to utilise linear features as commuting lines to foraging grounds and between roosts. Under current proposals, no

encroachment on habitat suitable for use as major commuting or foraging habitat by bats is predicted and thus no impacts.

5.4.2 No major commuting lines or foraging grounds were recorded during the survey period over the wider site.

5.4.3 Field sign evidence over the survey period infers the immediate area supports low level of bats/ bat activity.

6 Survey and Site Assessment

6.1 No bats of any species were recorded emerging from or re-entering any area of the building over the survey period.

6.2 A low level of bat activity was recorded over the survey consisting predominantly of contacts outside the western boundary and short bursts of foraging behaviour within the site boundary.

6.3 No evidence of use of any structure by breeding birds was recorded at the time of survey.

6.4 Based on evidence collated over the dusk survey combined with an absence of bat activity and no emerging/ re-entering bats, Vernon House is recorded as unlikely to support bats for roosting or as a place of shelter when assessed by an experienced bat ecologist (2015-12213-CLS-CLS).

6.5 The buildings are considered to have low potential for use by bats for hibernation, due to an absence of suitable crevices and cracks of a suitable depth capable of supporting a stable thermal mass which could support hibernating bats.

7 Ecological Constraints

7.1 Due to the variable properties of bat echolocation calls and the format of frequency division recordings, it is not always possible to identify a series of echolocation calls down to species level.

7.2 In most cases, it is usually possible to identify to genus level which is suitable to allow potential affects to be assessed, and appropriate mitigation designed.

7.3 Given the level of anti-social behaviour on the site, one fissure on the northern aspect of the site was covered by a standalone IR camera with footage analysed post survey. All footage recorded negative for bat emergence/ re-entry, and this is not deemed a constraint to the survey findings.

8 Interpretation and Evaluation

8.1 Vernon House is confirmed as being unlikely to be used by bats for roosting or as a place of shelter.

8.2 No field sign evidence to suggest use by bats was recorded over the survey period and no bat emergence or entry behaviour was recorded.

8.3 Bat activity over the survey period was generally low isolated to low levels of foraging behaviour from non-emerging individuals and occasional contacts outside the site boundary.

8.4 It would be expected that surveys undertaken during the optimum period of June and July 2025 would reveal a greater level of activity, if the site were to be used regularly by larger numbers of bats.

9 Assessment of Potential Impacts

9.1 Impacts on bats and their roosts

9.1.1 The results of the bat activity surveys confirm that the building within the curtilage of the site is unlikely to be used by bats for roosting or as a place of shelter.

9.1.2 The activity survey results recorded no evidence to suggest use of the survey site as a major commuting route or foraging ground. Under current proposals, no impacts on major foraging grounds or commuting lines are predicted.

9.1.3 Where feasible, artificial lighting should be designed so as not to splay outside the site boundaries.

9.2 Impacts on breeding birds

9.2.1 At the time of survey, no evidence to indicate use of any building by breeding birds was recorded.

9.2.2 It is understood that works are due to commence outside the breeding bird season. However, should timings change and nests or activity to suggest birds are breeding or attempting to breed in any building be recorded, then all works should cease, and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.

9.2.3 A suitable buffer zone, as advised by a suitably qualified ecologist, should be installed in order to protect the nest and prevent disturbance.

10 Conclusions and Recommendations

10.1 The result of the bat activity survey confirms Vernon House is unlikely to be used by bats for roosting or as a place of shelter. As a result, no formal mitigation is recommended however, the following precautionary caveat is applicable:

As with all buildings, there is the residual possibility of single bats using a building post survey. The likelihood in this instance is deemed very low however, during the onset of works, should bats or field sign evidence of bats be recorded then all works should cease, and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.

10.2 It is deemed that a Protected Species Mitigation Licence (formerly European Protected Species Mitigation Licence) will not be required to facilitate the works.

10.3 No impacts on major foraging lines or commuting corridors are predicted via the proposals.

References:

Collins, J (2023). Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition.

Appendix One: Example of IR imagery.

Appendix Two: Example of Surveyors Field View