Allied Ecology

Bat Survey Report

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The Stable off The Avenue

Leighton Bromswold

Huntingdon

PE28 5AW

-

August 2025

Site Details	The Stable off The Avenue, Leighton Bromswold, Huntingdon, PE28 5AW
Client	The Church Commissioners for England
Date of Issue	19/08/2025
Report Reference	25418 – Bat Survey Report

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Validity / 'Shelf-life'
Unless otherwise stated, the findings of the surveys and assessments detailed within this report should be considered as valid and able to be relied upon for a period of up to 18 months. Any alterations to the site boundary and / or proposals may invalidate the recommendations contained within this report.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

1.1.1. Allied Ecology has been appointed prepare a Bat Survey Report, following detailed dusk emergence bat survey work undertaken at The Stable off The Avenue, Leighton Bromswold, Huntingdon, PE28 5AW (grid reference TL 11305 75498).

1.1.2. The site is located within the village of Leighton Bromswold, to the north-west of Huntingdon, and comprises a largely dilapidated stable building, which is currently housing chickens. The site is located within a rural setting and is bound by residential dwellings to the south and west (beyond a public footpath), and agricultural land to the north and east. Beyond Leighton Bromswold lies agricultural land (largely cropland) on all aspects.

1.2. Summary of Proposals

1.2.1. It is understood that, due to the building's proximity to an adjacent footpath and its poor state of repair, the building is proposed for either partial or total demolition.

1.3. Basis of Reporting

1.3.1. The site was subject to initial ecological survey work, including a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment survey by Allied Ecology on 13th June 2025, in order to inform the proposals, and as such this report should be read in conjunction with the 'Protected Species Survey Report' prepared by Allied Ecology, June 2025. The Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment established the 'low' roosting potential of the on-site building, with no evidence of roosting bats encountered during the survey.

1.3.2. This report documents the findings of the subsequent Phase 2 bat survey work undertaken at the site, comprising a single dusk emergence survey, in order to establish the presence / absence status of roosting bats at the on-site building. This report sets out the likely effects of the proposals in respect of roosting bats and, where necessary, any licensing requirements, in line with relevant best practice guidance.

1.3.3. Where appropriate, proportionate recommendations for mitigation and / or compensation measures are also provided, in order to ensure that individual bats and local bat populations remain fully safeguarded under the proposals.

1.4. Lead Surveyor and Author's Experience

1.4.1. The lead surveyor and author is Sophie Smith. Sophie is a Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM), with over 7 years of relevant experience within an ecological consultancy setting and is suitably authoritative to assess the potential effects of the proposals on the habitats and faunal species present.

1.4.2. In addition to being an experienced botanical and habitat surveyor, Sophie holds Natural England protected species survey licences for UK bats (Class 2 - CL17/CL18), Barn Owl (CL29), and Great Crested Newt (CL08). As such, the findings and assessments detailed within this report can be relied upon to inform the proposals.

2. Ecological Background and Legislation

2.1. Ecological Background

2.1.1. A total of 17 species of bat are known to breed in Britain, all of which remain at risk from development as a result of disturbance and damage to roosting features, and the loss of suitable foraging / commuting habitat.

2.1.2. Species form localised populations and are distributed unevenly across Britain according to their specific habitat and climatic requirements, with common species more widely distributed than the uncommon / rare species. Bats are known to roost in both natural and artificial structures, including trees and buildings, and readily use a range of habitats for foraging and commuting.

2.1.3. Bats are well adapted for flight mobility and will typically emerge from their roosts between dusk and dawn to forage for prey, which consists exclusively of insects. To capture their prey, bats will emit short, high frequency bursts of sound, the process of which is known as 'echolocation'. From this, they are able to formulate an image of their surrounding environment and the precise locations of objects within it.

2.1.4. During the winter, bats will hibernate to reduce their metabolic activity / energy expenditure whilst prey is scarce. Suitable hibernation roosts will typically have high humidity levels, a stable low temperature and be free from predators. Bats are known to intermittently wake from hibernation, and sometimes even move between hibernation roosts, albeit will not typically do so fully until the beginning of the active season in April / May. Buildings and trees often provide suitable conditions to support hibernating bats.

2.1.5. During the summer, female bats will form maternity roosts within buildings and trees where they will rear their young. Females typically give birth to a single pup in any given year, which will be dependent upon the mother until they are able to take flight and forage for themselves. Once their young are independent, females will disperse to find a mate and to prepare for the upcoming hibernation season.

2.2. Legislation Summary

2.2.1. All British bats are protected under domestic (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) and international (Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended) legislation, and as such, they are classified as European Protected Species.

2.2.2. Under Regulation 39 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended, it is a criminal offence to:

- Deliberately capture or kill a bat;
- Deliberately disturb a bat;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat; and
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange a live or dead bat or any part of a bat.

2.2.3. Furthermore, under Schedule 5 the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, all bats are subject to the provisions of Section 9, which makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a bat;
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a bat; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

2.2.4. In addition to the above legislation, a number of bats are classified as Section 41 Priority Species, and are therefore afforded a greater level of consideration within development under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, representing a material consideration at planning.

3. Methodology

3.1. Phase 2 Dusk Emergence Surveys

3.1.1. A single dusk emergence survey was undertaken in August 2025, to establish the presence / absence status of roosting bats within building B1.

3.1.2. In accordance with best practice guidance, four Night-Vision Aids (NVAs), comprising one Canon XA-60 1080p Infrared (IR) sensitive camera, with two separate / independent Evolva T38 IR lights, two Guide TK612 'Gen2' and one Pixfra Arc 613 Thermal Imaging Cameras, were deployed at strategic locations during the survey covering all relevant aspects of the buildings.

3.1.3. Night-Vision-Aids, supported by Anabat Scout full-spectrum electronic bat detectors, were positioned at suitable locations throughout the duration of the survey and were utilised to identify precise roosting locations and confirm the number of any emerging / re-entering bats recorded (where present). The dusk emergence survey started 15 minutes prior to sunset, and continued 1.5 hours after sunset. Three suitably experienced surveyors were present in support of the Night-Vision Aids, in order to continually monitor the equipment and record background bat activity in proximity of the site.

3.1.4. The lead surveyor during the dusk emergence survey visit was Sophie Smith (MCIEEM / NE Class 2 bat survey licence), supported by two suitably experienced assistants.

3.1.5. The weather conditions during the survey are set out in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1. Summary of Dusk Emergence Survey Weather Conditions.

Date	Building ref.	Equipment deployed	Weather conditions	Survey start and end times
07/08/2025	B1	Anabat Scouts and NVAs (x4)	Dry, 80% cloud, BF4, 20°C	Start – 20:28 Sunset – 20:43 End – 22:13

3.1.6. Anabat Scout detectors comprise built-in full-spectrum recording equipment, from which all bat calls were extracted and analysed using Analook Insight to verify the species recorded during the survey work. All recordings were attributed to species level and are detailed within this report.

3.1.7. The data capture by the Night-Vision-Aid cameras was reviewed at the earliest opportunity, following the survey, using a combined approach of reviewing recorded footage in 'real time' (x1 speed), in addition to backing up this review using advanced motion detection software including MotionMeerket and VLC Media Player 'Motion Detect' functionality, where appropriate. An image showing the darkest time during the surveys is provided at Appendix BSR1.

3.2. Survey Constraints

3.2.1. The survey work was undertaken at a suitable time of year, under ideal conditions. Two of the Night Vision-Aid cameras were subject to some obstruction by vegetation, as shown on plan 25418-BSR1. However, based on the findings of the Preliminary Roost Assessment, and general bat activity recorded during the survey, the results are considered able to be relied upon to assess the likely presence / absence status of roosting bats.

4. Results

4.1. Dusk Emergence Presence / Absence Survey Results

4.1.1. In order to establish the presence / absence status of roosting bats that may be present within building B1, a single dusk emergence surveys was undertaken by Allied Ecology in August 2025. The results of the survey work undertaken are set out in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1. Dusk emergence survey results.

Date	Building Reference	Emerging / Re-entering Bats	Foraging / Commuting Summary
07/08/2025	B1	**No bats identified emerging from or entering the building at any point during the survey**	Low levels of bat activity within proximity to the building, attributed to infrequent (>10) passes by Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, with three passes by Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, observed in flight high above the site.

4.2. Summary and Evaluation

4.2.1. On the basis of the findings of the Preliminary Roost Assessment and above dusk emergence presence / absence survey, roosting bats are assessed to be likely absent from building B1, with no identified active roosts present. As such, no further survey work or assessment is considered necessary or proportionate to inform the planning application and proposed works.

4.2.2. Nonetheless, where proposed development is unlikely to result in an offence to European Protected Species, and where licensing is not required, reasonable precautionary measures should be implemented to minimise the risk to such species in the unlikely event they should be present during the course of development activities. Accordingly, and in line with the guidance set out by Natural England[1], a number of highly precautionary mitigation measures to fully safeguard bats under the development are set out below in Section 5.

[1] Natural England (2013) *'European Protected Species: Mitigation Licensing - How to get a licence (WML-G12)'*

5. Recommended Mitigation and Safeguarding Measures

5.1 **Update Survey**. Should a considerable amount of time elapse (>1 year) between the survey work detailed in this report and the proposed works commencing, it is recommended that a further visual inspection survey of the building be undertaken prior to the commencement. Such survey work would aim to establish the current status of bats at the site, and to identify any change in the potential for the building to support roosting bats.

5.2 **Bats – Unexpected Discovery of Bats during Works.** In the highly unlikely event that a bat(s) is discovered or encountered during the works, all works will cease immediately and Allied Ecology will be contacted for further advice. The necessary course of action would likely require Allied Ecology to visit the site and assess the need to obtain a relevant Natural England mitigation licence, in order for the remaining works to proceed lawfully. Works will only recommence once a Natural England mitigation licence is in place, or confirmation is received that no bats / active bat roosts would be impacted by continuing.

5.3 **Bat – Artificial Roost Boxes**. It is recommended that new bat roosting opportunities be incorporated within any future development proposals, in order to increase the biodiversity potential of the site. It is recommended that a single tree-mounted artificial bat box be installed on a tree within the site / in proximity within the applicant's control. The bat box should be sited as high up as possible in sheltered wind-free location that is no obscured by vegetated and is exposed to the sun for part of the day, facing a south-easterly or -westerly direction.

5.4 **Sensitive Lighting**. It is recommended that consideration be afforded to the implementation of any new lighting at the site so as to ensure any off-site vegetated habitats and the recommended bat box are not subject to any unnecessary directly illumination. A sensitive lighting design should be adopted, in accordance with the relevant best practice guidance[2]. This would intend to keep any new lighting provision to a minimum, and avoid vegetated habitats where practicable. Particular consideration should be given to avoiding upward light trespass, skyglow, and unnecessary lighting.

[2] Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals (2023) 'Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night''; Stone, E.L. (2013) 'Bats and lighting: Overview of current evidence and mitigation guidance.'; ILP (2011) 'Guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive light' Institution of Lighting Professionals, GN01:2011.

6. Conclusions

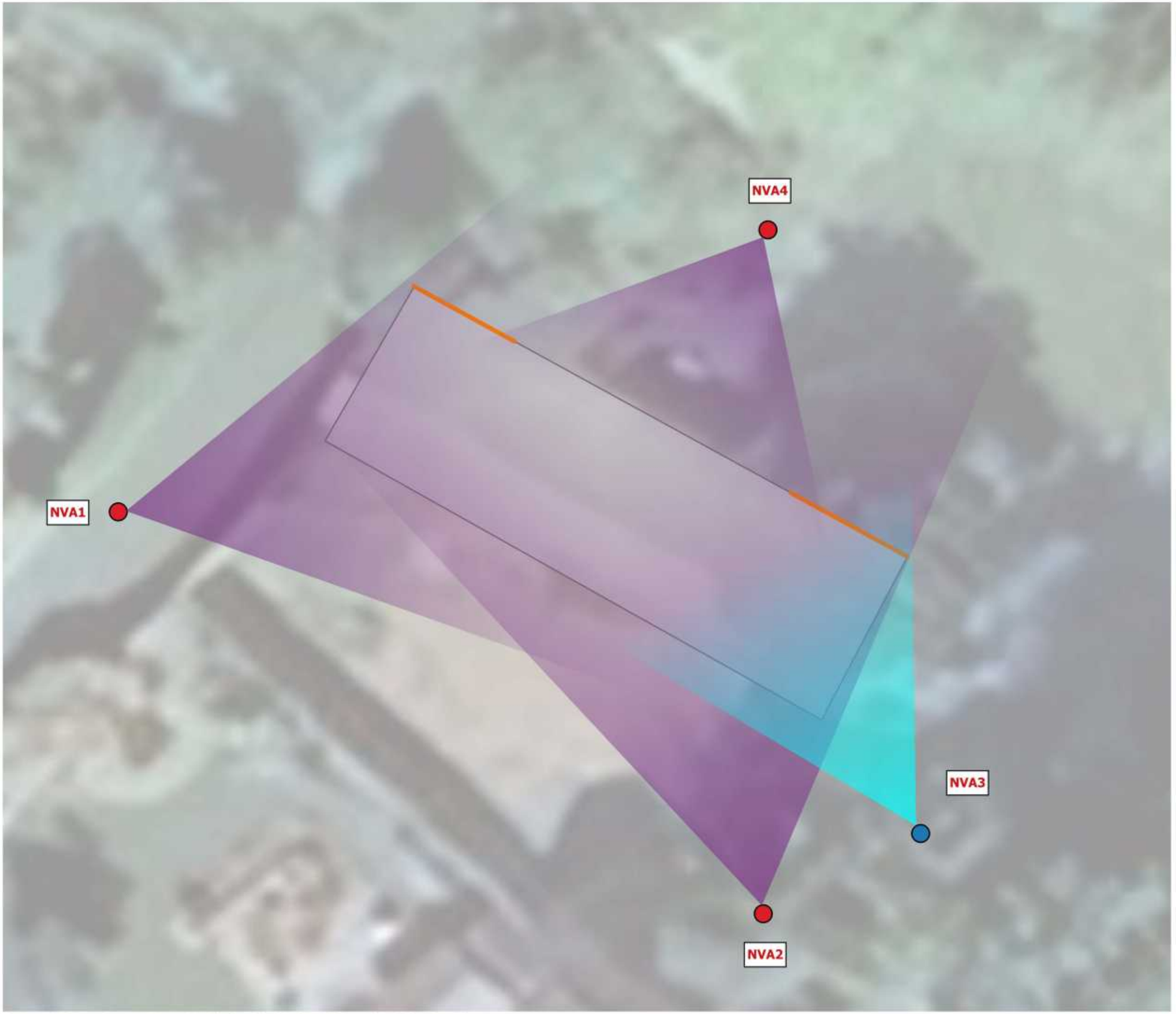
6.1 Allied Ecology has undertaken specific survey work in respect of bats at The Stable off The Avenue, Leighton Bromswold, Huntingdon, PE28 5AW, comprising a detailed dusk emergence survey supported by specialist Night-Vision-Aids (NVAs), in order to establish the presence / likely absence status of roosting bats, and to inform the proposals.

6.2 No active bat roosts were identified during the survey work undertaken.

6.3 Subject to implementing the recommended precautionary mitigation and safeguarding measures detailed within this Bat Survey Report and the Protected Species Survey Report prepared by Allied Ecology in June 2025, it is anticipated that the proposals will not result in any adverse impacts on bats, or other protected faunal species.

Plan 25418-BSR1

Bat Dusk Emergence Survey Results (07/08/2025)



Key:

- Building with bat roosting potential category of 'low'
- Section of building obscured by vegetation
- Thermal Imaging Camera Position
- Thermal Imaging Camera Field of View
- Infra-Red (IR) Camera Position
- Infra-Red (IR) Camera Field of View

No bats identified emerging from or entering the building at any point during the survey.

The Stable off The Avenue, Leighton Bromswold, Huntingdon, PE28 5AW

Bat Dusk Emergence Survey Results (07/08/25)

25418 - BSR1

August 2025

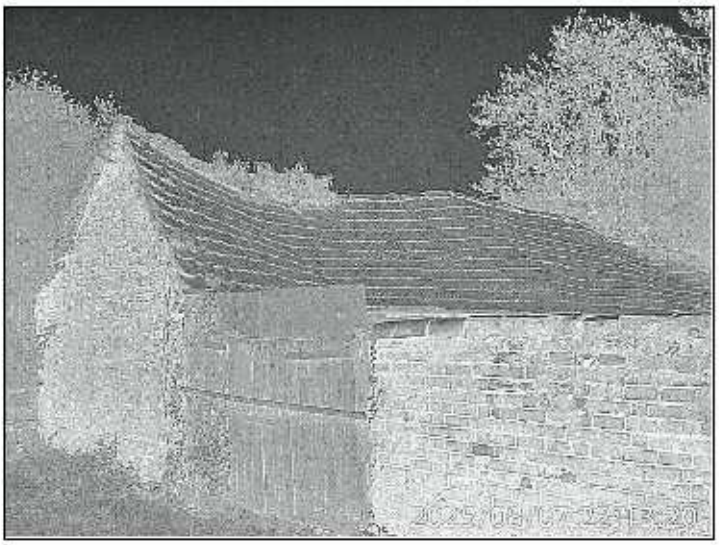
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Appendix 25418-BSR1

Images of the darkest period of dusk emergence survey



Darkest Point. Dusk Emergence Survey (07/08/25) – NVA1



Darkest Point. Dusk Emergence Survey (07/08/25) – NVA2



Darkest Point. Dusk Emergence Survey (07/08/25) – NVA3



Darkest Point. Dusk Emergence Survey (07/08/25) – NVA4

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