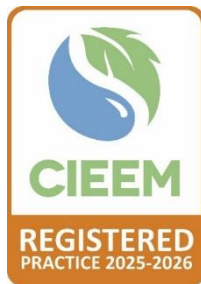


**Silver Birches,
Heath Ride,
Finchampstead,
Berks,
RG40 3QJ**

**PHASE 1 BAT SURVEY
(Provisional roost assessment)**

July 2025

Dr.Jonty Denton (Chartered Ecologist) FRES FLS MCIEEM CECol



Prepared by

Dr. Jonty Denton *BSc (Hons) D(Phil) FRES, FLS, MCIEEM, CECol*

31 Thorn Lane, Four Marks, Hampshire, GU34 5BX

Phone: (01420) 565647 mobile: 07935594093

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consultant Chartered Ecologist Dr.Jonty Denton FRES FLS MCIEEM CEcol was commissioned to undertake a Provisional Roost Assessment in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2023) at Silver Birches, Heath Ride, Finchampstead, Berks, RG40 3QJ (GR:SU808645).

The Provisional Roost Assessment / Phase 1 Bat Survey was undertaken on 12th July 2025 in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

No evidence of bats was found within the dwellings or garage. However, the roofs of the bungalow, rear extension and detached garage have small openings which could be exploited by crevice roosting bats and all have low potential for bats, and a phase 2 survey is required.

INTRODUCTION

Site Proposals

This is required for a planning application seeking to demolish the existing buildings and replace with a new dwelling.

Phase 1 Bat Survey Methods

The Daytime Bat Assessment / Phase 1 Bat Survey was undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

The Phase 1 Bat Survey was carried out and comprised of a daytime walkover of the site, internally and externally, to record evidence of any protected bat species.

Details of the survey methods are given below.

The property was investigated externally to identify potential bat access/egress locations and roosting areas such as gaps or holes between wooden cladding, roof tiles, fascias and soffits and to record direct evidence of bat presence such as droppings and urine staining. This was followed by a detailed investigation of all accessible internal spaces to record evidence of bat roosting activity such as droppings, feeding remains, live animals, corpses, urine staining and fur staining. The building was assessed as to its suitability for supporting roosting bats. The survey conformed to current Bat Conservation Trust guidelines (Bat Conservation, (2023) *Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good practice guidelines* 4th edition).

The details of the assessment criteria used to determine the ecological value of on-site attributes is outlined below. During the Phase 1 survey the assessment criteria are based on the potential for the site to support the species considered. However, in many cases Phase 2 surveys will be required to confirm presence /absence of any bat species and hence the importance of a population at the site, therefore the assessment of value should be considered as provisional.

Where possible, a provisional assessment of potential will be made although this may well require Phase 2 surveys to confirm status.

High Potential- High potential buildings are those that have features highly suitable for use by roosting bats, including gaps around soffits, hanging tiles, extensive roof spaces etc. High potential buildings are often, but not always,

buildings of more historic construction. Further Phase 2 surveys will be required to confirm the presence/absence of bats.

Moderate Potential- Moderate potential buildings have a moderate number of features that may be utilised by bats for roosting, these may include loose fascias, roof spaces etc. Further Phase 2 surveys are likely to be required to confirm the presence/absence of bats.

Low Potential- Low potential buildings are those that provide limited bat roosting potential although some features that may be utilised by bats may be present. Further Phase 2 surveys are likely to be required to confirm the presence/absence of bats.

No/Negligible Potential – These are buildings that are extremely unlikely to support roosting bats due to the absence of suitable features. Further Phase 2 surveys are unlikely to be required for buildings with negligible potential.

Phase 1 Survey Equipment

During the Phase 1 survey the surveyor was equipped with 10 x 42 close focus binoculars and a high-powered torch.



Figure 1. Site location. *Courtesy of Google images*



Figure 2. Priority habitats and species map. *Courtesy of Magicmaps*

Dark green= Deciduous woodland, Pink = Lowland heathland.

RESULTS

Phase 1 Habitat Survey Results

Bats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, and also receive additional protection via The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations (2017) from intentional killing and injury and from intentional damage, destruction or obstruction of access to a place of shelter. It is an offence to kill or injure a bat or interfere with any roosting or resting site. A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time or not. Barbastelle Bats, Bechstein's Bat, Noctule, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared Bat, Greater Horseshoe Bat and Lesser Horseshoe Bat are also UK BAP Priority Species and SPI.

Background Data Search

According to MagicMap, four protected species licences have been issued for Bats within 500m of the site. Closest is from 171m to the southeast issued in 2015 (No.2014-4594-EPS-MIT) covering brown long-eared and soprano pipistrelles. With 2015-7982-EPS-MIT from 490m to north and 2020-45340-EPS both covering brown long-eared bats.

Bats – trees

There are mature Scot's pines to the east of the extension, but these had negligible potential for roosting bats.

Bats – building

Building Assessment

Bungalow

The bungalow is brick faced block walls with a low-pitched roof of clay tiles which are close fitting with no gaps. However, there are a few potential openings where the tile faced parapets have been damaged (see figures 3-4).

The loft is partly boarded out and had been used for storage. The roof is lined with felting which is in very good order with no external daylight visible from within and there was no sign of any bat activity.



Figure 3. Front elevation of bungalow looking northeast: Red arrows indicate potential openings for crevice roosting bats.



Figure 4. Rear elevation of bungalow looking southwest: Red arrows indicate potential openings for crevice roosting bats.

Rear Extension of bungalow

The elongate extension was formerly attached by a garage/utility area which has been removed. The north face of the former connecting roof section is partly exposed there are a few potential openings where the tile faced parapets have been damaged (see figure 5). The flat roofed eastern third of the extension has negligible potential for ats in absence of enclosed voids and closed off fascias (see figure 6).

Detached garage

The detached garage is situated to southwest of bungalow and has a hipped single pitched roof of cement tiles. These are in good order but there is a broken ridge tile at northeast corner which bats could utilise to access the undertile spaces (see figure 7). The garage interior is permanently illuminated via side windows and has no enclosed roof void.



Figure 5. South face of rear extension looking north: Red arrows indicate potential openings for crevice roosting bats.



Figure 6. Rear extension looking southwest.



Figure 7. Garage looking southwest: Red arrow indicates potential openings for crevice roosting bats.

EVALUATION, IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The bungalow, rear extension and detached garage all have low potential for bats and a phase 2 survey is required.

A dusk emergence survey is required to confirm whether bats are utilising the properties. These surveys must be a minimum of three weeks apart between 1st May and end September, with two carried out before the end of August

This would entail the structures being surrounded by surveyors such that all potential entrance/exit points are covered. The structure is then watched from either 15 minutes before sunset to 2 hours after or 2 hours before dawn to sunrise.

All emerging or re-entering bats are recorded along with their flight path, their species and the time of flight.

An emergence survey would identify:

- Whether bats are present in a structure, the species and number involved
- Entrance and exit points for the roost
- The type of roost
- Actions needed to be taken to ensure legal compliance

REFERENCES

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

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Google Maps: www.maps.google.co.uk

Magic Interactive Map: www.magic.gov.uk

