



**The Red Cottage, The Village, Finchampstead,
Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 4JU**

Bat Survey Report & Mitigation Strategy

August 2026

on behalf of Mr Blunt

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Client	Mr Blunt
Job name	The Red Cottage, The Village, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 4JU
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	Signed	Name	Position	Date
Prepared by		Reuben Hayden <i>MSc ACIEEM</i>	Senior Ecologist	18/08/2026
Reviewed by		Edward Bodsworth <i>MA (Cantab) PhD MCIEEM</i>	Director	18/08/2026

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1 Executive Study

Site Details	Red Cottage, referred to as 'the site' within this report, comprises a two-storey dwelling in Finchampstead, to the south of Wokingham in Berkshire RG40 4JU. The approximate Ordnance Survey grid reference of the site is SU 791 631.
Proposals	The proposals include the following: • Demolition of existing single and two-storey elements and erection of a part single, part two-storey rear extension with associated internal alterations. • Minor front elevation alterations, including replacement fenestration and formation of a new covered side access. • Re-roofing and replacement of felt barrier (where needed).
Methodology	A Daytime Bat Walkover and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA) were undertaken on 17th June 2026. The dwelling was subject to a suite of bat dusk emergence surveys between July and August 2026. A sample of bat droppings was collected from the loft space of the dwelling and sent for DNA analysis to confirm to which bat species they belong.
Evaluation	• The building is assessed as having 'moderate-confirmed' potential (Collins, 2023) to offer shelter to bats. • Evidence of roosting bats was found within the loft space which included approximately 100 droppings (mixed age) in two areas. • During the bat emergence surveys in summer 2026, no bats were seen to emerge from the building. • DNA analysis of the droppings from the loft space of the dwelling confirms that brown long-eared bats (BLE) are using this space. • Nesting jackdaw <i>Coloeus monedula</i> were noted in the eastern chimney breast.
Impact Assessment	• The proposed works to the dwelling will result in the loss of a single day roost used by an individual or low numbers of brown long-eared bat. • New external lighting has the potential to affect bat behaviour. • If nesting birds are present within buildings at the time of roofing works, there is the potential for the destruction of active birds' nests and the killing/injury of eggs/young.
Recommendations	It is recommended that the works to the dwelling are covered under

	a Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL). A mitigation strategy for bats has been prepared within this report.
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Recommendations are made with regard to species-specific enhancement such as bat/bird boxes, avoidance of lighting around ecologically sensitive areas and sensitive working for nesting birds.

2 Introduction

2.1 Site Description & Context

Red Cottage, referred to as 'the site' within this report, comprises a two-storey dwelling in Finchampstead, to the south of Wokingham in Berkshire RG40 4JU. The approximate Ordnance Survey grid reference of the site is SU 791 631.

The cottage is a brick building that is considered to have been built sometime between the late 1920s to mid-1930s. The building has a series of pitched roofs with a covering of modern clay tiles. There is a loft space that covers the entire roof footprint of the building, other than the front porch. The building is surrounded by other dwellings, vegetated gardens, a road (The Village) and hardstanding parking areas.

Habitats within the wider landscape are dominated by residential development associated with Finchampstead. Outside of the village, arable land, improved pasture and pockets of woodland are found within the open countryside. This includes a number of ponds and the Blackwater River just 860m to the south.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for photographs of the building. Location plans can be found within Appendix 2.

2.2 Proposals

The proposals include the following:

- Demolition of existing single and two-storey elements and erection of a part single, part two-storey rear extension with associated internal alterations.
- Minor front elevation alterations, including replacement fenestration and formation of a new covered side access.
- Re-roofing and replacement of felt barrier (where needed).

Please see Appendix 3 for the existing and proposed plans.

2.3 Aims of Study

The aims of this study are to survey the building for bats and/or evidence of bats, and other protected species, including nesting birds. The study assesses the overall potential of the building to support roosting bats and other protected species.

The report makes recommendations for appropriate mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures and the potential impacts are assessed in accordance with the legal protection afforded to bats under The Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017. The need for a European Protected Species (Bat) Licence is also discussed in light of the impact assessment.

2.4 Bat Ecology

The following is adapted from British Bats (Altringham, 2003).

Bats are the only mammals to have developed the ability of true flight. At present, over 1,100 species of bat are recognised worldwide, making bats the second largest mammal group after rodents. As well as flight, bats have evolved a system of navigation and orientation using echolocation which has allowed many species to become nocturnal. There are 18 species of bat that occur within the British Isles, of which 17 are known to breed here. More species occur in the south and west of the country, with species numbers declining towards the north and into Scotland.

All bat species in the UK are nocturnal and feed exclusively on insects (they are insectivorous) which they catch in flight during their night-time activity, using echolocation to locate and home-in on their prey. Bats will roost during the daytime and seek out dark, enclosed and undisturbed places in which to do so, often using a variety of roosting sites within their home range. Different roost sites are used

for different purposes (such as mating, giving birth and hibernation) and at different periods of a bat's life cycle.

During the summer, female bats will gather together in a maternity or breeding roost. In the UK, this starts to occur towards the end of May and the females will seek out a warm and undisturbed site in which to give birth. Because maternity roosts require a particular set of environmental attributes (such as location, temperature, orientation and size), breeding bats tend to return to roost and breed in the same locations year after year. Given that bats live a relatively long time (anywhere from 10-20 years), and only give birth to one pup a year, maternity colonies are crucial to the reproduction and survival of the local population and can be very sensitive to environmental change.

Relatively little is known about hibernation roosts, as tracking and locating hibernating bats is very difficult. However, many species (particularly those within the genera *Myotis* and *Rhinolophus*) have been found within underground sites such as caves, mines and cellars, where the temperature remains constant and low throughout the winter allowing the bats to remain in a state of torpor. The spring and autumn are periods of transition and bats can use a number of different locations on a temporary basis, often moving between roosts as environmental conditions change and temperatures fluctuate. In the autumn, bats will mate, and it has been shown that male and female bats will gather at particular locations (such as a building, cave or tree) to meet, socialise and copulate.

Bats choose to roost in a number of different locations, depending on the species, their activity pattern and the period of their lifecycle. Certain species, such as the pipistrelles, favour crevices and small cavities for roosting and will use features such as cracks, crevices and small rot holes in the boughs and trunks of trees and within certain features of buildings such as boxed eaves, gaps under roof tiles, hanging tiles and soffit boards. Other species favour large, uncluttered roof spaces and lofts within buildings where they can hang up on the underside of the roof and use the interior space for flying prior to emergence. Hollow trees, cellars, caves, barns, churches and cavity walls can also all be used for roosting, given suitable access. Certain species, such as the noctule, favour roosting sites within trees whilst others tend to favour buildings. Roost sites may be used by only a very small number of bats, such as solitary males, or may offer shelter to tens or hundreds of bats within maternity and hibernation roost sites.

The suitability of roosting sites is also highly influenced by the location or context of a tree, building or cave. Roost sites are most often favoured when they are within close proximity to foraging habitats and where those habitats are connected to one another within the landscape by features such as hedgerows, woodlands, rivers or sunken lanes along which bats disperse and 'commute' from place to place. Suitable foraging habitats are any places where insect prey is diverse and abundant such as woodlands, ponds, lakes, rivers, scrub, hedgerows and unimproved grassland or pasture. Thus, the ecological context of a site is very important for determining if bats may be present within a roost and the potential for a roost to be present tends to be much higher within rural or village locations.

3 Methodology

3.1 Limitations on Survey Data

There were no significant limitations on the survey data and all parts of the building and loft could be accessed safely and thoroughly. All bat emergence surveys were undertaken during suitable weather conditions and time of year (May to August).

As with any survey undertaken on a certain date, the data presented within this report provide information at a particular point in time and present a 'snap-shot' of the ecological status of the site. Ecosystems and species behaviour/activity are dynamic and can change over time.

Whilst this report presents a characterisation and evaluation of species status at the time of the study, it should not be taken as an exhaustive representation of the ecological status of the site either at present or into the future.

3.2 Daytime Bat Walkover & Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

A Daytime Bat Walkover and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA) were undertaken on the 17th June 2026 by professional ecologist Reuben Hayden *MSc ACIEEM*. Mr Hayden holds a licence from Natural England to survey for bats within all counties of England (Licence Level 2 2025-84936-SCI-CL18) and has over 7 years of experience surveying bats.

A detailed internal and external survey of the building was undertaken using a 1 million candle-power torch and close-focusing binoculars in order to look for bats and/or evidence of bats and to assess the potential of the building to support roosting bats.

The building was inspected for evidence of bats including, bat droppings, urine stains, feeding remains (such as moth wings) and characteristic fur staining around access points.

Notes were made on the relative freshness, shape and size of bat droppings and the location and quantity of any feeding remains. 'Clean' gaps and crevices within the structure of the building were looked for as this can indicate where bats may have gained access to the interior spaces and the fabric of the walls.

The bat survey was undertaken according to best practice guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023) and the Bat Worker's Manual (Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 2012).

The study also takes into account the structure and ecological context of the building, including the following factors which may increase the likelihood of roosting bats being present:

- Age of the building (pre-20th Century or early 20th Century construction)
- Nature of construction; traditional brick, stone or timber construction
- Large and complicated roof void with unobstructed flying spaces
- Large (>20 cm) roof timbers with mortice/tenon joints, cracks and holes
- Entrances and gaps for bats to fly and crawl through
- Poorly maintained fabric providing ready access points for bats into roofs, walls; but at the same time not being too draughty and cool.
- Roof warmed by the sun, south-facing roofs in particular
- Weatherboarding and/or hanging tiles with gaps
- Undisturbed roof voids
- Buildings and built structures in proximity to each other providing a variety of roosting opportunities throughout the year
- Buildings or built structures close to good foraging habitat, in particular mature trees, parkland, woodland or wetland, especially in a rural setting.

The following criteria are used for as guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of buildings for bats (Collins, 2023), see Table 1.

Table 1. Criteria for the assessment of buildings for roosting bats (Collins, 2023).

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^b and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e.

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
	unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats ^c).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after the presence is confirmed).
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitats. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.

^a Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute), but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).

^b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or level of disturbance.

^c Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al.*, 2016 and Jansen *et al.*, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.

Confirmed presence of roosting bats is where evidence indicates that a building or other structure is used by bats, this includes:

- bats seen roosting or observed flying from a roost or freely in the habitat;
- droppings, carcasses, feeding remains etc. found and/or
- bats heard 'chattering' inside a roost on a warm day or at dusk.

Where the possibility that bats are present cannot be eliminated or evidence of bats is found during the building inspection survey, then further surveys (such as winter hibernation, presence/absence and/or roost characterisation) are likely to be necessary if impacts on the roosting habitat (or the bats using it) are predicted.

In addition to the bat survey, the building was checked for evidence of nesting birds including old birds' nests, bird droppings, feathers and eggs. Specific observations were made with regard to species such as the barn owl, swallow and house martin; species that are often associated with buildings.

3.2.1 Weather Conditions

The weather on the day was warm (19°C) with low cloud cover (20%) and a fresh breeze (Beaufort Scale 3).

3.3 Bat Emergence Surveys

The dwelling was assessed (during the PRA) as having 'moderate-confirmed' potential to offer shelter to roosting bats (Collins, 2023). As roosting bats were considered present, and impacts to roost locations were predicted, three bat emergence surveys were conducted.

The surveys involved two surveyors, to provide adequate coverage of all identified potential roost locations and were undertaken at dusk on 2nd July, 23rd July and 13th August 2026. For details of the surveyors employed during the survey please see Table 2 below.

Table 2. Bat emergence survey schedule & personnel.

Date	Surveyors
02/07/2026	Reuben Hayden <i>MSc ACIEEM</i> (Bat Survey Licence Level 2 2025-84936-SCI-CL18) Jennifer Hull (assistant)
23/07/2026	Reuben Hayden <i>MSc ACIEEM</i> (Bat Survey Licence Level 2 2025-84936-SCI-CL18) Catrin Farrell <i>BSc (Hons)</i> (Bat Survey Licence Level 1 2025-12685-CL17-BAT)
13/08/2026	Jan-Piet Stuursma (Bat Survey Licence Level 2 2025-84995-CL18-BAT) Claire Herlihy <i>BSc (Hons)</i>

Please refer to Table 3 for timing and weather conditions during the bat emergence surveys and Figure 1 for the location of surveyors during the surveys. Surveyors watched for bats emerging from the dwelling at dusk and were equipped with Echometer Touch bat detectors to record and analyse bat calls in real time.

In line with the 4th edition guidelines for bat surveys, a night vision aid (NVA) was set up to monitor each survey position during the bat emergence surveys. This comprised either an infrared camera (a Nightfox Whisker) set up on a tripod or a thermal camera (Pixfra Arc 600 Series) set up on a tripod. The infrared cameras were set up on a tripod with a Nightfox ARC infrared lamp to increase quality of the footage. Analysis of the footage was subsequently undertaken to detect roosting activity.

Please see Figure 2 for the darkest point screenshots from the NVAs.

As the camera is accompanied by a human surveyor who is visually surveying the building during the survey, it is not considered necessary to review the full 2 hours of footage collected by each camera. Instead, the reviewer manually reviews 1-5 minute segments which may contain bat activity or other relevant motion as identified by the original surveyor on their survey sheet. This review is conducted using appropriate video analysis software (VLCmedia player or equivalent) at between 1x and 1.5x speed.

Table 3. Timings and weather conditions during the bat emergence surveys.

Date	Timing	Sunset	Temp (Start)	Temp (Finish)	Weather (at start of survey)
02/07/2026	21:00-23:00	21:22	20°C	18°C	Dry, clear skies (5% cloud cover) with a gentle breeze (Beaufort Scale 3).
23/07/2026	20:50-22:35	21:05	23°C	21°C	Dry, clear skies (5% cloud cover) with a light breeze (Beaufort Scale 2).
13/08/2026	20:15-22:15	20:30	27°C	24°C	Dry, clear skies (0%) with a light breeze (Beaufort Scale 2).

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Figure 1. Aerial photograph showing the dwelling (outlined in red) and the location of the surveyors (indicated by the light blue circles) during the bat emergence surveys in 2026.

02/07/2026



23/07/2026



13/08/2026



Figure 2. Darkest points shown on the NVAs taken from the bat emergence surveys during summer 2026.

3.4 DNA Analysis of Bat Droppings

A sample of bat droppings was collected from the loft of the dwelling during the initial bat survey in June 2026. This sample was sent to Ecotype Genetics for DNA analysis to confirm to which bat species they belong (please refer to Appendix 4 for the DNA analysis results).

4 Results & Evaluation

4.1 Description & Assessment of Building

Red Cottage comprises a two-storey brick-built dwelling with a series of pitched roofs with a covering of modern clay tiles. The building has wooden boxed eaves with soffit boards and a loft space that covers the entire roof footprint of the building, other than the front porch. The cottage is considered to have been built sometime between the late 1920s to mid-1930s and is surrounded by other dwellings, vegetated gardens, a road (The Village) and hardstanding parking areas.

Access to the loft spaces exposes the absence of a roofing underlay other than in the north-western extension (believed to have been built around 1990s) which has a breathable cloth underlay.

Evidence of roosting bats was found within the loft space which included approximately 100 droppings (mixed age) in two places. The droppings are considered most likely to relate to the brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, given the size and shape. No other evidence of roosting bats was found within the building.

The walls and eaves of the building are in excellent repair, lacking any gaps or crevices features that roosting bats could utilise. The roof tiles, do however, provide gaps under tiles and at junction between existing chimney breasts that could provide access into the loft space. Given that the majority of the roof does not have an underlay, it is considered unlikely that bats will be roosting between the roof tiles as the roost locations will be exposed and draughty. The above potential roosting features for bats can be seen in Figure 3.



Gaps under roof tiles on northern aspect.



Gaps between roof tiles on eastern aspect.



Gap at roof junction next to eastern chimney breast.



Gaps under roof tiles on northern aspect.

Figure 3. Potential bat roost features of the building, outlined by red circles.

Bats will choose to roost within different locations within the summer and winter periods (see Figure 4), favouring dark, enclosed, humid and cool locations for hibernation such as caves and cellars. These locations must maintain a constant low temperature (2-8°C), but temperatures must also not go below freezing. In addition, bats favour places that are undisturbed and retain relatively high humidity during the winter period.

The building is not a classic cool/stable hibernation site but could be used by individual hibernating bats such as the brown long-eared bat which is known to linger in buildings into the winter. Given this, the building is assessed as having 'low' hibernation potential (Collins, 2023). It is considered most likely that hibernating bats are absent from the building.

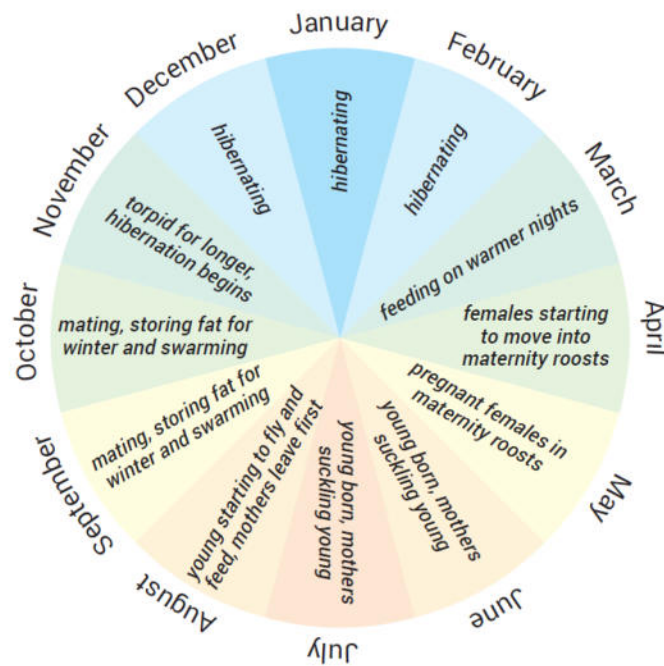


Figure 4. Diagram showing the yearly life cycle of a bat. Taken from the Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition) by Collins (2023).

Based on the above evaluation, the building is assessed as having ‘**moderate-confirmed**’ potential (Collins, 2023) to offer shelter to roosting bats.

4.2 Evidence of Bats

Evidence of roosting bats was found within the loft space which included approximately 100 droppings (mixed age) in two areas. The first area was underneath the ridge beam of the north-western extension, and the second area was below the eastern chimney breast. DNA analysis of the droppings confirms that brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* is utilising the loft space of the dwelling. No other evidence of roosting bats was found within the building. See Figure 5 for the location of the droppings and Figure 6 for photo evidence.



Figure 5. Location of bat droppings (approx. 100 in total, mixed age), indicated by black circle with white dots. Red line boundary indicates the building.

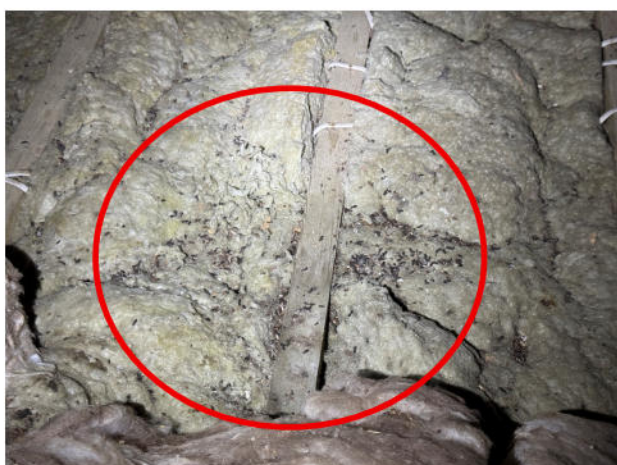


Figure 6. Photos of bat droppings within the loft space (approx. 100 in total mixed age), indicated by red circles.

4.3 Bat Emergence & Activity

4.3.1 2nd July 2026

No bats were seen to emerge from the dwelling during the dusk emergence survey undertaken on the 2nd July 2026.

Bat activity was noted to the north of the dwelling, particularly associated with garden habitats with low numbers of commuting and foraging common pipistrelle bats *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*. Noctule bats *Nyctalus noctule* were heard commuting overhead.

4.3.2 23rd July 2026

No bats were seen to emerge from the dwelling during the dusk emergence survey undertaken on the 23rd July 2026.

Bat activity was noted to the north of the dwelling, particularly associated with garden habitats with low numbers of commuting and foraging common pipistrelle bats *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle bats *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and brown long-eared bats *Plecotus auritus*. Noctule bats *Nyctalus noctula* were heard commuting overhead.

4.3.3 13th August 2026

No bats were seen to emerge from the dwelling during the dusk emergence survey undertaken on the 13th August 2026.

Bat activity was noted to the north of the dwelling, particularly associated with garden habitats with low numbers of commuting and foraging common pipistrelle bats *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle bats *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and brown long-eared bats *Plecotus auritus*. Noctule bats *Nyctalus noctula* were heard commuting overhead.

4.3.4 Summary

No bats were seen to emerge from the dwelling during any of the emergence surveys.

Bat activity such as foraging and commuting behaviour was noted along vegetated borders of the garden and within the garden to the north of the dwelling. Only common widespread species for the southeast of England were noted.

The combined results of the Preliminary Roost Assessment and subsequent Bat Emergence Surveys have confirmed the presence of roosting bats within the dwelling.

The following bat roosts are present within the dwelling:

- 1x BLE bat day roost (an individual or low numbers) in the loft space. DNA analysis of the droppings confirms that brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* is utilising the loft space of the dwelling.

There is no evidence to suggest the presence of a roost of higher conservation significance within the buildings, such as a maternity roost and it is considered most likely that hibernating bats are absent from the building.

It is considered that the suite of bat surveys in 2026 have adequately and appropriately characterised the roosts present, in regard to the proposed impacts.

Brown long-eared bats are considered to be a 'widespread' species of bat within southeast England. According to the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason & Wray, 2025), a non-breeding day roosts of a widespread species within all geographies of England, is of 'Site' conservation importance.

4.4 Evidence of Birds

Nesting jackdaw *Coloeus monedula* were noted within the eastern chimney pot (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Photo of nesting location for jackdaw.

No other nesting birds or evidence of nesting birds were found in association to the building.

5 Discussion

5.1 Legislative Guidance

5.1.1 Bats

As with many animal species within the UK, declines in the abundance and distribution of many bat species have been documented through recent decades. The reasons for these declines are various and complex but it is considered that the major factors are changes in land use and agriculture, the loss of woodlands and hedgerows and the loss of suitable roosting sites.

Bats are particularly sensitive to human activity due to the fact that they roost within buildings, trees and underground structures such as mines, and the availability of suitable roost sites is considered to be a key factor in the conservation of bats within the UK. As a consequence, all species of bat and their roost sites are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) and under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Taken together, these make it an offence to:

- (a) Deliberately capture or intentionally take a bat
- (b) Deliberately or intentionally kill or injure a bat
- (c) To be in possession or control of any live or dead wild bat or any part of, or anything derived from a wild bat

- (d) Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal or intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection
- (e) Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection
- (f) Deliberately disturb any bat, in particular any disturbance which is likely
 - to impair their ability;
 - (i) to survive, breed, reproduce or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - (ii) in the case of hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
 - to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong

A bat roost may be any structure a bat uses for breeding, resting, shelter or protection. It is important to note that since bats tend to re-use the same roost sites, current legal opinion is that a bat roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time.

Although the law provides strict protection to bats, it also allows this protection to be set aside (derogation) under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended through the issuing of licences (European Protected Species Licence – EPSL). Where a lawful operation is required to be carried out, but which is likely to result in one of the above offences, a licence may be obtained from Natural England (the statutory body in England with responsibility for nature conservation) to allow the operation to proceed.

Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL)

In 2015, Natural England launched a new class licence (WML-CL21), which provides a streamlined process to the European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) described above. The Bat Mitigation Class Licence (formerly the Low Impact Bat Class Licence) permits work that has a low or temporary impact on certain bat species and certain roost types, but which still needed to be licensed in order to meet legal requirements. Specifically, the criteria for using the class licence are set out below.

Bat species

The Bat Mitigation Class Licence can be used for sites where the following species are roosting:

- Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*
- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*
- Whiskered *Myotis mystacinus*
- Brandt's *Myotis brandtii*
- Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii*
- Natterer's *Myotis nattereri*
- Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*¹
- Lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*²

Assemblage of bats

Sites that support a maximum of three bat species listed above can be registered for the class licence. Sites with a more diverse assemblage of bat roosts must apply for an individual European Protected Species (EPS) licence.

Number of bats

¹ Under Annex C (for use in the following counties Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Devon, Dorset, East Sussex, Essex, Greater London, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Oxfordshire, Somerset, Surrey, West Sussex and Wiltshire) the low impact bat class licence also covers damage and destruction of no more than 3 feeding, day, night and transitional serotine bat roosts and the disturbance and capture serotine bats in appropriate small numbers.

² Under Annex D (for use in the following counties Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Somerset and Wiltshire) the low impact bat class licence also covers damage and destruction of no more than 3 low conservation significance day and transitional lesser horseshoe bat roosts and disturb and capture lesser horseshoe bats in appropriate small numbers.

Sites that support individuals or small numbers (in total) of the bat species listed above can register for the low impact class licence. If more than one bat species will be affected, it is the total number of bats which must be considered. The conservation status of bats varies across regions and must be considered by the ecologist when determining what constitutes 'small numbers'.

Roost type

The low impact class licence applies to roosts of low conservation significance, and is regulated to cover the following types of roosts in buildings:

- Feeding roosts
- Night roosts
- Day roosts
- Transitional roosts / occasional roosts

Sites with roosts of higher conservation significance such as maternity roosts, hibernation sites or swarming sites do not qualify.

Number of roosts

The low impact class licence is applicable to sites that support no more than three roosts in total (across all structures).

Impacts

Natural England's low impact class licence permits activities resulting in the disturbance and/or capture of certain bat species (listed above) and/or the damage or destruction of roosts of low conservation significance. Works should be short term and usually only last for up to 6 months.

Natural England's low impact class licence is held by Registered Ecological Consultants and sites must be registered with and approved by Natural England before any licensable work can commence. The ecological consultant must apply to Natural England's Sustainable Development Wildlife Licensing to register the site with at least 3 weeks (15 working days) notice and no more than 12 weeks before commencement of any licensable activities.

5.1.2 Nesting Birds

Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. The nesting season for most species is between February and August inclusive.

5.2 Potential Impacts

5.2.1 Bats

The proposed re-roofing, replacement of felt barrier and proposed rear extension is likely to result in the permanent loss (destruction) of 1x BLE day roost (comprising an individual or low numbers).

If bats are present at the time of the works, there is the potential for bats to be disturbed, killed or injured.

Brown long-eared bats are considered to be 'widespread' species of bat within southeast England. According to the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason & Wray, 2025), non-breeding day roosts of a widespread species within all geographies of England, are of '**Site**' conservation importance. There are no predicted impacts on larger numbers of bats, breeding roosts (maternity colonies), or hibernation roosts.

Since significant impacts on bats are predicted under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, a European Protected Species (bat) Licence will be required for the proposed

works to proceed. A Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) is considered to be appropriate in this instance, for the following reasons:

- One day roost in one structure
- Common bat species – BLE
- Small numbers (individual or small numbers of BLE)
- No hibernation or maternity colony

External lighting can have an impact on bats by affecting their activity and behaviour. In that certain species of bat have been shown to be attracted to mercury vapour lamps which emit light over a very broad-spectrum including UV light to which insects are particularly sensitive.

Furthermore, insects can be attracted in large numbers to mercury lamps and so can bats of the genera *Nyctalus* and *Pipistrellus*, including noctules *N. noctula* and common pipistrelles *P. pipistrellus* (Rydell and Racey, 1993). Lighting has shown to have an opposite effect on certain other species, such as the lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, which have been shown to avoid areas of artificial light (Stone *et al.* 2009).

New external lighting with the site could therefore have an adverse effect on foraging or commuting bats, partially foraging and dispersal behaviour along the site boundaries. Although disturbance by lighting is unlikely to result in significant impacts under the legal protection afforded to bats (and thus will not require a Bat Licence), lighting may result in a change in bat activity which is not desirable.

5.2.2 Birds

If active birds' nests are present in the building (specifically the eastern chimney breast) and this is to be removed at the time of works, there is the potential for active nests to be damaged or destroyed, and for eggs and young to be killed or injured.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Further Surveys

No further surveys are considered to be necessary at this stage.

6.2 Bats

6.2.1 Mitigation Strategy (The Dwelling)

The following bat mitigation strategy has been prepared with reference to the UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray, 2025).

Licensing

The works to the roof of the dwelling will need to be undertaken under a Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) from Natural England. This licence will allow for the destruction of 1x day roost used by individual non-breeding common bat species including:

- 1x BLE bat day roost (an individual or low numbers) in the loft space.

It is considered highly likely that a licence will be granted. The proposed development is considered to meet the three tests of European protected species licensing.

- The development is justifiable due to imperative reasons of overriding public interest of a social nature.
- There is no satisfactory alternative that will cause less harm to the species.
- With appropriate mitigation the proposals will not harm the long-term conservation status of the species.

The following Bat Mitigation Strategy will form the basis of a bat licence application to Natural England.

Timing

Given that the proposed works will only impact upon low numbers of a common species, with no foreseeable impacts on breeding/hibernating bats, no timing constraints are considered necessary.

Pre-commencement Inspection Survey

A survey of the dwelling should be undertaken prior to the commencement of any works. The aim of this survey will be to confirm that bats are absent from the building. If bats are present, they will be removed to safety by a Registered Consultant and placed within a pre-erected bat box on a nearby tree (see below).

The survey should be undertaken by an experienced ecologist who holds a licence to disturb bats for reasons of Science and Education (i.e. a licence from Natural England to survey for bats) and will involve an internal and external inspection of the dwelling.

Supervision of Works

A Registered Consultant should give a 'toolbox' talk regarding bats and their habitats, and where bats have been found at the building. Contractors should be briefed with regard to the fact that individual bats can often exploit very small crevices as roost sites and that bats can move between roost sites on a regular basis.

Works should proceed in a careful and controlled manner, with the removal of the suitable roosting features by hand. These works will be supervised by a Registered Consultant (ecologist).

If bats are encountered, they will be rescued by a Registered Consultant (ecologist) by hand and moved to a pre-erected bat box.

Mitigation/Enhancement Roosting Opportunities

Where loss of a 'Site' value non-breeding day roost is proposed, the proposed scale of compensation required is *"flexible (in terms of timing and type)"* and *"in all cases, provision should be suitable for the species"* (Reason and Wray, 2025). To add, *"where compensation is being provided, there should be at least one compensation feature, suitable for the species concerned, per roost and per species to be impacted, OR if a proposal impacts more than one bat species and/or roost type then cumulative impacts must be considered when designing the compensation; this should always be in line with the species and/or roost type which will be subject to the greatest impact and ensure that the requirements of all species impacted are met."*

The following mitigation/compensation is considered to be suitable for the replacement of 1x BLE day roost with low numbers of bats.

A bat box will be erected on a mature tree within the wider landholding, prior to the commencement of works. This box will be used to house rescued bats, if necessary, and is to remain in perpetuity. A Large Multi Chamber WoodStone Bat Box (see Figure 8), or similar, is recommended. Such a box should be installed as high as possible on a southerly aspect to provide a warmer microclimate within the box. The recommended bat box is suitable for BLE bats.



Figure 8. Large Multi Chamber WoodStone Bat Box (source: www.nhbs.com)

Lighting

It is recommended that external lighting is avoided within the site, unless it is necessary for reasons of security and safety. In particular, lighting should be avoided around any new bat roosting features and along the boundaries of the site.

The key in the first instance is to maintain or reduce existing light levels, and reduce blue content to protect the bat species present; this is in line with the mitigation hierarchy where impacts are avoided in the first instance by being planned out (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023).

If lighting is required, it should be kept at low level and at low intensity (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023 and Emery, 2008).

Light sources, lamps, LEDs and their fittings come in a myriad of different specifications which a lighting professional can help to select. However, the following should be considered when choosing luminaires and their potential impact on key habitats and features:

- All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used
- LED luminaires should be used where possible due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability
- A warm white light source (2700Kelvin or lower) should be adopted to reduce blue light component
- Light sources should feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats (Stone, 2012)
- Internal luminaires can be recessed (as opposed to using a pendant fitting) where installed in proximity to windows to reduce glare and light spill
- Waymarking inground markers (low output with cowls or similar to minimise upward light spill) to delineate path edges
- Column heights should be carefully considered to minimise light spill and glare visibility. This should be balanced with the potential for increased numbers of columns and upward light reflectance as with bollards

- Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio, and with good optical control, should be considered
- Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt
- Where appropriate, external security lighting should be set on motion sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as the risk assessment will allow. For most general residential purposes, a 1 or 2 minute timer is likely to be appropriate
- Use of a Central Management System (CMS) with additional web-enabled devices to light on demand
- Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed. However, due to the lensing and fine cut-off control of the beam inherent in modern LED luminaires, the effect of cowls and baffles is often far less than anticipated and so should not be relied upon solely.

6.3 Birds

6.3.1 Timing

The following mitigation measures have been adapted from the UK Government Environment guidance regarding construction near protected areas and wildlife (UK Government, 2015).

It is recommended that nesting birds are excluded from the eastern chimney stack on the dwelling prior to the commencement of works. This could be achieved by using a mesh barrier over the chimney stacks outside of the nesting period (during September to January, inclusive) and preventing birds from entering the building.

The clearance of any inactive birds' nests should be undertaken outside of the bird breeding period, avoiding February to August inclusive. **If this is not possible, the building should be checked for active nests prior to removal to confirm the absence of nesting birds. This will avoid impacts of damage and destruction to active birds' nests.**

6.3.2 Enhancement

The erection of bird nesting boxes is recommended in order to provide suitable nest sites for species within the local area, and to compensate for the loss of nesting locations within the site. Nest boxes can be excellent substitutes for the nesting potential of trees. Over 60 species are known to adopt nest boxes including blue tits, great tits, starlings, robins and sparrows.

The location and nature of the nest box depends on the species it is designed for; boxes for tits, sparrows or starlings should be fixed two to four metres up a tree or a wall; open-fronted boxes for robins and wrens need to be low down, below 2m, and well-hidden in vegetation. Unless there are trees or buildings which shade the box during the day, boxes should be faced between north and east, thus avoiding strong sunlight and the wettest winds.

It is recommended that bird boxes are erected on trees within the landholding.

Recommended boxes are:

- Vivara Pro Seville 28mm WoodStone Nest Box
- Vivara Pro Barcelona WoodStone Open Nest Box

8 References

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UK Government, 2015. *Guidance Wild birds: protection and licences*.

9 Appendix 1. Photographs



Photograph 1. The building viewed from the south.



Photograph 2. The building viewed from the south-east.



Photograph 3. The building viewed from the north.



Photograph 4. The building viewed from the south-west.

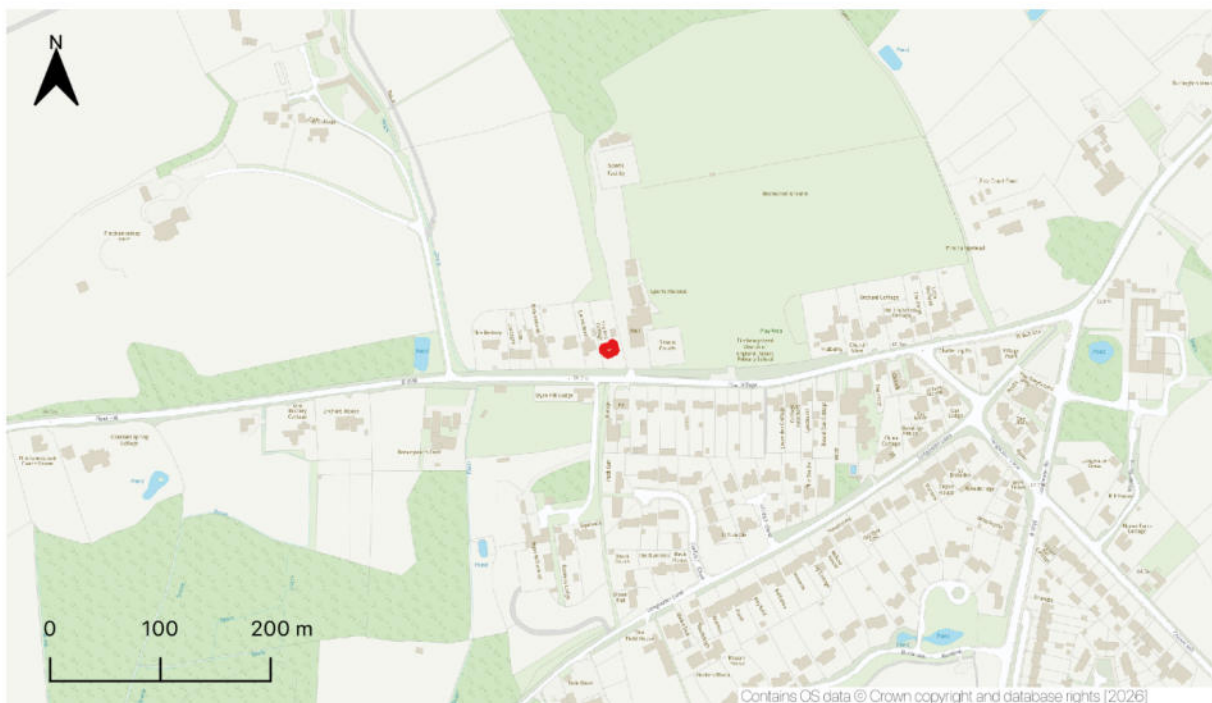


Photograph 5. The loft space of the building.

10 Appendix 2. Site Location Plans

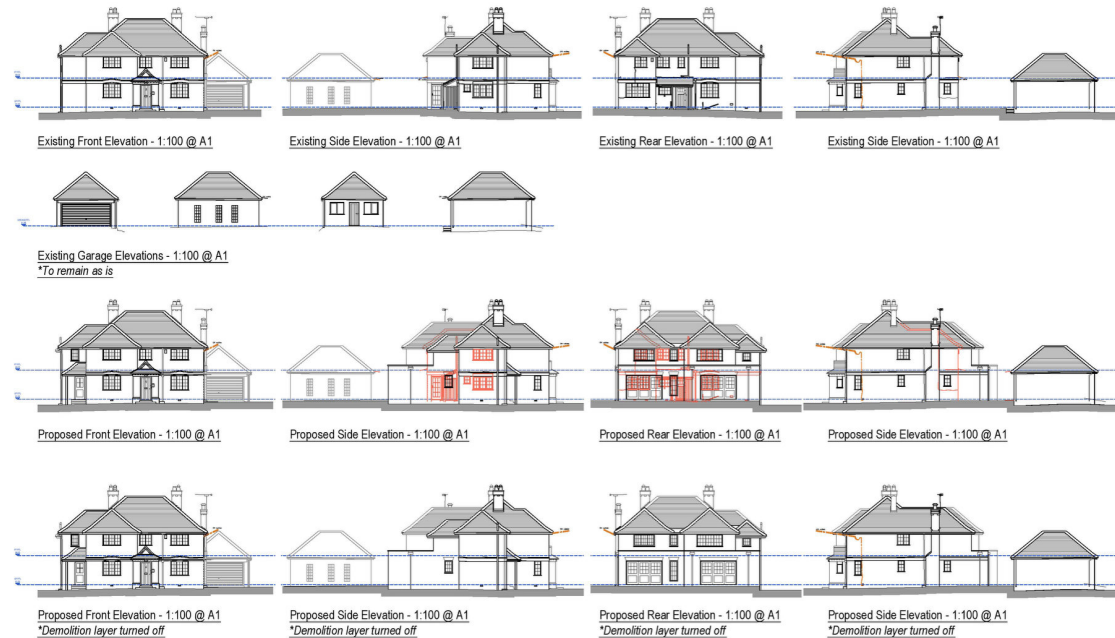


An aerial photograph showing the location of Red Cottage (outlined in red). Source: Google Satellite.



A map showing the location of Red Cottage (outlined in red) within the wider local area. Source: OSM Standard

11 Appendix 3. Existing & Proposed Plans



Proposed Materials

Walls existing - Multi red/orange facing brickwork to match existing with flat gauge brick arches over door/windows - Stone copings to parapet

Flat Roof - Lead grey single ply membrane with Skylights Aluminium polyester powder coated frames.

Pitched Roofs - Plain clay double camber tiles to match existing with lead valleys

Front door & Utility - Composite PAS 24 doorsets Doors Rear - Timber Frames

Windows - Flush casement PVC-U double glazed painted frames - obscure glass to all WC's etc.

Gutters - Black gutter and rainwater pipes. Fascia/soffits - PVC-U fascia and soffits

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL DRAWING

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ISSUE

CHRISTOPHER JAMES ARCHITECTURE

27 Chaucer Way, Woosehill, Wokingham
Berkshire . RG41 3BG

T: 01189 797892 M: 07736039224

E: CHRIS@CHRISTOPHERJAMESARCHITECTURE.CO.UK

The Red Cottage, The Village, Finchampstead, Wokingham RG40 4JUH - Proposed Extension and Associated Internal Alterations

Existing and Proposed Elevations

Scale as shown @ A1

June'26

412-1300

12 Appendix 4. DNA Analysis Results



LABORATORY REPORT

Species Identification from Biological Samples

CUSTOMER

Reuben Hayden
Windrush Ecology
The Isis Innovation Centre, Howbery Park, Wallingford OX10 8BA,
United Kingdom

ORDER DETAILS

Order Number: EG3701
Order Date: 31/07/2026

Sample Information

Sample ID	EG3701-1
Sample Type	Faecal
Suspected Species	BLE
Site Location	The Red Cottage, The Village, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 4JU
Comments	Found within loft space.
Date Collected	17/06/2026
Date Arrived at Lab	03/08/2026
Results Date	06/08/2026

Laboratory Information

DNA Extraction Code	EG-2026-2114
Identification Method	qPCR
Analysis Procedure Notes	All UK bat species tested for - only a single species detected in this sample.
Laboratory Comments	None

Species Identified

Species	Ct Value
Plecotus auritus (Brown long-eared bat)	20

Ecotype Genetics Limited.

Laboratory Address: Sussex Innovation Centre, Science Park Square, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9SB
e: orders@ecotypegenetics.co.uk **t:** 01273704505 **w:** ecotypegenetics.co.uk