

**WINDWHISTLE
READING ROAD
ARBORFIELD
READING
BERKSHIRE
RG2 9HN**

ECOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT (BATS)
(Preliminary Roost Assessment/DBW)



Prepared for:
Mr D RAMKALI and Mrs J. NASH.
Date: 12/3/25.
Ref: NWP/ESR-12/3/25.

CONTENTS

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Instruction**
- 1.2 Aims and Objectives**
- 1.3 Proposed works**
- 1.4 Surveyor Background and Experience**

2. Legislation and Planning Policy

2.1 Legislative Background

3. Site Location and Description

- 3.1 Site Location**
- 3.2 Site Description**

4. Survey Methodology

- 4.1 Pre-Survey Data Search**
- 4.2 Daylight Survey**
- 4.3 Constraints**

5. Survey Findings

- 5.1 External Inspection**
- 5.2 Internal Inspection**

6. Evaluation

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 Interpretation**

7.2 Contingency plan

8. References

9. Queries

Appendix 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BatCraft was commissioned Mr D RAMKALI and Mrs J NASH to conduct a preliminary ecological appraisal (daytime bat walkover [DBW]), of WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING, BERKSHIRE RG2 9HN. This is to support a planning application.

The site visit was carried out on the 8th of March 2025, during daylight hours. An internal and external inspection of the property took place to look for signs of bats. The preliminary ecological appraisal consists of a desk top study prior to the survey to review existing information about the site and its surroundings and to inform the design of subsequent bat surveys, if required. The desk top study was conducted based upon a 2km search radius and it revealed 0 statutory designated site within. There are 0 current European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for bats, there are 3 expired EPSL'S for bats within 2km of the proposed development site, the latest expiry date is 31/12/23. The proposed development is in what could be accurately described as a semi-rural setting, the size of the garden and adjoining gardens with trees/shrubs and hedges would allow good ecological connectivity to the wider landscape.

The DBW comprised a detailed search of the exterior and interior of the building for bats, signs of bats and features suitable for use by roosting bats. This includes droppings, scratch marks, rubbing and staining at exit holes, live or dead bats and other features such as missing tiles, this list is not exhaustive.

The buildings suitability to support roosting bats was assessed and no bats or evidence of bats was identified during the preliminary inspection.

The main dwelling building has negligible potential roost features that could support bats.

The conservatory has negligible roost potential that could support bats.

The attached garage has negligible potential roost features that could support bats.

When the findings are combined the main dwelling building, garage and conservatory were characterised as having negligible potential¹ to support roosting bats

In line with best practice guidelines², no further survey effort is required.

1-Table 4.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats. Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition. Page 44.

2- Collins, J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition).

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1 Instruction

BatCraft was instructed by Mr D. RAMKALI and Mrs J. NASH to conduct a DBW of WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING, BERKSHIRE RG2 9HN to support a planning application.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The DBW is designed to:

- Identify the presence/likely absence of bats within the building.
- Provide information on previous bat ecological surveys/reports.
- Provide information on the status of bats using the buildings currently or previously.
- To add confidence where no bats are found, or to categorise the nature of a roost where evidence of bats are found.
- To establish whether further surveys, mitigation or an EPSL is required.

The preliminary ecological appraisal (bats) and report writing were carried out in accordance with Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition.

1.3 Proposed Works

The survey was commissioned in connection with a forthcoming planning application, final plans were not available.

1.4 Surveyor Background and Experience

The preliminary ecological appraisal for bats was undertaken and the report written by Nicholas Powell. Nicholas holds a Class 2 Bat License (CLS-11742) and has received training in bat ecology and surveying, bat detector use, acoustic monitoring/sonogram analysis, architectural terms for bat workers, bats and development, H & S awareness for bat workers, legislation for bat workers, British bats their ecology and conservation, surveying trees for bats, Bat ID and handling, bat biology.

2. Legislation and Planning Policy

2.1 Legislative Background

All species of British bat are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Under this legislation 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. A summary of the main legislation and planning considerations are included at Appendix 1.

Seven species of bat are also Species of Principal Importance for nature conservation in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. This places a duty on all government departments to have regard for the conservation of these species and on the Secretary of State to further, or promote others to further, the conservation of these species.

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This report is valid for 12 months from the site inspection. The lifespan of this report may be subject to change if the site conditions change due to unspecified works that affect the site.

3. Site Location and Description

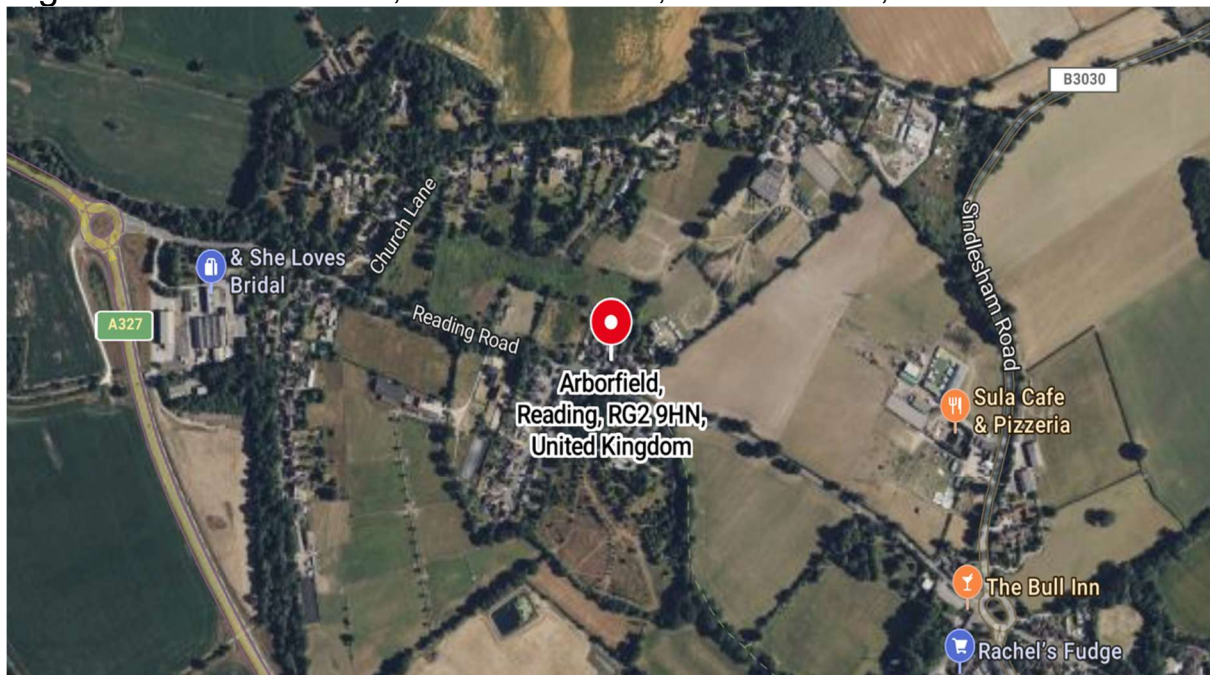
3.1 Site Location

The building is located at Grid Reference SU 75550 67400 see Figure 1 below. An overview of the immediate area is shown on Figure 2, courtesy of Bing Maps.

Figure 1. WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING RG2 9HN.



Figure 2. WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING RG2 9HN



WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING RG2 9HN.

3.2 Site Description

The application site comprises a double storey detached brick-built dwelling. It has a flat roof extension attached to the front and a conservatory attached to the rear. There is an attached brick-built garage.

Immediately to the front of the property is a gravel driveway and parking area. There is a maintained mature hedge forming one boundary whilst a close board fence forms the boundary on the opposite side. Figure 1.

To the rear of the property is an area laid to lawn, bordered with a hedge on one side and close board fence on the other. There is a swimming pool. Figures 2/3. There is farmland adjoining.

The site itself offers a small amount of foraging and commuting habitat for bats, the trees and hedges in surrounding premises do allow good connectivity to the wider landscape.

Figure 1. Front of property showing driveway/boundary hedges and fence.



Figure 2. Rear garden.



WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING RG2 9HN.

Figure 3. Rear garden.



4. Survey Methodology

4.1 Pre-Survey Data Search

The client has advised that to their knowledge, no previous bat surveys have been undertaken on the site. Google Earth and MAGIC maps (magic.defra.gov.uk) websites were used prior to the survey to determine the suitability of the surrounding habitat to support roosting bats and to identify any statutory designated sites or EPSLs within 2km of the site. No data was sought from the local records centre at this time. A search of the Magic interactive website revealed that 0 statutory designated site are located within. 0 current EPSLs for bats have been granted within 2km of the site, there are 3 expired licences, Figure 1.

The site is situated along a through road, Reading Road, on the southeast side of the village of Shinfield, approximately 2400 metres from the village centre.

The city of Reading is to the northwest, the centre being circa 5500 metres from the proposed development site.

Directly opposite the dwelling to the south crossing the road, is Walden Avenue, a residential cul-de-sac, beyond this is open countryside, which appears to consist of mixed farming interspersed with small blocks of woodland divided by hedgerows. To the northeast circa 1800 metres is Bearwood lakes, primarily a golf course, however there are multiple lakes.

The properties adjoining the proposed development site have trees/hedges and gardens, the ecological connectivity to the adjoining countryside from the site are very good.

Figure 1. Expired Licences.

CASE REFERENCE OF GRANTED LICENCE	SPECIES ON THE LICENCE	LICENSABLE PERIOD	LICENSABLE WORKS
EPSM2009-1250	C-PIP, S-PIP, BLE	START 6/10/09 END 1/9/11	DESTROY A RESTING PLACE
2016-26319-EPS-MIT-2	BLE, C-PIP, S-PIP	START 26/2/19 END 31/12/21	DESTROY A RESTING PLACE
2018-38593-EPS-MIT	C-PIP, S-PIP	START- 2/1/23 END-31/12/23	DESTROY A RESTING PLACE

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4.2 Daylight Survey

The DBW of WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING, BERKSHIRE RG2 9HN was carried out by Nicholas Powell on Saturday 8th March 2025 at 10am. The weather conditions for the survey were clear with no rain and a temperature of 12 degrees.

Equipment used included a high-powered torch, a digital camera, a digital camera on a telescopic pole, an endoscope and a ladder.

During the DBW an external inspection of the property was carried out to identify any signs of occupation by bats and features that could offer potential roosting sites following standard survey guidelines.

Features investigated included:

- Construction of the building– soffits, loft space, tiles/slates, lead flashings etc.
- Building condition – structure of roof and walls.
- Access points – potential entry and exit points for bats.
- Roosting points – cracks and crevices, between underlay and roofing tiles/slates.

Field signs that would indicate the presence of bats were searched for. These included:

- Bat droppings on the floor and walls of the building.
- Feeding remains (particularly butterfly and moth wings).
- Evidence of urine and/or oily staining around possible roost entrance
- Presence of areas cleared of cobwebs.
- Where a breathable roofing membrane has been fitted staining on the membrane may suggest use by bats.
- Odour can sometimes suggest the present of bats.
- Squeaking and chattering can reveal bats roosting between the tiles and roofing underlay.

4.3 Constraints

Full access to the site during the visit was made possible by the client. There was nothing to be considered a significant constraint.

5. Survey Findings

5.1 External inspection

The external features of the property were examined for signs described in section 4.2. Windowsills, exposed features around the windows, fascia's and walls were inspected for any evidence of bat droppings or staining.

The property is detached, double storey of brick construction, part rendered, there is an area of UP.V.C. cladding which was in good condition, close fitting with no significant gaps, there is a flat roof extension on the front, a conservatory to the rear and an adjoining garage on the western aspect.

WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING RG2 9HN.

To the front is an extension with a flat roof covered in a composite material, (bitumen felt) it was close fitting to the soffit boards, it was in good condition with no rips or tears. Figure 1.

The ridge tiles on the dwelling were in good condition with no significant missing mortar that bats could exploit. Figure 2.

The hip tiles were in good condition with no significant missing mortar that bats could exploit. Figure 3/4.

The tiles covering the roof were in good condition, close fitting with no visible broken/slipped/missing tiles visible. Figure 5/6.

The U.P.V.C soffits and fascias on main dwelling are all in good condition, close fitting to the walls with no splits or significant openings. Figure 9/10.

The conservatory had a corrugated plastic roof. Figure 11.

The Garage is of brick construction with a flat roof, Figure 12.

The composite covering was in fair condition. Figure 13.

The soffits and fascias were U.P.V.C, all in good condition, close fitting to the walls with no significant splits or openings. Figure 14.

No bats or evidence of bats was recorded during the external inspection of the dwelling/extension/conservatory/garage and annexe, there were no visible roosting opportunities for bats or access into the building for roosting bats.

Figure 1. Flat roof extension.



Figure 2. Example of ridge tiles.



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Figure 3/4. Hip Tiles.



Figure 5/6. General tiles.





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Figure 9/10. Close fitting U.P.V.C soffits and fascias.



Figure 11. Conservatory.



Figure 12. Attached garage.

Figure 13. Garage roof.



Figure 14. Garage soffits and fascias.



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5.2 Internal Inspection

An internal inspection of the property was undertaken and was examined for any signs of bats, (described in section 4.2)

The loft space in the main dwelling was accessed via an integral ladder and was in good condition.

The loft was lit, it was boarded and insulated, figure 1.

It was being used to store personal possessions; this did not affect the access.

Figure 2.

There were multiple thick cobwebs suggesting no disturbance.

The roof tiles were lined with a bitumen felt, it was in good condition with no visible rips/tears. Figure 3.

There was no light ingress.

The conservatory had a corrugated plastic roof. Figure 4.

The garage roof was boarded with OSB sheets. It was in good condition with no visible gaps, no light ingress or signs of water ingress. Figure 5/6.

The garage door was close fitting.

Figures 7/8/9. Show roof structure and general condition.

No evidence of bats was recorded during the internal inspection of the property and internally there are limited opportunities for bats within the building.

Figure 1. Example of boarding.

Figure 2. Example of personal possessions.



Figure 3. Bitumen felt in good condition.



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Figure 4. Showing conservatory roof.



Figure 5/6. OSB lining garage flat roof.

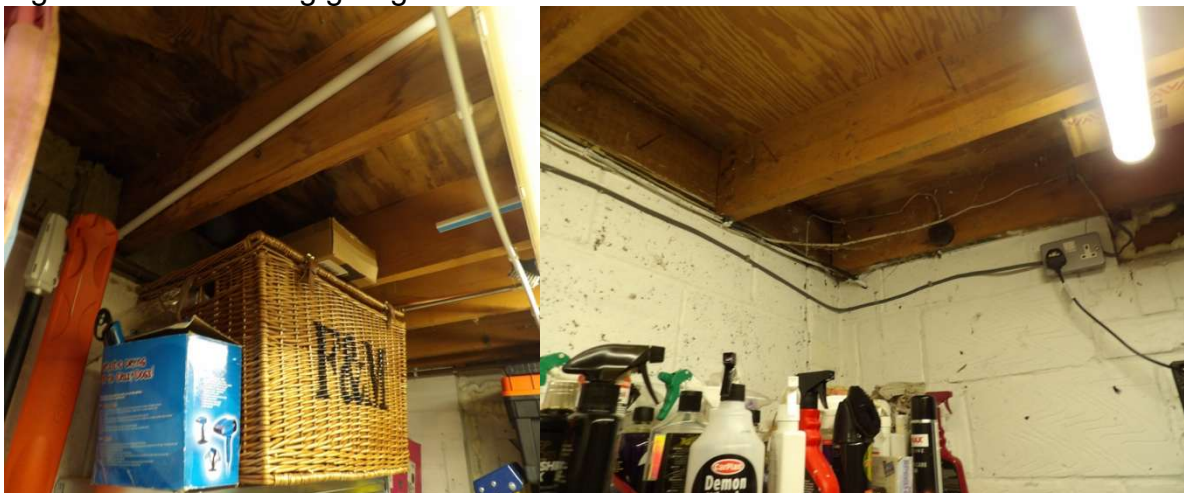


Figure 7/8/9.



WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING RG2 9HN.

6. Evaluation

The bat roost potential of the features within the site have been assessed with reference to the following criteria and include seasonal variation where increased or decreased probability may arise. Where features are present, they are **highlighted in bold**.

The likelihood of bat roosts being present will be higher where structures:

- are of a pre-20th Century construction;
- **are in a lowland rural setting;**
- **have woodland, mature trees, species-rich grassland and/or water nearby.**
- have large dimension roof timbers with cracks, joints and holes,
- have an uneven roof covering with gaps, though not too draughty;
- have numerous crevices in stonework and structures;
- have hanging tiles or roof cladding, especially on south-facing walls;
- **have a roof warmed by the sun;**
- **are disused or little used; largely undisturbed;**
- provide appropriate hibernation conditions, such as abandoned mines, tunnels, kilns, or fortifications; or
- **Recent and historical records of bat roosts in the general area.**

The likelihood of bat roosts being present will be lower where structures:

- are in an urban setting with little green space;
- are subject to heavy disturbance (constant movement due to draughts and noise, also unstable microclimate);
- have a small, cluttered roof void (particularly for brown long-eared);
- **are of a modern construction with few gaps or crevices that bats can fly or crawl through** (though pipistrelle bats may still be present);
- **are comprised of prefabricated steel or sheet materials; (some sections);**
- are active industrial premises.

Please note that the above list provides generic screening criteria only and there are exceptions to consider.

WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING RG2 9HN.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Interpretation

The combined evidence from the desktop study and the external/internal inspection of the property provides a high level of confidence in support of the opinions set out in this report. There are no visible features externally on the main dwelling, garage and conservatory in which bats could access the building to roost.

House/dwelling- Informed by the results of the survey and the factors highlighted in Section 6, it is concluded that there is negligible potential for roosting bats within the building, based on recommendations in the Bat Workers Manual and the Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines, no further survey effort is required.

Conservatory- Informed by the results of the survey and the factors highlighted in Section 6, it is concluded that there is no potential for roosting bats within the conservatory, based on recommendations in the Bat Workers Manual and the Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines, no further survey effort is required.

Garage- Informed by the results of the survey and the factors highlighted in Section 6, it is concluded that there is no potential for roosting bats within the garage, based on recommendations in the Bat Workers Manual and the Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines, no further survey effort is required.

7.2 Contingency Plan

In the unlikely event that bats are found during the works within the buildings, all work must stop, and advice sought from **BatCraft** or another licensed bat ecologist.

If, for whatever reason, there is a time delay of greater than 12 months between this survey and the commencement of work, then the survey should be repeated as the condition of the buildings may change and bats may start roosting at the site.

8. References

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

HM Government (2017) Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations as (amended).

HM Government (1981) The Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended). HM Government (2006) Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). Bat Workers' Manual (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

WINDWHISTLE, READING ROAD, ARBORFIELD, READING RG2 9HN.

9. Queries

Any queries regarding this report should be addressed in the first instance to **BatCraft**.

Telephone; 07960 351558. Email: info@batcraft.co.uk

1 The Chestnuts, East Grimstead, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 3RU.

APPENDIX 1

In summary, the legislation combined makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter by a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats; in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair the ability of bats to survive, breed or reproduce or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migrating bats, to hibernate or migrate.
- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or take any bat.

Planning Considerations:

Government guidance to Local Planning Authorities stipulates the need to consider biodiversity and protected species during the consideration of planning applications. The NPPF makes clear that the planning system should help minimise the impacts that development can have on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible. In addition, the ODPM Circular 04/2005 states "It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed

development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision”.

Developments that compromise the protection afforded to bats or roosts under the provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 will require a European Protected Species (EPS) licence from Natural England (NE).

NE, the government’s statutory conservation advisory organisation, is responsible for issuing EPS licences that would permit activities that would otherwise lead to an infringement of the Habitat Regulations.

Three tests must be satisfied before this licence (to permit otherwise prohibited acts) can be issued:

- • Reg 44(2)(e) – the derogation is “in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”.
- • Reg 44(3)(a) – there is “no satisfactory alternative” to the derogation.
- • Reg 44(3)(b) –the derogation is “not detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range”.

Tests (a) and (e) can be met with the issue of planning permission for the proposed works. Test (b) is determined by NE’s ecology department that requires the development of a suitable mitigation strategy that would ensure that any bats present on site, are retained at the same population level or better.