

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Spring Copse, Julkes Lane, Arborfield, Reading RG2 9JJ

Client:

Michael Heard

Survey date:

07/09/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Wokingham Borough Council. This proposal can be described as “the construction of a brick-built garage to replace the existing garage and adjacent timber shed”.

On the assumption that site conditions and habitats remain unchanged, the results of this assessment will remain valid for 18 months from the date of this survey i.e. until March 2028, in accordance with CIEEM guidance in the lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. This survey and report should be updated if a planning application has not been submitted within this timeframe.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in the proceeding sections of this report.

Table 1: Summary of key findings arising from this survey.

Key Findings
▪ A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be requested by the LPA via condition. ▪ A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will be designed to incorporate the measures laid out in the latest (2023) bat lighting guide Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting¹. ▪ Various precautionary working methods have been recommended which have been fully detailed within the fauna section of this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author’s knowledge, by any other consultancy.

Methodology

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2025](#).

Survey Details

The site survey was undertaken by Thomas Doarks BSc (Hons), accredited agent for Level 1 activities on Natural England Bat Licence (2025-83880-CL18-BAT)

Table 2: The weather conditions during the survey.

Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
22	63	79	16	None

Survey Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood.

There were no specific limitations to the survey.

2. SITE LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Site Location & Context

The site is located within the grounds of a residential property set within a landscape comprising mature trees, areas of amenity grassland and broadleaved woodland. An area of deciduous woodland is located immediately adjacent to the western site boundary, providing suitable habitat for a range of species and a potential source of ecological connectivity. The wider landscape is predominantly rural in character, comprising a mosaic of pasture and arable fields interspersed with frequent blocks of woodland. A well-developed network of hedgerows delineates the small field pattern and provides valuable commuting and dispersal routes through the landscape. The site therefore forms part of a relatively well-connected landscape, with the adjacent woodland, hedgerows and surrounding grassland providing opportunities for foraging, commuting and movement by a range of species.

Priority Habitats

There are seven types of priority habitats within 2km of the site. These comprise deciduous woodland, ancient & semi-natural woodland, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, wood pasture and parkland, traditional orchard, reedbeds and lowland fens. Immediately adjacent to the western site boundary is an area of deciduous woodland. The site is well-connected to nearby habitats via field margins, hedgerows and tree lines.

Designated Sites

Statutory Designations within 2km

There are no statutory designations within 2km of the site.

Statutory Designations within 10km

There is one national network site (SAC, SPA, Ramsar) located within 10km, as detailed below:

Table 3: The additional national network sites within 10km of the site boundary.

Designation	Distance from Site
Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)	6100m S

SSSI Risk Zone

The site does fall within the impact risk zone for Longmoor Bog SSSI however, the proposed development type is not listed as possible high risk with regard to this designation. Therefore, consultation with Natural England is not required.

Non-Designated Sites

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the local records centre. Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site do not host habitats likely to be of designable quality.

2.2 Foreseen Impacts

No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development. However, due to the proximity of the site to deciduous woodland, and the possible presence of non-statutory designations in the vicinity, indirect effects such as pollution during construction, or increased recreational pressure, could occur.

2.3 Recommendations

Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution, damage to adjacent habitats must be implemented during construction. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be requested by the LPA via condition. This should include the following measures:

- Retained trees adjacent to the site will be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations' (BS 5837) (2012).
- Appropriate buffering between the development zone and retained habitats (e.g. deciduous woodland).
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto adjacent habitats.

3. FAUNA: BATS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

3.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There are five EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site, as detailed below:

Table 4: EPSL survey returns for bats within a 2km radius.

EPSL Reference	Bat Species Affected	Distance from Site (EPSL records are accurate to 100m)	Impacts Allowed by Licence
2020-49081-EPS-NSIP1	Daubenton's bat <i>Myotis daubentonii</i> , Soprano pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	~675m NW	Damage of a breeding place
2015-18114-EPS-MIT	Daubenton's bat, Soprano pipistrelle, Common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> , Brown long-eared bat <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	~750m E	Damage of a breeding place
EPSM2009-899	Common pipistrelle	~1.45km NE	Destruction of a resting place

EPSM2009-1250	Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Brown long-eared bat	~1.75km SW	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2011-3341	Common pipistrelle, Brown long-eared bat	~1.9km W	Destruction of a resting place

There are no Special Areas of Conservation designated for bats within 10km of the site.

Foraging and commuting habitat

Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats within the vegetated garden. The garden is likely to support invertebrate prey, providing suitable foraging resources for local bat populations.

The site is located within a rural landscape characterised by modified grassland, scattered trees and areas of woodland, which together create a network of connected green spaces. The presence of deciduous woodland adjacent to the western site boundary contributes to the availability of linear and semi-linear features, which bats commonly use for navigation and commuting between roosting and foraging habitats.

Roosting habitat

Buildings to be impacted by the proposed development were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats below. There are a total of two buildings on site; garage (B1) and shed (B2). Both buildings were surveyed as they will be impacted by the proposed development. There was no evidence of roosting bats identified.

Buildings

B1: Garage

B1 is a detached, single-storey timber-framed garage with a gabled roof clad in bitumen felt. The structure is single-skinned, and the internal space is well sealed, with no gaps, cracks or access points identified that would allow bats to enter the building or access any internal voids. No evidence of bats (e.g. droppings, staining or feeding remains) was recorded during the inspection.

In line with Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B1 is assessed to have **negligible** habitat value for roosting bats, as no features likely to be used by bats at any time of the year were identified.



Northern elevation of B1.

Table 5a: The roosting features associated with building B1.

Feature	Materials/Details	Condition / description / suitability	Photograph
Walls and window frames	Timber	Condition/description The timber walls and window frames are in good condition and are well-sealed. Suitability/access/evidence of bats No gaps, features or access points suitable for roosting bats were identified.	B1 northern elevation wall and windows.

Roof	Bitumen felt	Condition/description The roof structure comprises timber boards overlaid with bitumen roofing felt. The felt covering appears continuous and in good condition. A small superficial gap is present along the entirety of the roof edge (~10mm wide and ~10mm deep) where the bitumen felt is lifted. This gap does not provide access to the roof or to the internal garage spaces. Suitability/access/evidence of bats The superficial lifting on the roof edge identified is shallow and does not offer sufficient shelter, protection, or appropriate microclimatic conditions (including stable temperature and humidity), as it is exposed to external weather conditions and temperature fluctuations. Furthermore, it does not provide access to the internal garage space. As such, this roof feature is considered to provide negligible suitability for roosting bats.	 Western roof of B1.  Eastern roof edge of B1.
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Barge boards	Timber	Condition/description The timber bargeboards of B1 are in good condition with no gaps. Suitability/access/evidence of bats No bat roosting features or access points were identified.	 <i>Bargeboard on the northern elevation of B1.</i>
Internal space	Timber rafters	The internal space of B1 is accessible and measures 8.5m in length, 5.5m in width, and 3m in height. The timber roof is in good condition and well-sealed. The timber rafters could present a feature. Windows on the western and eastern elevation allow high levels of natural light into the internal space. The garage doors on the southern elevation are in poor condition, presenting gaps that could create suitable access points into the internal space. However, the conditions created by the windows and doors result in a bright, exposed and thermally unstable	 <i>Timber roof of B1 in good condition.</i>

		environment, which is unsuitable for roosting bats, as bats typically favour dark, sheltered spaces with relatively stable microclimatic conditions. No evidence of roosting bats was identified within this void. Temp: 26.5°C // Humidity: 54%	 Garage doors on the southern elevation of B1.
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B2: Shed

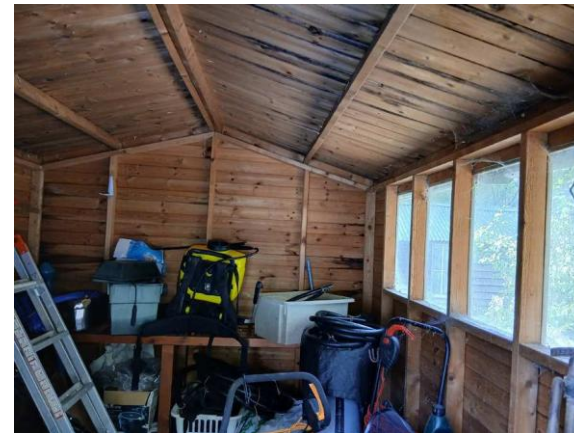
B2 is a detached, single-storey timber-framed shed with a gabled roof clad in bitumen felt. The structure is single-skinned, and the internal space is well sealed, with no gaps, cracks or access points identified that would allow bats to enter the building or access any internal voids. No evidence of bats (e.g. droppings, staining or feeding remains) was recorded during the inspection.

The shed also contains large windows, which allow high levels of natural light into the internal space. In addition, the single-skinned timber construction provides little thermal insulation, resulting in significant temperature fluctuations throughout the day and night. These conditions create a bright, exposed and thermally unstable environment, which is unsuitable for roosting bats, as bats typically favour dark, sheltered spaces with relatively stable microclimatic conditions.

In line with Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B2 is assessed to have **negligible** habitat value for roosting bats, as no features likely to be used by bats at any time of the year were identified.



Eastern elevation of building B2.



Internal space of B2 facing west.

3.2 Foreseen Impacts

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within B1 and B2 and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in these locations as a result of the proposed development.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

There are no trees on site, therefore no impacts are foreseen.

Foraging and commuting habitat

The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats. However, the proposed development will include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.

Artificial lighting

The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats or the retained building without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.

3.3 Recommendations

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

None.

Foraging and commuting habitat

No further surveys are required.

Artificial lighting

A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/08/bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night-ilp-guidance-note-update-released>.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of one bat box at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats.

The bat box will be incorporated into the fabric of the new garage. Suitable bat boxes include e.g. Habibat Bat Box, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or similar alternative brand.

Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.

4. FAUNA: BIRDS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

4.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Buildings

No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within any of the buildings on site. However, the buildings may provide suitable shelter and could be used by common nesting birds.

Trees and vegetation

No habitat suitable for schedule 1 birds was observed.

Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site is not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.

4.2 Foreseen Impacts

Buildings / trees

The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.

Trees and vegetation

None foreseen.

4.3 Recommendations

Buildings / trees

Any building or vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged or an ecologist has confirmed the nesting attempt has concluded.

Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged or an ecologist has confirmed the nesting attempt has concluded.

Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained habitats so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works.

Trees and vegetation

No additional surveys required.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of one bird box on mature trees within the wider site ownership or on the new build will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings), Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace (buildings), Schwegler 1B Nest Boxes (trees), Schwegler 2H Robin Boxes (trees), Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) or a similar alternative brand.

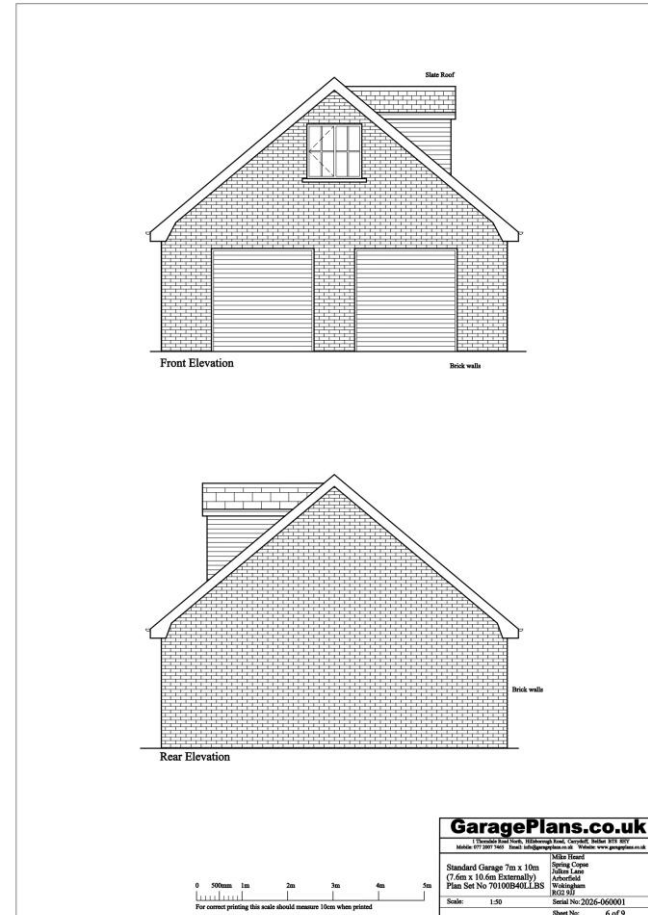
Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole. Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY/HABITAT MAP



APPENDIX 2: LOCATION MAP





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VERSION CONTROL

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Thomas Doarks BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist	07/09/2026
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