

**Outbuildings at
19 Grovelands Lane,
Spencer's Wood,
Reading,
RG7 1DP**

**Preliminary Roost Assessment
(Phase 1 Bat survey)**

January 2025

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Prepared by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consultant Chartered Ecologist Dr.Jonty Denton FRES FLS MCIEEM CEcol was commissioned to undertake a Daytime Bat Assessment (Phase 1) of the outbuildings at 19 Grovelands Lane, Spencer's Wood, Reading, RG7 1DP. The Daytime Bat Assessment / Phase 1 Bat Survey was undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2023) on 30th January 2025.

The buildings are a prefabricated, flat-roofed cabin, a wooden shed and an open fronted storage barn with attached flat-roofed workshop and changing area. There were no signs of any historic bat activity in any of the structures.

The structures are all unsuitable for roosting bats with no accessible enclosed voids. Therefore, they have negligible potential, and Phase 2 bat surveys are *not* required.

INTRODUCTION

The bungalow was assessed in 2024 (Ecological Partnership, 2024) but the outbuildings were not covered by this report.

Site Setting and Description

The buildings are situated to the west of Grovelands Road at the northern edge of Spencer's Wood in Berkshire. The yard is flanked by detached houses with large mature gardens top the northeast and south and by Shinfield Cemetery to the west. (see figure 1). There are no woodlands within 250m but the adjacent roads and access driveways are treelined. The area has good foraging habitat for common bat species.



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

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 on the afternoon of the 30th January 2025., 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 open barn and flat roofed outbuildings were investigated externally to identify potential bat access/egress locations and roosting areas such as gaps or holes between 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 (Collins 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 Timing and Weather Conditions

The Phase 1 bat survey was carried out on the afternoon of the 30th January 2025, which was calm and clear with 0% cloud cover, and an ambient temperature of approx. 6°C.

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.

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.

The closest international designated site is the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) located 4.5km south-east.

The closest statutory designated site is Stanford End Mill & River Loddon Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located approximately 1.5km south of the site.

There are no priority habitats located on site. Several units of priority habitat are located within 1km of the site and the closest is good quality semi-improved grassland located approximately 200m north.

OS maps and aerial images indicate no ponds are located within 250m of the site.

According to the DEFRA's MagicMap, one EPS licences for bat species within 1km of the site. This was issued in 2015 for Brown Long-eared Bats approximately 729m to the south-east for the damage and destruction of a resting place.

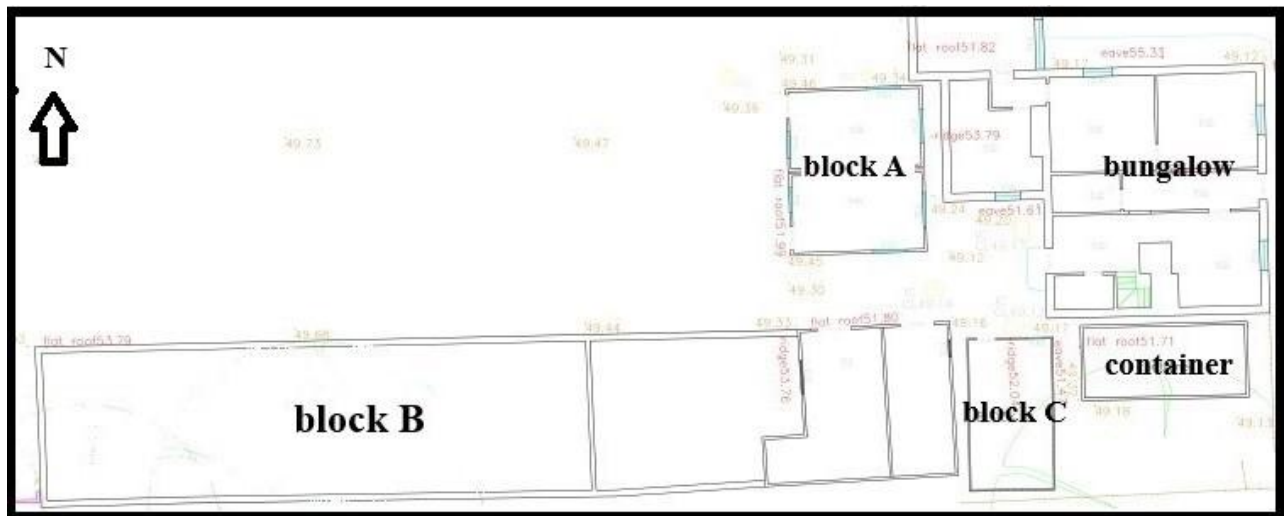


Figure 2. Building layout

BLOCK A-

Block A is a prefabricated, flat roofed concrete slab walled single-storey building. The fascias are sealed off and there are no openings or enclosed voids. The structure has negligible potential for roosting bats.



Figure 3. Block A looking southeast



Figure 4. Block A looking west

BLOCK B- Open barns and workshop

The elongate open-fronted covered storage structures used to cover aggregates and other building materials occupy the westernmost four bays of block B (see figures 5-6). There are no enclosed voids within and the structure has negligible potential for bats. The eastern end is attached to a flat-roofed enclosed workshop, changing room and washroom (see figures 5 and 7). This has no roof voids and the fascias are closed off and has no signs of bat activity within.



Figure 5. Block B easternmost open bay and workshop looking south.



Figure 6. Block B open bays looking west.



Figure 7. Interior of block B workshop looking south.

BLOCK C

A prefabricated wooden shed with a shallow pitched roof of corrugated cement sheeting on a wooden frame (see figures 8-9). The interior is permanently illuminated by a side window and has negligible potential for bats.



Figure 8. Block C looking north.



Figure 9. Block C interior looking east.

Shipping container

There is a metal shipping container adjacent to the bungalow and block C. It is closed off with no openings and has negligible potential for roosting bats.

EVALUATION

The buildings are a prefabricated, flat-roofed cabin, a wooden shed and an open fronted storage barn with attached flat-roofed workshop and changing area. There were no signs of any historic bat activity in any of the structures.

None of the structures have openings exploitable by crevice roosting bats and therefore have negligible potential and phase 2 surveys are not recommended.

REFERENCES

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

Ecological Partnership (2024). *Preliminary Roost assessment of 19 Grovelands, Spencer's Wood*. Unpublished report.

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