

Lake House
178 Bearwood Road
Barkham
Wokingham
RG41 4SH

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Report ref.: R3130_PRA_a

Report Quality Control Information	
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Mary and Chris Kay to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Lake House – a detached residential dwelling at 178 Bearwood Road in Barkham, Berkshire. The PRA was commissioned to accompany a planning application to be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council seeking consent for single-storey extensions to the detached property and removal of outbuildings.
- 1.1.1** The aim of the PRA is to ascertain if there is evidence of the presence of bats and/or potential for roosting bats to be present, and therefore whether further survey and/or mitigation would be required for the proposed development activities. A detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of the house and outbuildings was undertaken on the 21st January 2026.
- 1.1.2** No evidence of roosting bats were found during the survey of the house or outbuildings, with no suitable roof void present for use by void-dwelling species, such as locally recorded brown long-eared bats. Externally, there were no potential roost features observed which would provide conditions suitable for use by small crevice-dwelling bat species, such as the locally recorded *Pipistrellus* species. Considering the lack of features noted, the Lake House and outbuildings were assessed as having negligible potential suitability for bats.
- 1.1.3** The survey findings demonstrate that these proposals are highly unlikely to result in the death, injury or disturbance of bats; the damage or destruction of a bat roost; or the obstruction of access to a bat roost. Therefore, a European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence would not be required to allow the development proposals to proceed lawfully.
- 1.1.4** In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during construction, the works must stop immediately, and a suitably licensed ecologist should be called to site attend to the bat and provide advice on how to proceed; works should not continue until further written advice has been received. At this stage, an EPS mitigation licence may be required to permit the works to recommence lawfully.
- 1.1.5** This report contains information regarding a mobile species so it will likely be valid for 12 months only (CIEEM 2019).

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Background

- 2.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Mary and Chris Kay to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Lake House – a detached residential dwelling at 178 Bearwood Road in Barkham, Berkshire.
- 2.1.2** The PRA survey was commissioned to accompany a planning application to be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council for the construction of single-storey extensions at the eastern and western elevations of the existing dwelling, along with the removal of the existing office and outbuildings, to create a permeable surfaced driveway and parking (refer to location plan in **Appendix 1** and existing and proposed plan in **Appendix 2**).

2.2 Site Location and Context

- 2.2.1** The detached two-storey property is located on the eastern side of Bearwood Road, in Barkham, Berkshire, approximately 2.9km to the west of Wokingham Town Centre (central OS grid reference: SU 78424 68571).
- 2.2.2** The detached house is in a leafy suburban area surrounded by woodland and facing a large pond to the north with a housing estate to the east. There is a golf course with 3 ponds 200m to the east of the site. There are hedgerows alongside the road.
- 2.2.3** Overall, the nearby habitats provide suitable commuting and high quality foraging opportunities for bats adapted to roosting in suburban environments.

2.3 Report Objectives

- 2.3.1** The aim of the PRA is to ascertain if there is evidence of the presence of bats and/or potential for roosting bats to be present, and therefore whether further survey and/or mitigation would be required for the proposed development activities.

3 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY BACKGROUND

3.1 Relevant Legislation

3.1.1 In England and Wales, all bat species found in the wild are fully protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA) and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended); the regulations are commonly referred to as the Habitat Regulations and hereafter referred to as such. The Habitat Regulations refer to European Protected Species (EPS) and all species of bats in the United Kingdom (UK) are EPS. Although the UK left the European Union on the 31st January 2020 and is therefore no longer tied to European legislation, the Habitat Regulations have been retained in their current format.

3.1.2 The legal framework underpinned by the WCA and Habitat Regulations makes these specific actions an offence as follows:

- Deliberately kill, injure, capture or take a wild bat;
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb bats; in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, to rear or nurture their young, to hibernate or migrate, or to significantly affect local distribution or abundance;
- Damage or destroy a place used by a bat for breeding or resting; and
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used by a bat for shelter or protection.

3.2 Planning Policy

3.2.1 The biodiversity duty imposed through the Environment Act 2021 states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must consider what action they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. Government planning policy, such as the ODPM Circular 06/2005, requires LPAs to account for the conservation of protected species when considering and determining planning applications.

3.2.2 The ODPM Circular 06/2005 states that *'the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat.'* This policy means that in instances where there is a reasonable likelihood of bats being present and affected by a development, surveys must be undertaken to inform a mitigation strategy to be agreed prior to granting planning permission.

3.3 Mitigation Licensing

3.3.1 The government's statutory nature conservation body, Natural England, is responsible for issuing European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licences that would permit activities that would otherwise lead to an infringement of the Habitat Regulations. An EPS mitigation licence can be issued if the following three tests derived from Regulation 55 have been satisfied:

- (2)(e) – the derogation is for the purposes of '*preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment.*'
- (9)(a) – there is '*no satisfactory alternative*' to the derogation; and
- (9)(b) – '*the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.*'

3.3.2 LPAs have a statutory duty under Regulation 7(3)(e) of the Habitat Regulations to consider and determine whether these three tests are likely to be satisfied by planning proposals affecting EPS before granting planning permission. If an EPS mitigation licence is necessary, a licence can be sought once all the necessary planning consents have been granted. Natural England aims to issue a decision on licence applications within 30 working days of submission.

3.3.3 The Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) scheme allows ecologists to apply to become Registered Consultants to use this licence for low conservation status roosts, i.e. roosts comprising small numbers of seven commonly occurring species. A site registration form must be completed as a condition of the licence and submitted to Natural England at least three weeks before the licensable activities are due to start; Natural England aims to register sites within two weeks of submission.

3.3.4 Baseline survey information supporting EPS mitigation licence applications or BMCL site registrations must be up-to-date and have been completed within the current or most recent optimal season. A suitably experienced ecologist will be required to undertake a site walkover/check within three months prior to application/registration submission to confirm that conditions have not changed since the most recent survey.

4 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

4.1 Desk Study

4.1.1 A desk-based study for bats was undertaken to collate and review existing information about the site and the surrounding land. The study utilised the following open access resources:

- Google Earth – satellite imagery was used to identify potential flight paths and foraging habitats for bats;
- MAGIC – examined to locate granted European Protected Species licences; and
- Pre-existing bat survey reports – any available reports were obtained from the client or relevant planning portal to provide background information for the site.

4.2 Building Inspection

Survey Details

4.2.1 A detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of the property and outbuildings was undertaken on the 21st January by Meghan Porter-Smith registered under Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL17 (Registration no.: 2025-86253-CL17-BAT), and Jake Morgan registered under Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL17 (Registration no.: 2025-85343-CL17-BAT), in accordance with good practice guidelines (Collins 2023). The equipment used during the inspection comprised binoculars, a high-power (1 million candlepower) LED torch, a headtorch, and a ladder. The inspection involved a systematic search of the exterior and interior of the structures during daylight hours to compile information on potential and actual bat access points; potential and actual bat roost sites; and any evidence of bat presence.

External Survey

4.2.2 Frequently used bat access points and/or roost sites include (but are not limited to) spaces:

- behind hanging tiles, weatherboarding, soffit boxes and barge boards;
- under lead flashing (particularly around chimneys) and roof tiles/slates; and
- in existing bat boxes.

4.2.3 It is important to note that the two most abundant and widespread bat species, common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), typically only require gaps measuring 15mm by 20mm to gain access to a roost inside a

building.

4.2.4 The external survey involved a systematic search for evidence of bats including:

- live or dead specimens;
- droppings;
- urine marks;
- fur-oil staining; and
- squeaking noises.

4.2.5 It should be noted that bats can be present in a building while leaving no visible signs externally and wet weather has the potential to wash any evidence away. The search for evidence was focused on (but was not limited to) the ground, windowsills, windowpanes and walls (including cladding and hanging tiles); particularly in places near to potential bat access points and/or roost sites.

Survey Limitations and Validity

4.2.6 There were no significant survey limitations because PRAs can be carried out at any time of year under any weather conditions and the building was fully accessible.

4.2.7 It should be noted that it is not always possible to inspect all potential roost sites during a survey, particularly for bat species which typically roost in hidden crevices. Therefore, an absence of bat evidence found during a survey does not necessarily equate to evidence of bat absence in a building.

4.2.8 This report contains information regarding a mobile species so it will likely be valid for 12 months only (CIEEM 2019).

5 SURVEY RESULTS

5.1 Desk Study

5.1.1 The large ponds and scattered trees present within the wider garden site could be used as bat flight paths and high quality feeding habitat, is connected to additional high-quality foraging habitats within the surrounding woodland habitat for any bats roosting locally.

5.1.2 The following table lists the bat mitigation licences issued within the last 10 years within a 2km radius of the property.

Table 1. Bat mitigation licences granted within a 2km radius of the property (Source: MAGIC).

Case Reference of Granted Licence	Species on the Licence	Licensable Period	Licensable Works	Distance (m)/ Direction
2017-31502-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	29/09/2017 - 30/04/2023	Destruction of resting place	~ 875 S
2015-18114-EPS-MIT-4	Brown long-eared, Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle Daubenton's & Noctule	28/02/2019 - 30/04/2021	Destruction of resting place	~ 1490 NW
2016-22176-EPS-MIT	Brown long-eared	01/04/2016 - 31/03/2021	Destruction of resting place	~ 1750 NE

5.1.3 There were no pre-existing bat survey reports held by the client or available for the property on the Wokingham Borough Council website, however a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was carried out in 2022 to accompany a planning application for a replacement dwelling for the original bungalow present to the north of the application site (Application number: 240665). The site was said to offer suitable foraging habitat for bats roosting locally, however the bungalow was deemed to be of negligible potential for roosting bats.

5.2 Building Inspection

Overview

5.2.1 The findings from the external inspection carried out for the property and outbuildings, are described with photographs and are annotated in a plan, as follows:

Lake House - External Survey

5.2.2 The property is a detached single-storey timber framed house with a main pitched roof, and flat roof extensions on the southern elevation. A detached office building and timber

shed were present to the east of the house, with a set of open car ports, log store and shed present to the south-east of the house (**Photographs 1 - 5**).



Photograph 1. Front of the property viewed from the south.



Photograph 2. Side of the property viewed from the west.



Photograph 3. Rear of the property and detached office building, viewed from the north.



Photograph 4. Detached office and timber storage shed, viewed from the east.



Photograph 5. Sheds, car port and log stores to the south-east of the property, viewed from the north.

- 5.2.3** The main roof was covered with overlapping plain tiles that were intact across both elevations, with tight ridge tiles and intact ridge mortar present (**Photographs 6 & 7**). The verge mortar was intact across both gables, with the soffits tight to the tongue-in-groove cladding along the eaves of the gables (**Photographs 8 & 9**). The timber cladding was intact across all elevations of the property, and the soffits were tight to the timber clad walls along both sides of the property (**Photograph 10**).



Photograph 6. Flat and mossy plain roof tiles (north elevation).



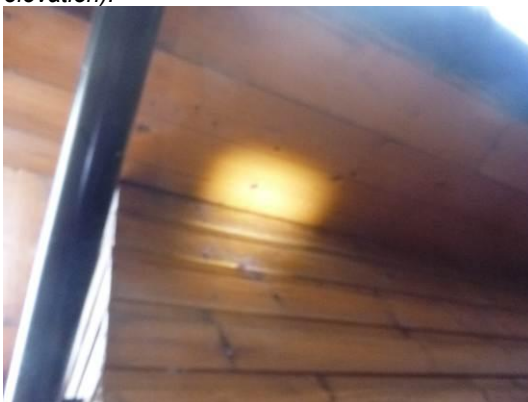
Photograph 7. Tight ridge tiles and intact mortar (south elevation).



Photograph 8. Intact verge mortar (east elevation).



Photograph 9. Timber soffit tight to tongue-in-groove timber cladding along eaves (west elevation).



Photograph 10. Intact timber cladding and tight timber soffit along eaves (south elevation).

Lake House - Internal Survey

- 5.2.4** The property had one roof void that covered the single-storey footprint of the pitched roof and that was accessible via a loft hatch on the ground floor. The void had a floor-to-ridge height of approximately 1.5 metres in the middle of the void around the loft hatch, with the roof height reducing to less than a metre at the eastern and western end of the void, and therefore the gables were inaccessible (**Photograph 11**). The roof was of pre-trussed rafter construction, and the roof was lined with intact foil-backed bitumen felt, which was also visible across the gable ends (**Photograph 12**).



Photograph 11. Roof void of pre-trussed rafter construction.



Photograph 12. Intact foil lined roofing felt across roof and gable end (roof void).

- 5.2.5** The floor of the void was completely boarded, with some fibreglass insulation visible beneath the boards in places. The void was used for storage, with access to the eaves were blocked by the floor boarding, which was tight to the roof felt (**Photograph 13**).



Photograph 13. Roof void of pre-trussed rafter construction.

Detached outbuildings

- 5.2.6** The detached office featured diagonal timber cladding on the office which was intact and had a sloped metal sheet roof, with the metal flashing tight to the timber clad walls (**Photographs 14 & 15**). The office had no internal roof void and was completely sealed internally, offering no roosting opportunities for bats.



Photograph 14. Tight timber cladding on detached office (eastern elevation).



Photograph 15. Metal flashing tight to timber cladding on detached office (eastern elevation).

5.2.7 The timber sheds, open car port and log stores were of single skin timber cladding construction. The timber bargeboard was tight to the bitumen roofing felt and the timber cladding of the shed to the east of the detached office (**Photograph 16**). The open car port and log store was covered with corrugated bitumen sheets (**Photograph 17**). Internally, the storage shed had plywood boarding on the internal roof and ceiling, which had some water damage and gaps, where the corrugated bitumen sheeting was visible (**Photograph 18**). There was no evidence of roosting bats observed externally or internally within any of the outbuildings.



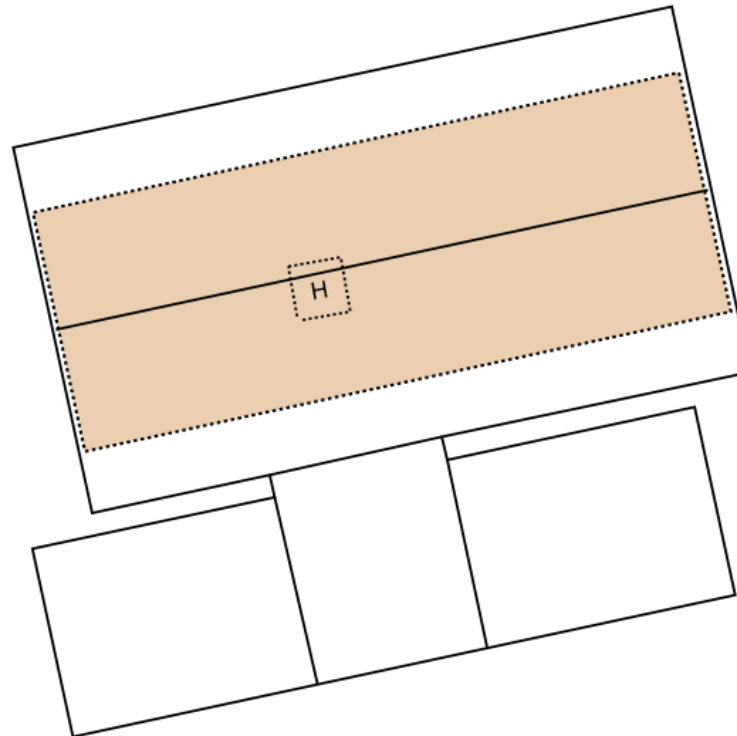
Photograph 16. Timber bargeboard tight to timber shed (eastern elevation).



Photograph 17. Intact timber cladding on storage shed (northern elevation).



Photograph 18. Intact timber cladding on storage shed (Storage shed internal).



Roof space



Loft hatch

Drawn by:	Date	Scale:	Lake House, 178 Bearwood Road, Barkham	
MP-S	February 2026	Not to scale	Preliminary Roost Assessment Findings	

Figure 1. Plan of the Preliminary Roost Assessment findings.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Assessment of Roost Suitability / Presence

- 6.1.1** The property is in a rural setting surrounded by garden habitats including two large ponds, managed lawn and scattered trees to the north and woodland to the south, which provide high-quality flight paths and foraging opportunities for bats roosting locally. Furthermore, three bat mitigation licences issued within a 2km radius reveals bat roosts for at least three species in the near vicinity: common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), brown long eared (*Plecotus auritus*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) and Daubenton's (*Myotis daubentonii*).
- 6.1.2** No evidence of roosting bats were observed during the external or internal survey of the Lake House or any of the outbuildings.
- 6.1.3** The property had a trussed roof void that was considered to be too small and cluttered with rafters, and therefore sub-optimal for void-dwelling bat species, such as the locally recorded brown long-eared (*P. auritus*) bats. Furthermore, no evidence of bats was found during the internal search of the roof void.
- 6.1.4** Externally the property had no suitable features that could provide access or be used by primarily crevice-dwelling species, such as the locally recorded *Pipistrellus* bats, with tight roof and ridge tiles, tight timber soffits and intact timber cladding.
- 6.1.5** Overall, the evidence shows that the house is considered to have negligible potential suitability for roosting bats (see **Appendix 3** for Roost Suitability).

6.2 Impact Assessment and Recommendations

- 6.2.1** The development proposals seek consent for the construction of single-storey extensions at the eastern and western elevations of the existing dwelling, along with the removal of the existing office and outbuildings to create a permeable surfaced driveway and parking (refer to location plan in **Appendix 1** and existing and proposed plan in **Appendix 2**).
- 6.2.2** The survey findings demonstrate that these proposals are highly unlikely to result in the death, injury or disturbance of bats; the damage or destruction of a bat roost; or the obstruction of access to a bat roost. Therefore, a European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence would not be required to allow the development proposals to proceed lawfully.

- 6.2.3** In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during construction, the works must stop immediately, and a suitably licensed ecologist should be called to site attend to the bat and provide advice on how to proceed; works should not continue until further written advice has been received. At this stage, an EPS mitigation licence may be required to permit the works to recommence lawfully.

7 REFERENCES

CIEEM (2019). *Advice Note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys*. CIEEM, Winchester.

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

Ellendale Environmental (2022) *178 Bearwood Road, Wokingham - Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) C IC v 1 . 1*. Ellendale Environmental, Chippenham.

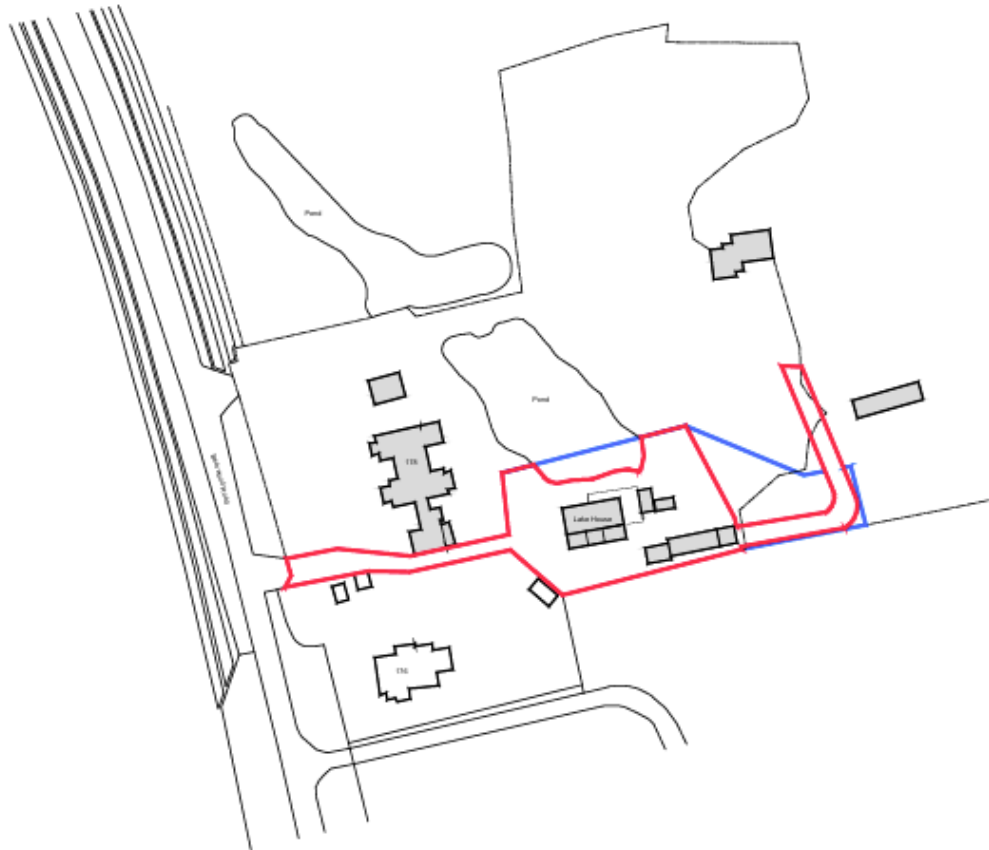
Mathews F., Kubasiewicz L.M., Gurnell J., Harrower C.A., McDonald R.A., Shore R.F. (2018). *A Review of the Population and Conservation Status of British Mammals*. A report by the Mammal Society under contract to Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage. Natural England, Peterborough.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. & McLeish, A. P. (2004). *Bat Workers' Manual (3rd edition)*. JNCC, Peterborough.

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2025). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats. Version 1.2*. CIEEM, Ampfield.

APPENDIX 1 – EXISTING SITE PLAN

DO NOT SCALE OFF THIS DRAWING
EXCEPT FOR PLANNING PURPOSES
ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE



LAND IN SAME
OWNERSHIP

SITE BOUNDARY

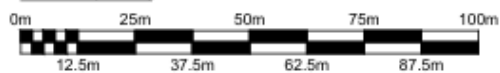


Rev	Description	Date
C	Red line updated to reflect revised site plan	04/12/23
B	Site redline area reduced to align with the client's revised supplied drawings	27/10/23
A	Address updated	28/09/23
Revisions		

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Location Plan
Scale 1:1250 @ A4

Scale bar (1:1250)



Project: Extension

for
Mary & Chris Kay

at
Lake House
178 Bearwood Road
Barkham
Wokingham
RG41 4SH

Contact: [Michael Austin RIBA](mailto:Michael.Austin@RIBA)
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Dwg Ref: 2525 [S] 00

Rev: C

Date: April 2025

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APPENDIX 2 – EXISTING AND PROPOSED PLAN



1. Existing Volume Study



2. Proposed Volume Study

DO NOT SCALE OFF THIS DRAWING
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ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE

Volumes - Existing	
1 LAKE HOUSE	- 360m³
2 OFFICE	- 41.6m³
3 SHED	- 21.1m³
4 SHED 2	- 31.7m³
5 WOOD STORE & CAR PORT	- 128.6m³
TOTAL = 583m³	

Volumes - Proposed	
1 LAKE HOUSE	- 633m³
TOTAL = 633.3m³	

Volume Study of Existing and Proposed
Scale 1:100 @ A1



Project: Extension	
for Mary & Chris Kay	
at Lake House	
178 Bearwood Road	
Barkham	
Wokingham	
RG41 4SH	
Dwg Ref: 2525 [PL] 150	Rev: -
Date: December 2025	
Contact: Michael Austin RIBA	
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Phone: 01753 887550	

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APPENDIX 3 – POTENTIAL SUITABILITY CATEGORIES FOR ROOSTING BATS

The categories detailed in **Table 2** below are derived from the '*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)*' (Collins 2023) and provide guidance for assessing the potential suitability of buildings (and other structures) for roosting bats. These categories are applied using professional judgement and irrespective of whether the presence of a bat roost has been confirmed during a survey, as additional bat roosts could be present which have not yet been discovered.

Table 2. Categories for potential suitability of buildings (and other structures) for roosting bats.

Potential Suitability	Category Justification
None	A building (or structure) that has no features likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of cracks, crevices or voids that could provide suitable shelter).
Negligible	A building (or structure) that has no obvious features likely to be used by roosting bats, but in this case a small element of uncertainty remains as bats will occasionally use small and apparently unsuitable features. This category may also be used where a bat could potentially roost due to one attribute, but it is considered unlikely due to another attribute (e.g. a feature that is subject to constant illumination from artificial lighting).
Low	A building (or structure) that has one or more potential roost sites suitable for opportunistic use by individual bats at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites for bats do not provide sufficient space, shelter, protection, conditions and/or surrounding suitable habitat to be used regularly or by large numbers (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for a maternity colony and not a classic hibernation site).
Moderate	A building (or structure) that has one or more potential roost sites suitable for regular use by individual bats, or small non-breeding groups, due to sufficient space, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. However, these potential roost sites for bats are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status with regards to the type of roost only (i.e. maternity colonies and classic hibernation sites).
High	A building (or structure) that has one or more potential roost sites suitable for use by large numbers of bats more regularly and for longer periods of time due to sufficient space, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These potential roost sites for bats are capable of supporting high conservation status roosts (i.e. maternity colonies and classic hibernation sites).