



Urban Tree Experts

BS5837 – Tree Surveys – Ecological Consulting

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL (DBW) AT 30 BYRON ROAD TWYFORD



**Prepared for:
Mr P Dale
30 Byron Road
Twyford
Wokingham
RG10 0AE**

30 January 2026

Ref: SPH/NP/PEA-26/20.01



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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.



Executive Summary

Urban Tree Experts was commissioned by Mr P Dale to conduct a preliminary ecological appraisal (daytime bat walkover [DBW]), at 30 Byron Road, Twyford, Wokingham, RG10 0AE. This is to support a forthcoming planning application to Wokingham Borough Council.

The site visit was carried out on Tuesday 20 January 2026 at 11.30am, 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 minimum 2km search radius and it revealed that one statutory designated site is located within, and one current European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for bats has been granted within 2km of the proposed development site. The immediate surrounding habitat does not provide suitable habitat for roosting, commuting or foraging bats, due to the dense urban environment however, there is good ecological connectivity to allotments and wooded, large freshwater lakes via the garden network.

The DBW comprised a detailed search of the interior and exterior of the property 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 property's suitability to support roosting bats was assessed and potential roost features identified during the preliminary inspection. There are moved roof and hanging tiles on the rear elevation resulting in gaps which could provide potential roosting opportunities for bats or access into the building, and the presence or absence of bats could not be established without further survey effort. When combined with the data from the desk top study, this resulted in the property being characterised as having a moderate potential¹ to support roosting bats.

In line with best practice guidelines², two separate dusk emergence surveys are required on the property in order to establish the presence or absence of bats. If bats are recorded roosting during either survey, a further survey and mitigation will be required in order for the proposed development to proceed legally.

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.

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



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1. Introduction

1.1 Instruction

Urban Tree Experts was instructed by Mr P Dale to conduct a DBW at 30 Byron Road, Twyford, Wokingham, RG10 0AE to support a forthcoming planning application to Wokingham Borough Council.

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 building 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 to Wokingham Borough Council that will seek to remove the rear dormers and construct both first floor and ground floor rear extensions, see plans at Appendix 1.

1.4 Surveyor Background and Experience

The preliminary ecological appraisal for bats was completed by Nick Powell and the report was written by Simon Holmes MSc. CEnv.

Nick holds a Class 2 Bat License (CLS-11742) and has been surveying bats for 4 years with various ecological consultancies and has received training in surveying techniques, bat detector use, bat biology, identification, acoustic monitoring, echolocation analysis and netting.

Simon holds Class 3 (CL19) and 4 Bat (CL20) Licenses (Nos. 17637 and 17638) and a Science and Education license (SCI64844). He has 36 years' experience of carrying out bat surveys and bat conservation work.

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 2.



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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.

3. Site Location and Description

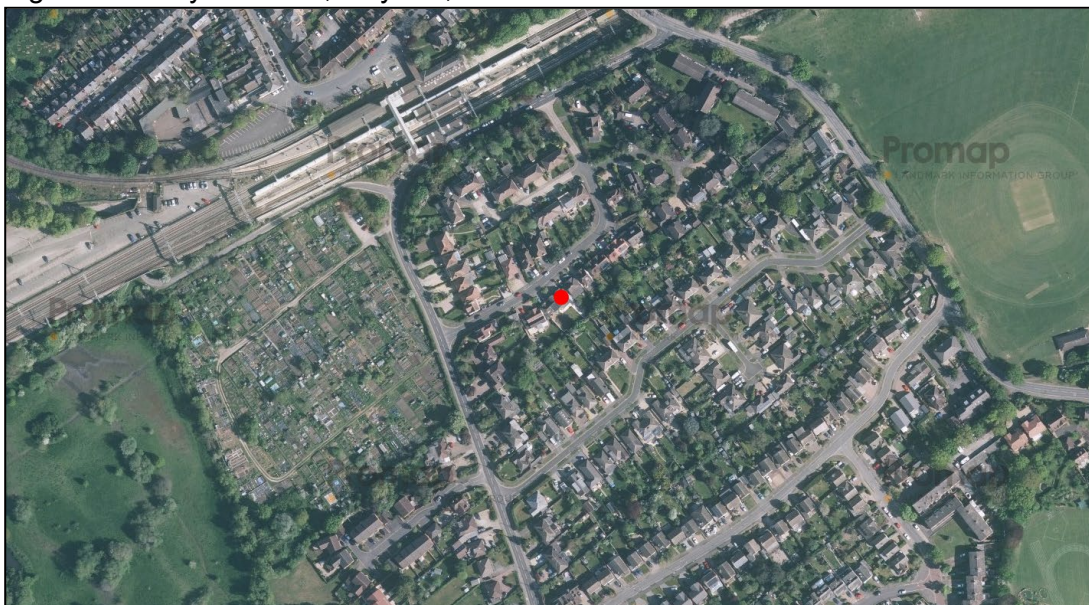
3.1 Site Location

The building is located at Grid Reference SU79137564, see Figure 1 below. An overview of the immediate area is shown on Figure 2, courtesy of Bing Maps.

Figure 1. 30 Byron Road, Twyford, highlighted.



Figure 2. 30 Byron Road, Twyford, overview of the immediate area.





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3.2 Site Description

The application site comprises a detached brick built and rendered property with integral garage and rear single storey extension. To the front is a paved in/out driveway/parking area with shrubs and to the rear, the garden is mainly laid to lawn with a patio area, see Figure 3 below. The site itself offers limited foraging and commuting habitat for bats however there is ecological connectivity to the wider landscape via the garden network.

Figure 3. Rear garden. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26



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 this 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. Due to the suburban area, scale of the proposed development, and the very local impact that may occur, no data was sought from the local records centre at this time.

The site is situated in the village of Twyford and is surrounded by properties of differing styles and sizes. Allotments, Twyford Brook, the River Loddon and Loddon Reserve (freshwater lakes) are situated to the west with Stanlake Meadow recreation ground, Twyford Brook and areas of woodland and farmland to the east. All these areas contain good habitat to support roosting, commuting and foraging bats and are connected to the site via ecological corridors such as rear gardens. Further afield lie additional areas of woodland, farmland and parkland, all of which provide good habitat for bats and have some ecological connectivity to the site.



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Alder Moors Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is situated to the southwest and just within 2km of the site, however there is limited ecological connectivity from the site to this area. A search of the Magic interactive website revealed one current EPSLs for bats have been granted within 2km of the site, the details of which are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Current EPSL for bats within 2km of the site

EPSL reference	Licence end date	Species on licence
2016-25277-EPS-MIT-1	09/2026	Soprano pipistrelle

4.2 Daylight Survey

The DBW at 30 Byron Road, Twyford, Wokingham, RG10 0AE was carried out by Nick Powell on Tuesday 20 January 2026 at 11.30am. The weather conditions for the survey were dry and bright with a temperature of 10 degrees. Equipment used included a high-powered torch, a digital camera on a telescopic pole, endoscope and a ladder.

During the DBW, an external and internal 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 property – soffits, loft space, tiles/slates, lead flashings etc.
- Building condition – structure of roof and walls.
- Internal conditions – microclimate stability, draughts etc.
- 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 property.
- Feeding remains (particularly butterfly and moth wings).
- Evidence of urine and/or oily staining around possible roost entrances.
- 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.

Buildings or structures that were not to be affected by the current proposals or with no bat roosting potential were not inspected.

4.3 Constraints

Full access to the site during the visit was made possible by the client. A thorough inspection of the main loft space could not be undertaken due to the low ridge height.



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, fascias and walls were inspected for any evidence of bat droppings or staining.

The property is a detached, brick-built and rendered building with integral garage, rear dormer and rear flat roof single storey extension, see Figure 4 below. The multi-pitched roof is covered in clay tiles, the majority of which are well fitted with no gaps however, on the rear elevation some of the tiles have moved leaving gaps that could be exploited by crevice dwelling bat species, see Figure 5 on page 9. There is no missing mortar from the ridge or bonnet tiles (see Figure 6 on page 9) and the front and rear verges are sealed with no gaps, see Figure 7 on page 10. The lead flashing around the chimney stack, flue and dormer windows is flush and the soffits and fascias are tight to the walls with no splits, see Figure 8 on page 10. The flat roof of the rear dormer is covered in a well fitted membrane with no rips or tear (see Figure 9 on page 11) however, the hanging tiles on the sides and front have moved leaving gaps and there are gaps where the hanging tiles meet the windows and these gaps could be exploited for roosting, see Figure 10 on page 11. The part flat/part pitched roof of the rear extension is covered in a combination of bitumen felt and membrane, all of which is in a good condition with no rips or tears, and it offers no roosting opportunities (see Figure 11 on page 12) and the wooden fascias are tight to the wall, see Figure 12 on page 12.

No bats or evidence of bats were recorded during the external inspection of the property although there are various features on the property that provide potential crevice roosting opportunities for bats or may provide access into the loft space for bats.

Figure 4. Rear view of property. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26





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Figure 5. Example gaps in rear roof tiles. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26



Figure 6. Example sealed ridge tiles. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26





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Figure 7. Example sealed verges. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26



Figure 8. Example sealed soffits/fascias. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26





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Figure 9. Example well fitted membrane on rear dormer. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26



Figure 10. Example moved hanging tiles and gaps on rear dormer. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26





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Figure 11. Example bitumen felt and membrane on rear extension. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26



Figure 12. Example sealed fascias on rear extension. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26





5.2 Internal Inspection

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

There are two loft spaces within the property and eaves storage areas. The remaining loft void over the property was accessed via a ladder and was in a fair condition internally. The space was not lit, not boarded and insulated and, due to the low ridge height, a thorough inspection was not possible, see Figure 13 below. The roof tiles are lined with bitumen felt, some of which was ripped, see Figure 14 on page 14.

The second loft space is above the attached “annex” on the southwest elevation above the integral garage and this space was also accessed via a ladder. The space was in a fair condition internally, not lit, not boarded and insulated and, due to the low ridge height, a thorough inspection was not possible, see Figure 15 on page 14.

There are three eaves storage areas within the building, all accessed via doorways. These spaces are mainly boarded, not lit and the tiles lined with a combination of bitumen felt and insulation, all of which appeared to be in a good condition, see examples at Figure 16 on page 16.

No bats or evidence of bats was recorded during the internal inspection of the property.

Figure 13. Internal view of remaining loft space and torn bitumen felt. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26





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Figure 14. Internal view of torn bitumen felt in remaining loft space. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26



Figure 15. Internal view of loft space above attached annex and bitumen felt lining to tiles. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26





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Figure 16. Eaves storage areas. 30 Byron Road, Twyford. 20.01.26





6. Evaluation

The bat roost potential of the features within the section of the building to be affected by the proposed works 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 numerous crevices in stonework and structures;
- **have an uneven roof covering with gaps, though not too draughty;**
- 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.

7. Conclusions

7.1 Interpretation

No bats or evidence of bats were recorded during the survey of the property however, there are features on the property which provide crevice like features suitable for bats to roost and the presence or absence of bats could not be determined without further survey effort. The building was assessed as having a moderate potential to support roosting bats.

Based on the Bat Workers Manual and the Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines, two dusk emergence surveys must be undertaken on the property, between May and August, in order to establish the presence or absence of roosting bats in the building. The features identified will require three survey positions, 2 equipped with bat detectors and night vision cameras and 1 with a night vision camera only in order to cover the potential bat roosting features. If bats are seen emerging from or returning to the building to roost during either of the surveys, a further activity survey and mitigation will be required before the developments works can commence.



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7.2 Contingency Plan

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 building may change and the site may become more suitable to support roosting bats.

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.

9. Queries

Any queries regarding this report should be addressed, in the first instance, to Urban Tree Experts:

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Natural England Licence CLS-CLS-17637, CLS-CLS-17638



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APPENDIX 1

Chartered Architectural Technologist
Passive House Designer

[illegible]

PROJECT
30 Byron Road,
Twyford,
RG10 0AE

Mr & Mrs Dale

TITLE

Proposed Plans and Elevations

DRAWING NUMBER

25607-102

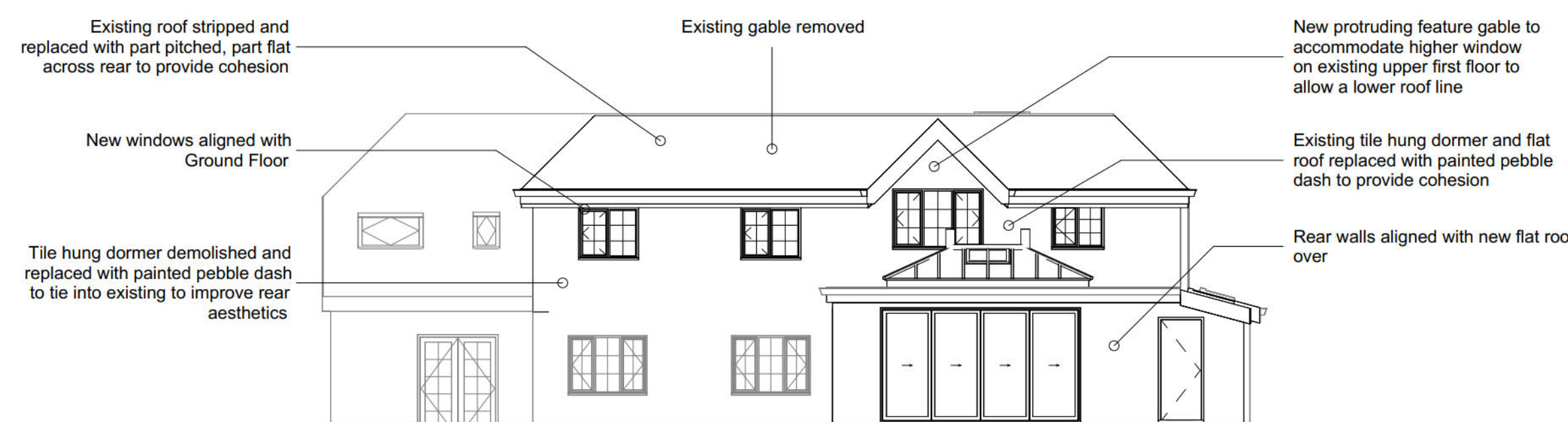
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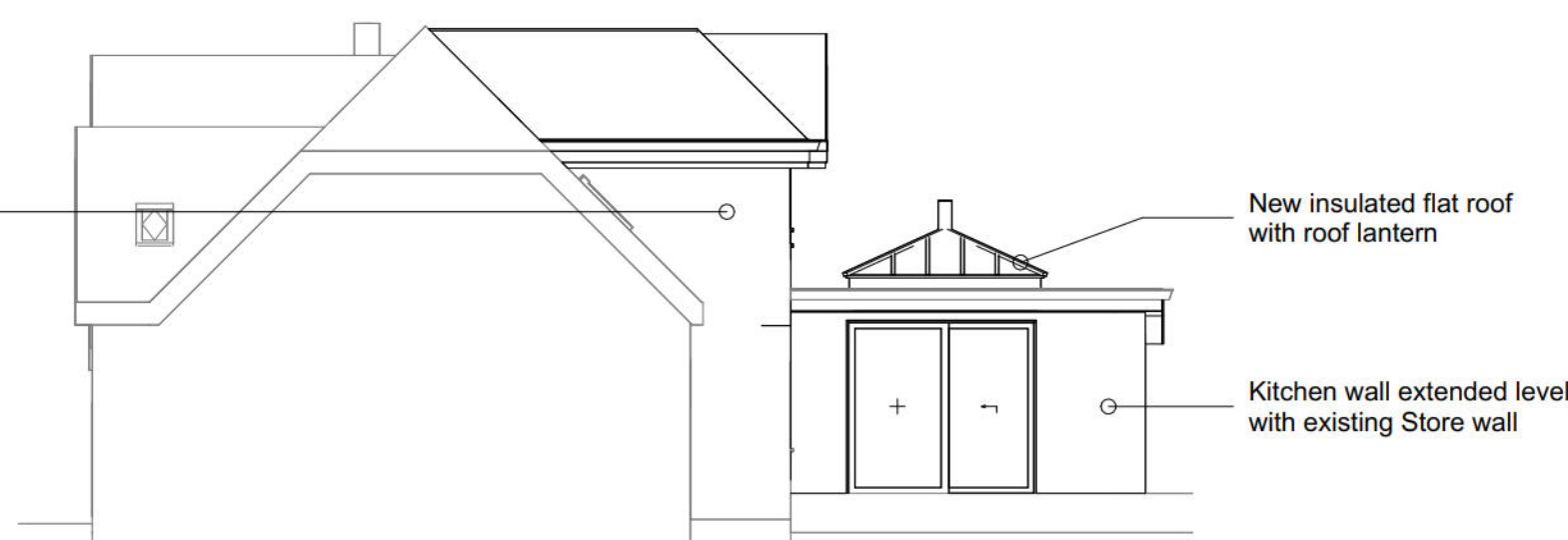
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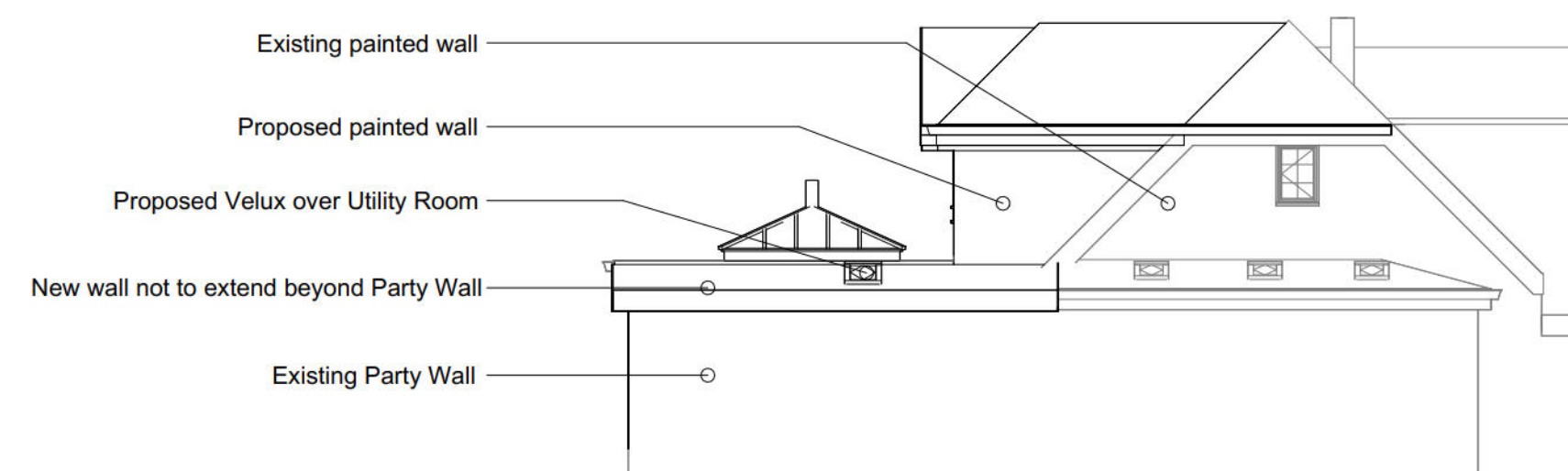
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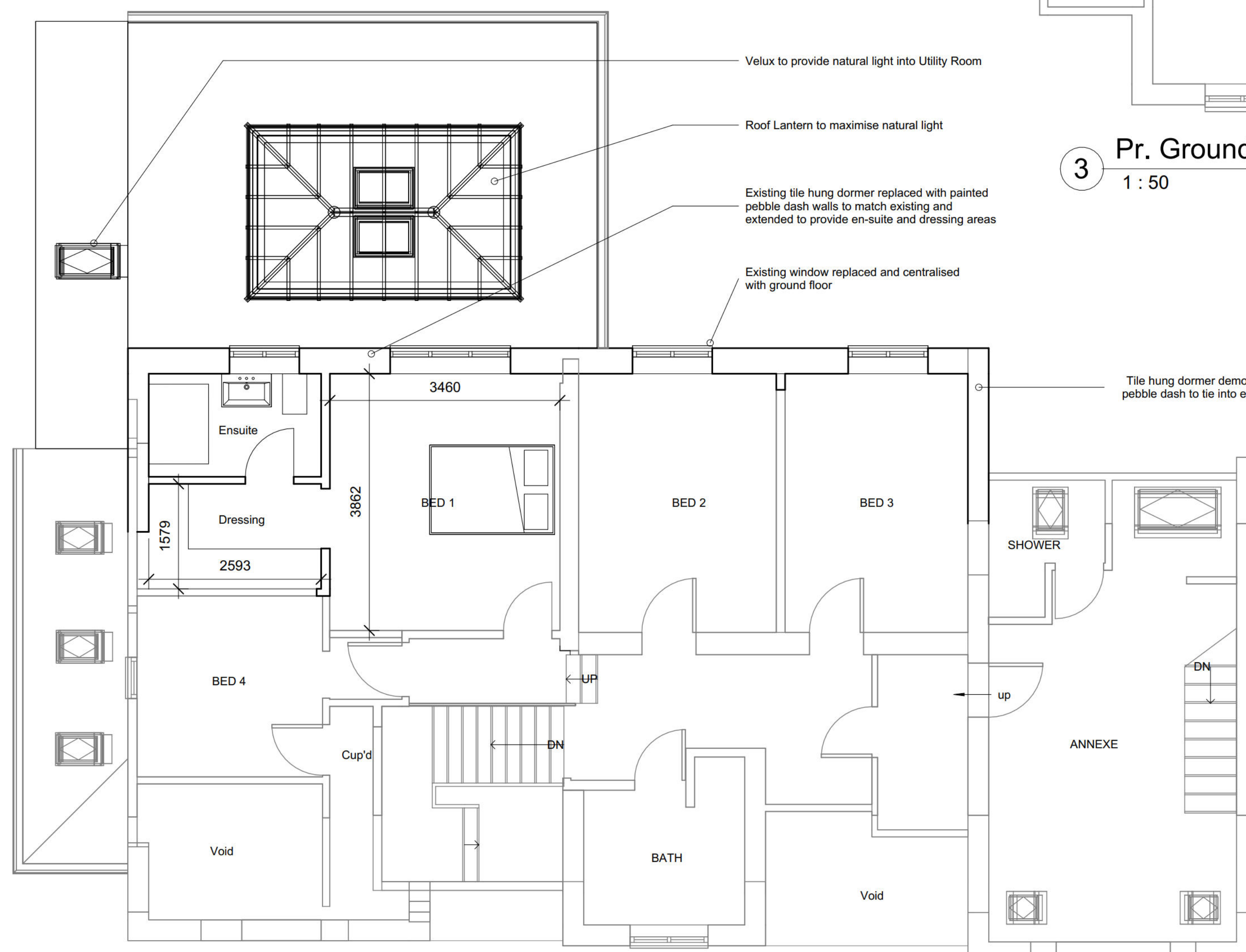
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1 : 100



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APPENDIX 2

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"*.

Policy CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (planning policy relating to the site) states *"Development which may harm habitats or, species of principle importance in England for nature conservation, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna (including wildlife and river corridors), whether directly or indirectly will be only permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to safeguard the nature conservation importance, that no alternative site that would result in less or no harm is available which will meet the need, and*

- i) Mitigation measures can be put in place to prevent damaging impacts; or*
- ii) Appropriate compensation measures to offset the scale and kind of losses are provided"*.

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.