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Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:
134 Victoria Road, Wargrave, Reading, RG10 8AJ

Client:
Kate Murphy

Survey date:
29th October 2024

Project:
This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Wokingham Borough Council. The proposal is described as: Constructing a dormer window onto the southern elevation, relocating the rear rooflight to the northern elevation, and a single-storey side extension. [Unsubmitted]

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: **PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.**
The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion

The site survey was undertaken by Rebecca Gane, Ecological Surveyor, [accredited agent to Natural England Level 1 bat licence number 2018-33540-CLS-CLS]					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
28/10/2024	14	95	95	6	None

PRA Survey Factor	**Detailed using desk study and site survey. Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table 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.**

See PRA plan in Appendix 1, location plan in Appendix 2, proposed plans in Appendix 3 and photos in Appendix 4.

Background and Site Location

Summary of site and desk Study	**Site context** The site is centred on National Grid Reference SU 79429 78828 and has a total area of 0.024ha, including the main property and garden. The surroundings of the site are of moderate bat foraging and commuting qualities, with the immediate vicinity comprised of urban infrastructure with residential dwellings, gardens, roads and commercial premises, and the wider landscape comprising of managed recreation grounds and arable fields separated by a network of hedgerows and lines of trees. The River Thames is located ~900m west.

Designation

The site is not subject to any designation, and there are no known statutory sites within 2km and no Special Areas of Conservation relevant to bats within 10km. The site falls within the SSSI impact zone of Harpsden Wood and Rodbed Wood. The proposed development type is not listed as a possible high risk for this designation.

EPSL data

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. There are ten EPSLs within a 2km radius of site as detailed below:

EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence
EPSM2009-1439	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat and Natterer's bat.	1.4km east	Destruction of a resting place
2015-7300-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat	1.4km north	Destruction of a resting place
2015-7300-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat	1.4km north	Destruction of a resting place
2015-7300-EPS-MIT-2	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared	1.4km north	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2013-6116	Brown long-eared bat	1.9km north	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2012-4004	Soprano pipistrelle	1.5km northeast	Destruction of a resting place
2020-45673-EPS-MIT-1	Soprano pipistrelle	1.9km southeast	Destruction of breeding site

	2018-35667-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	1km east	Destruction of a resting place
	2018-35667-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle	1km east	Destruction of a resting place
	2015-7819-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle	1.8km north	Destruction of a resting place

Background

No previous ecological reports have been prepared for the site, to the authors knowledge.

Field survey results

Summary of Survey Findings	B1 is a mid-terrace two-storey dwelling with a slate tiled roof. There is a single storey flat roof extension to the rear. The main body of the roof has been converted into a living space with a rooflight window. This rooflight on the southern elevation of the main roof is proposed to be relocated to the northern aspect of the building and replaced with a new dormer. The single storey extension will be attached to the side of the existing single storey extension. A pitch roof porch is located on the northern aspect.

Feature	Materials	Condition/description	Suitability/access/evidence of bats
Walls	Brick and mortar (Partially rendered)	Good condition apart from one area on the western elevation where mortar is missing. The area of missing mortar is shallow and does not lead into an cavities (approx. 2cm deep). The second storey of B1 is rendered and in good condition, with no holes, cracks or gaps that that may provide suitable roosting habitat.	The features are considered to be too shallow for crevice dwelling bats to roost. No evidence of bat use found.

Roof	Slate	Slate tiles on the northern aspect are predominately in good condition with no damaged or missing tiles noted. Some tiles are slightly lifted but not enough to be considered suitable for crevice dwelling species. The gapping is approximately 1cm at widest point. On the southern aspect some of the tiles have begun to lift, but not enough to be considered suitable for crevice dwelling species. As with the tiles on the northern aspect, the gapping is approximately 1cm at widest point. The lead flashing within the channel, on the neighbouring dormers and connecting the extension to the main dwelling is in good condition with no gaps or access holes present. No mortar is present along the only verge on the southern aspect, but the tiles lay flush.	The features are not considered to be large enough for crevice dwelling bats to roost. No evidence of bat use found.
Eaves	Timber fascia	Tight fitting.	N/A

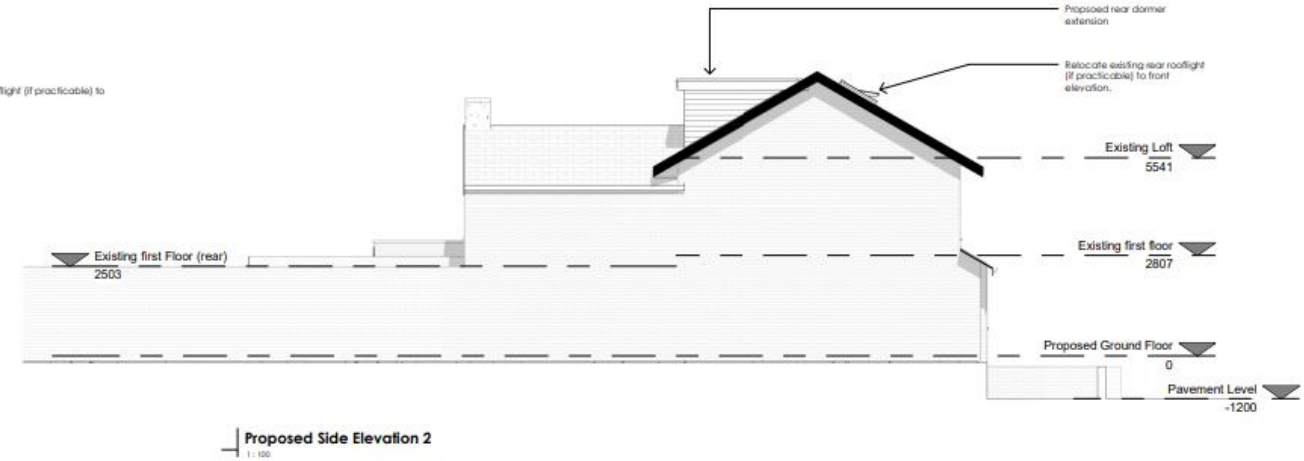
Window/doors frames and lintels	Timber	Tight fitting.	N/A
Internal voids	Habitable space Crawl space in the southern portion of the main roof.	The main body of the roof space has been converted into a habitable room and is therefore unsuitable for void dwelling species. The crawl space located on the southern portion of the main roof is approx. 1m H x 6m L x 1.8m W. The bitumen felt membrane in good condition, no access holes are present and no areas for roosting were noted. The area is used as storage, therefore presenting obstacles that inhibit flightpaths.	No access for void dwelling species. No bat evidence or access points noted.
Habitat value	In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J. (Ed) 2023) B1 is assessed to have **negligible** habitat value for roosting bats due to the absence of suitable roost features and the location of the site.		
Foreseen Impacts	Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within this building, as such there are not anticipated to be any impacts on roosting bats as a result of the alteration to this building.		
Recommendations	No further surveys required.		
Nesting Birds			
Summary of Survey Findings	No evidence of nesting birds was found on site during the surveys; however, birds could use the buildings, scattered trees and scrub for nesting.		

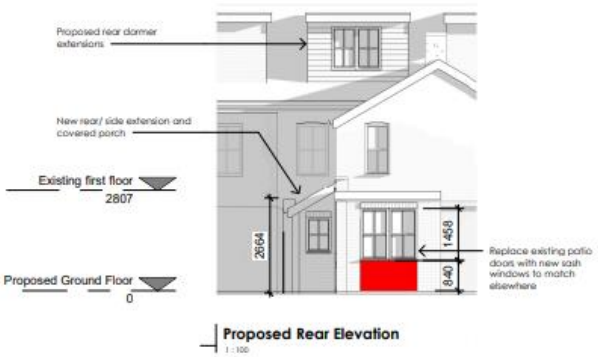
Foreseen Impacts	The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.
Recommendations	Any building removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection 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. 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. The installation of one bird box on trees around the site boundaries or on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings), Bark Boxes Blue Tit 25mm (trees), Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees), or a similar alternative brand.

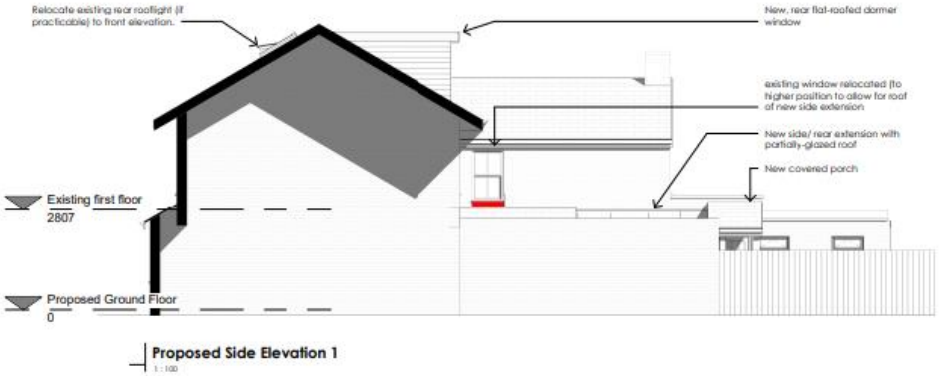
Appendix 1: PRA plan

Appendix 2: Location map

Appendix 3: Proposed plan







Appendix 4: Photos

	
Figure 1: Northern aspect	*Figure 2: Southern aspect*

Figure 3: The western face

Figure 4: Windows on the northern aspect.

	
Figure 5: Neighbouring dormer facing east. (Good condition tiles, hanging tiles and flat roof)	*Figure 6: Neighbouring dormer facing west. (Good condition tiles, hanging tiles and flat roof)*

Figure 7: Southern elevation including the flat roof extension

Figure 8: Mortar gaps on the western face.

Figure 9: Sealed lead flashing on the western face

Figure 10: Flush slate tiles on the southern verge.

Figure 11: Garden space

Figure 12: Interior of the habitable loft conversion.

Figure 13: The loft void situated in the southern portion of the building.

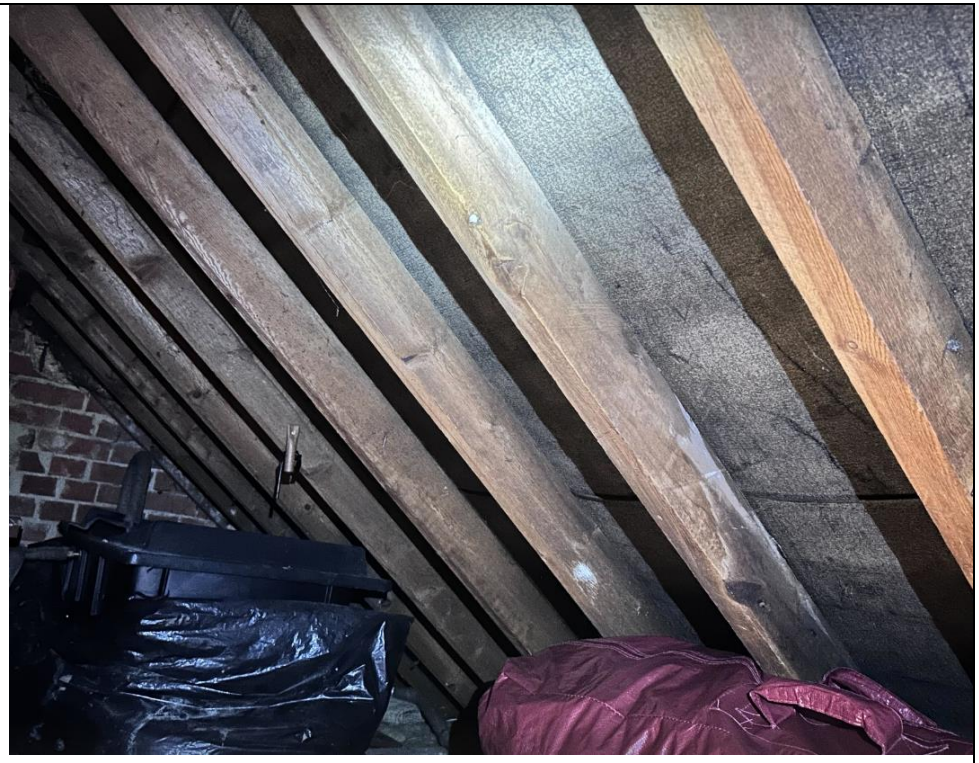


Figure 14: Intact roofing felt.

Limitations and Copyright

Limitations

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. To date, Arbtech has not been commissioned to obtain the data. Bat records can be acquired at a later date and will be necessary for any subsequent license application to Natural England.

Legal

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Version control			
Status	**Issue**	**Name**	**Date**
Draft	0.1	Rebecca Gane BSc, Graduate Ecologist	29/10/2024
Proof	0.2	Katie Whitfield BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist	04/11/2024
Draft	0.3	Rebecca Gane BSc, Graduate Ecologist	04/11/2024
Proof	0.4	Callum Taylor MSc, Senior Ecologist	07/11/2024
Final	1	Rebecca Gane BSc, Graduate Ecologist	08/11/2024