



Urban Tree Experts

BS5837 – Tree Surveys – Ecological Consulting

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL (DBW) AT GREYSTONES, 16 AGGISTERS LANE BARKHAM



**Prepared for:
Mr A Lee
Greystones
16 Aggisters Lane
Barkham
Wokingham RG41 4DN**

21 August 2025

Ref: SPH/NP/PEA-25/012.08



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Bramley House
Newnham Bridge
Tenbury Wells
Worcestershire
WR15 8NX
Tel: 0118 976 2902
Email: info@batsurveys-uk.com

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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 A Lee to conduct a preliminary ecological appraisal (daytime bat walkover [DBW]) of Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4DN. This is to support a forthcoming planning application to Wokingham Borough Council.

The site visits were carried out on Tuesday 12 August 2025 at 9am, during daylight hours. During the visit an external and internally 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 Licence (EPSL) for bats has been granted within 2km of the proposed development site. The habitat to the west of the site, with woodland, farmland and improved grassland provide diverse habitats suitable for a wide range of bat species and there is good ecological connectivity to these areas from the site via the garden network.

The DBW comprised a detailed search of the interior and exterior of the building 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 buildings suitability to support roosting bats was assessed and no potential roost features were identified during the preliminary inspection. When combined, the lack of features along with the data from the desk top study, results in the property being characterised as having negligible potential¹ to support roosting bats.

In line with best practice guidelines², no further survey effort is required.

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 A Lee to conduct a DBW of Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham RG41 4DN 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 the full details of which were unknown at the time of writing this report but are likely to include the construction of a first floor onto the bungalow.

1.4 Surveyor Background and Experience

The preliminary ecological appraisals for bats were 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 3 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 35 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 1.



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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

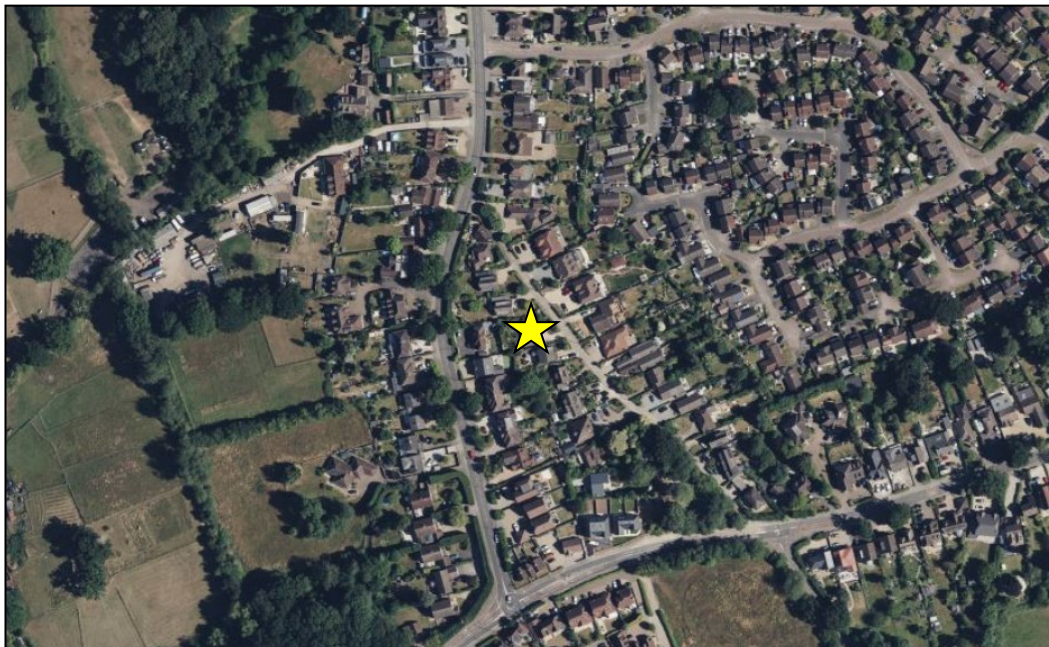
3.1 Site Location

The building is located at Grid Reference SU78346733, see Figure 1 below. An overview of the immediate area is shown on Figure 2, courtesy of Bing Maps.

Figure 1. Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham, highlighted.



Figure 2. Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham, overview of the immediate area.





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3.2 Site Description

The application site comprises a detached, brick-built bungalow with attached garage. The remainder of the site comprises a gravelled front driveway/parking area and, to the rear, the garden is mainly laid to lawn with patio area and mature trees/shrubs on the boundaries, see Figure 3 below. The site itself offers some foraging and commuting habitat for bats and there is some ecological connectivity to the wider landscape.

Figure 3. Rear garden. Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham. 12.08.25



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 property. 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 property is situated in the village of Barkham, on the outskirts of Wokingham, and is adjacent to properties and gardens of differing sizes and styles. To the north, east and south lie housing developments which do not provide good habitat for bats. To the west lies farmland and improved grassland with Coombes Wood which provide good habitat for bats and are within travelling distance for bats. Further afield lie a number of golf courses, further areas of woodland, wetland and farmland, all of which provide good conditions to support bats and have ecological connectivity to the site.



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Longmoor Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR) lies to the south of the site, on the edge of the 2km search area, although there is no ecological connectivity from the proposed development site to this designated area. A search of the Magic interactive website revealed that one current EPSLs for bats has been granted within 2km of the site, the details of which are provided in Table 1 below.

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

EPSL reference	Licence end date	Species on licence
2016-24999-EPS-MIT-1	02/2027	Common and soprano pipistrelle

4.2 Daylight Survey

The DBW of Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham, RG41 4DN was carried out by Nick Powell on Tuesday 12 August 2025 at 9am. The weather conditions for the survey were dry and bright with a temperature of 27 degrees. Equipment used included a high-powered torch, a digital camera on a telescopic pole, endoscope and a ladder.

During the DBW an internal and external 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 building – 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 building.
- 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 and there were no constraints to the survey.



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 bungalow with attached garage all of which are in a good condition externally. The pitched roof is covered in close fitting interlocking tiles, none of which are missing or broken, see Figure 4 below. The ridge tiles are all sealed with clips with no gaps in which roosting bats could exploit (see Figure 4 below) and there is no missing mortar from the verges, see Figure 5 on page 9. The lead flashing around the flue pipes is flush with no gaps and the uPVC soffits and fascias are all tightly fitted to the walls with no gaps in which roosting bats could exploit, see Figure 6 on page 9. On the southern elevation is the attached garage (see Figure 7 on page 10), the flat roof of which is cover in well-fitted bitumen felt with no rips or tears and it is firmly affixed to the main dwelling and offers no roosting opportunities (see Figure 8 on page 10), and the fascias are flat against the wall plate, see Figure 9 on page 10.

No bats or evidence of bats was recorded during the external inspection of the property and externally there were no visible roosting opportunities for bats or access into the building for roosting bats.

Figure 4. Example of sealed roof and ridge tiles. Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham. 12.08.25





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Figure 5. Example of sealed verges. Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham.
12.08.25



Figure 6. Example soffits and fascias. Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham.
12.08.25





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Figure 7. Garage.
Greystones, 16 Aggisters
Lane, Wokingham.
12.08.25

Figure 8. Bitumen
covering garage.
Greystones, 16
Aggisters Lane,
Wokingham. 12.08.25



Figure 9. Fascias on
garage. Greystones, 16
Aggisters Lane,
Wokingham. 12.08.25



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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).

The loft was accessed through a hatch via a loft ladder and is in a good condition internally. The loft is lit, partially boarded and insulated, see Figure 10 below. The roof tiles are insulated with bitumen felt, all of which is in a good condition, see Figure 12 on page 13. Internally, there is no loft space in the garage, as the ceiling is plastered and painted, see Figure 13 on page 13.

No bats or evidence of bats was recorded during the internal inspection of the property and internally there appeared to be no roosting opportunities for bats within the building.

Figure 10. Example loft space. Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham. 12.08.25





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Figure 11. Example bitumen felt lining to tiles. Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham. 12.08.25



Figure 12. Interior view of garage and roof. Greystones, 16 Aggisters Lane, Wokingham. 12.08.25





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6. Evaluation

The bat roost potential of the features within the site 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

The combined evidence from the desktop study and the internal and external inspection of the property provides a high level of confidence in support of the opinions set out in this report. There are no visible features externally on the building which could be utilised by roosting bats or in which bats could access the building to roost and internally there are no potential roosting opportunities for bats.

Informed by the results of the survey and the factors highlighted in Section 6, it is concluded that there is negligible potential for roosting bats within the property. Based on recommendations in the Bat Workers Manual and the Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines, no further survey effort is required.

7.2 Contingency Plan

In the unlikely event that bats are found during the proposed works, all work must stop, and advice sought from Urban Tree Experts or another licensed bat ecologist.



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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 bats may start roosting at the site.

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:

Telephone: 01189 762902
Email: info@batsurveys-uk.com

Urban Tree Experts
Bramley House
Newnham Bridge
Tenbury Wells
WR15 8NX



Simon Holmes MSc. CEnv.
Consultant, Urban Tree Experts
Natural England Licence CLS-CLS-17637, CLS-CLS-17638