



Urban Tree Experts

BS5837 – Tree Surveys – Ecological Consulting

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL (DBW) AT 8 BRAYBROOKE GARDENS WARGRAVE



**Prepared for:
Mr T McMahon
8 Braybrooke Gardens
Wargrave
Wokingham
RG10 8DW**

2 October 2025

Ref: SPH/NP/PEA-25/16.09



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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 T McMahon to conduct a preliminary ecological appraisal (daytime bat walkover [DBW]), of 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave, Wokingham, RG10 8DW. This is to support a forthcoming planning application to Wokingham Borough Council.

The site visit was carried out on Tuesday 16 September 2025 at 10am, during daylight hours. An external and internal 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 no statutory designated sites are located within, and no current European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) for bats have been granted within 2km of the proposed development site. The landform to the north, east and west of the site is made up of urban development and infrastructure systems and has a low potential to support foraging bats however to the south there is direct ecological connectivity to a graveyard and an area of woodland that may provide alternative foraging opportunities for bats.

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 building's suitability to support roosting bats was assessed and no potential roost features were identified on the sections of the property to be affected by the proposed works during the preliminary inspection. When combined, the lack of features, along with the data from the desk top study results in the sections of the property to be affected by the proposed works being characterised as having negligible potential¹ to support roosting bats.

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

Should the proposed plans change and the single storey side extension be affected then further survey effort will be 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 T McMahon to conduct a DBW of 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave, Wokingham, RG10 8DW 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 for that will seek to construct a two-storey side extension and replace the timber cladding on the front elevation, see plans at Appendix 1.

1.4 Surveyor Background and Experience

The preliminary ecological appraisal for bats was undertaken by Nick Powell and the report 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 (SCI-64844). 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 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

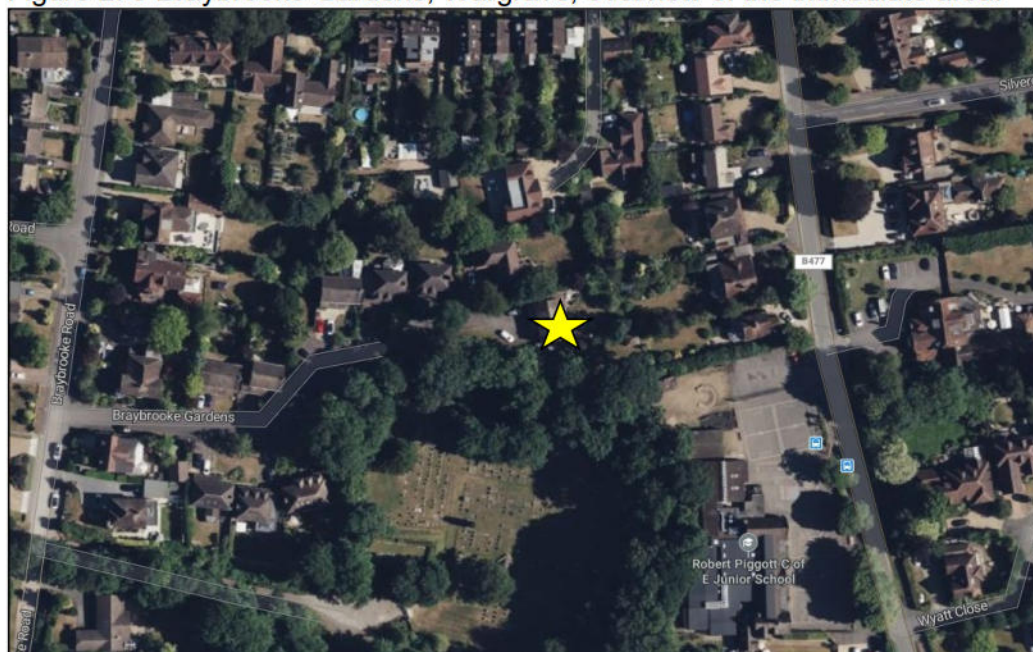
3.1 Site Location

The building is located at Grid Reference SU78867839, see Figure 1 below. An overview of the immediate area is shown on Figure 2, courtesy of Bing maps.

Figure 1. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave, highlighted.



Figure 2. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave, overview of the immediate area.





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3.2 Site Description

The application site comprises a detached, brick-built 2 storey property. The remainder of the site comprises a shared driveway/parking area with lawn and mature trees, see cover photograph. The rear garden is mainly laid to lawn with mature trees/shrubs on the boundaries, see Figure 3 below. The site itself offers some foraging and commuting habitat for bats and there is direct ecological connectivity to the wider landscape.

Figure 3. Rear garden. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25



4. Survey Methodology

4.1 Pre-Survey Data Search

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 Wargrave, a large village in Berkshire, with properties and gardens of differing sizes and styles to the north, east and west. To the south and with direct connectivity to the back garden lies Wargrave cemetery which connects directly to the public open space of Wargrave Chalk Pit and an area of woodland, further south the landform consists of agricultural fields covered in solar panels which do not provide suitable foraging habitat for bats.

No statutory designated sites lie within 2km of the proposed development site. A search of the Magic interactive website revealed no current and eight historical EPSLs for bats have been granted within 2km of the site.



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4.2 Daylight Survey

The DBW of 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave, Wokingham, RG10 8DW was carried out by Nick Powell on Tuesday 16 September 2025 at 10am. The weather conditions for the survey were dry and bright with a temperature of 16 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. There was no access to the roof void above the single storey side extension however this section of the building is not being affected by the proposed works.

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 building 2 storey building that is in a good condition externally. The pitched roof is covered in interlocking tiles, all of which are well fitted with no missing or broken tiles, see Figure 4 on page 8. The ridge tiles and verges are all in good condition with no gaps which roosting bats could exploit, see Figure 5 on page 8. The lead flashing around the chimney stack and flues is flush with no gaps, see Figure 6 on page 9. There is a section of tightly fitted wooden cladding on the front and side (southern) elevation, with no gaps or warping and offers no roosting potential for crevice dwelling bat species, see Figure 7 on page 9.



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The tiles covering the front porch are all tightly fitted with no gaps, as are the verges and lead flashing affixing it to the main dwelling, see Figure 8 on page 10. Historically a two-storey side (northern) elevation extension with attached single storey side and rear extension was added, see Figure 9 on page 10. The roof and ridge tiles on this single storey element are all tightly fitted aside from a lifted tile by a flue on the rear elevation (see Figure 10 on page 11), and this could afford roosting opportunities or access for crevice dwelling bat species however, this section of the property is not being affected by the proposed works. The soffits and fascias around the whole property are all tightly fitted to the wall plate with splits or gaps that could afford roosting potential, see Figure 11 on page 11.

No bats or evidence of bats was recorded during the external inspection of the parts of the property to be affected by the proposed works.



Figure 4.
Example roof
and ridge tiles.
8 Braybrooke
Gardens,
Wargrave.
16.09.25

Figure 5. Example of sealed verges. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25





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Figure 6. Example sealed lead flashing around the chimney stack. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25



Figure 7. Example of tightly fitted wooden cladding. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25





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Figure 8. Example sealed front porch tiles. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25



Figure 9. Rear view of property and historical extensions. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25





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Figure 10. Example of raised roof tile on rear single storey extension. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25



Figure 11. Example of sealed soffit and fascias. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25





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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).

There are 2 loft spaces within the property, both of which were accessed via a ladder and both are in a good condition internally. The main loft space was lit, partially boarded and insulated (see Figure 12 below) and the roof tiles are lined with bitumen felt, all of which that could be seen was in a good condition with no rips or tears. The secondary loft space was also lit, partially boarded and the roof tiles were lined with bitumen felt off of which appeared to be in a good condition with no rips or tears, see Figure 13 on page 13.

There is no access to the void in the single storey extension, the ceiling being boarded, plastered and painted however this section of the property is not being affected by the proposed works, see Figure 14 on page 13.

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

Figure 12. Example main loft space and bitumen lining to tiles. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25





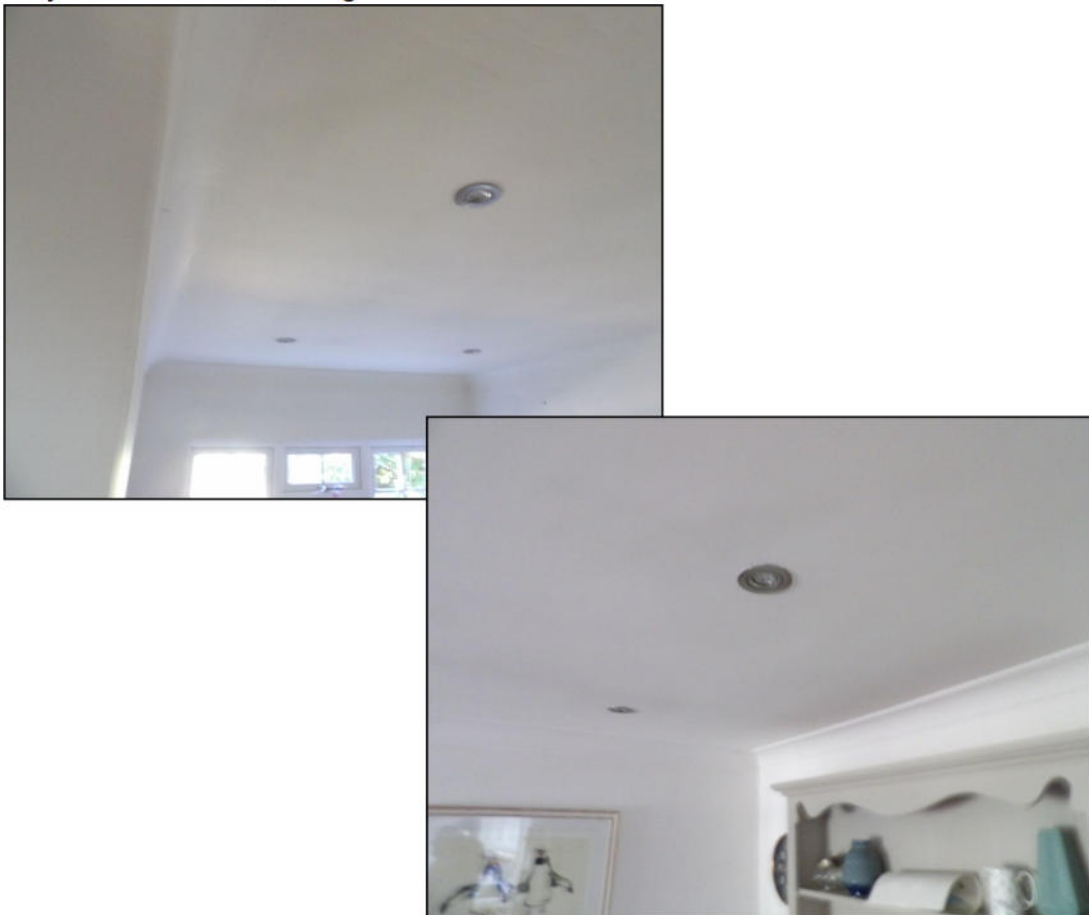
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Figure 13. Secondary loft space. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25



Figure 14. Boarded, plastered and painted ceiling of single storey extension. 8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave. 16.09.25





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 sections of the property to be affected by the proposed works provides a high level of confidence in support of the opinions set out in this report. There are no visible features externally on the sections of the building to be affected by the works which could be utilised by roosting bats or in which bats could access the buildings 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 section of the property to be affected by the proposed works. Based on recommendations in the Bat Workers Manual and the Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines, no further survey effort is required.

Should the proposed plans change and the single storey side extension were to be affected then further survey effort will be required on this roof.



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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.

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

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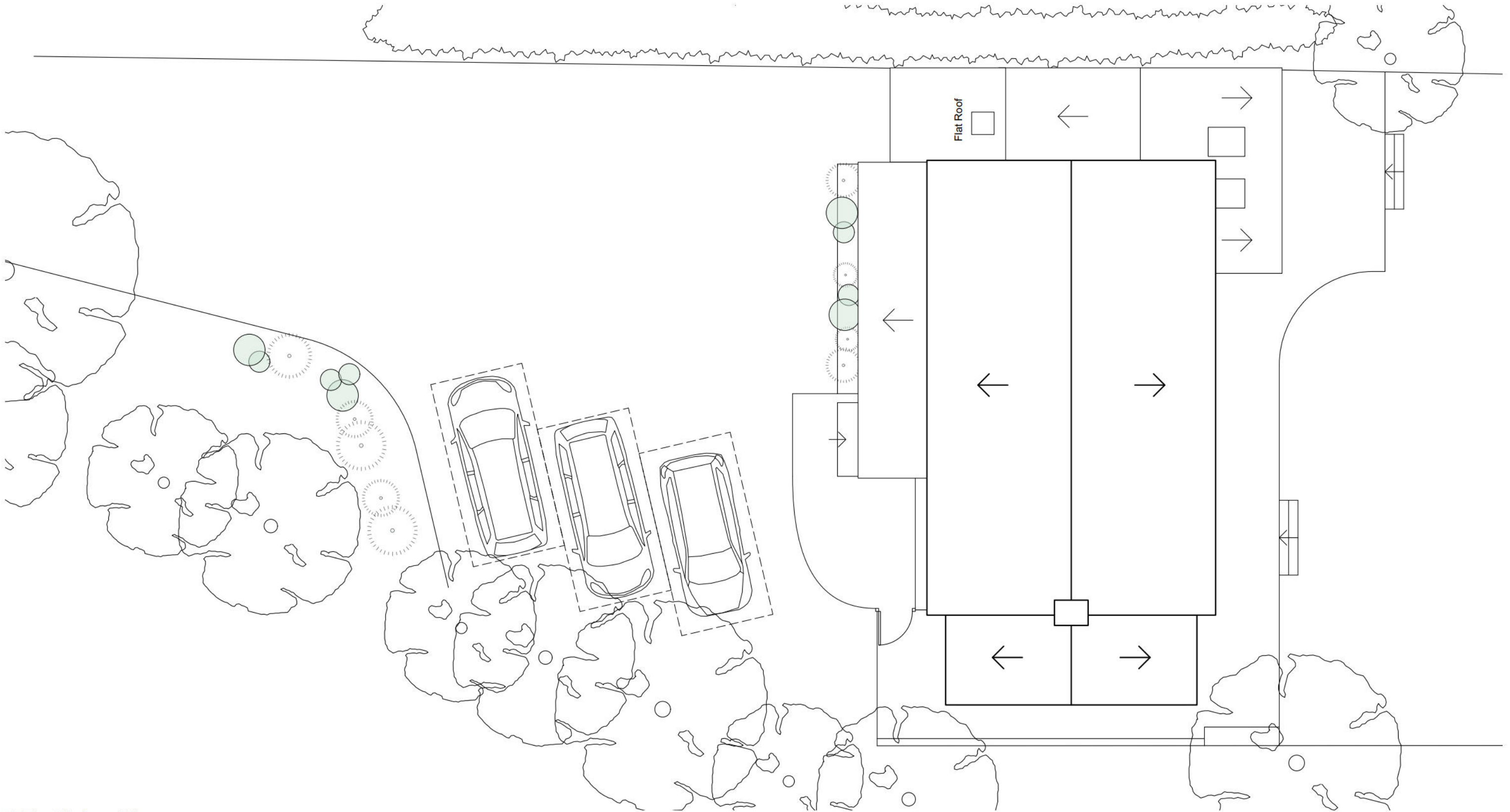

Simon Holmes MSc. CEnv.
Consultant, Urban Tree Experts
Natural England Licence CLS-CLS-17637, CLS-CLS-17638



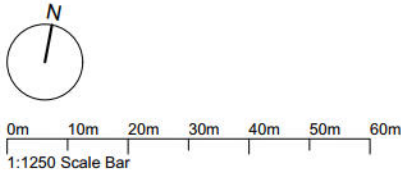
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APPENDIX 1



Existing Site Layout Plan



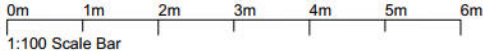
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		SCALE	1:100 @ A3	
CLIENT	Mr & Mrs MaMahon	DRAWN	LN	
DRAWING	Proposed Site Plan	DRW NO.	BBG-D003-P1	
Copyright Lucy Newman Architect 2025 Site boundary shown as described by client. Site surroundings based upon the OS map and site survey.		Proposals are subject to all Statutory Approvals and Building Control requirements. To be read in conjunction with all other relevant documents produced by Lucy Newman Architect		Lucy Newman BA (Hons), MArch, DipArch, ARB, RIBA 13 Winchcombe Road, Twyford, Reading RG10 0AS lucynewmanarchitect@gmail.com 07970 429739



Existing Front (West) Elevation



Existing Rear (East) Elevation



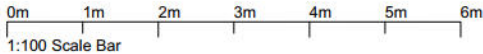
PROJECT	8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave	DATE	Jul 2025	REVISION 29.07.25 Issued for Comment P1
		SCALE	1:100 @ A3	
		DRAWN	LN	
CLIENT	Mr & Mrs MaMahon			
DRAWING	Proposed Elevations		DRW NO.	BBG-D200-P1
Copyright Lucy Newman Architect 2025		Proposals are subject to all Statutory Approvals and Building Control requirements.		Lucy Newman BA (Hons), MArch, DipArch, ARB, RIBA 13 Winchcombe Road, Twyford, Reading RG10 0AS lucynewmanarchitect@gmail.com 07970 429739
Site boundary shown as described by client. Site surroundings based upon the OS map and site survey.		To be read in conjunction with all other relevant documents produced by Lucy Newman Architect		



Existing Front (West) Elevation



Existing Rear (East) Elevation



PROJECT	8 Braybrooke Gardens, Wargrave	DATE	Jul 2025	REVISION 29.07.25 Issued for Comment P1
		SCALE	1:100 @ A3	
		DRAWN	LN	
CLIENT	Mr & Mrs MaMahon			
DRAWING	Existing Elevations	DRW NO. BBG-S200-P1		
Copyright Lucy Newman Architect 2025		Proposals are subject to all Statutory Approvals and Building Control requirements.		
Site boundary shown as described by client. Site surroundings based upon the OS map and site survey.		To be read in conjunction with all other relevant documents produced by Lucy Newman Architect		



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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.