

**21 Oatlands Road,
Shinfield,
Reading
RG2 9DW**

**PHASE 1 BAT SURVEY
(Provisional roost assessment)**

December 2024



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Prepared by

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SUMMARY

This report constitutes a site survey carried out on the 14th December 2024 and further assessment of the potential impacts arising from the proposed re-development of 21 Oatlands Road, Shinfield, RG2 9DW (GR:SU735680).

There was no sign of any activity in the loft. However, the clay tiled roof has a few potential openings around the skylights, and the connected garage ridge tiles have potential gaps: Therefore, the property has low potential, and a phase 2 emergence survey is recommended.

INTRODUCTION

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Site Setting and Description

The property is a semi-detached house dating to 1950s situated to the west of Oatlands Road in a semi-rural setting in Shinfield. It is flanked by other detached and semi-detached dwellings with small mature gardens. There is an extensive area of open farmland 35m to the east (See figure 1). There is a block of woodland included on the priority habitats inventory 730m to the east. The area supports habitats suitable for common bat species.

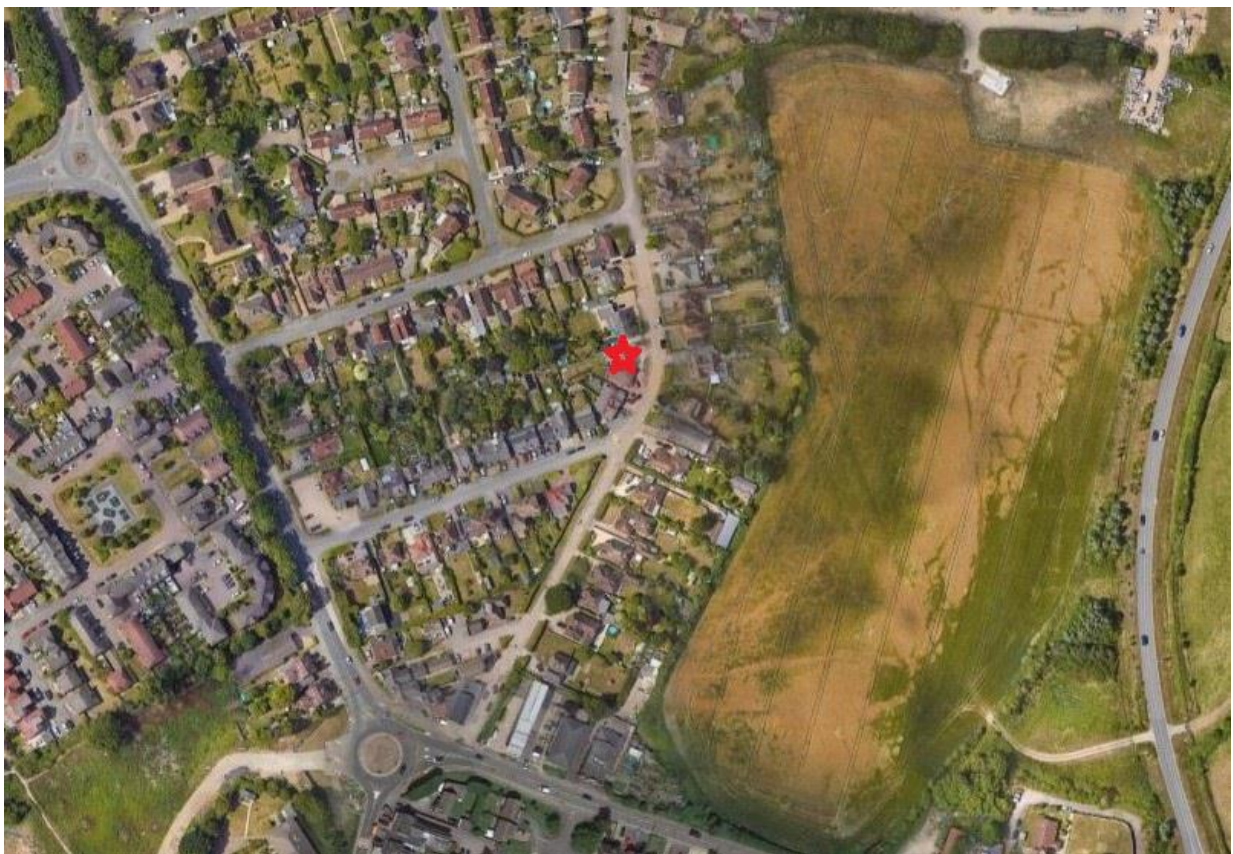


Figure 1. Location of 21 Oatlands Road (Red star). *Courtesy of Googlemaps*

METHODS

Datasearch

Background Data Search

According to the DEFRA MagicMap website <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> the nearest EPS bat licence issued to the plot is for a house 620m to the west issued in 2016 covering soprano pipistrelles and common pipistrelles.

Phase 1 Bat Survey Methods

The Phase 1 bat survey was carried out on 14th December 2024 and comprised of a walkover of the site to record evidence of any protected bat species.

Details of the survey methods are given below;-

The property was investigated externally to identify potential bat access/egress locations and roosting areas such as gaps or holes in roof tiles, fascias and soffits and to record direct evidence of bat presence such as droppings and urine staining. This was followed by a detailed investigation of all accessible internal spaces to record evidence of bat roosting activity such as droppings, feeding remains, live animals, corpses, urine staining and fur staining. The building was assessed as to its suitability for supporting roosting bats. The survey conformed to current Bat Conservation Trust guidelines (Collins, 2023) *Bat surveys for professional ecologists: Good practice guidelines* 4th edition).

The details of the assessment criteria used to determine the ecological value of on-site attributes is outlined below. During the Phase 1 survey the assessment criteria are based on the potential for the site to support the species considered. However, in many cases Phase 2 surveys will be required to confirm presence /absence of any bat species and hence the importance of a population at the site, therefore the assessment of value should be considered a provisional.

Where possible, a provisional assessment of potential will be made although this may well require Phase 2 surveys to confirm status.

High Potential- High potential buildings are those that have features highly suitable for use by roosting bats, including gaps around soffits, hanging tiles, extensive roof spaces etc. High potential buildings are often, but not always, buildings of more historic construction. Further Phase 2 surveys will be required to confirm the presence/absence of bats.

Moderate Potential- buildings have a moderate number of features that may be utilised by bats for roosting, these may include loose fascias, roof spaces etc. Further Phase 2 surveys are likely to be required to confirm the presence/absence of bats.

Low Potential- Low potential buildings are those that provide limited bat roosting potential although some features that may be utilised by bats may be present. Further Phase 2 surveys are likely to be required to confirm the presence/absence of bats.

No/Negligible Potential – These are buildings that are extremely unlikely to support roosting bats due to the absence of suitable features. Further Phase 2 surveys are unlikely to be required for buildings with negligible potential.

Phase 1 Survey Equipment

During the Phase 1 survey the surveyor was equipped with 10x42 binoculars and a high-powered 1 million candlepower Clulite torch.

RESULTS

Phase 1 Bat Survey Results

Building Assessment

The bungalow has rendered brick walls with a hipped, pitched roof faced with clay tiles. There are a few potential openings around the skylights (See figures 2 & 5). However, the dormer off the west face and the flat roofed south facing dormer have hang tile faced sides with potential openings (See figures 4 & 6).

There is an attached single storey garage of the north end which has flat felted roof with a low pitched section at the front faced with clay tiles. There are possible gaps in the ridge tiles which could open to an inaccessible void within (see figure 4).

The roof space is largely incorporated into a second storey, illuminated by skylights with a small closed off loft which is accessed via hatch in an upstairs room. The roof is lined with felting which is in very good order with no external daylight visible from within (see figure 6) and there was no sign of any bat activity within.



Figure 2. West elevations looking east: Red arrows indicate potential openings for crevice roosting bats.



Figure 3. East elevations looking west: Red arrows indicate potential openings for crevice roosting bats.



Figure 4. East elevations of garage looking west: Red arrows indicate potential openings for crevice roosting bats.



Figure 5. Garage interior looking northeast



Figure 6. Loft looking north

EVALUATION, IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There was no sign of any activity in the loft. However, the clay tiled roof has a few potential openings around the skylights, and the connected garage ridge tiles have potential gaps: Therefore, the property has low potential, and a phase 2 emergence survey is recommended.

A dusk emergence survey is recommended to identify whether bats are utilising the property. These can be carried out in suitable weather between May and the end of September.

This would entail surrounding the structure with surveyors such that all potential entrance/exit points are covered. The structure is then watched from either 15 minutes before sunset to 2 hours after or 2 hours before dawn to sunrise.

All emerging or re-entering bats are recorded along with their flight path, their species and the time of flight.

An emergence survey would identify:

- Whether bats are present in a structure, the species and number involved
- Entrance and exit points for the roost
- The type of roost
- Actions needed to be taken to ensure legal compliance

REFERENCES

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

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Google Maps: www.maps.google.co.uk

Magic Interactive Map: www.magic.gov.uk