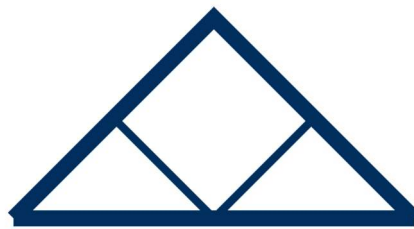


Coppid Hill House, Barkham Road, RG41 4TG

Ref: 28-94-25

Client: Harminder Bal



Bluestone
Surveys

SUMMARY

A preliminary daytime bat roost assessment was conducted on 21st July 2025 in relation to proposed works at Coppid Hill House, including a single-storey rear extension, a first-floor balcony, and alterations to rear dormers. As these works have the potential to impact features commonly used by bats, a full internal and external inspection was carried out.

The survey involved a visual assessment of the building's structure, including checks for lifted roof tiles, gaps in soffits, and broken or displaced tiles. The loft void was accessed via a built-in ladder, and the eaves were inspected from ground level due to their low height.

All inspected areas were found to be in good condition with no evidence of bat presence or roosting activity. The roof remains intact, and no construction work has commenced.

The weather during the inspection was dry with a temperature of 19°C.

CONTENTS

Summary	1
Contents	2
1. Introduction	3
2. Site Context	3
3. Survey Methodology	4
4. Results	7
5. Conclusion And Recommendations	16
6. References	18
Appendix 1: Location Plan	19
Appendix 2: Site Layout	20

1.INTRODUCTION

Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

Site: Coppid Hill House, Barkham Road, Barkham, RG41 4TG

Client: Arcadia-Designs Group

Surveyor: Bluestone Surveys

Survey Date: 21st July 2025 At 11am

Weather Conditions: Dry, 19°C

Bluestone Surveys were commissioned by Arcadia-Designs Group to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Coppid Hill House, located on Barkham Road in the parish of Barkham, near Wokingham, Berkshire (postcode RG41 4TG). The assessment was required in support of a proposed single-storey rear extension, first-floor balcony, and modifications to existing rear dormers, which have the potential to impact features commonly used by bats for roosting.

2. SITE CONTEXT

Coppid Hill House occupies an elevated position, offering expansive views across the surrounding countryside. The property is situated within a predominantly rural setting characterised by a mosaic of open farmland, ancient woodland, and mature hedgerows. The nearby woodland area, **The Coombes**, is designated as a **Wildlife Heritage Site** and an **Area of Landscape Importance**, highlighting the area's ecological value.

The wider region supports a variety of wildlife including roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), and numerous bird species, contributing to the site's tranquil and ecologically rich character. The village of Barkham is historically significant, with Saxon origins and a landscape dotted with mature trees, hedgerows, and large residential plots that support biodiversity.

Despite its countryside character, Coppid Hill House benefits from good accessibility, being approximately 1.7 miles from Wokingham town centre and its associated amenities and transport links, including Wokingham railway station.

3. Survey Methodology

The survey followed industry best practice guidelines, including those set out by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT, 2016). The PRA comprised a daytime inspection of both the interior and exterior of the building to assess its suitability for supporting roosting bats.

To thoroughly assess bat activity at a particular site, the Bat Conservation Trust (2023) recommends using information gathered from a desk study of known bat records and a daytime site walkover to guide the type and extent of any future survey work, which may include nocturnal surveys.

A daytime (diurnal) walkover survey enables the identification of indicators of bat presence, such as droppings, scratch marks, feeding remnants, carcasses, or even bats currently occupying the site. When necessary, nighttime (nocturnal) surveys are conducted to ascertain the number and species of bats present. These nocturnal assessments are particularly useful in determining bat presence or absence in situations where signs of activity are unclear or lacking, yet the potential for suitable roosting habitats is rated as medium to high. The following table outlines the categories used to evaluate the suitability of structures for bat roosting.

Category	Level of Roosting Habitat	Survey Requirements
Negligible	No features of roosting bats	No Further Surveys required
Low	A building that includes one or more potential roosting features which may occasionally be used by solitary bats opportunistically, but these features lack the necessary size, shelter, environmental conditions, or surrounding habitat to support larger or regularly occupied roosts.	One further survey required (between May to August).
medium	A structure featuring one or more potential roosting sites that might be used by individual bats, but lacks the spatial, environmental, or habitat qualities needed to support a significant roost.	Two further surveys required (between May and September).
High	A structure featuring one or more potential roosting features that offer sufficient size, shelter, protection, and supportive surrounding habitat to be used by bats—but which is unlikely to host a roost of high conservation importance	Three further surveys required (between May and September).
Confirmed	Verified evidence of bats, such as the presence of droppings (guano), documented past sightings at the site, or actual individuals observed	Three further surveys required (between May and September).

Table 1: Structure suitability categories

Roost preferences differ by bat species:

Pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus* spp.) typically use narrow cracks and small cavities on building exteriors—such as behind soffits, fascia boards, or loose ridge tiles—for roosting. In larger, older barns they may also exploit similar tight niches internally. These crevices may also occur in cavity walls or fallen-out mortar joints, offering entry points as small as 1.5 × 2 cm

Larger bat species—such as brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), *Myotis* spp. (e.g. Natterer's, whiskered, Brandt's), and lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*)—tend to roost in roof voids. They often hang singly or in small clusters from ridge boards or timbers, particularly where structural elements meet gable walls or chimneys. These bats prefer older, timber-framed buildings and squeeze into concealed crevices, making them hard to detect during standard inspections.

Survey timing and method:

- Daytime walkover inspections (PRA) can be performed year-round, but dusk emergence surveys—now regarded as the standard approach—should be carried out only when bats are out of hibernation and using summer roosts. The universally accepted survey period in the UK is **May to September**, with **May to August** considered optimal. September surveys are accepted under some conditions; October is generally avoided in colder regions
- Each nocturnal survey must begin no earlier than **10 °C at dusk**
- Dusk emergence surveys should start **15 minutes before sunset** and continue for at least **1.5 hours afterward**
- **Dawn re-entry surveys** are no longer routinely required, owing to the risk of missing early returning bats—the focus is now on dusk-only surveys unless site-specific justification is provided

Survey effort, frequency & suitability-linked requirements:

- Nocturnal surveys should be spaced a minimum of **three weeks apart**, replacing the older two-week interval guideline.
- The number of required surveys depends on suitability classification determined in the PRA:
 - **Low suitability:** one survey in the optimal May–August period.
 - **Moderate suitability:** at least two surveys, one of which must fall within May–August; surveys may extend up to September

- **High suitability** or confirmed roost: **three surveys**, with at least two during May–August
- Typically, at least **two surveyors** should be present at small sites (< 5 ha or simple structures); larger or complex sites may require additional personnel

On 21 July 2025, Joshua White BSc (Hons), MSc, conducted a detailed inspection of the house—inside and out—covering walls, roof, eaves, gables, windows, door frames, and inaccessible areas using 8×32 binoculars and a high-powered torch.

The results of the survey are detailed in Section 4.

4. Results

3.1 Desk Study

Given the limited scale of the proposed works and in accordance with CIEEM's (2016) guidelines on accessing and using biodiversity data, it was determined that a full background data search was not necessary.

In this case, MAGIC (Defra, 2021) shows that eight mitigation licences for bats under the European Protected Species regime are located within 2 km of the site. The specifics of these licences are presented in Table 2 below

License No.	Level of Roosting Habitat	Date	Location And Direction from Site
2014-2425-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>) and brown long-eared bat	2014-2015	0.3km W
2014-964-EPS-MIT	Brown long-eared bat	2014	0.3km W
2015-11806-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	2015-2017	1.4km NE
2016-22176-EPS-MIT	Brown long-eared bat	2016-2021	1.6km NE
2017-31502-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	2017-2023	0.5km W
EPSM2009-1496	Noctule (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)	2010-2011	2km NE
EPSM2013-6034	Common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bat	2013-2014	0.8km SW

Table 2: European Protected Species licenses for bats within 2Km

3.2 Location

Coppid Hill House is situated on Barkham Road in the village of Barkham, about 2 miles southwest of Wokingham town centre. It sits on the north side of the village within postcode RG41 4TG in the Wokingham postal district of the RG area.

The Ordnance Survey grid reference for Coppid Hill House is SU 7867 (Appendix 1)

Coppid Hill House is conveniently situated within easy access of the A329 and M4 motorways .

3.3 Site Description

The survey site comprises a detached residential property (CHH) (Photographs 1-4). To the North of CHH is a Tiled driveway and to the South is a vegetated garden on two levels with tiled patio to the rear of the existing conservatory including outdoor swimming Pool (Photographs 5 and 6).



Photograph 1: North Elevation of CHH



Photograph 2: North Elevation of CHH



Photograph 3: South Elevation of CHH



Photograph 4: East Elevation of CHH



Photograph 5: Rear South Garden view
from CHH



Photograph 6: South garden of CHH

The site layout, shown in the aerial photograph in Appendix 2, reveals its boundaries:

- Residential properties lie to the west and north.
- To the south, the site borders open green space and woodland.

The vegetated gardens of the surrounding homes support moderate foraging activity and may act as commuting corridors, linking into richer foraging habitats across the wider landscape.

3.4 Building Survey

The daytime inspection was carried out:

Site: Coppid Hill House, Barkham Road, Barkham, RG41 4TG

Client: Arcadia-Designs Group

Surveyor: Bluestone Surveys

Survey Date: 21st July 2025 At 11am

Weather Conditions: Dry, 19°C

Coppid Hill House is a detached, brick-built dormer bungalow standing approximately eight metres tall. It features a hipped clay-tiled roof and includes a triple integral garage on the eastern side, with a pitched dormer roof above. The rear of the property faces south, and is complemented by a glass conservatory and three rear dormers.

Above the first floor lies a small loft void, framed in timber and reaching about two metres in height at its apex (Photos 7 - 11). This space is lined with timber sarking and insulation. A small boarded area allowed inspection along the roof's central ridge. Several extract ducts and light tunnels penetrate the roof, but no natural light penetration is observed internally (Photo 9). No draughts or light ingress were noted, and no evidence of bat activity was found.

Roof tiles are in excellent condition, with well-sealed soffits, and no missing or lifted tiles on any elevation (Photo 12-15). The lead flashing adjacent to the chimney on the eastern elevation is intact with no gaps or missing tiles (Photo 16). The western roof slope was observed from the rear garden using binoculars due to limited visibility—no potential roost features were identified.

Report Break down

- **Building description:** Detached, brick-built dormer bungalow (approx. 8 m tall) with a hipped clay-tiled roof.
- **Garage addition:** A triple integral garage attached to the eastern elevation, topped by a pitched dormer roof.
- **Rear elevation:** South-facing façade includes a glass conservatory and three rear-facing dormers.

Loft and Roof Void Inspection

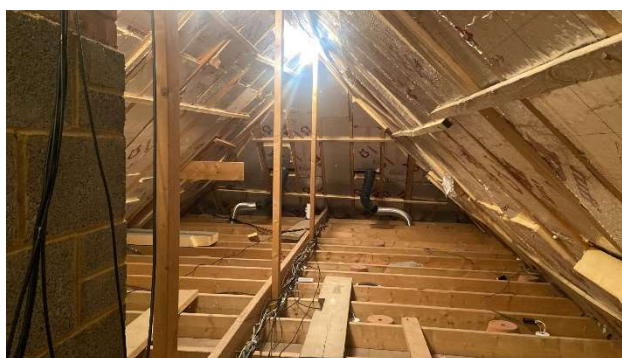
- **Loft void characteristics:** Timber-framed void above the first floor, with an apex height of approximately 2 m (Photos 7, 8, 9, 10 And 11). Internally lined with timber sarking and insulation.
- **Boarding and access:** A small boarded area allowed limited internal inspection along the roof's ridge line.
- **Roof penetrations:** Multiple extract ducts and light tunnels visible. No natural light entry, draughts, or light ingress noted (Photo 9).
- **Bat evidence:** No signs of bat activity observed in the loft (Photos 10).

Roof Condition

- **Tiles and soffits:** All roof tiles are in excellent condition with well-sealed soffits; no missing or lifted tiles on any elevation (Photo 12-15).
- **Flashing integrity:** The lead flashing adjacent to the eastern chimney is complete with no gaps or missing tiles (Photo 16).
- **Western slope inspection:** Viewed with binoculars from the rear garden due to poor accessibility—no potential bat roost features identified.



Photograph 7: Loft Void of CHH



Photograph 8: Loft Void of CHH



Photograph 9: Loft Void penetrations of CHH



Photograph 10: Loft Void penetrations of CHH



Photograph 11: Loft Void of CHH



Photograph 12: External conditions South Facing of CHH



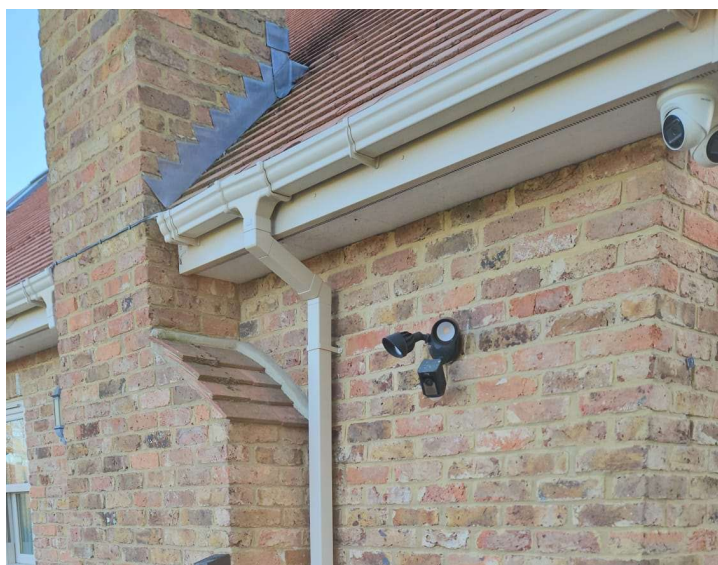
Photograph 13: External Eaves West Facing of CHH



Photograph 14: External Eaves East Facing of CHH



Photograph 15: External Eaves and roof tiles East Facing of CHH



Photograph 16: External Eaves and chimney flashing East Facing of CHH

Given there was no evidence of bats within the loft void—no droppings, staining, or entry points detected—and no visible cracks or gaps in the roof tiles, it is deemed highly unlikely that bats are entering the void to roost.

Although the dormers on the north and south elevations might appear as potential roost features, they lie below the loft void, are associated with well-sealed bedrooms, and are planned to remain untouched under the proposed changes—hence they are not expected to be impacted.

No potential roost features were identified on the eastern elevation or within the garage, nor on the southern conservatory, which is slated for removal.

This assessment aligns with established standards in the BCT/Biodiversity Code of Practice (Good Practice Guidelines), which categorize roof voids and structural sealing as low potential for bats when there is no visible access or bat evidence.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The areas of Coppid Hill House that will be affected by the proposals have been assessed as offering *negligible suitability* for bat roosting. This conclusion is based on the absence of bat evidence and roost features within the loft void, which is connected to the rear dormer modifications.

While flashing and extract ducts represent potential roost structures of moderate suitability, their excellent condition—alongside the intact roof tiles and well-sealed assemblies—means none have been, or will be, disturbed by the proposed works.

No potential roost features were observed on the eastern elevation, in the garage, or on the southern conservatory (which is planned for demolition).

Should the design change to involve works affecting the roof void, then two further bat surveys would be required in accordance with BCT Survey Guidelines: one dusk emergence and one dawn re-entry survey between May and September

Timing & Work Restrictions

- Construction should be restricted to daylight hours only, with no external illumination at night, to avoid disturbance to commuting or foraging bats.
- Surrounding habitats do support moderate foraging opportunities for bats, via hedgerows and nearby woodland.

Bat Seasonality & Behaviour

- Bat roosting is seasonal:
 - Females typically form maternity colonies in spring/early summer (May–June), then vacate for adjacent trees or woodland in July–August once young are independent. Over winter, they hibernate in cooler, sheltered locations, before returning in spring.
 - Males tend to roost singly, visiting multiple roost sites through the summer before settling in a chosen winter refuge from mid-late October onward.
- Bats favour sun-warmed areas in summer and often select south- or west-facing roosts in buildings.

Species Roosting Preferences

- Pipistrelle bats (the smallest and most common) prefer tight external crevices—such as behind hanging tiles or soffits, under bargeboarding, between roof felt and tiles, or within cavity walls. These are notoriously difficult to detect and often require high-skill inspection

- Brown long-eared bats typically roost within loft voids and roof timbers, especially near ridge boards and chimneys. They favour quiet, warm interior spaces and are sometimes found as small colonies in lofts of older buildings

Summary Table

Aspect	Finding
Roost suitability	Negligible across affected areas
Evidence of bats	None found in loft, dormers, garage or conservatory
Roost feature condition	Excellent flashing/tiles; no impacted features
Survey requirement	Only if roof void works are proposed—then two surveys May–Sept
Working restrictions	Daytime only; no night lighting
Foraging habitat	Moderate—local garden, woodland, hedgerows present
Species notes	Pipistrelles – external cracks; Brown long-eared – lofts and timber

6. References

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

English Nature. (2004). *Bat mitigation guidelines*. English Nature. Peterborough.

MAGIC. *Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside*.

Mitchell-Jones A. J. & McLeish. (2004). *Bat Workers' Manual*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Stebbins R.E. (1986). *Which bat is it?* The Mammal Society and The Vincent Wildlife Trust, London.

The Vincent Wildlife Trust. (2003). *The Bats of Britain and Ireland*. The Vincent Wildlife Trust, Ledbury.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Location Plan

Appendix 2: Site Layout

APPENDIX 1: Location Plan



Coppid Hill House, Barkham Road, RG41 4TG

APPENDIX 2: Site Layout



Coppid Hill House, Barkham Road, RG41 4TG