

**1 Chapel Lane,
Riseley,
RG7 1QU**

**PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL
APPRAISAL**

August 2026

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Prepared by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consultant Chartered Ecologist Dr.Jonty Denton FRES FLS MCIEEM CEcol (Bat license: 2025-82187-CL17-BAT) was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of 1 Chapel Lane, Riseley, RG7 1QU. (NGR:SU836467).

The survey area was systematically walked and surveyed according to Phase 1 Habitat Survey criteria during daylight hours by Dr.Jonty Denton on the 18th August 2026. Phase 1 Habitat Survey is a standardised system for classifying and mapping semi-natural vegetation and wildlife habitats in Great Britain.

The site comprises hard-standing and vegetated garden.

There was no sign of any bat activity in the roof space, and the roof, walls and soffits are closed off with no access points which bats could exploit. Therefore, the property has negligible potential for bats, and a Phase 2 bat survey is not recommended.

There are no priority habitats on site, and the proposed extension lies adjacent to a busy roads and small gardens. No adverse impacts are envisaged on the surrounding area.

INTRODUCTION

Consultant Chartered Ecologist Dr.Jonty Denton FRES FLS MCIEEM CEcol (Bat license: 2025-82187-CL17-BAT) was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of 1 Chapel Lane, Riseley, RG7 1QU.

Site Proposals

This is required for a planning application seeking to remove the conservatory and add a two-storey extension off the eastern elevations.

This section details the methods used during the Phase 1 survey undertaken of the site.

METHODS

Phase 1 Habitat Survey Methods

The survey area was systematically walked, and habitats mapped according to Phase 1 Habitat Survey criteria during daylight hours on 18th August 2026. Phase 1 Habitat Survey is a standardised system for classifying and mapping semi-natural vegetation and wildlife habitats in Great Britain. Vegetation is mapped in terms of standard habitat types as defined in the JNCC Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey (2010).

In addition, habitats were appraised for their suitability to support protected or notable (UK Biodiversity Action Plan/Species of Principle Importance [S41]) species, e.g. breeding birds, badgers, bats, herptiles, stag beetle, that might be affected by the proposed development; in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment' (IEA, 1995).

Phase 1 Bat Survey Methods

The Daytime Bat Assessment / Phase 1 Bat Survey was undertaken in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

The Phase 1 Bat Survey was carried out and comprised of a daytime walkover of the site, internally and externally, to record evidence of any protected bat species.

Details of the survey methods are given below.

The building was investigated externally to identify potential bat access/egress locations and roosting areas such as gaps or holes between wooden cladding, 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 (Bat Conservation, (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 as 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- 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.

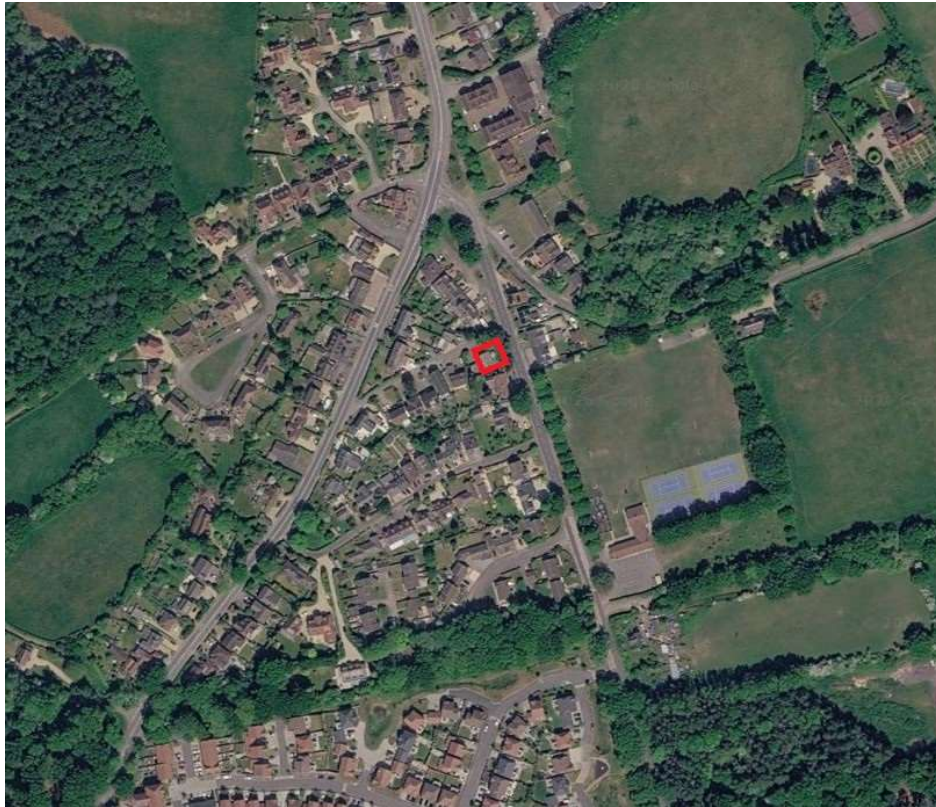


Figure 1. Site location. *Courtesy of Google images*

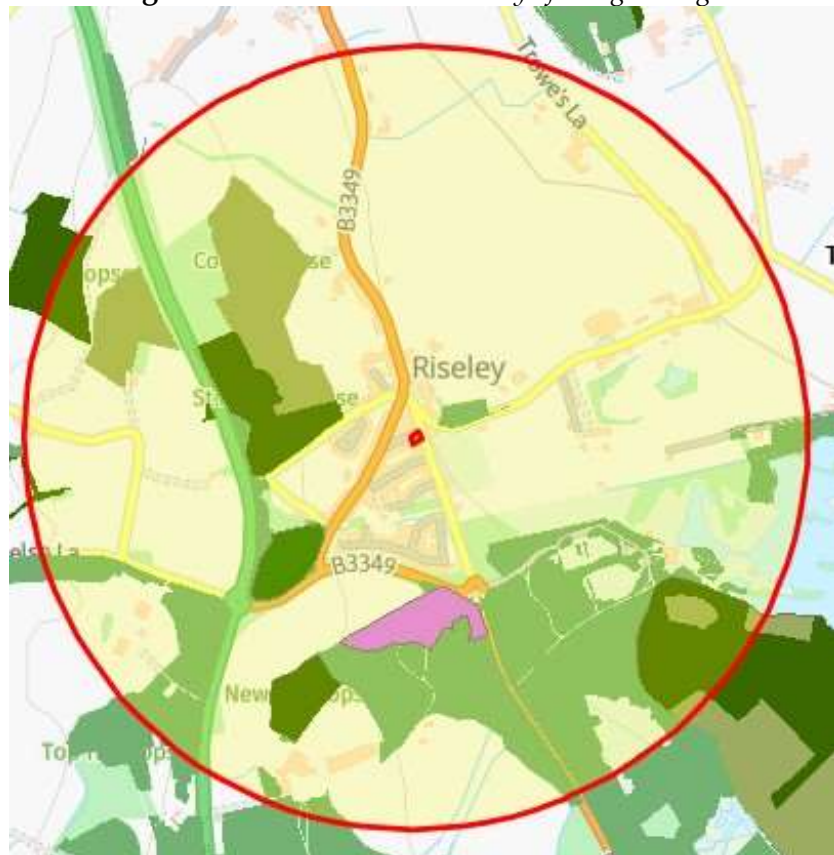


Figure 2. Priority habitats and species map. *Courtesy of Magicmaps*
 Dark green= Deciduous woodland, purple is semi-improved grassland

RESULTS

Phase 1 Habitat Survey Results

Background Data Search

A desk-based assessment was carried out using the DEFRA MagicMap website <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> to identify all designated sites within 5km of the site and all other designated sites and protected species within 2km.

A search was made for information on statutory designated sites (often internationally and nationally important sites for ecology) and non-statutory designated sites (often important in a local context) within 1 km of the site boundary.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The property lies in a corner plot west of Odiham Road and south of Chapel Lane in Riseley in Berkshire. There are three deciduous woodlands included in priority habitats inventory within 500m (See figures 1 and 2). The site comprises an extensive garden with amenity lawned areas and shrubberies (see figures 3-5).

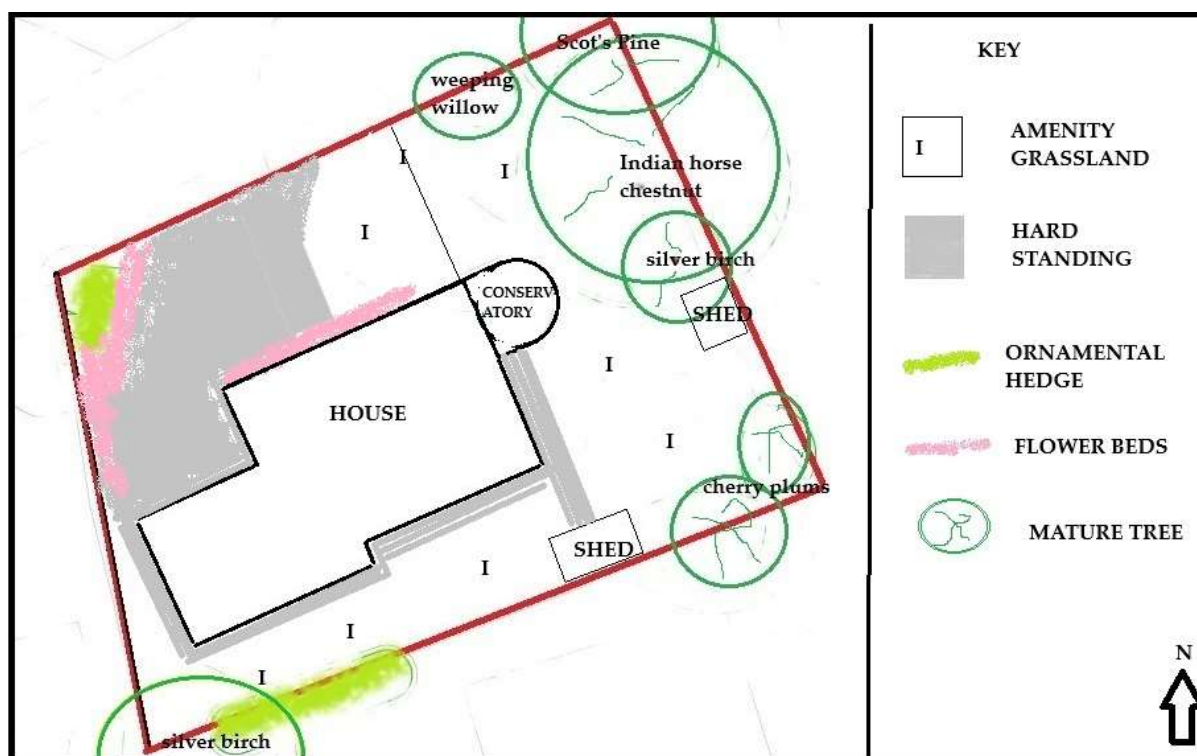


Figure 3. Habitat map



Figure 4. Garden looking southwest



Figure 5. Garden looking north



Figure 6. Northeastern corner of garden looking north



Figure 7. Northern and western elevations of house



Figure 8. Eastern elevations of house and conservatory looking west



Figure 9. Loft looking north

PROTECTED HABITATS

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) Priority Habitats are also Habitats of Principle Importance (HPI) listed under The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 Section 41 (NERC S41). These habitats do not receive statutory protection, but the S41 list is intended to provide guidance to decision-makers, e.g. those representing public bodies and local/regional authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act to ‘...have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England when carrying out their normal functions’.

The nearest priority habitat is deciduous woodland 168m to the south with the River Wey 165m to the south.

The site lies outside the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone as defined by DEFRA 2017.

An arboricultural survey has been completed by Arbtech which deals with tree protection matters (Arbtech, 2026).

PROTECTED SPECIES

Reptiles

All native British reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) from killing and injury. Sand Lizards and Smooth Snakes also receive additional protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 2010 from intentional killing and injury and from intentional damage, destruction or obstruction of access to a place of shelter. All native UK reptiles are UK BAP Priority Species and SPI.

The site has negligible potential for common reptiles in the absence of any structured habitats.

Amphibians

Great Crested Newts are protected under schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 2010 from intentional killing and injury and from intentional damage, destruction or obstruction of access to a place of shelter. In addition Great Crested Newts and Common Toads are UK BAP Priority species and SPI.

According to MagicMap, the closest GCN return is from 1.7km to the north in Swallowfield and 2km to the east.

The nearest water bodies are 259m to the east. The garden is effectively isolated from these water bodies by busy roads and extensive regularly mown amenity grassland (sports fields), and therefore has negligible potential for amphibians.

Badgers

Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which makes it illegal to kill, injure or take a badger or to interfere with their setts; such as by the use of heavy machinery nearby.

No evidence of Badgers (holes, dung pits or push-throughs under fences) was found within the survey area, and there is no sign of any sett activity in the surrounding gardens or hedgerows.

Breeding Birds

All wild birds are protected under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, from damage or destruction of their nest whilst in use or construction, some birds listed on Schedule 1 receive additional protection from disturbance during nesting.

There is cover for nesting birds in the garden, but no sign of birds nesting on the building.

Bats

Bats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, and also receive additional protection via The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations (2017) from intentional killing and injury and from intentional damage, destruction or obstruction of access to a place of shelter. 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 or not. Barbastelle Bats, Bechstein's Bat, Noctule, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared Bat, Greater Horseshoe Bat and Lesser Horseshoe Bat are also UK BAP Priority Species and SPI.

Phase 1 Bat Survey Results

According to MagicMap, no EPS bat licences have been issued within 1km of the property.

The area supports habitats suitable for common bats species with records of noctule, serotine, brown long-eared bats, Daubenton's bat, whiskered bat and common and soprano pipistrelles from within 1km.

Building Assessments

There was no sign of any bat activity in the roof space, and the roof, walls and soffits are closed off with no access points which bats could exploit (see figures 7-9). Therefore, the property has negligible potential for bats, and a Phase 2 bat survey is not recommended.

Bats – trees

There are no mature trees within 25m of the property.

EVALUATION, IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Phase 1 Habitat Survey

Priority and protected Habitats

There are no priority habitats on site, and the proposed extension lies adjacent to a busy roads and small gardens. No adverse impacts are envisaged on the surrounding area.

Protected Species

Amphibians & Reptiles

The extensions would be built on areas of regularly mown grassland and hard standing.

Care should be taken with storage of materials during build phase and where possible materials should be kept off the ground on pallets.

Badgers

No badger activity was detected on site. Badgers occur in the wider area and good building practice should be followed (such as placing boards over holes or trenches overnight) to prevent animals being harmed during site works.

Dormice

A dormouse license was issued for a site 280m to the south in 2018 (no.2018-34337-EPS-MIT). The garden is effectively isolated for many suitable dormice habitat by busy roads, therefore has negligible potential for dormice.

Hedgehogs

As with herptiles care should be taken with storing materials on site piles.

Breeding Birds

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) under which it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure, disturb or take any wild bird. This legislation and its requirements should be highlighted in staff inductions, toolbox talks and signed by all contractors, operators, and sub-contractors.

Any removal of structures should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season, which is typically 1st March to 31st August.

If any works occur within the breeding bird season the area should be checked, ideally by an ecologist, and if any nesting birds are found there is a legal obligation to protect the affected area with a buffer zone of 10m until after the young have fledged.

Phase 1 Bat Survey

There was no sign of any bat activity in the roof space, and the roof, walls and soffits are closed off with no access points which bats could). Therefore, the property has negligible potential for bats, and a Phase 2 bat survey is not recommended.

New exterior lighting should be avoided, but if necessary for security purposes, then the latest updated lighting guidance note (GN08/23) should be followed. This is available at Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting | Institution of Lighting Professionals (theilp.org.uk) and supersedes all previous guidance.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

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

Magic Interactive Map: www.magic.gov.uk