



Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

Sandastra, Heath Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3QE

May 2026

On behalf of the agent S. Roger

Quality Assurance		
Report date:	Version:	Author:
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1. Executive Summary

Imprint Ecology was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) at Sandastra, Heath Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3QE, to accompany a planning application at the site.

The assessment has been undertaken by an ecologist holding a Natural England Level 2 Class Licence for Bats. It has assessed the potential impacts of the proposals on bats and informed appropriate mitigation to demonstrate that, with mitigation in place, the works will have a negligible impact on bats.

No further bat surveys are recommended, and no European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) will be required.

Negligible impacts upon bats are dependent on the mitigation measures outlined in Section 6 being implemented in full.

Other protected species have been considered during the site visit. The site falls within a NatureSpace green impact risk zone for great crested newts (GCN), and impacts upon this species are therefore considered highly unlikely. The proposed works will take place on existing hardstanding and building footprint, and will not affect any watercourses. While no constraints have been identified that would require further species-specific surveys or licensing, nesting birds, hedgehogs, slow worms, and other small animals are sometimes encountered during works on small sites, therefore precautionary mitigation measures may be included where relevant.

Ecological enhancements to improve habitat opportunities for local wildlife are recommended in Section 7.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background and Scope

Imprint Ecology was commissioned by S. Roger to undertake a PBRA at Sandastra, Heath Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3QE (central grid reference: SU 90508 06623), hereafter referred to as 'the site'.

The proposals comprise a householder application for the creation of a single storey front extension to form a porch, conversion of the hipped roof to a gabled roof on the front elevation, and changes to fenestration.

See Figure 2.1 for an aerial view of the site and Figure 2.2 for the location of the site and building surveyed as part of this assessment. Figures 2.3 and 2.4 show the site location plan and existing and proposed block plans.

2.2 Personnel

Emily Luck, BSc (Hons), MCIEEM, MRSB, Director of Imprint Ecology Ltd, holds a Natural England CL18 Level 2 Class Licence for Bats. Emily has extensive experience in designing surveys and mitigation for bats across southern England, and she is a committee member of the Sussex Bat Group.

2.3 Purpose of the Report

This report presents the findings of an ecological assessment of all structures on-site relevant to the proposed development. The aim of this report is to identify and present any potential ecological constraints the proposals may pose to bats or other protected species. It also provides recommendations for further surveys, impact avoidance, mitigation, and biodiversity enhancements, where necessary. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a legal obligation to consider the potential presence of protected species, such as bats, prior to determining planning applications. Where works may impact bats or their roosts, sufficient survey effort must be undertaken to demonstrate presence or likely absence, and where necessary, an appropriate mitigation strategy must be proposed to ensure no offences will occur. This report satisfies that requirement and provides the necessary ecological information to enable the LPA to make an informed decision.

Figure 2.1 – Site location. ©Google Earth 2026

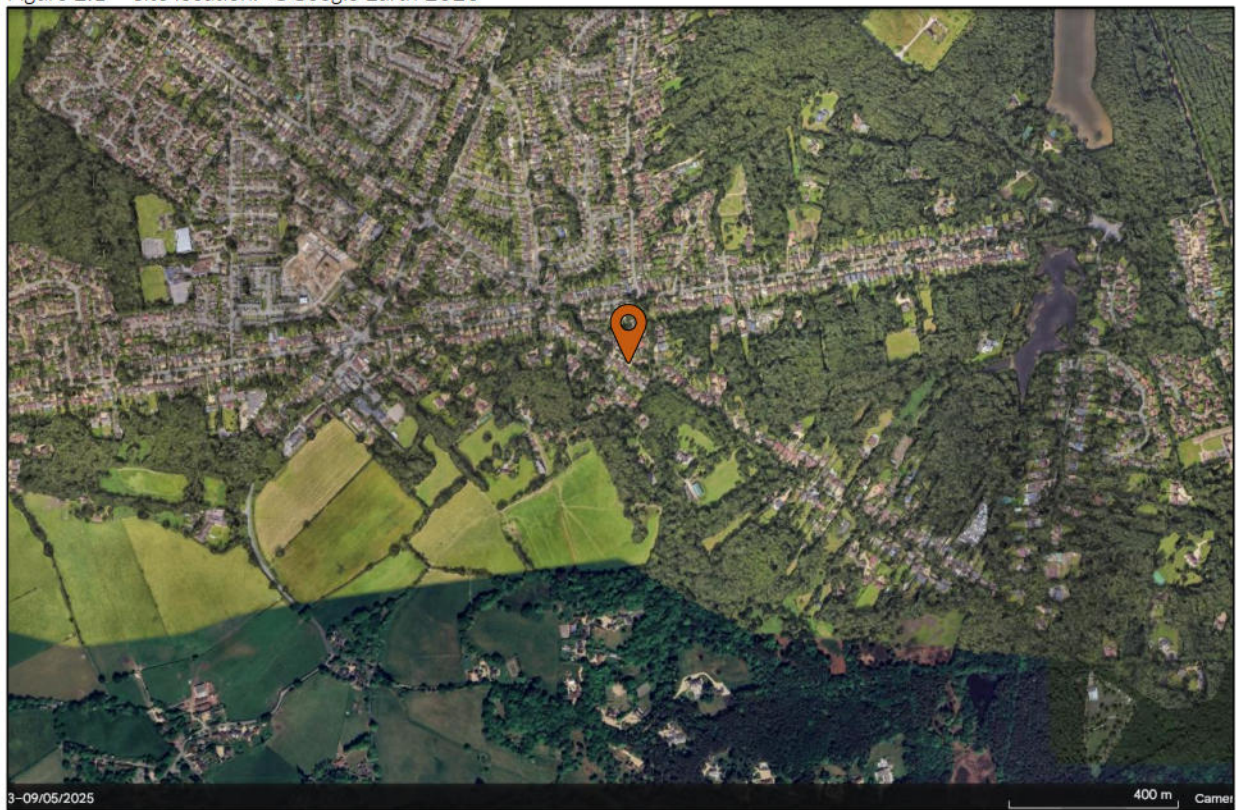


Figure 2.2 – Buildings surveyed in red line. Map data ©Google Earth 2026



Figure 2.2 – Site location plan.

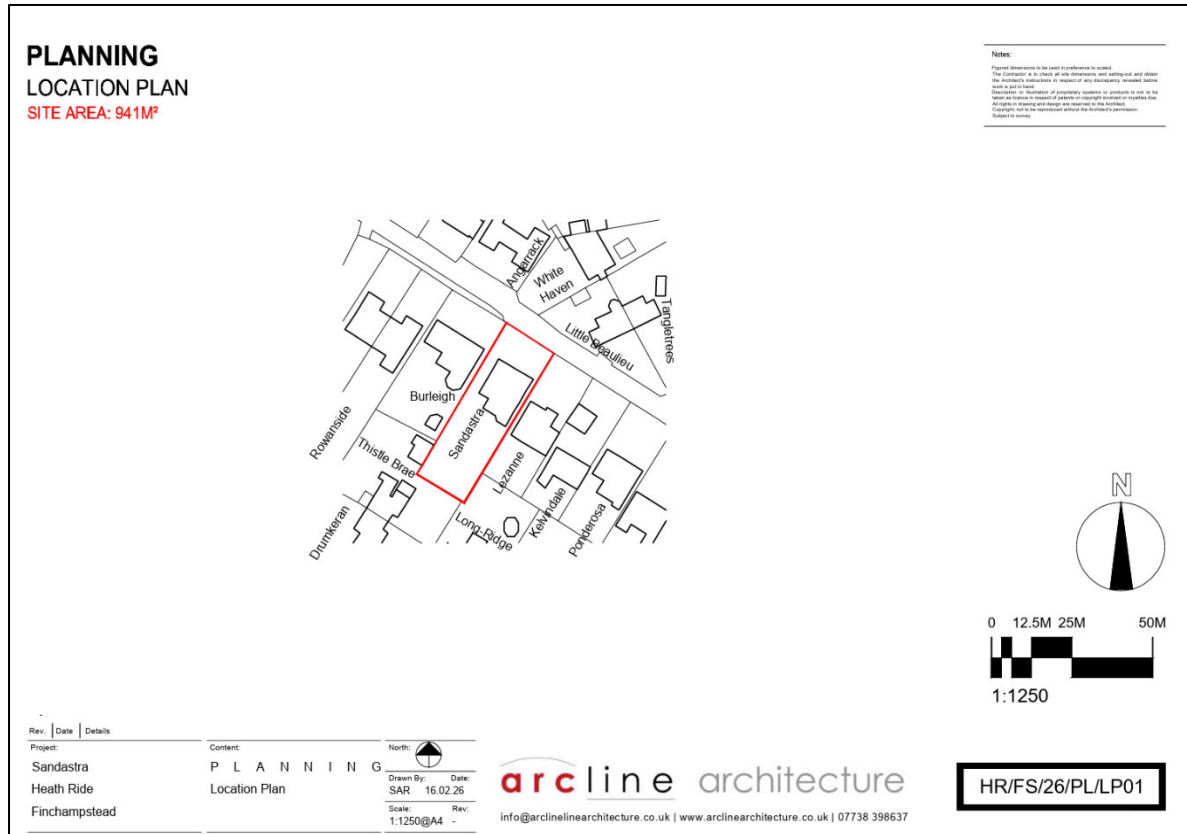
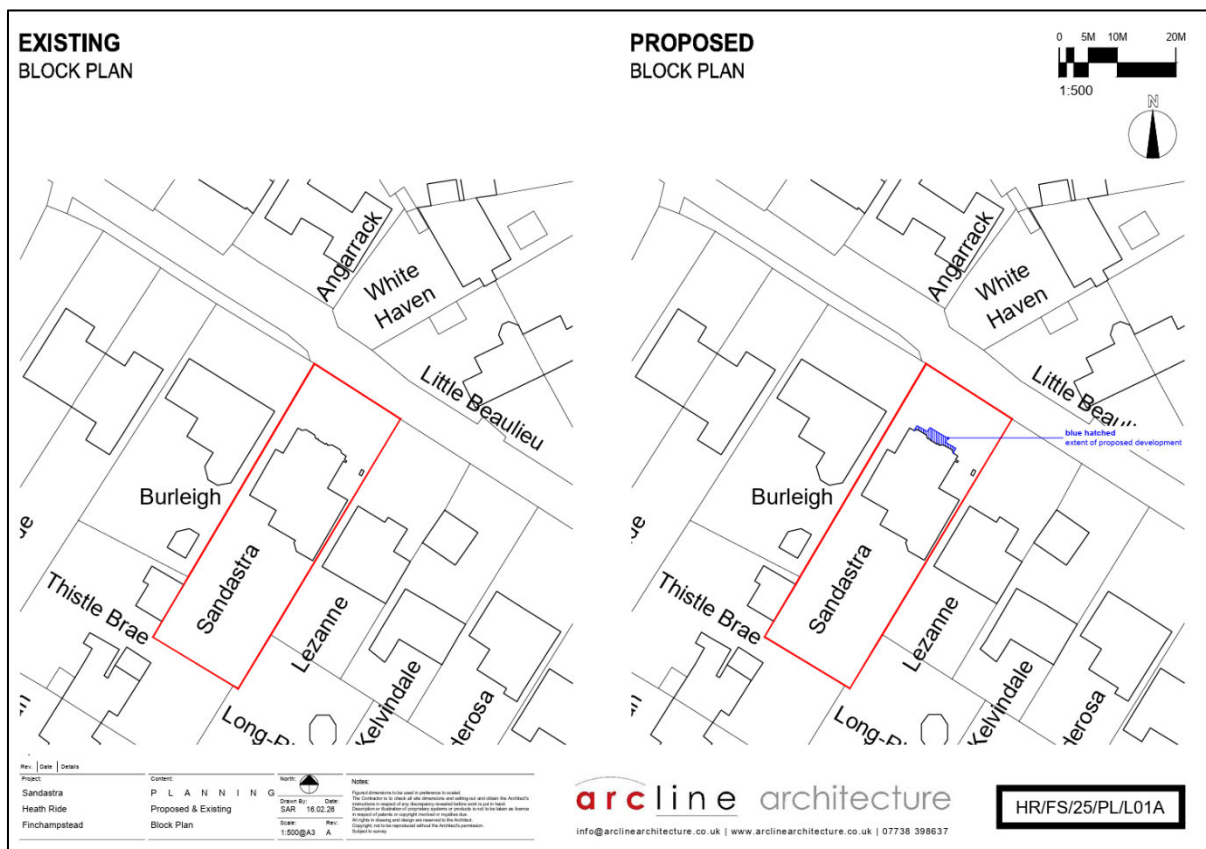


Figure 2.2 – Existing and proposed block plans.



2.4 Justification for Bat Surveys

Bat surveys are required to ensure that developments of any scale do not contribute to the progressive loss of bat habitat. The UK has 17 breeding bat species, which are all legally protected, and several of which are of high conservation concern. All “common” bat species have also experienced population declines largely due to habitat loss and the reduction of natural roosting features such as ancient trees and traditional buildings. Over several centuries, the rapid loss of natural roosting sites has led many bat species to adapt to using not only rural properties but houses in urban settings including modern buildings, many of which now support a large proportion of known bat roosts. Bats can live for decades and show strong fidelity to their roosts, returning year after year, which makes the assessment of buildings prior to development particularly important.

2.5 Validity

The report remains valid for up to 12 months from the date of issue. If there are any changes to the proposals or the site during this period, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted to re-assess the site.

3. Relevant Planning Policy and Conservation Legislation

3.1 National Planning Policy

Table 3.1 summarises the current national planning policy and legislative framework relevant to biodiversity and ecology.

Table 3.1: Relevant national planning policies.

Policy/Framework	Summary and relevance
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024)	The NPPF (December 2024) requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment. Paragraph 187 sets out requirements to protect and enhance designated sites, valued landscapes, soils, and priority habitats and species, minimise impacts on biodiversity, deliver biodiversity net gain, establish resilient ecological networks, and prevent pollution or land instability. Paragraph 193 requires local planning authorities to avoid significant harm to biodiversity, refuse development where impacts cannot be adequately mitigated or compensated, protect Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) unless benefits clearly outweigh harm, protect irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and veteran trees, and support development that delivers measurable biodiversity enhancements and improved access to nature.
Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation	Circular 06/2005 provides statutory guidance on biodiversity within the planning system. It confirms that the presence or absence of protected species must be established prior to the determination of planning applications. The Circular clarifies legal obligations under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, emphasising the need for ecological surveys, application of the mitigation hierarchy (avoidance, mitigation, compensation), and the requirement for protected species licences where development affects legally protected species.

3.2 Local Planning Policy

Table 3.2 summarises the relevant local planning policies relating to biodiversity and ecology. These set out the requirements that development proposals must meet to avoid adverse ecological effects at a local scale.

Table 3.2: Relevant local planning policies.

Local planning authority	Summary of relevant policies
Wokingham Borough Council	<u>CP7 – Biodiversity</u> Sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site in terms of its international or national importance.

	Development: A) Which may harm county designated sites (Local Wildlife Sites in Berkshire), whether directly or indirectly, or B) 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, or C) That compromises the implementation of the national, regional, county and local biodiversity action plans 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.
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3.3 Conservation Legislation

Legislation for UK protected and non-native invasive species that have been considered as part of this assessment is outlined in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Legislation of UK Protected/Priority species.

Species	Relevant Legislation and Protection
Bats	All British bat species are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), which classes them as European Protected Species (EPS). It is a criminal offence to kill, injure, capture, or disturb bats, or to damage, destroy, or obstruct access to bat roosts, whether bats are present or not. Additional protection is provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Several bat species are also listed as priority species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.
Hedgehogs	Hedgehogs are listed as a priority species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. They must be considered during the planning process, and reasonable avoidance measures should be implemented, particularly during hibernation in winter and when females may be nesting with dependent young in spring and summer.
Nesting birds	All wild birds, their nests, and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure, or take birds, or to damage or destroy an active nest. Barn owls receive additional protection under Schedule 1, making disturbance of adults, eggs, or dependent young an offence. Works affecting nesting birds should generally be avoided between March and August inclusive, with precaution also required in February.
Other mammals	The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 provides legal protection to all wild mammals in the UK, making it an offence to intentionally cause unnecessary suffering through actions such as mutilation, beating, kicking, drowning, or any other form of harm. The legislation ensures that wild mammals, including species such as foxes, deer, rabbits, and small mammals, are protected from cruelty, neglect, and deliberate mistreatment. This Act complements other wildlife legislation by

	providing a general level of welfare protection to species not otherwise specifically covered under existing laws.
Reptiles	Widespread reptile species, including slow worms and common lizards, are protected from intentional killing or injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These species are also listed as priority species under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. While habitat disturbance is not itself an offence, reasonable measures must be taken to avoid harm during activities such as vegetation clearance and groundworks.

4. Methods

4.1 Desk Study

A desk study on 20th May 2026 involved reviewing online geographical databases and mapping tools to assess the site's proximity to key ecological features, including designated sites, priority habitats, and protected habitats, typically within a 1km radius. Specifically for bats, which have large home ranges, the search for granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSMLs) was extended to a 2km radius. A data search from the local biodiversity records centre was not obtained, as it was deemed disproportionate and unlikely to alter the assessment outcomes. The following resources were used during the study:

- Local Planning Portal
- Google Earth Pro Satellite Imagery
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)
- LandApp by DigitalLandSolutions Ltd
- Ordnance Survey (OS) Explorer (1:25,000 scale)

4.2 Site Walkover and Bat Roost Assessment

As part of this survey, the ecologist not only assesses the site's suitability for bats but also examines all ecological features to identify any additional constraints, such as the presence of other protected species, in proportion to the proposals. For example, nesting birds are often incidentally found during bat surveys. Any such observations are recorded and well-documented, as they may influence the timing and methodology of works. This approach applies even if no bats or suitability for bats are found.

A visual inspection of the site was undertaken during daylight hours on 20th May 2026 by Emily Luck (qualifications in Section 2.2). The presence of potential roosting features (PRFs) and access/exit routes which bats could use to enter these features were surveyed. Evidence of use by bats was also looked for, such as scratch marks, urine stains, lack of cobwebbing, feeding remains e.g. moth wings, droppings, and actual bats. An assessment of potential commuting routes and surrounding habitat was also undertaken to determine their potential to support bats. Bat PRFs are usually found in specific areas, such as joints, cracks, gaps and cavities within structures like mature trees and buildings. These were prioritised as areas to check for bat evidence. Roosting bat evidence is not easy to find and not always visible, so any potential roosting locations were also noted. Following inspection, the building(s) was categorised as having the following suitability for bats: 'high', 'moderate', 'low', 'negligible' or 'none'. These

categories are based on observations made during the survey and in the context of the descriptions laid out in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 - Categorisation of bat roosting potential of structures (adapted from Collins, J., 2023).

Suitability	Description
Confirmed bat roost or resting place	Presence of bats or evidence of bats.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation-site.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation-site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on-site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
None	No habitat features on-site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).

4.3 Site Inspection Constraints

It is important to note that a single site assessment provides only a snapshot in time; while no bats or signs of bats were observed during the survey, their presence at other times of year cannot be entirely ruled out. The building, surrounding habitats, and any potential connectivity were therefore assessed for their suitability to support bats, even in the absence of direct evidence.

5. Results

5.1 Desk Study

5.1.1 Designated Sites

Designated sites within 1km of the site are shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 - Statutory designated sites within 1km of the site.

Site	Designations	Proximity to site	Reasons for designations
None.			

5.1.2 Habitats

The following protected/priority habitats lie within 1km, but are not within or adjacent to, the site:

- Lowland heathland
- Deciduous woodland

5.1.3 Previous Planning Applications

No planning applications relate to this property with historic bat survey data.

5.1.4 European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSMLs)

Table 5.2 shows the EPSMLs that have been granted within 2km of the site. A relatively high number of licences have been issued in the surrounding area, indicating an active bat population and a good level of development activity, recording, and monitoring in Wokingham. None of these licensed sites are directly adjacent to or from within the site.

Table 5.2: EPSMLs within 2km of the site.

Licence ref.	Species	Start date	End date	Damage to breeding site?	Damage to resting place?	Destruction of breeding site?	Destruction of resting site?
EPSM2010-2316	C-PIP; S-PIP; BLE	07/10/2010	06/08/2012	N	N	N	Y
EPSM2011-3144	C-PIP; S-PIP; BLE	24/01/2012	31/08/2013	N	N	N	Y
2014-3970-EPS-MIT	BLE C-PIP	29/10/2014	31/10/2019	N	Y	N	N
2014-4890-EPS-MIT	BLE	23/03/2014	31/08/2015	N	Y	N	N
2014-4890-EPS-MIT-1	BLE	27/05/2015	31/12/2015	N	N	N	Y
2014-4890-EPS-MIT-2	BLE	04/07/2015	31/12/2015	N	N	N	Y
2015-18339-EPS-MIT-1	C-PIP	23/05/2016	31/01/2021	N	N	N	Y
2015-7094-EPS-MIT	BLE C-PIP	06/03/2015	31/03/2015	N	N	N	Y
2015-7982-EPS-MIT	BLE	14/04/2015	14/04/2020	N	N	N	Y
2015-8440-EPS-MIT	BLE	28/04/2015	30/04/2020	N	Y	N	N
2015-9568-EPS-MIT	C-PIP	06/05/2015	30/04/2020	N	N	N	Y

2015-9568-EPS-MIT-1	C-PIP	07/10/2016	01/04/2020	N	N	N	Y
EPSM2013-5917	S-PIP; BLE	09/01/2014	31/08/2015	N	N	Y	Y
EPSM2013-5917B	BLE S-PIP	09/01/2014	31/08/2015	Y	Y	Y	Y
EPSM2013-6081	C-PIP	09/01/2014	31/10/2014	N	N	N	Y
EPSM2013-6081C	C-PIP	09/01/2014	31/10/2014	N	Y	N	Y
EPSM2012-5339	C-PIP; BLE; NATT	12/09/2013	30/09/2015	N	N	N	Y
EPSM2012-4842	C-PIP; S-PIP	29/09/2012	01/11/2012	N	N	N	Y
EPSM2009-535	C-PIP; BLE	25/03/2009	30/09/2010	N	N	Y	Y
EPSM2009-561	C-PIP; S-PIP; BLE	15/04/2009	31/12/2010	N	N	N	Y
2019-39174-EPS-MIT	BLE C-PIP S-PIP	13/03/2019	13/03/2029	Y	Y	N	N
2019-40646-EPS-MIT	N-PIP	22/05/2019	19/05/2024	N	N	N	Y
2019-44291-EPS-MIT	C-PIP S-PIP	17/03/2020	31/12/2020	N	Y	N	N
2020-45340-EPS-MIT	BLE	25/03/2020	30/09/2025	N	N	N	Y
2020-48238-EPS-MIT	BLE C-PIP	28/07/2020	30/07/2026	N	Y	N	Y
2014-3970-EPS-MIT-1	BLE C-PIP	29/06/2017	29/06/2022	N	Y	N	N
2017-31639-EPS-MIT	C-PIP	24/10/2017	30/10/2027	N	N	N	Y
2018-33861-EPS-MIT	BLE	14/03/2018	30/11/2018	N	N	N	Y
2018-37292-EPS-MIT	BLE C-PIP S-PIP	16/10/2018	10/10/2028	N	N	Y	Y
2014-4594-EPS-MIT	BLE S-PIP	16/01/2015	31/01/2025	N	N	Y	Y
2014-3877-EPS-MIT	C-PIP	03/10/2014	02/10/2019	N	N	N	Y
2014-3612-EPS-MIT	S-PIP	24/10/2014	22/10/2019	N	N	N	Y
2015-18339-EPS-MIT	C-PIP	01/02/2016	31/01/2021	N	N	N	Y
2017-31789-EPS-MIT	S-PIP	19/10/2017	31/10/2018	N	N	N	Y

Abbreviations: BLE – brown long-eared; C-PIP – common pipistrelle; S-PIP – soprano pipistrelle, NATT –Natterer's.

5.2 Site Assessment

5.2.1 Foraging and commuting bats

The site is located within a suburban residential area with the surrounding habitat dominated by domestic gardens, hardstanding, fencing, with some mature trees. There is no waterbody, semi-natural woodland or other high-value foraging habitat within the immediate site curtilage. Nearby mature gardens are likely to provide moderate value foraging opportunities for common and widespread bat species.

The proposals are restricted to a single dwelling and do not affect any trees, hedgerows or boundary vegetation, and external lighting changes are not proposed as part of this application. The foraging and commuting resource of the wider site will therefore be retained in its current form.

5.2.2 External inspection

The main dwelling is a two-storey rendered property with a pitched roof clad in concrete tiles with no slipped tiles, lifting or weathering damage observed across the main roof slopes that

could create access points for bats. The roof verges and junctions are well-bedded and pointed in mortar and all lead flashing appears to be intact. No gaps were identified at the eaves.

The north (front) elevation has a decorative gable clad in plain clay hanging tiles. The tiles are machine-made and tightly fitted with minimal variation in overlap. These tiles appear well-seated across the elevation with no obvious gaps beneath any tiles that could support roosting bats. The hanging tiles along the edges adjacent to the bargeboards were noted to be well-cobwebbed which shows they have not been used by bats. Hanging tiles on the dormer (to be replaced) are in a similar condition and tightly sealed, including the corner tiles, which can often present gaps suitable for roosting bats. While no PRFs were identified, hanging tiles are a common feature on buildings that are often used by bats and therefore, additional precautionary mitigation has therefore been provided in Section 6 in the form of a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS).

The fascia and soffits are well-sealed with uPVC gutters and downpipes in good condition. The render to all elevations is in good condition, with no cracking or crevices that bats could use. The small front porch roof and the small front roof to be removed are also clad in concrete tiles (~3 rows) which are tightly fitted with mortar at the verges. The south (rear), east and west elevations are not to be altered structurally and there are no PRFs on these elevations.

5.2.3 Internal inspection

The loft void is low and narrow comprising timber rafters and a central ridge. The roof is lined with a mix of breathable and type 1F bitumen felt which appears taut and intact throughout the loft with no tears noted or daylight penetration. There is mineral wool insulation laid between the ceiling joists at the base of the void. The loft was found to be clean with no live or dead bats, no droppings, no feeding remains, no urine staining and no scratch marks identified. The kitchen ceiling area at ground floor level to the rear has no associated void.

5.2.4 Summary

Given the negligible suitability of the building and lack of PRFs, no further bat surveys are required. A summary is presented in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Summary of roost suitability and recommendations.

Building	Dwelling
Confirmed bat roost?	No

Roost suitability (Refer to Table 4.1)	Negligible
Taking suitability in context with the proposals, are further bat surveys required?	No
Other notes	None

Photo 1: North elevation.



Photo 2: North elevation hanging tiles, tightly fitted.

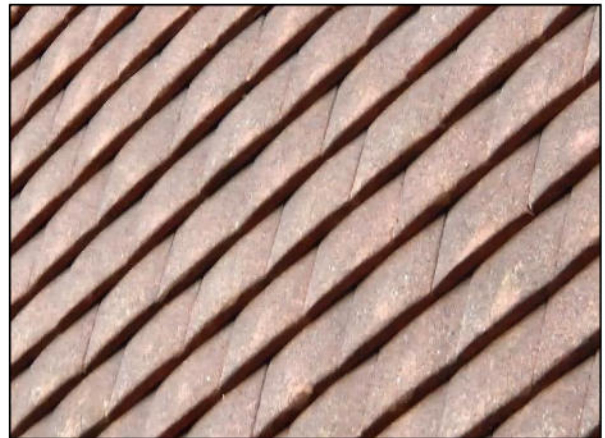


Photo 3: North elevation hanging tiles, tightly fitted.

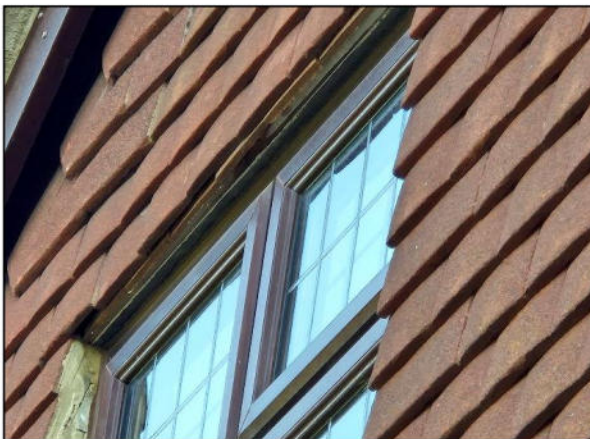


Photo 4: North elevation hanging tiles, tightly fitted.

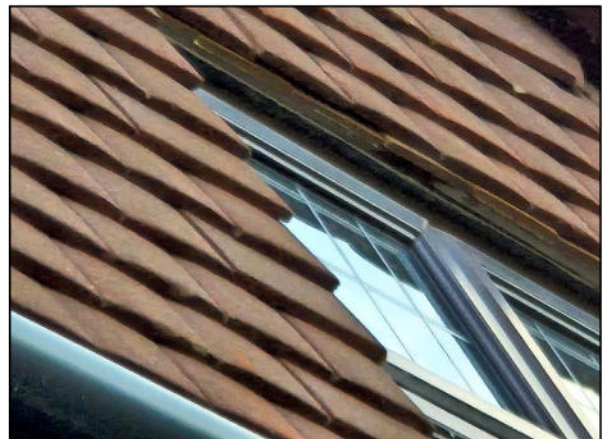


Photo 5: Northwest corner.



Photo 6: Northeast corner.



Photo 7: Dormer to be enlarged.



Photo 8: Tight hanging tiles on dormer.



Photo 9: Tight hanging tiles on dormer.



Photo 10: East facing roof slope.



Photo 11: West facing roof slope.



Photo 12: Small roof at front of house to be removed.



Photo 13: Surroundings to west.



Photo 14: Surroundings to east.



Photo 15: East elevation.

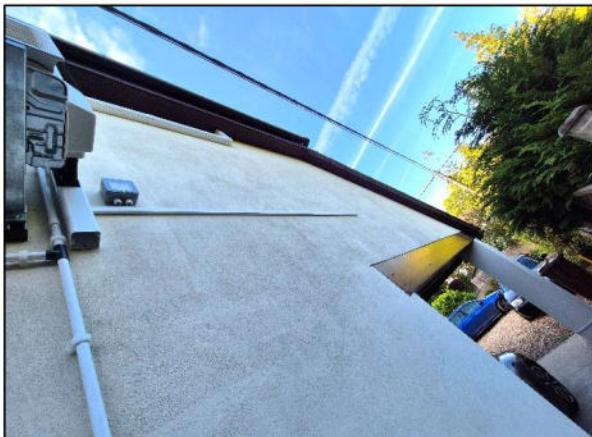


Photo 16: South elevation.



Photo 17: South elevation.



Photo 18: South elevation.



Photo 13: Interior of kitchen (no void).



Photo 14: Main house loft void.



5.3 Other Protected Species

The site comprises the existing building and its immediate curtilage, with no waterbodies or features of notable ecological value within or adjacent to the working area. All proposed works are restricted to the existing footprint of the building and driveway, with no significant impacts on surrounding garden vegetation or boundary features anticipated.

The buildings, gardens and boundary vegetation have potential to support a small number of widespread and common protected and priority species, including nesting birds, common reptiles and hedgehog. Nesting birds may use shrubs, hedgerows and climbing plants within the garden, although no features on the buildings themselves were found to be suitable for nesting birds and no vegetation removal is planned as part of the proposed works.

Common reptiles, particularly slow worm, may make occasional use of garden margins, log piles and compost heaps in suburban settings of this type. Hedgehogs are frequently recorded in

suburban gardens across southern England and may use the site for foraging, shelter and dispersal between connected gardens.

The site falls within a NatureSpace green impact risk zone for GCNs, and impacts on this species are therefore considered highly unlikely. The proposed works will take place on existing hardstanding and within the existing building footprint.

6. Evaluation and Mitigation

This section sets out the evaluation of potential impacts and the mitigation measures required to avoid harm to designated sites, habitats and protected species as a result of the proposed works. Although the scope of this report is primarily a bat survey, best practice mitigation is also provided for other species where potential for them has been identified during the site assessment (Section 5).

6.1 Designated Sites

Potential impacts

The proposed works are small-scale and comprise a householder application. No impacts on statutory designated sites are anticipated.

Mitigation measures

None required

Significance of residual effects

No residual effects.

6.2 Habitats

Potential impacts

Dust generated by the works may settle on surrounding vegetation, including nearby gardens, trees and shrubs, which can affect plant health. Construction activities carry a low risk of unintentional loss of vegetation, for example should scaffold materials crush or fall onto garden vegetation. Construction materials, fuel, solvents and chemicals may introduce pollutants into the soil, and heavy machinery may compact soil, making it less hospitable for plant growth.

Mitigation measures

- All construction will be undertaken in accordance with best practice advice with regards to control of dust, noise and emissions.
- Contractor vehicles will remain on hardstanding where possible.
- Hazardous materials will be stored securely on impermeable surfaces away from vegetated areas. This includes substances such as wet concrete, cement washings, oils, paints and solvents, which can cause pollution or damage to soils and vegetation if spilled. Contractors will be trained how to use spill kits to ensure any accidental spills are dealt with correctly.

Significance of residual effects

With mitigation measures in place, there will be no residual effects.

6.3 Protected Species

6.3.1 Bats

PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHOD STATEMENT FOR BATS

This method statement sets out the working practices to be followed during construction to protect bats, which are afforded full legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). It is to be read by the principal contractor and all site operatives prior to works commencing, and a copy is to be retained on site for the duration of the project.

Working methods

The area of works has been assessed as having negligible suitability for roosting bats and no evidence of bats was recorded during the site assessment. A precautionary approach is nevertheless to be followed in recognition of the residual uncertainty associated with negligible suitability features, as set out in Table 4.1.

- Hanging tiles to the front elevation are to be removed carefully by hand, working from the top down, with the underside of each tile and the felt behind checked before the next tile is lifted.
- If a bat, bat droppings, urine staining, scratch marks, or any feature suspected to be a bat roost is encountered at any point during the works, all activity in the affected area is to stop immediately and the project ecologist contacted without delay.
- Works in the affected area may only recommence once written approval has been provided by the project ecologist and, where required, a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence has been obtained from Natural England.
- The project ecologist's contact details are to be displayed prominently at the site and provided to all operatives.

Lighting during construction

Any temporary task lighting required during the works is to be directed downwards onto the working area only, switched off when not in use, and must not illuminate the vegetated garden boundaries, the retained roof slopes of the dwelling, or adjacent properties, between dusk and dawn.

Lighting post-completion

Any new external lighting installed as part of, or following, the works is to be designed to avoid light spill onto vegetated boundaries, the retained building elevations, or any other feature that may be used by commuting or foraging bats. The following measures are to be implemented:

- Motion-activated external lighting is to be used in preference to continuous illumination, with timers set to a short delay of 1 to 2 minutes after the last detected movement.
- Light intensity is to be kept low, not exceeding 500 lumens per fitting, using warm white light sources of approximately 2700K to reduce the blue light content, which is particularly disruptive to bats.
- All external fittings are to be installed facing downward and fitted with appropriate shields or cowls to minimise vertical and horizontal light spill.

Responsibilities

The principal contractor is responsible for ensuring that all site operatives are briefed on the contents of this method statement before works commence. Any uncertainty regarding the working methods is to be referred to the project ecologist before works continue in the affected area.

6.3.2 Hedgehogs and Other Small Animals

Potential impacts

Unmitigated works have the potential to accidentally harm, crush, trap, or kill individual hedgehogs and ubiquitous mammals such as foxes that may occasionally cross the site, especially at night, although this risk is low.

Mitigation for Hedgehogs and Other Mammals

- During works, piles of materials will be stored in skips or on hardstanding where possible. The removal of other piles of soil, rubble, pallets and other materials will be undertaken carefully by hand before being moved into the skip. This will help to prevent small animals from sheltering in piles of debris and becoming injured or trapped during any removal.
- Any grassland near the development area will be kept mown short throughout the duration of works to prevent small animals from sheltering within it and being at risk of being crushed by materials.
- Any excavations made will ideally be fully covered over when not in use, especially overnight, or fitted with multiple escape ramps. Ramps should either be soil slopes or

gently sloping roughened timber planks (maximum 45° angle) laying along the edge of a trench or excavation to enable animals to escape freely.

- Open pipework will be checked for the presence of small animals at the start and end of each workday, and they will be left sealed overnight.
- No vegetation or other materials will be burned on-site during any phase of the work.

Significance of residual effects

With mitigation measures in place, there will be no residual effects.

7. Ecological Enhancements

The applicants at Sandastra will adhere to Wokingham Local Planning Policy CP7 - Biodiversity by incorporating ecological enhancements into their project. Paragraph 192(b) of the NPPF also requires plans to promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats and species, and to identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. The enhancements in Table 7.1 are recommended to meet this requirement and to contribute positively to local wildlife.

Table 7.1: Recommended enhancements for the development.

Species	On-site Enhancements	Examples
Bats	One bat box will be installed. The box may be fixed to the external wall of the building or to a suitable mature tree within the garden curtilage. Specifications are as follows: • Durable box such as Vivara Pro's "WoodStone Beaumaris Midi" or equivalent. • 3-5m above ground level. • Facing between southeast to southwest, receiving several hours of sunlight, • Position the box away from any external artificial lighting or windows that could spill light onto the box. Keep the box entrance clear and free of climbing vegetation or overhanging foliage that would prevent bats having a clear flight path in.	Woodstone Beaumaris Midi 
Nesting Birds	One bird box will be installed. The box may be fixed to the external wall of the building or to a suitable mature tree within the garden curtilage. Specifications are as follows: • Durable box, such as Vivara Pro's WoodStone Seville 28mm, or equivalent. • 2-4m above ground level. • Facing between north and east to avoid direct sunlight and prevailing wind and rain. Site box close to boundary vegetation to provide foraging resources and cover, but not directly adjacent to large windows, glazed doors or reflective surfaces that could increase the risk of bird collisions.	WoodStone Seville 28mm 

8. Conclusion

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment was undertaken at Sandastra in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust guidance (Collins, J. 2023). The property was assessed as having negligible suitability for roosting bats. No further surveys are required, and the works can proceed with precautionary mitigation measures in place.

Should artificial lighting be required as part of the development, it should be designed in an ecologically sensitive manner to minimise potential disturbance to bats and other wildlife.

Appropriate biodiversity enhancements will be incorporated into the development in accordance with Wokingham Local Planning Policy CP7 - Biodiversity to provide small-scale benefits for local wildlife.

9. References

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Appendix 1: Gardening for Bats

Why garden for bats?

Bats play an important role in maintaining healthy ecosystems by acting as natural pest controllers. All of the UK's native species only feed on insects like moths and mosquitoes. Bat populations have declined significantly due to habitat loss, pesticide use and light pollution. Creating a bat-friendly garden can help provide valuable foraging habitat and shelter for bats, and the insects they prey on, even within residential settings.

Tips for a bat-friendly garden

- Plant **night-scented flowers** to attract moths and other nocturnal insects.
- Reduce **light pollution** as much as possible, because bats are sensitive to light. Use minimal external lighting and avoid shining lights directly onto plants or trees.
- A pond, compost heap, and other **"wild" areas** like wildflower borders, nettles, and brambles will encourage lots of insects.
- Avoid **pesticides** at all costs to prevent killing the insects that bats feed on.



Recommended plants

- Evening primrose
- Night-scented stock (above right)
- Honeysuckle
- Jasmine
- Lavender

These specific plants attract a variety of nocturnal insects that bats love to feast on.

Native wildflowers, such as ragged robin and white campion, are also excellent choices.

Creating habitat

While food is essential, bats also require safe places to roost. This can be encouraged by:

- Installing bat boxes in suitable locations, such as on buildings or mature trees, ideally facing south so they warm up during the day.
- Retaining mature trees with natural crevices or cavities where safe to do so.
- Leaving standing deadwood or tall tree stumps, as these can support insects and may provide future roosting features.