



Urban Tree Experts

BS5837 – Tree Surveys – Ecological Consulting

ECOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT (BATS) AT ARLINGTON SPENCERS WOOD



**Prepared for:
Mr Miah
c/o Arlington
Basingstoke Road
Spencers Wood
RG7 1AE**

4 July 2025

Ref: SPH/ESR-25/26.06



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Appendix 1

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The validity of this report ceases at the prescribed time limit or after one year from the survey, or if the site conditions change due to unspecified works that affect the site whichever is the sooner.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Urban Tree Experts was commissioned by Mr Miah to carry out two dusk emergence surveys at Arlington, Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood, RG7 1AE. The surveys were undertaken at the property to provide further evidence to support the initial findings (a negative result) and conclusions from the preliminary ecological appraisal conducted in December 2024, ref SPH/NP/PEA-24/10.12, and to inform appropriate mitigation for the proposed works, if required. This report is prepared to support a current planning application to Wokingham Borough Council.

The application site comprises a vacant, semi-detached, brick-built property with attached garage/utility. The remainder of the site comprises a small front garden and parking/driveway, and an overgrown rear garden. The site itself offers some foraging and commuting habitat for bats and there is good ecological connectivity to bat foraging and commuting habitat in the wider landscape.

The preliminary ecological appraisal consists of a desktop 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 search of the local planning authority online planning portal revealed a CLP number 242472, and the desktop search was conducted based upon a minimum 2km search radius and it revealed one statutory designated site is located within, and two current European Protected Species Licenses (EPSLs) for bats have been granted within 2km of the proposed development site. The surrounding habitat, with woodland, a freshwater lake and farmland provide rich and diverse habitats suitable for a wide range of bat species and there is ecological connectivity to these areas from the site.

A search of Berkshire and South Bucks bat group records confirmed 7 different species within the 2-kilometer search radius, including *Myotis sp.*

The dusk emergence surveys were conducted on Saturday 31 May and Thursday 26 June 2025. A low number of bats were heard foraging in the vicinity and none seen during either surveys and none were seen emerging from or re-entering the property to roost.

This report confirms the findings of the surveys, completed by an experienced licensed bat ecologist, in accordance with the current best practice guidance where possible, and outlines any ecological constraints or issues with the proposed works.

The combined evidence from the preliminary survey and activity surveys provides a high level of confidence in support of the opinions set out in this report. No bats or evidence of bats were observed during the PEA and no bats were seen entering or emerging from the property during the activity surveys. This indicates that the property has not been used as a roost by bats and that an EPSL from Natural England (NE) is not required.



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1. Introduction

1.1 Instruction

Urban Tree Experts were commissioned by Mr Miah to carry out two dusk emergence surveys at Arlington, Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood, RG7 1AE.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The dusk emergence surveys are designed to:

- Identify the presence/likely absence of bats using the building to roost.
- Estimate the size and status of any existing bat roost within the building.
- Establish where the bats are accessing the building.
- Determine the potential impacts on any bat roost from the proposed development.
- Determine if an EPSL and ecological method statement is required.

The survey was carried out in accordance with Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition.

1.3 Proposed Works

The surveys were commissioned in connection with a current planning application to Wokingham Borough Council (no 250020) for “Householder application for the proposed first floor side extension over garage, including the removal of 2 no. existing chimneys and the addition of 2 no. roof lights.”

1.4 Surveyor Background and Experience

The activity surveys were conducted by Robert (Bob) Brittain, Katie Holmes and Nick Powell and the report was compiled by Simon Holmes MSc. CEnv, a Natural England licensed bat ecologist.

Simon holds Class 3 (CL19) and 4 Bat (CL20) Licenses (Nos. 17637 and 17638) and a Science and Education license (SCI64844). He has 35 years’ experience of carrying out bat surveys and bat conservation work.

Bob holds a Class 2 Bat Licence (CLS-11916) and has been surveying bats for 13 years with various ecological consultancies and has received training in surveying techniques, bat detector use, bat biology, identification, acoustic monitoring, echolocation analysis and netting.

Katie Holmes. Katie holds a Class 2 Bat License (CLS-35124) and has been surveying bats for 12 years with various ecological consultancies and has received training in surveying techniques, bat detector use, bat biology, identification, acoustic monitoring, echolocation analysis and netting.

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.



2. Survey Methodology

2.1 Constraints/Limitations

An assessment of the building exterior was conducted on 31 May 2025, prior to the first activity survey being undertaken and there were no constraints or limitations to the surveys. Weather conditions for both surveys were suitable, being conducted during warm weather, a low number of bats were heard foraging in the vicinity and none seen during either survey, and none were seen emerging from or re-entering the property to roost.

2.2 Dusk Surveys

The dusk emergence surveys were conducted on the evenings of Saturday 31 May and Thursday 26 June 2025. The surveyors and equipment were stationed (as shown in Figure 1 below), to ensure the features identified in the preliminary roost assessment could be observed.

During the surveys bat activity was monitored using two BatLogger M bat detectors together with five Sony Handycam night shot video cameras with high intensity IR lamps. Sample screenshots from the video cameras is included at Appendix 1. The detectors and cameras were fitted with SD cards for recording bat activity, allowing for later analysis with Kaleidoscope Pro 3 software, MotionMeerkat and VLC media player.

Figure 1 – Arlington, Spencers Wood, surveyor/equipment location.



During the surveys no bats were seen emerging from and/or returning to the property to roost. In total 3 different species were recorded and identified foraging and commuting around the site. A simple summary of the bats recorded can be seen in Table 2 on page 7. The most frequently used flight paths of bats could not be shown as none were seen during either survey.



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3. Survey Findings

3.1 Dusk Survey

The weather conditions and surveyor details from the surveys can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Surveyor details and weather conditions for the bat activity surveys conducted at Arlington, Spencers Wood.

Date:	31 May 2025	26 June 2025
Survey Type	Emergence survey	Emergence survey
Surveyor and location	(A) Bob Brittain (B) Remote camera (C) Katie Holmes (D) Remote camera (E) Remote camera	(A) Bob Brittain (B) Remote camera (C) Nick Powell (D) Remote camera (E) Remote camera
Weather Conditions (Start)	Temperature 20.6°C Cloud cover 80% Humidity 69.7% Dry with Wind Beaufort 1	Temperature 20°C Cloud cover 20% Humidity 54.7% Dry with Wind Beaufort 0
Sunset	21:10	21:25
Start time	20:55	21:10
Finish Time	22:40	22:55
Duration	01:45	01:45
Weather Conditions (Finish)	Temperature 17.8°C Cloud cover 80% Humidity 66.3% Dry with Wind Beaufort 1	Temperature 18.5°C Cloud cover 100% Humidity 64.3% Dry with Wind Beaufort 1

Table 2. Summary of bat calls recorded in the vicinity of Arlington, Spencers Wood.

Date	Surveyor Position	Time	Seen	Heard	Species	Comments
31/05/25	A	20:55 – 22:40	N	Y	Common and soprano pipistrelle and noctule	At 21.30 (20 minutes after sunset) a call from a soprano pipistrelle was heard and thereafter, between 21.34 and 21.35 six foraging calls were heard. No further soprano pipistrelle activity was recorded. Between 21.34 and 22.27 eight calls from a noctule were heard. Common pipistrelle activity commenced at 21.42 and continued until survey end with the bat believed to be foraging around the trees on the other side of the road and behind the surveyor.
31/05/25	B	20:55 – 22:40	N	N	Remote camera	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.
31/05/25	C	20:55 – 22:40	N	Y	Common pipistrelle and noctule	Bat activity at this survey position was extremely limited with eight noctule calls heard between 21.34 and 21.40. Six foraging calls from a common pipistrelle bat were heard between 21.50 and survey end.
31/05/25	D	20:55 – 22:40	N	N	Remote camera	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.
31/05/25	E	20:55 – 22:40	N	N	Remote camera	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.



Table 2 continued

Date	Surveyor Position	Time	Seen	Heard	Species	Comments
26/06/25	A	21:10 – 22:55	N	Y	Common pipistrelle and noctule	The first bat calls during the survey, at 22.07, were transit calls from a noctule. Between 22.17 and 22.51 fifteen foraging and transit calls from common pipistrelle bats were heard.
26/06/25	B	21:10 – 22:55	N	N	Remote camera	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.
26/06/25	C	21:10 – 22:55	N	N	Common and soprano pipistrelle	Once again, bat activity at this survey position was extremely limited with a call from a common pipistrelle bat being heard at 22.21 and two calls from a soprano pipistrelle bat, at 22.30 & 22.44.
26/06/25	D	21:10 – 22:55	N	N	Remote camera	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.
26/06/25	E	21:10 – 22:55	N	N	Remote camera	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.

4. Conclusions/Interpretation

- 4.1 The calls detected and recorded from the surveys provided identification of common pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, and noctule, *Nyctalus noctule*, foraging and/or transiting in the vicinity.
- 4.2 The property has features suitable for crevice dwelling bats to roost. However, the surrounding urban area does not provide good habitat for bats in which to forage and the roosting potential in neighboring buildings may also be higher. No bats were seen emerging from or returning to the property to roost. The surveyor observations provide a high level of confidence in the species detected during the survey at Arlington.
- 4.3 Noctule and pipistrelle bats are one of the first emerging bat species after sunset, frequently emerging within 20 minutes after sunset. The first bat heard during the surveys was a soprano pipistrelle at 20 minutes after sunset and, the first noctule bat call was at 24 minutes after sunset, indicating that the bats are most probably roosting close by, but they did not emerge from the building. Whilst no bats were seen emerging from or returning to the property to roost, this does not mean that they will not be present in the future as bats are known to be transient and use a wide variety of crevice like features opportunistically.
- 4.4 The survey conditions were good, with warm weather, a variety of insects flying and the bat calls and field observations were, in our opinion, considered very low. This has been a common theme this season, 2025 and also recorded on social media groups.
- 4.5 The bat calls and field observations provide a high level of confidence in support of the opinions as set out in this report.
- 4.6 The cumulative evidence leads me to conclude that bats are not roosting at Arlington and the property has a negligible potential to support roosting bats, therefore an EPSL is not required.
- 4.7 All bats and their roosts are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).



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5. References

Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition).
Bat Workers Manual – Mitchell-Jones & McLeish 2004.
Bat Mitigation Guidelines – Natural England 2006.
The Conservation and Habitat Regulations – 2017.

6. Queries

Any queries regarding this report should be addressed, in the first instance, to Urban Tree Experts:

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APPENDIX 1

Arlington, Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood, RG7 1AE
Sample screenshots from night vision cameras

A



B



C





D



E

