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38, Linkway, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6ES Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report



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**38, Linkway, Crowthorne, Berkshire
RG45 6ES**

**Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment
Report**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

TSA Ecology was commissioned by Ms Kuldeep Gill to carry out a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) of the property at 38, Linkway, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6ES. The property is located at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SU 8292 6423 in a suburban area in Crowthorne (see Figure 1 for site location). For development proposals, see Figure 2.

The PBRA was commissioned following with respect to extending the roof to create additional room space.

1.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The property at 38, Linkway comprises a detached, pitched-roof, two storey brick-built residence, considered to date from c. 1960s. There is a flat-roofed single storey extension on the eastern side. There is a well-maintained, lawned garden to the rear and front of the property.

1.3 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to identify and describe any signs of potential bat use of the structures on site, including the presence / absence of ingress / egress points for bats.

The report follows the 2015 CIEEM guidance.

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2. LEGISLATION

2.1 PROTECTED SPECIES

All bats and their roosts are protected under the Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

The desk study included a search on MAGIC (www.magic.defra.gov.uk) for the following within a 2 km radius of the site:

- European protected species licences for bats.

3.2 Field Survey

General

An external and internal survey of the property, including the roof structures, was carried out on 15th January 2025. The survey was undertaken by Tony Stones MSc, MCIEEM, CEnV of TSA Ecology. Tony is an experienced bat surveyor with over 25 years of experience in the ecological sector. Tony has undertaken various preliminary ecological assessments, preliminary roost assessments (bats) and surveys for protected species; and prepared subsequent reports with appropriate recommendations. Binoculars, a step ladder, and a high-powered torch were used as required.

Date	Approximate Start Time	Weather Conditions
15.01.2025	12.00	Generally sunny, wind SW 6 mph. Visibility was good, and the air temperature was 10 degrees centigrade.

Table 1: Details of Survey Conditions

3.3 Bats

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

The property was assessed for its potential to support bat roosts. This involved a consideration of various factors including:

- Light levels;
- Temperature regime and protection from weather;

- Access to the interior of the building or to other suitable roost sites;
- Potential roost sites;
- Building construction; and
- Habitat context.

Based on these factors, an assessment was made as to whether or not the building could potentially support bats, and the type and number of roosts that might be present.

External Inspection for Signs of Bats

An external inspection was made of the building for any evidence of bat use, such as live or dead bats, droppings, scratch-marks, staining and prey remains, and in some cases the absence of cobwebs, where access permitted. A pair of 8 x 30 binoculars was used to scan potential ingress / egress points, and other areas of interest from ground level.

Features identified as possible bat access points or potential roosting locations were thoroughly searched where possible, using a powerful torch and binoculars to facilitate the process. Large quantities of cobwebs in roof voids or in access points tend to be suggestive of no bat use, although this evidence is not conclusive.

The survey commenced at the front (southern face) of the property and proceeded in a clockwise direction around the property.

Internal Roof Void Inspection

An internal roof void inspection was undertaken for any evidence of bat use, in particular signs such as ingress / egress points, live or dead bats and droppings, where access permitted.

Constraints and limitations

The survey was undertaken at a suitable time of year to conduct a preliminary bat roost assessment.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Bats: desk study data

DEFRA Magic maps (www.magic.defra.gov.uk) was used to determine whether or not there were any granted European Protected Species applications for bats within close proximity of the proposed development site.

A search on MAGIC (2024) returned eight approved licence applications granted by Natural England pertaining to bats within 1 km of the site. The closest approved licence to the site was c. 422 m SE. This was for Common pipistrelle bats (for further details see Table 2). A further 13 approved licence applications were granted by Natural England from within 2 km of the site.

Species	Distance from site	Activity	Licencing period
CP	422 m SE	Destruction of resting place	Licence Start Date 18/07/2016 Licence End Date 18/07/2021
CP	471 m SSE	Destruction of resting place	Licence Start Date 11/03/2015 Licence End Date 31/03/2020
WHISK	522 m SE	Destruction of resting place	Licence Start Date 06/09/2017 Licence End Date 30/09/2022
CP, SP	551 m NE	Destruction of resting place	Licence Start Date 01/07/2013 Licence End Date 30/11/2014
CP, SP, BLE	610 m NW	Destruction of resting place	Licence Start Date 08/10/2013 Licence End Date 30/04/2015
BLE, SP	665 m ESE	Destruction of resting place	Licence Start Date 06/09/2016 Licence End Date

			06/09/2021
BLE, CP	1120 m SSE	Destruction of resting place	Licence Start Date 23/04/2013 Licence End Date 30/04/2014
CP	1190 m SW	Destruction of resting place	Licence Start Date 24/10/2017 Licence End Date 30/10/2027
Species Codes: BLE = Brown long-eared CP = Common pipistrelle SP = Soprano pipistrelle WHISK = Whiskered bat			

Table 2: Natural England granted EPSL licences for works pertaining to bats 2013-2022 (MAGIC 2024) within 1 km of the site

4.2 Bats: assessment of habitats

In addition to the built structure, vegetation within the site boundary comprises lawned garden with hedging and semi-mature trees along the site boundaries. The property is along a suburban road, and the majority of residences have lawned gardens with semi-mature / mature trees and hedgerows prevalent so habitat connectivity to the site is considered to be good.

4.3 Bats: preliminary roost assessment

Building description

The property comprises a two-storey, brick-built, pitch-roofed chalet bungalow, with the roof being tiled, dating from c. 1960s (see Photo 1), with a conjoined single-storey, brick-built, flat-roofed garage and outbuilding. The walls of the building are brick, with pvc windows (see Photo 2). The building is in overall good condition. The tiles and ridge were intact (see Photos 3 and 4). The soffits were of wood and appeared flush to the walls with no obvious ingress / egress points (see Photos 6 - 7).



Photo 1: The front of the property (north-facing), showing brick-built nature with brick-tiled, pitched roof and two dormer windows



Photo 2: PVC window along west-facing side of the property



Photo 3: Close-up view of ridge and brick roof tiles west side of property



Photo 4: View of ridge, tiles and dormers, east face of property



Photo 5: Wooden soffit box along eastern face of property



Photo 6: Sealed soffits and wooden cladding at front of property



Photo 7: Gable at rear of property



Photo 8: Tiles and fascia board at rear of property



Photo 9: Flat-roofed extension to western side of property

4.4 Roof Void Inspection

The presence of loft boarding afforded opportunity to assess the loft space. The loft space comprises a void approximately 2.5 m high with wooden rafters and had underfelt into the joists – the felt was in good condition throughout, and the loft was insulated. Internally it was evident that the loft space had been well protected, with the roof well-maintained. No obvious ingress / egress points were noted within the structure of the roof, and there were no gaps evident into the roof void.

No bat droppings or other signs of bats, or features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats (such as sagging roofing felt) were found within the loft space.



Photo 10: Loft space showing roofing felt onto wooden joists



Photo 11: Loft space showing boarding and insulation materials

5. ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The exterior of the building is well-sealed and no obvious access points for bats were observed. No bat droppings were observed external to the building. The tiles on the building were intact, including along the ridge, as were the soffits. The roof void was intact with no evidence of ingress / egress points, and the roofing felt was well-fitted above the wooden roof joists.

From the DEFRA Magic desk study data, there are no known bat roosts nor records within the immediate vicinity of the site; there are eight European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSMLs) which have been granted within 1 km of the proposed development site, and the site has good habitat connectivity to potential feeding areas.

Based upon the desk study data and the lack of evidence of bat presence recorded, it is not considered that the building currently functions as a bat roost.

However, bats are mobile species and conditions may change so that previously unsuitable structures become suitable as roosts. In the unlikely event of bats being suspected / observed during the proposed works, works should cease immediately and an ecologist be contacted to advise further. This may result in delay to the work programme.

6. CONCLUSIONS

On the instructions of Ms Kuldeep Gill, TSA Ecology undertook a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) survey of the property at 38, Linkway, Crowthorne, Berkshire GU12 4LG, to investigate evidence for signs of bats.

No obvious potential access points to the roof or building were identified. The roof tiles and ridge were in good condition, and the soffits were flush with the main walls of the property.

No evidence for the presence of bats was identified. The overall condition of the felting within the roof space was good. It is not considered that emergence / re-entry surveys are required to further characterise the use of the building by bats.

There have been eight EPSMLs granted between 2013 - current within 1 km of the proposed development site, and habitat connectivity to the site is considered to be good.

The building is therefore classified as having **negligible** potential to support roosting bats and there should be no constraints to the proposals in relation to bats.

However, bats are mobile species, and conditions may change so that previously unsuitable structures become suitable as roosts. In the unlikely event of bats being suspected / observed during the proposed works, works should cease immediately, and an ecologist be contacted to advise further. This may result in delay to the work programme.

If development does not proceed by the next bat active season (May – September inclusive), then the building should be reassessed for its potential to support bats at this time.

7. REFERENCES

Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (2015). *Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing*. CIEEM, Winchester.

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