



Urban Tree Experts

BS5837 – Tree Surveys – Ecological Consulting

ECOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT (BATS) AT 6 OLD BATH ROAD SONNING



**Prepared for:
Mr L Kulasingam
c/o 6 Old Bath Road
Sonning
Reading
RG4 6TA**

3 August 2025

Ref: SPH/ESR-25/20.07



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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.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Urban Tree Experts was commissioned by Mr L Kulasingam to carry out two dusk emergence surveys at 6 Old Bath Road, Sonning, Reading, RG4 6TA. 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 (bats) report ref SPH/NP/PEA-25/20.05, 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 detached, brick-built and part rendered/painted property with link attached garage. The front garden consists of a gravelled driveway/parking area and lawn with flower beds and shrubs, the rear garden is mainly laid to lawn with mature trees and shrubs on the boundaries. The site itself offers foraging and commuting habitat for bats and there is good ecological connectivity to the wider landscape.

The preliminary ecological appraisal consists of a desk top 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 desk top study was conducted based upon a minimum 2km search radius and it revealed that three statutory designated sites are located within, and three current European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for bats have been granted within 2km of the proposed development site. The landform to the north of the site is suitable for roosting, commuting or foraging bats and provides a rich and diverse habitats suitable for a wide range of bat species.

A search of Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire Bat Group records confirmed 12 different species within the 2-kilometer search radius, including *Myotis sp.*

The dusk emergence surveys were conducted on Wednesday 25 June and Sunday 20 July 2025. A very low number of bats were seen and heard foraging in and around the site throughout both surveys and none were seen emerging from or re-entering the property to roost. The static detector recorded no bat activity.

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 L Kulasingam to carry out two dusk emergence surveys at 6 Old Bath Road, Sonning, Reading, RG4 6TA.

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 251596) for “Full application for the proposed erection of 1 no. detached dwelling following demolition of the existing dwelling and garage”.

1.4 Surveyor Background and Experience

The activity surveys were conducted by Nick Powell and remote cameras/batlogger 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.

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 25 June 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, and a low number of bats were seen and heard foraging and in transit during the surveys.

2.2 Dusk Surveys

The dusk emergence surveys were conducted on the evenings of Wednesday 25 June and Sunday 20 July 2025. The surveyor and equipment were stationed (as shown in Figure 1 on page 5), to ensure the features identified in the preliminary bat report could be observed.



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During the surveys bat activity was monitored using two BatLogger M bat detectors together with three Sony Handycam night shot video cameras with high intensity IR lamps. Sample screenshots from the video cameras is included at Figure 2 on page 6. 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.

A static detector was positioned in the main loft of the property between 25.06.25 and 19.07.25.

Figure 1 – 6 Old Bath Road, Sonning, 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 a very low number of bats were heard/seen across both surveys.



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Figure 2 – 6 Old Bath Road, Sonning, screenshot from night vision cameras.

Position A:



Position B:



Position C:





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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 6 Old Bath Road, Sonning.

Date:	25 June 2025	20 July 2025
Survey Type	Emergence survey	Emergence survey
Surveyor and location	(A) Nick Powell (B) Remote camera (C) Remote camera (D) Remote batlogger	(A) Nick Powell (B) Remote camera (C) Remote camera (D) Remote batlogger
Weather Conditions (Start)	Temperature 22.4°C Cloud cover 5% Humidity 68.9% Dry with Wind Beaufort 0	Temperature 20.1°C Cloud cover 5% Humidity 62.3% Dry with Wind Beaufort 1
Sunset	21:25	21:09
Start time	21:10	20:50
Finish Time	22:55	22:40
Duration	01:45	01:50
Weather Conditions (Finish)	Temperature 20.8°C Cloud cover 5% Humidity 69.4% Dry with Wind Beaufort 1	Temperature 15.8°C Cloud cover 0% Humidity 80.4% Dry with Wind Beaufort 0-1

Table 2. Summary of bat calls recorded in the vicinity of 6 Old Bath Road, Sonning.

Date	Surveyor Position	Time	Seen	Heard	Species	Comments
25/06/25	A	21:10 – 22:55	Y	Y	Common and soprano pipistrelle and noctule	Bat activity during this survey was limited. At 21.44 (19 minutes after sunset) a call from a noctule was heard, it was heard again 2 minutes later but never seen. At 22.00 a soprano pipistrelle bat was seen in transit from behind the surveyor flying toward the garage to the rear of the property and thereafter only another 8 foraging calls from soprano pipistrelle bats were heard up until 22.42. Common pipistrelle activity commenced at 22.06 with a bat being seen in transit from the rear of the property to the front. A common pipistrelle bat was then seen foraging over the garage at 22.08 and the last call from a common pipistrelle bat was heard at 22.22.
25/06/25	B	21:10 – 22:55	N	N	Remote camera only	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.
25/06/25	C	21:10 – 22:55	N	N	Remote camera only	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.
25/06/25	D	21:10 – 22:55	N	Y	Common and soprano pipistrelle and noctule	Between 21.44 and 22.22, 2 calls from a noctule, 6 calls from soprano pipistrelles and 4 calls from common pipistrelle bats were recorded.



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Table 2 continued

Date	Surveyor Position	Time	Seen	Heard	Species	Comments
20/07/25	A	20:50 – 22:40	Y	Y	Common and soprano pipistrelle and noctule	Again, bat activity was limited during the survey. The first bat seen and heard during the survey was a common pipistrelle at 21.53 (44 minutes after sunset) in transit into the site from behind the surveyor and flying toward the garage then into the neighbouring back garden. Thereafter only another 2 calls from common pipistrelle bats were heard during the entire survey. Only 3 foraging calls were heard from a soprano pipistrelle bat between 21.50 and 22.03, the bat was not seen. Three calls from a noctule were heard 22.21 and 22.34, the bat was not seen.
20/07/25	B	20:50 – 22:40	N	N	Remote camera only	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.
20/07/25	C	20:50 – 22:40	N	N	Remote camera only	The remote camera did not record any bat activity.
20/07/25	D	20:50 – 22:40	N	Y	Common and soprano pipistrelle and noctule	Between 21.59 and 22.34, 5 calls from a noctule, 3 calls from soprano pipistrelles and 2 calls from common pipistrelle bats were recorded.

3.2 Static Detector Findings

Remote monitoring at the site was conducted between 25.06.25 and 19.07.25 using a static detector, installed in the main loft space.

The static detector did not record any bat calls indicating that bats were not active in the loft space.

4. Conclusions/Interpretation

- 4.1 The calls detected and recorded from the surveys provided identification of common pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, noctule, *Nyctalus noctule*, foraging and/or transiting in the vicinity.
- 4.2 The property has a feature 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.
- 4.3 Pipistrelle bats are one of the first emerging bat species after sunset, frequently emerging within 20 minutes after sunset. As the first soprano pipistrelle call was heard at 35 minutes after sunset, the bat is most probably roosting in the vicinity and did not emerge from the property. 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.
- 4.5 The bat calls and field observations support the opinions set out in this report and provide a high level of confidence in the species detected during the surveys at 6 Old Bath Road.



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- 4.6 The cumulative evidence leads me to conclude that bats are not roosting at 6 Old Bath Road 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).

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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