Urban Tree Experts

BS5837 – Tree Surveys – Ecological Consulting

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL (DBW) AT 52 POUNDFIELD WAY TWYFORD

Prepared for:
Ms K Pauling
52 Poundfield Way
Twyford
RG10 0XR

2 October 2025

Ref: SPH/NP/PEA-25/18.09

Offices in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Worcestershire
Tel: 0118 976 2902

Bramley House
Newnham Bridge
Tenbury Wells
Worcestershire
WR15 8NX
Tel: 0118 976 2902
Email: info@batsurveys-uk.com

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This report is valid for 12 months from the site inspection. The lifespan of this report may be subject to change if the site conditions change due to unspecified works that affect the site.

Executive Summary

Urban Tree Experts was commissioned by Ms K Pauling to conduct a preliminary ecological appraisal (daytime bat walkover [DBW]) of 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford, RG10 0XR. This is to support a forthcoming planning application to Wokingham Borough Council.

The site visit was carried out on Thursday 18 September 2025 at 1pm, during daylight hours. An internal and external inspection of the property and detached garage took place to look for signs of bats.

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 one statutory designated site is located within, and one current European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) for bats has been granted within 2km of the proposed development site The immediate surrounding habitat does not provide suitable habitat for roosting, commuting or foraging bats, due to the dense urban environment however, there is good ecological connectivity to woodland and agricultural land via the garden network.

The DBW comprised a detailed search of the interior and exterior of the buildings for bats, signs of bats and features suitable for use by roosting bats. This includes droppings, scratch marks, rubbing and staining at exit holes, live or dead bats and other features such as missing tiles, this list is not exhaustive.

The buildings suitability to support roosting bats was assessed and no potential roost features were identified during the preliminary inspection. When combined, the lack of features, along with the data from the desk top study results in the property and garage being characterised as having negligible potential[1] to support roosting bats.

In line with best practice guidelines[2], no further survey effort is required.

[1] Table 4.1 Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats. Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition.
[2] Collins, J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition).

1. Introduction

1.1 Instruction

Urban Tree Experts was instructed by Ms K Pauling to conduct a DBW of 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford, RG10 0XR to support a forthcoming planning application to Wokingham Borough Council.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The DBW is designed to:

- Identify the presence/likely absence of bats within the buildings.
- Provide information on previous bat ecological surveys/reports.
- Provide information on the status of bats using the buildings currently or previously).
- To add confidence where no bats are found, or to categorise the nature of a roost where evidence of bats are found.
- To establish whether further surveys, mitigation or an EPSL is required.

The preliminary ecological appraisal (bats) and report writing were carried out in accordance with Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition.

1.3 Proposed Works

The survey was commissioned in connection with a forthcoming planning application to Wokingham Borough Council that will seek to construct a two-storey side and rear extensions, see plans at Appendix 1.

1.4 Surveyor Background and Experience

The preliminary ecological appraisal for bats was completed by Nick Powell and the report was written by Simon Holmes MSc. CEnv.

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.

Simon holds Class 3 (CL19) and 4 (CL20) Bat Licenses (Nos. 17637 and 17638) and a Science and Education license (SCI64844). He has 34 years' experience of carrying out bat surveys and bat conservation work.

2. Legislation and Planning Policy

2.1 Legislative Background

All species of British bat are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Under this legislation 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. A summary of the main legislation and planning considerations are included at Appendix 2.

Seven species of bat are also Species of Principal Importance for nature conservation in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. This places a duty on all government departments to have regard for the conservation of these species and on the Secretary of State to further, or promote others to further, the conservation of these species.

3. Site Location and Description

3.1 Site Location

The building is located at Grid Reference SU79707503, see Figure 1 below. An overview of the immediate area is shown on Figure 2, courtesy of Bing Maps.

Figure 1. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford, highlighted.

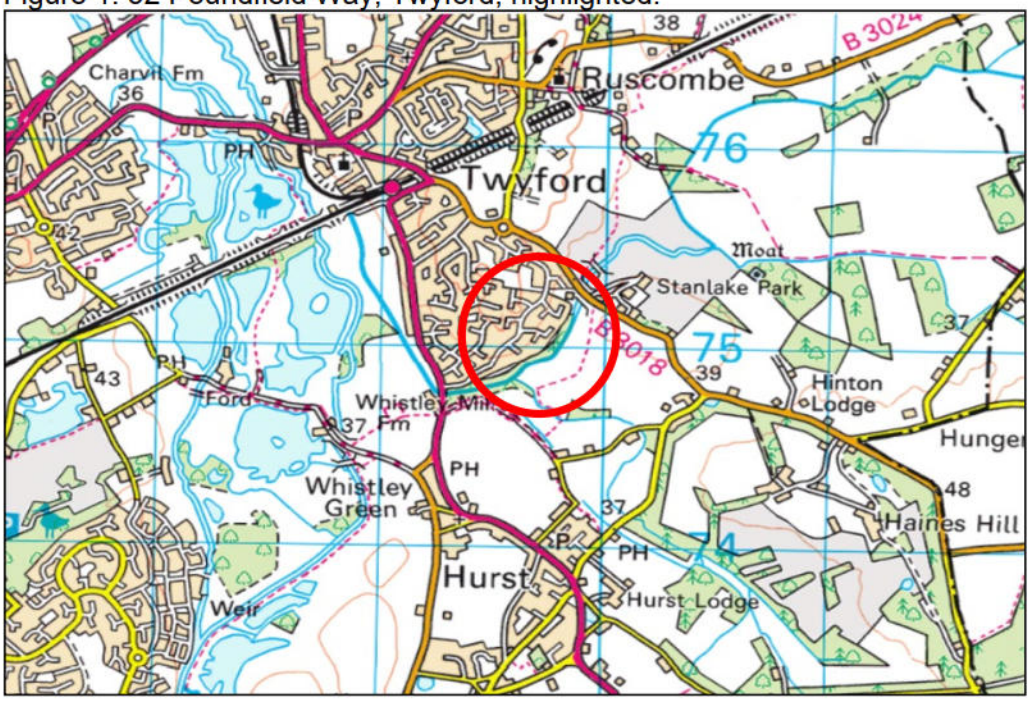

Figure 2. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford, overview of the immediate area.

3.2 Site Description

The application site comprises a detached, brick-built 2 storey property with detached garage. The remainder of the site comprises a paved parking area with lawn and a rear garden which is mainly laid to lawn, with patio area, see Figure 3 below. The site itself offers no foraging or commuting habitat for bats however there is good ecological connectivity to bat foraging and commuting habitat in the wider landscape.

Figure 3. Rear garden. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

4. Survey Methodology

4.1 Pre-Survey Data Search

The client has advised that, to their knowledge, no previous bat surveys have been undertaken on this site. Google Earth and MAGIC maps (magic.defra.gov.uk) websites were used prior to the survey to determine the suitability of the surrounding habitat to support roosting bats and to identify any statutory designated sites or EPSLs within 2km of the site. Due to the suburban area, scale of the proposed development, and the very local impact that may occur, no data was sought from the local records centre at this time.

The site is situated in a residential area of Twyford and is surrounded by properties and gardens of similar sizes and styles. Slightly further afield to the east lies Twyford Brook and areas of woodland and farmland, all of which are likely to provide good habitat to support roosting, commuting and foraging bats and are connected to the site via the garden network. To the west lies the River Loddon, Old River, a number of large fresh water lakes and areas of woodland and grassland, all of which are likely to provide good habitat for bats and are connected to the site via ecological corridors.

Lodge Wood & Sandford Mill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies to the south-west and within 2km of the proposed development site although there is limited ecological connectivity from the site to this designated site. A search of the Magic interactive website revealed one current EPSLs for bats have been granted within 2km of the site, the details of which are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Current EPSLs for bats within 2km of the site

EPSL reference	Licence end date	Species on licence
2016-25277-EPS-MIT-1	09/2026	Soprano pipistrelle

4.2 Daylight Survey

The DBW of 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford, RG10 0XR was carried out by Nick Powell on Thursday 18 September 2025 at 1pm. The weather conditions for the survey were overcast with a temperature of 19.5 degrees. Equipment used included a high-powered torch, a digital camera on a telescopic pole, endoscope and a ladder.

During the DBW, an internal and external inspection of the property and garage was carried out to identify any signs of occupation by bats and features that could offer potential roosting sites following standard survey guidelines. Features investigated included:

- Construction of the buildings – soffits, loft space, tiles/slates, lead flashings etc.
- Building condition – structure of roof and walls.
- Internal conditions – microclimate stability, draughts etc.
- Access points – potential entry and exit points for bats.
- Roosting points – cracks and crevices, between underlay and roofing tiles/slates.

Field signs that would indicate the presence of bats were searched for. These included:

- Bat droppings on the floor and walls of the buildings.
- Feeding remains (particularly butterfly and moth wings).
- Evidence of urine and/or oily staining around possible roost entrances.
- Presence of areas cleared of cobwebs.
- Where a breathable roofing membrane has been fitted staining on the membrane may suggest use by bats.
- Odour can sometimes suggest the present of bats.
- Squeaking and chattering can reveal bats roosting between the tiles and roofing underlay.

Buildings or structures that were not to be affected by the current proposals or with no bat roosting potential were not inspected. The wooden shed in the rear garden will not be affected by the current proposals and therefore an inspection of this building was not undertaken.

4.3 Constraints

Full access to the site during the visit was made possible by the client. A thorough inspection of the loft space could not be undertaken due to the lack of boarding and think insulation but given the good condition of the roof tiles externally this was not considered a constraint to the survey.

5. Survey Findings

5.1 External Inspection

The external features of the property and garage were examined for signs described in section 4.2. Windowsills, exposed features around the windows, fascias and walls were inspected for any evidence of bat droppings or staining.

The property is a detached, brick-built building that is in a good condition externally. The clipped hipped roof is covered in closely fitted tiles, none of which are missing or broken, see Figure 4 below. The ridge and hip tiles are all tightly fitted with no gaps which could be used by roosting bats (see Figure 5 on page 9) and the verges are all fully sealed with no gaps in which roosting bats could exploit, see Figure 6 on page 9. The lead flashing around the flues is all tightly fitted to the roof tiles with no lifted sections which crevice dwelling bats could utilise and the soffits and fascias are all tightly fitted to the walls and had no cracks or splits in which bats could use to roost, see Figure 7 on page 10. There are ventilation holes in the soffits, which are covered in wire mesh (see Figure 8 on page 10) providing no gaps large enough for bats to access the building.

On the north-west elevation is the detached, brick-built single garage (see Figure 9 on page 11), the pitched roof of which is covered in closely fitted tiles and there is no missing mortar from the ridge or verges, see Figure 10 on page 11. There is an area of tightly fitted hanging tiles on the front of the garage and they firmly abut the soffits, see Figure 11 on page 11.

No bats or evidence of bats was recorded during the external inspection of the property or garage and there were no visible roosting opportunities for bats or access into the buildings for roosting bats.

Figure 4. Example of tightly fitted roof tiles. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

Figure 5. Example of ridge and hip tiles. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

Figure 6. Example sealed verges. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

Figure 7. Example of soffits/fascias. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

Figure 8. Ventilation holes in soffit boxes. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

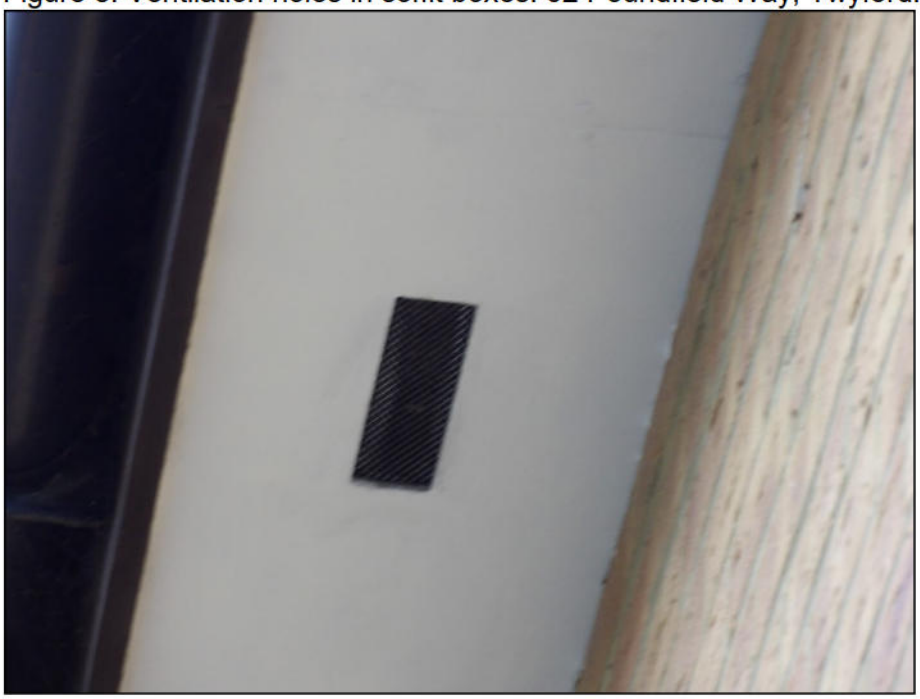

Figure 9. Detached garage. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

Figure 10. Example sealed roof and ridge tiles on garage. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

Figure 11. Example of tightly fitted hanging tiles. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

5.2 Internal Inspection

An internal inspection of the property and garage was undertaken and was examined for any signs of bats (as described in section 4.2).

The loft space was accessed via a ladder through a hatch and is in a good condition. The loft space is lit, not boarded and insulated, see Figure 12 below. The roof tiles were lined with bitumen felt, all of which that could be seen appeared to be in a good condition with no rips or tears. Although it has no loft space the garage was also inspected. The roof is open to the rafters, and the tiles are lined with bitumen felt with no features that roosting bats could exploit, see Figure 13 below.

No bats or evidence of bats was recorded during the internal inspection of the property or garage and internally there appeared to be no roosting opportunities or access into the buildings for bats.

Figure 12. Example of loft space. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

Figure 13. Internal view of garage roof. 52 Poundfield Way, Twyford. 18.09.25

6. Evaluation

The bat roost potential of the features within the site have been assessed with reference to the following criteria and include seasonal variation where increased or decreased probability may arise. Where features are present, they are **highlighted in bold**.

The likelihood of bat roosts being present will be higher where structures:

- are of a pre-20th Century construction;
- are in a lowland rural setting;
- **have woodland, mature trees, species-rich grassland and/or water nearby**;
- have large dimension roof timbers with cracks, joints and holes;
- have numerous crevices in stonework and structures;
- have an uneven roof covering with gaps, though not too draughty;
- **have hanging tiles or roof cladding, especially on south-facing walls;**
- **have a roof warmed by the sun;**
- are disused or little used; largely undisturbed;
- provide appropriate hibernation conditions, such as abandoned mines, tunnels, kilns, or fortifications; or
- **Recent and historical records of bat roosts in the general area.**

The likelihood of bat roosts being present will be lower where structures:

- **are in an urban setting with little green space;**
- are subject to heavy disturbance (constant movement due to draughts and noise, also unstable microclimate);
- **have a small, cluttered roof void (particularly for brown long-eared);**
- **are of a modern construction with few gaps or crevices that bats can fly or crawl through (though pipistrelle bats may still be present);**
- are comprised of prefabricated steel or sheet materials; (some sections);
- are active industrial premises.

Please note that the above list provides generic screening criteria only and there are exceptions to consider.

7. Conclusions

7.1 Interpretation

The combined evidence from the desktop study and the internal and external inspection of the property and garage provides a high level of confidence in support of the opinions set out in this report. There are no visible features externally on the buildings which could be utilised by roosting bats or in which bats could access the buildings to roost.

Informed by the results of the survey and the factors highlighted in Section 6, it is concluded that there is negligible potential for roosting bats within the property or garage. Based on recommendations in the Bat Workers Manual and the Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines, no further survey effort is required.

7.2 Contingency Plan

In the unlikely event that bats are found during the proposed works, all work must stop, and advice sought from Urban Tree Experts or another licensed bat ecologist.

If, for whatever reason, there is a time delay of greater than 12 months between this survey and the commencement of work, then the survey should be repeated as the condition of the building may change and bats may start roosting at the site.

8. References

Collins, J (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

HM Government (2017) Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations as (amended).

HM Government (1981) The Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended).

HM Government (2006) Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (2004). Bat Workers' Manual (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

9. Queries

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

Telephone: 01189 762902
Email: info@batsurveys-uk.com

Urban Tree Experts
Bramley House
Newnham Bridge
Tenbury Wells
WR15 8NX

[redacted]
Simon Holmes MSc. CEnv.
Consultant, Urban Tree Experts
Natural England Licence CLS-CLS-17637, CLS-CLS-17638

APPENDIX 1

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Please Note:
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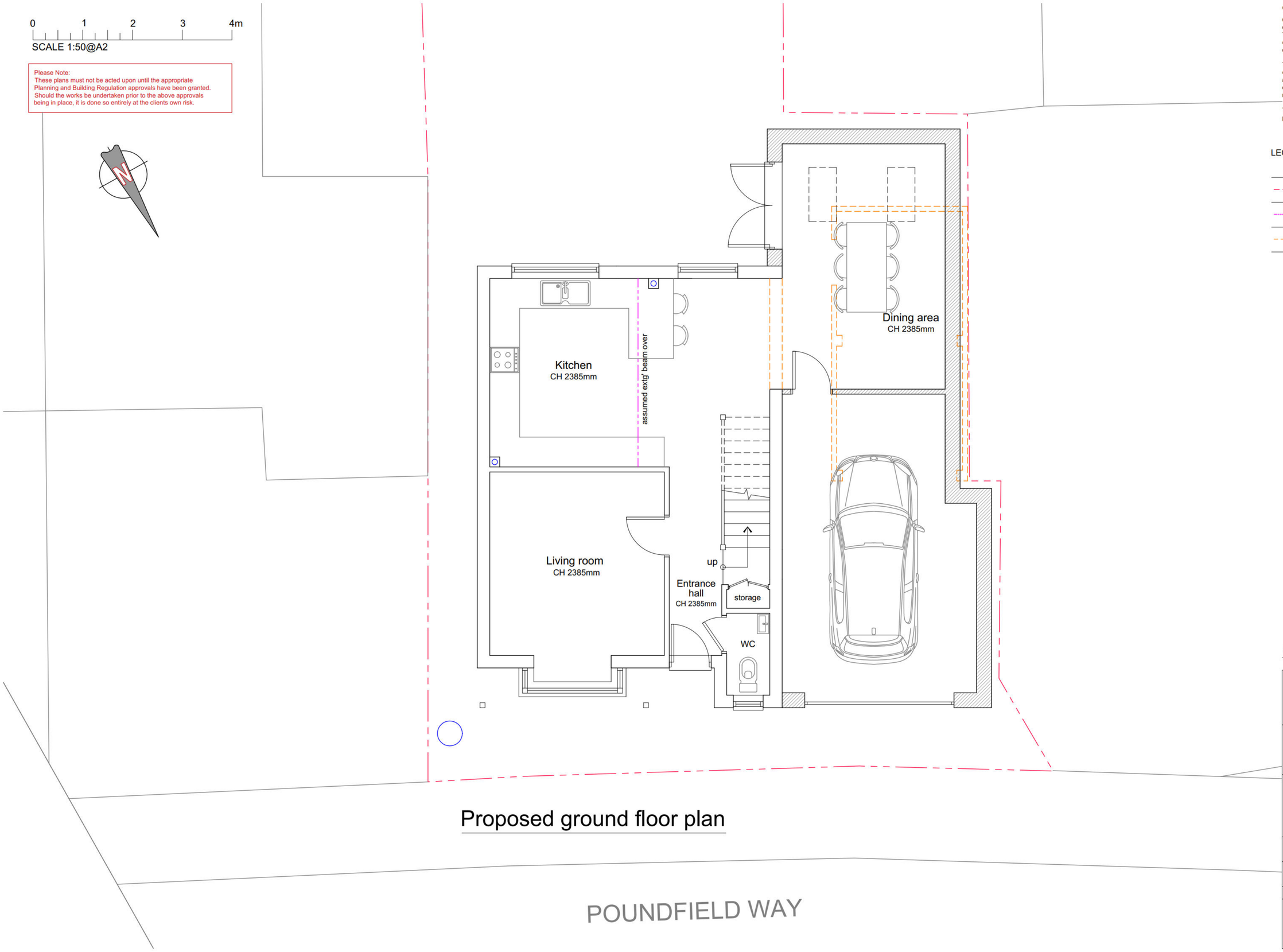

Proposed ground floor plan

GENERAL NOTES:

Check and verify all dimensions prior to commencement of work.
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LEGEND

	Boundary		Drainage
	Beam		Span Direction
	Demolition		

Status: Planning

Project
52 Poundfield Way
Twyford
RG10 0XR

Drawing Title
PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN

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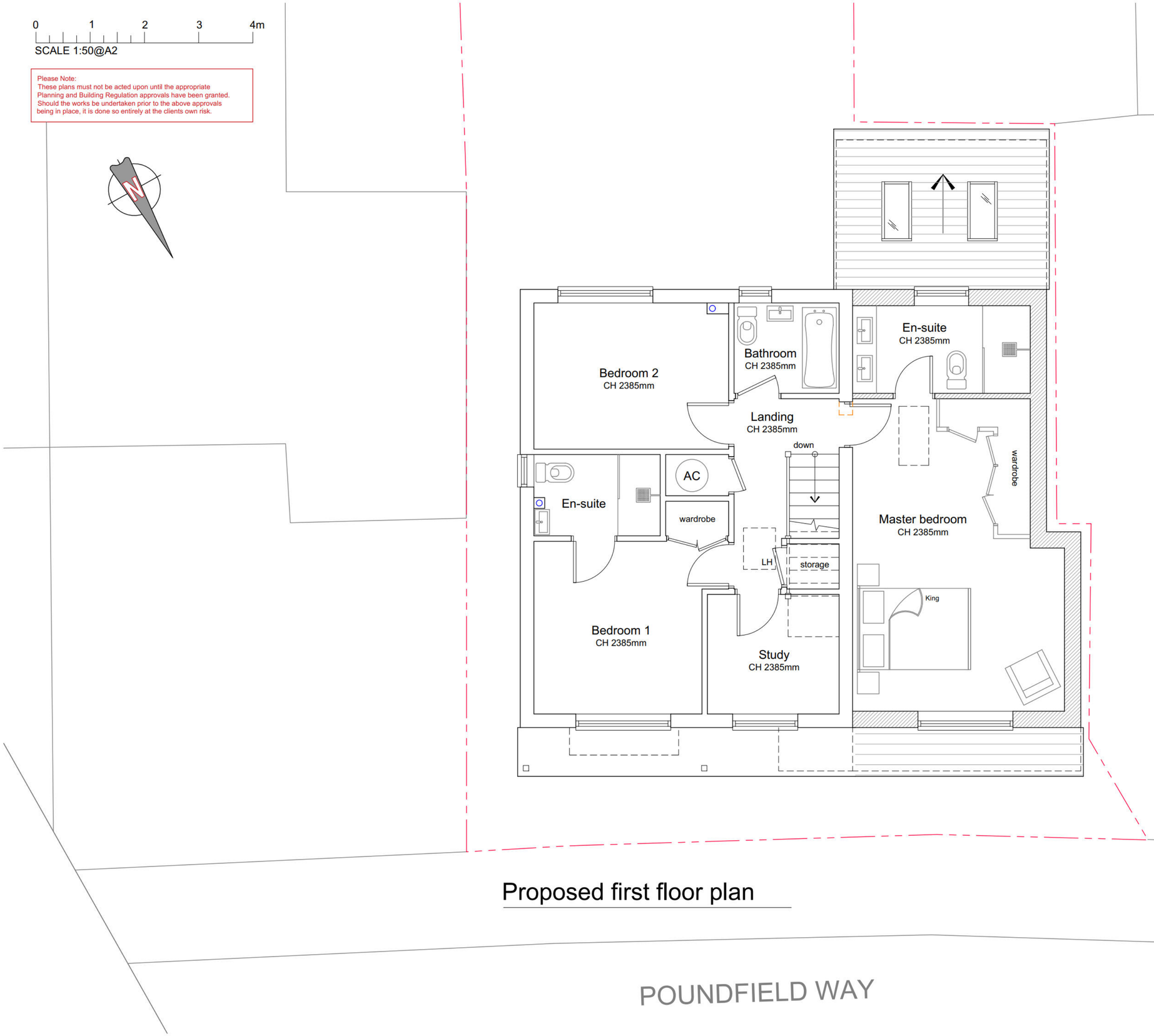

Proposed first floor plan

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LEGEND

	Boundary		Drainage
	Beam		Span Direction
	Demolition		

Status: Planning

Project
52 Poundfield Way
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Drawing Title
PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN

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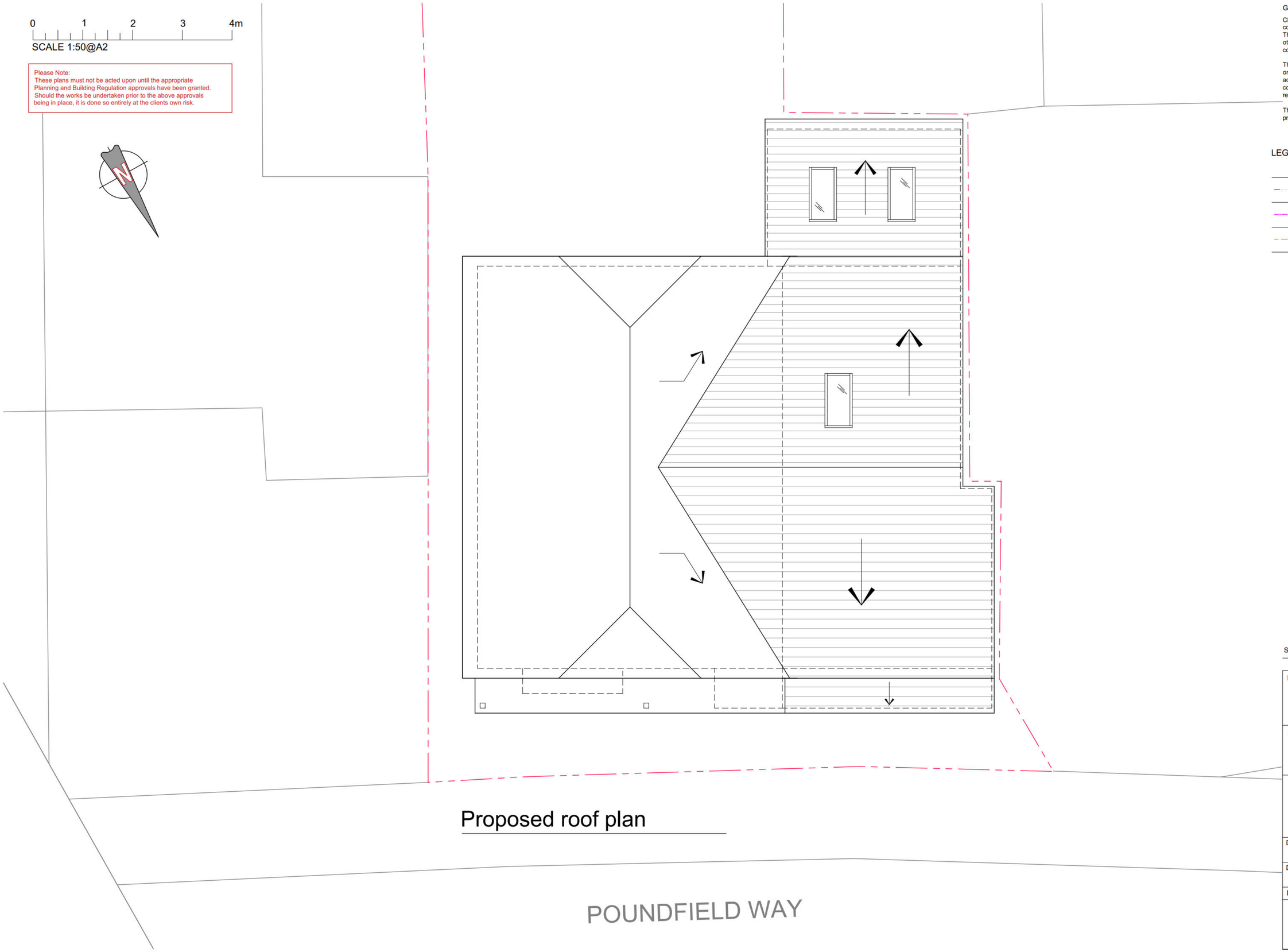

Proposed roof plan

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LEGEND

	Boundary		Drainage
	Beam		Span Direction
	Demolition		

Status: Planning

Project
52 Poundfield Way
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Drawing Title
PROPOSED ROOF PLAN

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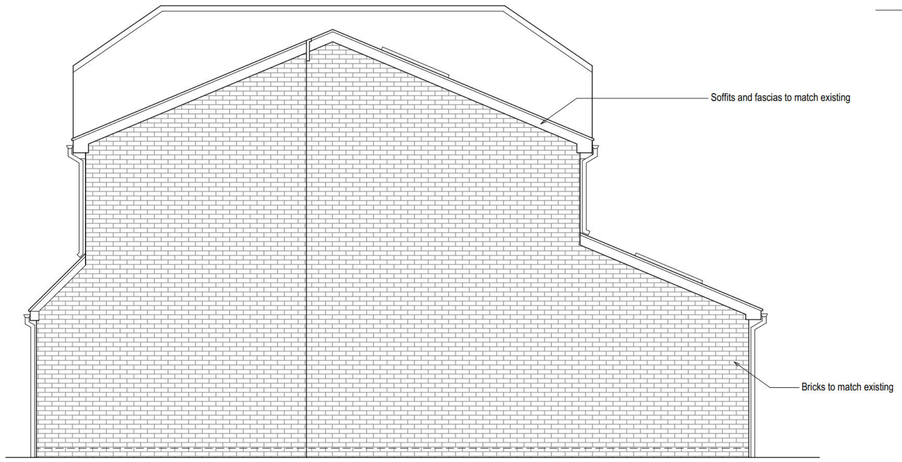
LEGEND

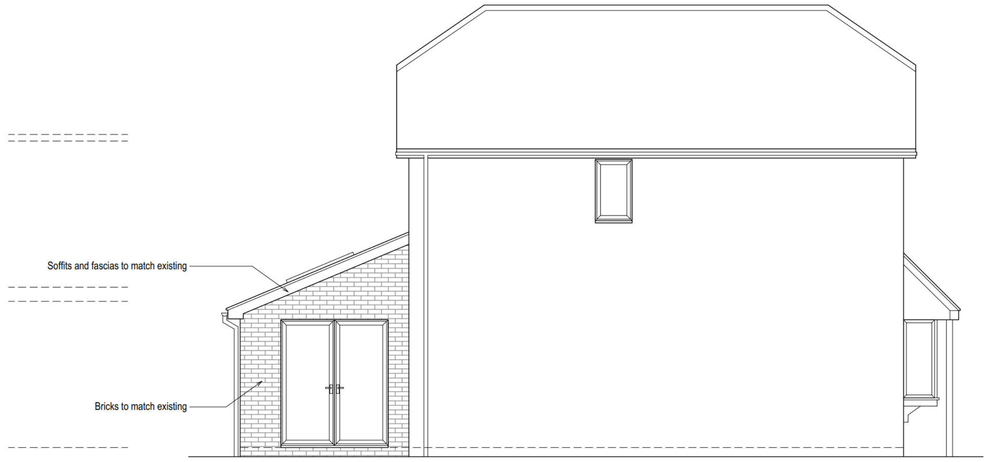
	Boundary		Drainage
	Beam		Span Direction
	Demolition		

Proposed front elevation



Proposed side elevation

Proposed rear elevation



Proposed side elevation

Status	Planning
Project	52 Poundfield Way Twyford RG10 0XR
Drawing Title	PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

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12325-08	

APPENDIX 2

In summary, the legislation combined makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter by a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats; in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair the ability of bats to survive, breed or reproduce or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migrating bats, to hibernate or migrate.
- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or take any bat.

Planning Considerations:
Government guidance to Local Planning Authorities stipulates the need to consider biodiversity and protected species during the consideration of planning applications. The NPPF makes clear that the planning system should help minimise the impacts that development can have on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible. In addition, the ODPM Circular 04/2005 states "*It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision".*

Policy CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (planning policy relating to the site) states "*Development 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 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".

Developments that compromise the protection afforded to bats or roosts under the provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 will require a European Protected Species (EPS) licence from Natural England (NE).

NE, the government's statutory conservation advisory organisation, is responsible for issuing EPS licences that would permit activities that would otherwise lead to an infringement of the Habitat Regulations.

Three tests must be satisfied before this licence (to permit otherwise prohibited acts) can be issued:

- Reg 44(2)(e) – the derogation is "in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment".
- Reg 44(3)(a) – there is "no satisfactory alternative" to the derogation.
- Reg 44(3)(b) –the derogation is "not detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range".

Tests (a) and (e) can be met with the issue of planning permission for the proposed works. Test (b) is determined by NE's ecology department that requires the development of a suitable mitigation strategy that would ensure that any bats present on site, are retained at the same population level or better.