

SPECIES

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**25 CRESSINGHAM ROAD, READING,
BERKSHIRE**

BAT EMERGENCE/RE-ENTRY SURVEYS

FINAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER, 2023

25 CRESSINGHAM ROAD,

READING, BERKSHIRE

BAT EMERGENCE/RE-ENTRY SURVEYS & MITIGATION STRATEGY

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**25 CRESSINGHAM ROAD,
READING, BERKSHIRE
BAT EMERGENCE/RE-ENTRY SURVEYS**

SUMMARY

Species Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Gemma Piper to undertake Phase 2 Bat Emergence and Re-entry Surveys of 25 Cressingham Road, Reading, Berkshire. It is proposed to extend the property. A Phase 1 Bat Survey undertaken in August 2023 (Arbtech, 2023) concluded that 25 Cressingham Road had potential to support a bat roost. Thus it is best practice (Bat Conservation Trust, 2016) to undertake bat emergence and re-entry surveys to more fully assess whether a bat roost is present. These surveys were thus undertaken and the results are presented here.

Bat emergence/re-entry surveys undertaken in August and September, 2023 found that no bats emerged or re-entered the property but low numbers of Common Pipistrelle bats foraged within the garden and around the house. No. 25 Cressingham Road, Reading is thus not currently considered to be a bat roost. It is considered that small roosts of Common Pipistrelle bats are located to the south of the property.

From November, 2023 it will become law that all development proposals must include a 10% enhancement for biodiversity. This may be provided by allowing bats access to the roofspace of the new extension or providing two woodcrete bat boxes on trees to the rear of the garden.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Overview

- 1.1 Species Ecological Consultancy was instructed by Gemma Piper to undertake Phase 2 Bat Emergence and Re-entry Surveys of 25 Cressingham Road, Reading, Berkshire. It is proposed to extend the property. A Phase 1 Bat Survey undertaken in August 2023 (Arbtech, 2023) concluded that 25 Cressingham Road had potential to support a bat roost. Thus it is best practice (Bat Conservation Trust, 2016) to undertake bat emergence and re-entry surveys to more fully assess whether a bat roost is present in order to inform a planning application.

Site Description

- 1.2 The site is a detached house that was constructed in the 1920s and sits to the north of the plot, set back slightly from Cressingham Road, which runs east-west to the front of the property (**Photo 1**). Mature vegetation, including trees runs along the boundaries of the site with much of the garden laid to lawn. To the south of the property stands a small copse which is physically connected to the site. The house has other properties on both sides.
- 1.3 The Site stands in a sub-urban situation amongst other residential properties to the south-east of Reading, Berkshire, to the west of the A327 major road, near to the University of Reading campus and Leighton Park School. Cowsey Wood Nature Reserve lies to the south of the site and is connected to the site by the small copse. This landscape provides good foraging, roosting and commuting habitat for wildlife.

Policy and Legislation

- 1.4 Nature conservation in the UK is protected by legislation, principally under the Habitats Regulations: The Conservation of Habitats and Species (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). The Government's stance on biodiversity is set out in The National Planning Policy Framework (July, 2021) and includes how biodiversity policy is expected to be applied in order to achieve sustainable development. The environment is considered a core component of sustainable development and the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils;
- recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- preventing both new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.

1.5 To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries;
- identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
- promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

2. METHODOLOGY

Phase 2 Bat Survey

- 2.1 Phase 2 bat emergence and re-entry surveys of 25 Cressingham Road were undertaken by Species Ecological Consultancy on 28th August and 20th September, 2023. The Phase 1 Bat survey undertaken by Arbtech (2023) recommended that two bat emergence/re-entry surveys be undertaken. A dusk emergence survey and a dawn re-entry survey were therefore undertaken. All the surveys were undertaken in the period for bat activity in the UK and in good weather conditions suitable for bat activity and meet best practice (Bat Conservation Trust 2016) by one survey being undertaken between May and August and one survey a dawn re-entry survey.
- 2.2 Three surveyors were positioned around the house with heterodyne and time expansion bat detectors (see **Plan 2**) to listen and watch for emerging and re-entering bats. Any bats seen or heard were recorded and their movements noted on a plan. The population of bats present was then evaluated.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 2.3 Following completion of the emergence and re-entry surveys consideration was given to any bat mitigation and compensation steps required by the proposals.

3. RESULTS & EVALUATION

Dusk Emergence Surveys

- 3.1 A single dusk emergence survey and a single dawn re-entry survey were undertaken to evaluate the bat population present. The environmental data for the surveys is presented in **Table 1.** below.

Table 1. Environmental Data for Bat Survey Dates.

Date	Dusk/Dawn	Start Time	Finish Time	Temperature at start	Temperature at end	Weather
28/08/2023	20:00	19:30	21:40	18.0°C	15.0°C	Dry, 100% overcast; Still.
20/09/2023	06:46	05:10	07:02	17.0°C	16.0°C	Dry, 100% cloud, 1-2/5 wind

- 3.2 No bats were seen or heard emerging from or re-entering 25 Cressingham Road. Very low numbers of Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* bats were recorded foraging around the garden of the property and around the rear of the house. No other species of bat were recorded. Further results are given in **Table 2** below.
- 3.3 Bats were seen and heard foraging around the mature trees to the south of the rear garden early on in the surveys and bat activity recorded is presented in **Plan 2.** It is thus considered likely that these bats are roosting south of the site, possibly in mature trees.

Table 2: Summary of results of bat emergence and re-entry surveys

Date	Emergence/Re-entry	Bat Activity
28/08/2023	No bats were seen to emerge or enter the buildings on Site.	Moderate activity from very low numbers of Common Pipistrelle bats (2-3), largely along the boundary trees and occasionally around the house.
20/09/2023	No bats were seen to emerge or enter the buildings on Site.	Moderate activity from very low numbers of Common Pipistrelle bats (1-2) foraging around the boundary vegetation.

Survey Constraints

- 3.4 Bats will often roost in places that are inaccessible to the surveyor, such as under tiles, behind cladding and within soffits. Augmenting internal and external inspection of the building with dusk and dawn surveys should provide a sufficient level of information to allow a more accurate evaluation of any bat roosts present.
- 3.5 Bats are nomadic and invariably move between roosts, therefore any bat survey will only provide a snapshot of how bats are using a particular site at that time.

Interpretation/Evaluation of Results

- 3.6 No bats were seen to emerge or enter the house on the two survey dates. The tiles on the roof sit very flat and are of the type which tend to break off and fall leaving the remainder of the tile in-situ and not leaving a gap into the structure. Under these tiles is pine boarding lining the roof which also largely prevents access to the internal loft space. Thus access opportunities for bats are limited. The rear of the property is also highly lit at night by external lights from the neighbouring children's home to the west and bats do not like their access points to be brightly lit as they are then made obvious to predators, which may sit and wait outside the access point. There is thus a number of reasons as to why 25 Cressingham Road, Reading is not considered to be a bat roost.

4. MITIGATION, COMPENSATION AND ENHANCEMENTS

Summary of Mitigation

- 4.1 As it is considered a bat roost is not present on site it is not necessary for the proposals to provide mitigation. However, there are bats foraging on site and it would be best practice to inform tradesmen working on site that there are bats known to forage on site and to check for their presence in the roof prior to the commencement of works and behind tiles/inside any soffits being removed when works are underway. Should any bats be found all works must stop immediately and a licensed bat worker contacted for advice. It would also be best practice not to increase the amount of external lighting on the property.

Biodiversity Enhancement

- 4.2 As part of the planning process, it is also a requirement from November 2023 to enhance the biodiversity value of all development sites as part of the Environment Act 2021. This could be achieved through the permanent erection of two woodcrete bat boxes on trees to the south of the rear garden or by providing bat access to the roofs of the new extension through the installation of two bat tiles.

5. REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust. (2016). *Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines*. Bat Conservation Trust, London. 3rd ed.

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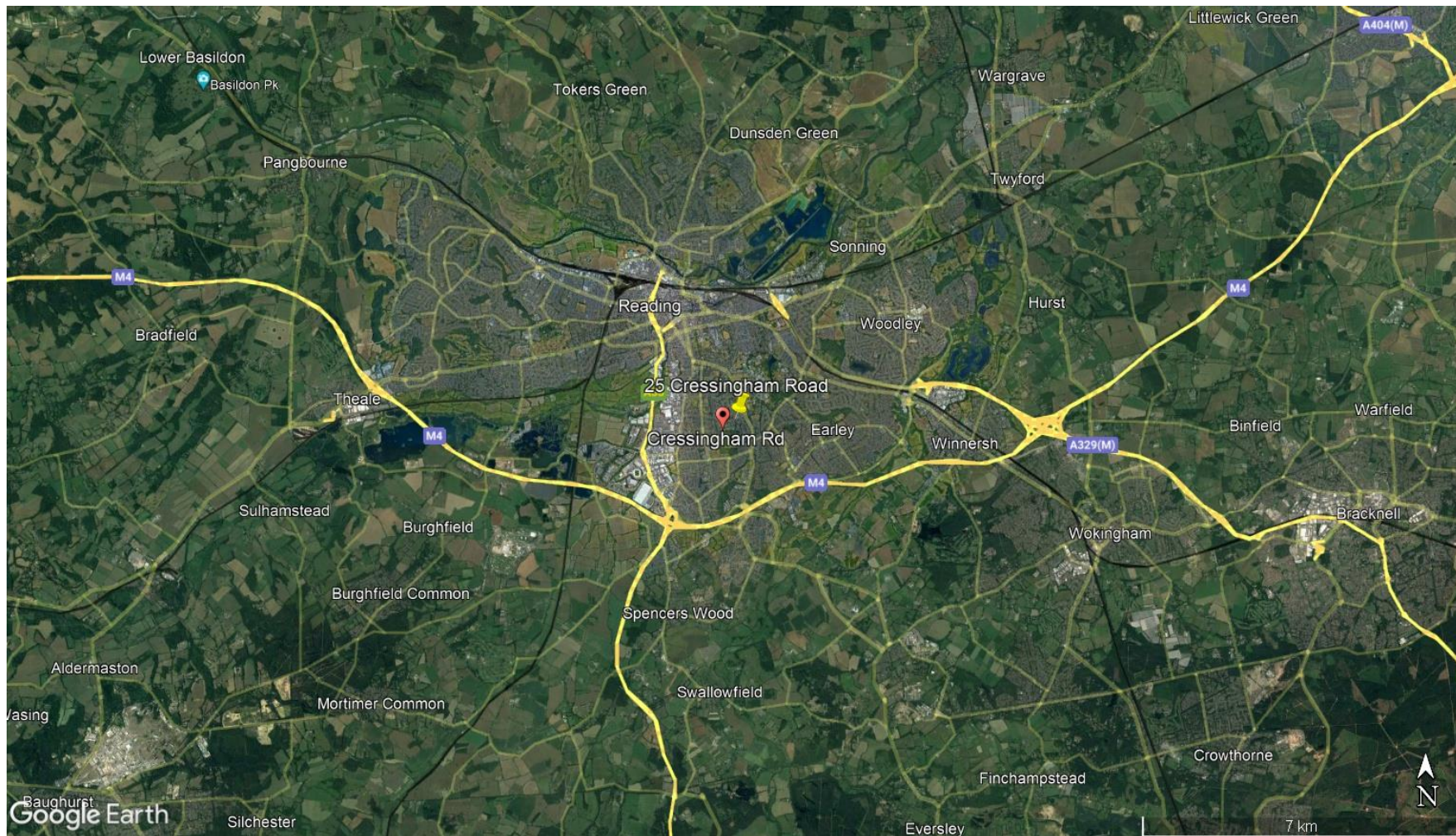
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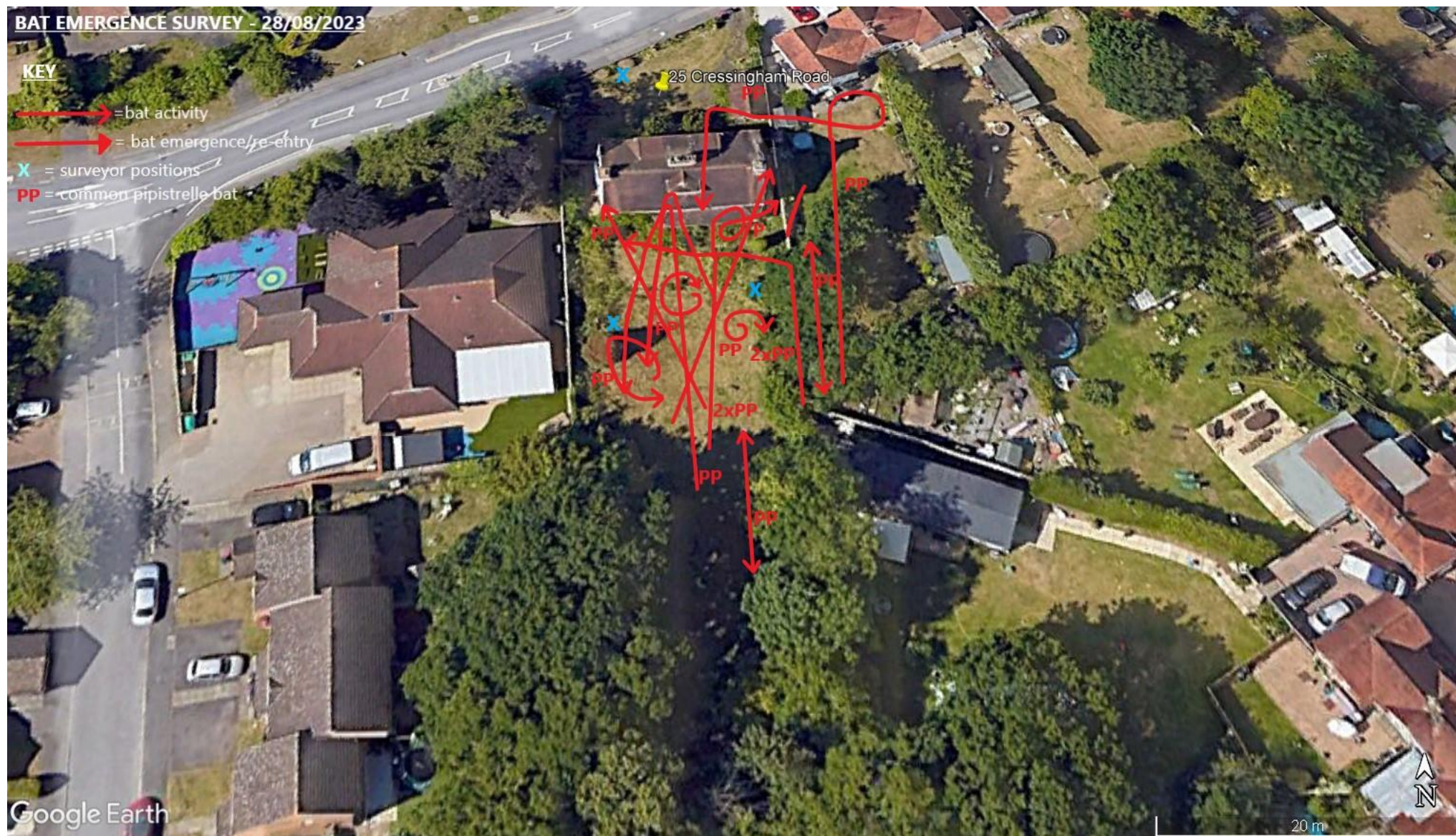
6. PLANS

Plan 1: Site Location (Google Earth, 2023).



PLAN 2: BAT EMERGENCE/RE-ENTRY SURVEY

PLAN 2a: Dusk bat emergence survey – 28/08/2023 (Google Earth, 2023)



2b: Dawn bat re-entry survey – 20/09/2023 (Google Earth, 2023)



7. PHOTOS

Photo 1: Aerial view of 25 Cressingham Road, Reading (Google Earth, 2023).

