
8 Ardler Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire



Vesper Conservation & Ecology Limited

08/08/2023

Phase 1 Bat Surveys:

8 Ardler Road,

Caversham,

Reading,

RG4 5AE



Survey and report by: Vesper Conservation & Ecology Limited

Report produced by: Robert West BA(Hons), PGDip, MCIEEM

Vesper Conservation & Ecology Limited
Director: Robert West. Company Secretary: Stephanie West.
Registered in England No. 9643480
Registered office: 2 Wessex Business Park, Colden Common, Winchester, SO21 1WP

Non-Technical Summary:

Site name and location	8 Ardler Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire Grid Ref: SU 72037 74680
Scope of works	Phase 1 bat survey undertaken on 24th July 2017 and then Updated on 2nd August 2023 This survey is valid for a period no longer than 12 months after that an update will be needed to ascertain if anything has changed in that time.
Assessment and survey methods	The Phase 1 (PRA) survey was carried to the standards set down in the Bat Conservation Trusts Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edition) (2016) and guidance from the Chartered Institute for Ecologists and Environmental Managers (CIEEM).
Lead Surveyor	Robert West BA (Hons), PGDip. MCIEEM
Purpose of Works	The purpose of this survey is to inform a planning application for: To demolish the existing and build two new properties.
Summary of Surveys and evaluation	The building has tight eaves and roof with no obvious holes or gaps that would allow ingress into the building. The internal inspection showed no physical signs of bats within the roof void where access was very good throughout. This building has negligible potential for bats at this time.
Recommendations	It is recommended that: - That no further surveys are required on this site at this time. - In the highly unlikely event of bats been discovered during the construction phase then all works must stop, and a suitable qualified person be contacted for further advice. - The addition of built in bat and bird boxes is recommended for the proposed build on as many elevations as possible, to be situated as high as possible with minimal to no lighting on them.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report was commissioned by the owners to determine if there were any ecological issues associated with the proposed redevelopment of this building.
- 1.2 8 Ardler Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire. The national grid reference number is SU 72037 74680.
- 1.3 The building is situated in the Caversham area of Reading. The area around the building is built up with housing with gardens and is within 2km of the Thames and some open green spaces and water bodies. There are no designated sites within 1km of the property.
- 1.4 A data search for the local bat group and records centre has shown that there are records of both Pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Long eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*) in the area, but with no detail to exact locations. There have been two granted EPS mitigation Licenses within 1km of the property these have been for small roosts of Common and Soprano Pipistrelle bats.
- 1.5 There are 18 species of bat in the UK, 7 of which are UK BAP priority species and Species of Principal Importance in England under S41 of the NERC Act 2006. All bats and bat roosts are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Bats are also a European Protected Species protected under the Habitat Regulations 2019. (see appendix)
- 1.6 This Phase 1 survey was carried to the standards set down in the Bat Conservation Trusts Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd Edition) (2016) and guidance from the Chartered Institute for Ecologists and Environmental Managers (CIEEM).

2. Field Survey

External Inspection: Bats (see pictures in appendix)

- 2.1 An external inspection of the cottage was undertaken on the 24th of July 2017 and then update on the 2nd August 2023 by experienced ecologist and bat surveyor Robert West (NE license number 2018-33612-CLS-CLS). These inspections were undertaken to identify any potential ingress/egress points within the roof and the body of the structure and any other potential for bat activity.
- 2.2 The house site in its own grounds which are put down to a mixture of gravelled garden areas and concrete paths, there is a lean-to that connects the house to a small garage.
- 2.3 8 Ardler road is a single storey brick-built building with a cavity which seems to been built around the 1970's.
- 2.4 The eaves are tight fitting and are made with concrete fibre board; there are no gaps that would help the ingress of bats into this building.
- 2.5 The windows are mostly of uPVC construction and there are no gaps around any of the facias which would allow ingress.
- 2.6 The roof is made with tight fitting clay/concrete tiles there are no gaps or missing tiles, the ridge is made of a similar material again there are no gaps.
- 2.7 All the pugging was intact throughout the roof; there are no gaps which would allow the ingress of bats into the building.
- 2.8 The garage is of a similar construction to the house all the tiles and pugging are intact, there is a chimney on this building, it does not have any lead flashing but has a collar of mortar which seems to be all intact.
- 2.9 There are no physical signs of bats using this building. This building has **negligible** potential for bats to be using it for roosting.

Internal inspection (*see pictures in appendix*)

- 2.10 This building has a large open plan roof space, which is easily accessible throughout; there were no areas that could not be accessed.
- 2.11 The roof floor is insulated with fibre insulation which was sparse at best, the roof floor was boarded throughout; there was no evidence of rodents using the building but there were several large old wasp nests.
- 2.12 The tiles are backed with bitumen felt and this was all intact with no tears or rips. The roof and felt seem to be in a very good condition and no signs of ageing could be seen during this survey.
- 2.13 There is heavy cobwebbing along the ridge beam, but the rest of the roof space was clear.
- 2.14 There was no light coming from the eaves or any other area which would indicate holes.
- 2.15 The roof structure is an A frame with a single ridge beam that runs the full length of the building, the roof space is large and open.
- 2.16 No bat droppings or other evidence was seen during the internal inspection. The roof space has **negligible** potential for bats to be using it of roosting.

3 Survey Conclusion

- 3.1 During both the original survey and the update survey showed that little has changed between the two surveys there are still no physical evidence of bats was observed.
- 3.2 Although the external survey showed that that building had very limited opportunities for bats to gain access to the building, it was also evident from the inspection that the building had no potential.
- 3.3 The plot the building is sitting on is of low ecological value with the majority of the area been put down to low maintenance style gardens.
- 3.4 It is considered from this survey that this building has **negligible** potential of been used as a bat roost and as such **no further surveys** are needed.
- 3.5 This can change over time if the features change in the future, and, if the works are not carried out in a timely manner, then it is suggested further assessment of the building maybe required.
- 3.6 In the unlikely event of a bat been discovered when removing any of the tiles all work must stop, and the area should be lightly covered over (to reduce the likelihood of squashing the bat) and a suitable qualified and licensed ecologist should be contacted.
- 3.7 It is recommended that built in bat and bird boxes are incorporated into all the new elevations of the proposed building. These should be placed as high as possible with minimal to no light spill on them, with clear flight paths to and from. Further information can be obtained either form an ecologist or the manufactures/suppliers of the boxes.



Figure 1: Proposed Bio enhancements.

Appendices:

Bats and the law

Natural England offers further detailed advice which can be applied to planning applications that affect protected species.

Bats

There are 18 species of bat in the UK, 7 of which are UK BAP priority species and Species of Principal Importance in England under S41 of the NERC Act 2006. All bats and bat roosts are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Bats are also a European Protected Species protected under the Habitat Regulations 2019 (as amended). It is an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly disturb bats in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the ability of any significant group of bats to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young or the local distribution of or abundance of a species of bat;
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection (i.e. bat roosts); or
- Possess, sell or transport a bat, or anything derived from it.

For more information please read:

Natural England. 2016. *Standing Advice for Protected Species*. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bats-surveys-and-mitigation-for-development-projects>

Mammals

All wild mammals are protected against cruelty under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996, which makes it an offence to mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

The following species of mammal relevant to the site are protected further by law in England.

Bats

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- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly disturb bats in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the ability of any significant group of bats to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young or the local distribution of or abundance of a species of bat;
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection (i.e. bat roosts); or
- Possess, sell or transport a bat, or anything derived from it.

Birds

48 species of bird on the UK BAP exist in England. These species, plus the Hen Harrier, are also listed as Species of Principal Importance in England under S41 of the NERC Act 2006. All birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), making it an offence, with certain exceptions (e.g. game birds), to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird and to take, damage or destroy their nests or eggs.

Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 affords extra protection for a number of species and applies harsher penalties for offences. Any intentional or reckless disturbance of a Schedule 1 bird, whilst it is nesting or rearing dependant young, constitutes an offence.

Reptiles

All four of the widespread British species of reptile, including the Common Lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, Slow-Worm *Anguis fragilis*, Grass Snake *Natrix natrix* and Adder *Vipera berus*, are also UK BAP priority species and Species of Conservation Concern in England. They are protected under Schedule 5 (Sections 9.1, 9.5a, 9.5b) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) from intentional killing, injury and trade. The habitat of the four widespread reptiles is not legally protected; however the replacement of habitat lost through development may be required through the planning system. Mitigation for these species is not subject to licensing by Natural England but should nonetheless be planned to minimise disturbance.



Picture 1: The eastern elevation



Picture 2: The northern elevation of the building, this picture is taken from the neighbouring plot the chain link fence is the boundary for this property (arrowed).



Picture 3: Showing the western elevation



Picture 4: Showing the southern elevation



Picture 5: Showing the tight eaves and the UPVC windows



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