

**14 The Rise
Caversham
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 8NZ**

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

Ref: R2944/a

November 2021



1 Diesel House, Honey Hill, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 3BL
Telephone: 0118 3271810 Mobile: 07979 403099 E-mail: info@wenman-ecology.co.uk
www.wenman-ecology.co.uk

John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales with registered number OC339057.
Registered office: 100 New Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, RG45 6JP where you may look at a list of members' names.

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2	INTRODUCTION	4
2.1	Background.....	4
2.2	Legislative Background.....	4
2.3	Site Location and Context.....	5
3	SURVEY METHODOLOGY.....	7
3.1	Building Inspection.....	7
3.2	Survey Constraints.....	7
4	SURVEY FINDINGS	8
4.1	Introduction.....	8
4.2	External Survey.....	8
4.3	Internal Survey.....	8
5	DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	10
5.1	Assessment of Bat Roost Potential/Status.....	10
5.2	Impact of Proposals and Recommendations	10
6	REFERENCES	11
	APPENDIX 1 - SITE PHOTOGRAPHS.....	12
	APPENDIX 2 – PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT PLAN	16
	APPENDIX 3 – EXISTING AND PROPOSED ELEVATIONS	17

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP was commissioned by Mrs Tracy Gillespie to undertake a preliminary bat roost assessment of the detached house at 14, The Rise in Caversham, Berkshire (OS grid reference: SU 71976 75682). The assessment was commissioned to accompany a planning application submitted to Reading Borough Council seeking consent for a second-storey extension above the garage and a single-storey rear extension following the demolition of the existing glass-roofed conservatory.
- 1.1.2** All British bat species are fully protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('Habitat Regulations'). A survey of the interior and exterior of the property was conducted on the 14th October 2021 by an ecologist registered under the Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL17 and an assistant ecologist.
- 1.1.3** The building showed no evidence of the presence of roosting bats. The cobwebbed ridges in both roof voids and the absence of any bat droppings inside the roof voids indicates that primarily void-dwelling bat species, such as the long-eared bats (*Plecotus* spp.), are highly unlikely to be present. The building lacked external features suitable for use by crevice-dwelling bats, such as pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus* spp.) and/or small *Myotis* species. Overall, the property is considered to have negligible bat roost potential.
- 1.1.4** The property showed no signs of use by bats and lacked suitable external bat roost features and as such, the planning proposals are considered highly unlikely to lead to the disturbance of bats or lead to the damage or loss of a bat roost during the works. A European Protected Species Mitigation Licence would not be required to allow the works to go ahead lawfully.
- 1.1.5** In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during the course of the building work, the work must stop immediately and a licensed ecologist should be called to site to attend to the bat(s) and provide further advice on how to proceed; work must continue only once further written advice has been received. At this point, a European Protected Species licence may be required to permit the work to continue lawfully.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP was commissioned by Mrs Tracy Gillespie to undertake a preliminary bat roost assessment of the detached house at 14, The Rise in Caversham, Berkshire.
- 2.1.2** The assessment was commissioned to accompany a planning application submitted to Reading Borough Council seeking consent for a second-storey extension above the garage and a single-storey rear extension following the demolition of the existing glass-roofed conservatory.

2.2 Legislative Background

- 2.2.1** All British bat species are fully protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('Habitat Regulations'). In summary, the legislation combined makes it an offence to:
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place or intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter by a bat;
 - Deliberately, 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; or to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species; and
 - Deliberately kill, injure or take any bat.
- 2.2.2** The government's statutory conservation advisory organisation, Natural England, is responsible for issuing European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSML) that would permit activities that would otherwise lead to an infringement of the Habitat Regulations. A licence can be issued if the following three tests have been met:
- **Regulation 55(9)(a)** - there is "no satisfactory alternative" to the derogation;
 - **Regulation 55(9)(b)** - the derogation "will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range"; and

- **Regulation 55(2)(e)** - the derogation is for the purposes of “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”.

2.2.3 Local authorities have a statutory duty under Regulation 7(3e) of the Habitat Regulations to have regard to requirements of the Habitats Directive in the exercise of their functions. The Council must therefore consider and determine whether these three tests are likely to be satisfied by applications where survey findings show that an EPSML is necessary before granting planning permission.

2.2.4 EPSML applications can be submitted once all necessary planning consents have been granted and Natural England aim to issue a licence decision within 30 working days.

2.2.5 Licensable projects affecting small numbers of seven commonly occurring species occupying roosts of low conservation importance may fall under the remit of the Bat Mitigation Class Licence WML-CL21 (BMCL). The BMCL permits ‘Registered Consultants’ or accredited agents appointed by them to carry out licensable operations on site on behalf of clients following the registration of sites with Natural England at least 15 working days before the work is due to start.

2.2.6 Survey data supporting EPS licence applications or the registration of the site under the BMCL must be up to date i.e., have been conducted within the current or most recent optimal survey season i.e., May to August. Therefore, if surveys show bats are present and licensable work is delayed until during or after the next survey season, updated surveys will be required to support an application or site registration.

2.3 Site Location and Context

2.3.1 The detached house is located at the end of The Rise, a cul-de-sac in Caversham, Berkshire (OS grid reference: SU 71976 75682).

2.3.1 There are residential properties surrounding the site, with their respective gardens consisting of managed lawns, with hedge and trees along the boundaries. Approximately 220 metres to the north-east of the site there are allotments, connected to the managed gardens and the grassland of Reading Crematorium. There are areas of deciduous woodland, wood-pasture and parkland approximately 370 metres to the north-east of the site. Further areas of deciduous woodland were

present approximately 485 metres to the west of the site. Overall, the gardens, trees and nearby woodland surrounding residential houses provide good quality commuting and foraging opportunities for bats adapted to suburban environments.

3 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

3.1 Building Inspection

3.1.1 A survey of the interior and exterior of the building was conducted on the 14th October 2021 by an ecologist registered under the Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL17 and an assistant ecologist.

3.1.2 The survey was undertaken with the aid of binoculars and a high power (1 million candle power) torch, searching for features that could offer potential roosting sites following standard survey guidelines (Collins 2016; Mitchell-Jones 2004; Mitchell-Jones & McLeish 2004).

3.1.3 The following may indicate the presence of a bat roost within a building:

- Bat droppings (these can be found externally, especially in sheltered areas such as window sills, underneath roost entrances or internally within a roof space);
- Piles of insect remains e.g., moth wings (these may be indicative of regular feeding sites used by species such as brown long-eared bat);
- Staining at roost entrances or within the roost (urine and oil from fur can leave stains on timbers when bats are gathered for long periods); and
- Bats (live or dead).

3.1.4 Buildings may offer potential roosting sites in a number of locations, favoured locations include:

- Under roof, ridge and hip tiles, especially when loose or lifted tiles are present, or sections of mortar are missing;
- Under sections of raised lead flashing;
- Beneath lifted barge boards;
- At the gable ends – access is typically gained at the roof apex via gaps in the soffits or under roof tiles;
- At the eaves – gaining access via gaps between the soffits and wall; and
- Within an enclosed roof space – long-eared bats (*Plecotus* spp.) for example, will often cluster at the ridge beam.

3.2 Survey Constraints

3.2.1 There were no significant survey constraints because full access was available to the interior and exterior of the property.

4 SURVEY FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1** Photographs of the building are presented in **Appendix 1** and a plan of the external and internal survey findings with associated target notes is shown in **Appendix 2**. The survey findings from the exterior and interior of the building are described as follows:

4.2 External Survey

- 4.2.1** The house featured an attached garage on the southern elevation and a glass-roofed conservatory on the rear extension (**Photographs 1 & 2; Target note 1**). The building was of modern brick cavity construction, with a hipped roof on the house and garage which featured flat slate roof tiles (**Photograph 3; Target note 2**). The ridge and hip tiles were tightly fitted, and the mortar was also intact offering no roosting opportunities for bats (**Photograph 4; Target notes 3 & 4**). The lead flashing was tight at the junction between where the garage and conservatory joined the brickwork of the house (**Photograph 5; Target note 5**). A brick chimney was present on the northern elevation of the house, with tight lead flashing around the base and sealed soffit to the chimney stack (**Photograph 6; Target note 6**). The uPVC soffit was sealed to the brickwork along all sides of the house and garage, with two overflow pipes visible coming out of the soffit on the rear elevation (**Photographs 7 & 8; Target notes 7 & 8**). There were gaps above the garage doors on the front elevation which could offer access for bats into the interior of the garage (**Photograph 9; Target note 9**).
- 4.2.2** No evidence of roosting bats was observed at the time of the external inspection of the house and garage.

4.3 Internal Survey

- 4.3.1** There were two roof voids within the house, with the first covering the two-storey footprint of the house and was accessible via a loft hatch on the first floor (**Photograph 10**). The void had an approximate floor-to-ridge height of 1.5m and was of trussed rafter and hipped roof construction, with a smaller hipped section on the front elevation (**Photograph 11**). Two covered water tanks were present adjacent to the loft hatch (**Photograph 12**). The roof was lined with intact hessian and bitumen felt membrane and the ridge was lightly cobwebbed, which can indicate a lack of void-dwelling bat activity (**Photograph 13; Target note 11**). A chimney was present on the northern hipped end of the building, with loose felt around the

John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP

brickwork (**Photograph 14; Target note 12**). The floor was unboarded and insulated with fibreglass, with the eaves open into the soffits which were visible throughout the void (**Photograph 15; Target note 13**). Daylight was visible through small gaps in the soffit around the overflow pipes on the rear elevation (**Photograph 16; Target note 14**). A medium-sized wasps' nest was present beside the eaves within the roof void (**Photograph 17; Target note 15**).

4.3.2 A second roof void was present above the garage and was accessed via a loft hatch on the ground floor (**Photograph 18**). The roof was half-hipped with the northern end of the wall made up of a part block and part brickwork wall of the house (**Photograph 19; Target note 16**). The roof was lined with hessian and bitumen felt which was intact, and the ridge was moderately cobwebbed throughout (**Photograph 20; Target notes 17 & 18**). The floor was un-boarded, with occasional sections of fibreglass insulation present and scattered mouse droppings (**Photograph 21; Target note 19**). The eaves were open with the soffit visible (**Photograph 22; Target note 20**). The interior of the garage itself had a concrete floor, with plastered ceiling tight to the brick and blockwork walls and daylight visible through cobwebbed gaps above the garage doors (**Photograph 23 & 24; Target note 21**).

4.3.3 No signs of roosting bats were observed during the internal inspection of the house and garage.

5 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Assessment of Bat Roost Potential/Status

5.1.1 The house and garage showed no evidence of the presence of roosting bats. The cobwebs along the ridge and absence of bat droppings inside both roof voids indicates that primarily void-dwelling species, such as the long-eared bats (*Plecotus* spp.), are highly unlikely to be present.

5.1.2 The building on the whole lacked external features suitable for use by crevice-dwelling bats, such as pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus* spp.) and/or small *Myotis* species. The uPVC soffits were sealed to the brickwork and the roof, ridge and hip tiles were intact across the roof of the house and garage. Overall, the property is considered to be of negligible bat roost potential.

5.2 Impact of Proposals and Recommendations

5.2.1 The planning proposals are for the addition of a second-storey extension above the garage, and a single-storey rear extension to replace the existing conservatory (refer to existing and proposed elevations in **Appendix 3**). The house showed no signs of use by bats and lacked suitable bat roost features and as such, the proposals are considered highly unlikely to lead to the disturbance of bats or lead to the damage or loss of a bat roost during the works. A European Protected Species mitigation licence would not be required to allow the works to go ahead lawfully.

5.2.2 In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during the course of the building work, the work must stop immediately and a licensed ecologist should be called to site to attend to the bat(s) and provide further advice on how to proceed; work must continue only once further written advice has been received. At this point, a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence may be required to permit the work to continue lawfully.

6 REFERENCES

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

Mitchell-Jones, A. J. & McLeish, A. P. (2004). *Bat Workers' Manual (3rd Edition)*. JNCC, Peterborough.

Richardson, P. (2000). *Distribution Atlas of Bats in Britain and Ireland 1980 – 1999*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

APPENDIX 1 - SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



1. Front of house viewed from the west.



2. Rear of house viewed from the east.



3. Flat slate roof tiles (rear elevation).



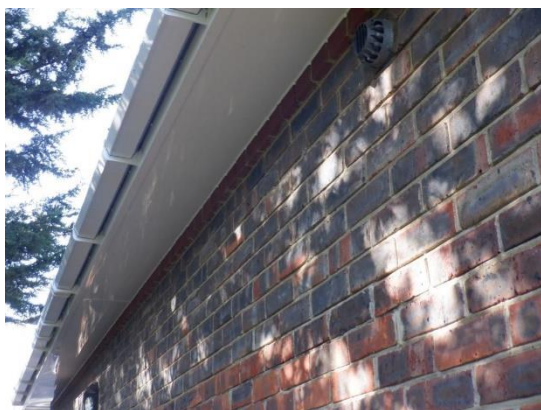
4. Tight ridge and hip tiles with intact mortar.



5. Tight lead flashing where the garage roof joins the house (front elevation).



6. Tight lead flashing and sealed soffit to chimney stack (north elevation).



7. Soffit sealed to brickwork along garage.



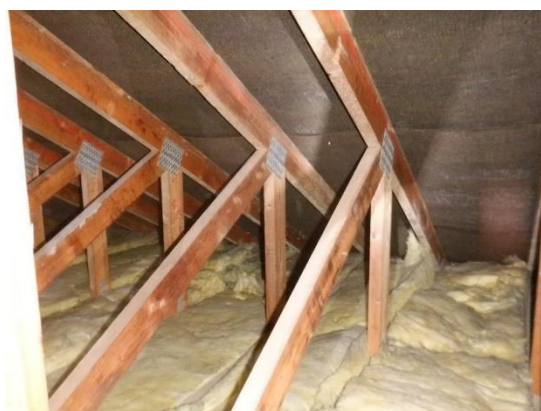
8. Overflow pipes out of uPVC soffit (rear elevation).



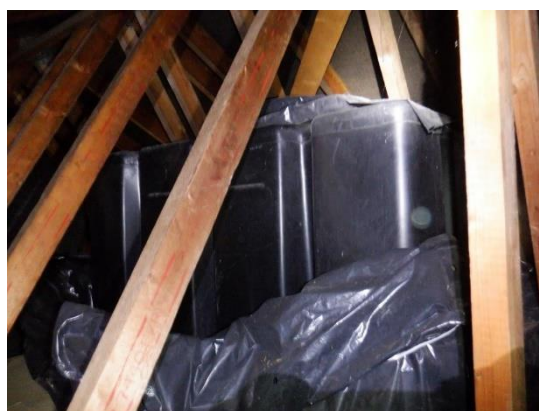
9. Gap above garage doors (front elevation).



10. First roof void above the house.



11. Hipped roof at southern end with trussed rafters.



12. Covered water tanks adjacent to loft hatch.



13. Lightly cobwebbed ridge.



14. Loose bitumen roofing felt around chimney at northern hipped end.



15. Eaves open into the soffits.



16. Daylight visible around overflow pipes in soffit on rear elevation.



17. Medium sized wasps' nest at eaves.



18. Second roof void above the garage.



19. Part block and part brickwork wall of the house.



20. Roof lined with hessian and bitumen roofing felt.



21. Occasional mouse droppings on fibreglass insulation.



22. Open eaves into soffit.

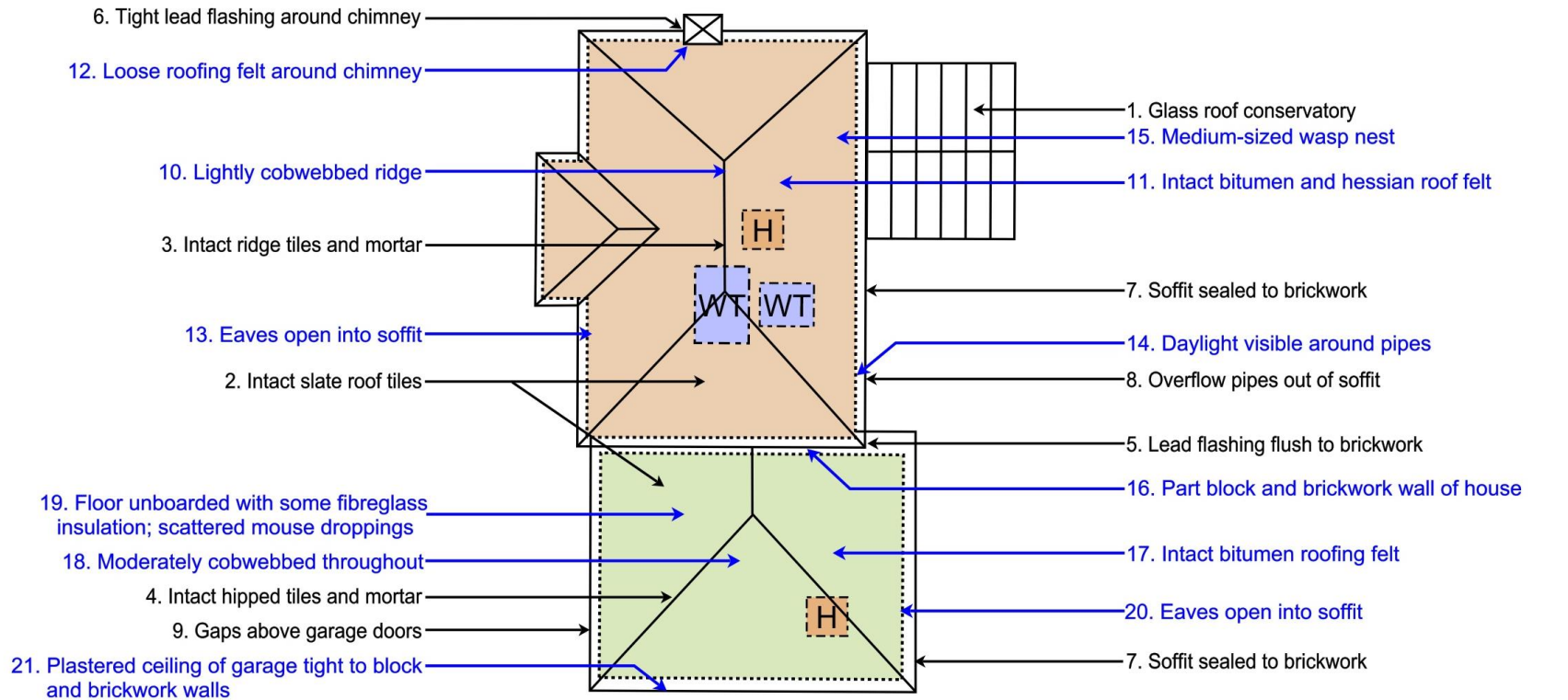


23. Plastered ceiling of garage tight to brickwork.



24. Daylight visible above garage doors, which were cobwebbed.

APPENDIX 2 – PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT PLAN

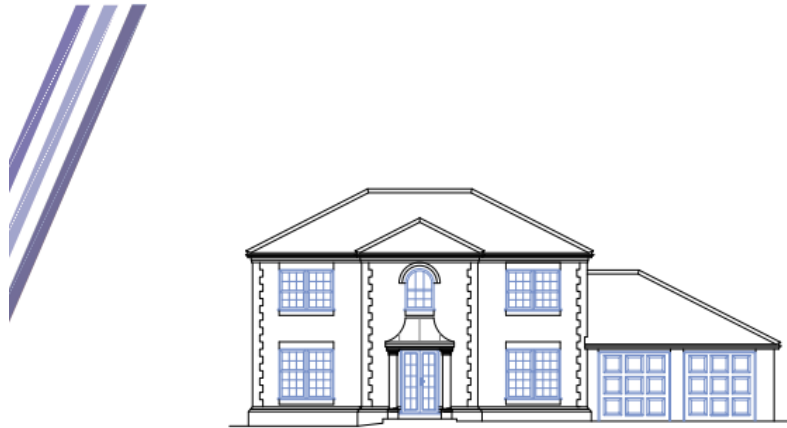


n. External target note **n.** Internal target note First roof void Second roof void Chimney Loft hatch Water tank

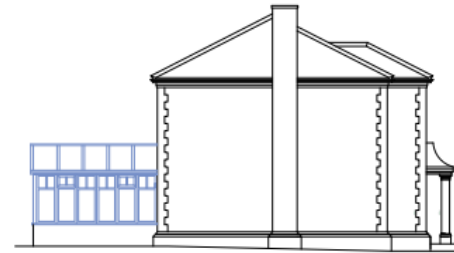
Drawn by:	Date	Scale:	14, The Rise, Caversham, Berkshire, RG4 8NZ	
MP	October 2021	Not to scale	Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Findings	

John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP

APPENDIX 3 – EXISTING AND PROPOSED ELEVATIONS



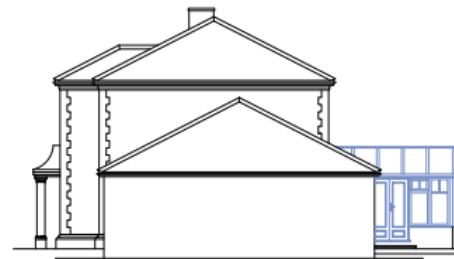
EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION



EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION



EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION

NOTES:

1. CONTRACTOR MUST CHECK DIMENSIONS ON-SITE PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS.
2. ANY DISCREPANCIES OR AMBIGUITIES MUST BE REPORTED TO THE ARCHITECT IMMEDIATELY.
3. DIMENSIONS AND AREA FIGURES ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY. CLARIFICATION AND CONFIRMATION OF DIMENSIONS MUST BE OBTAINED FROM A LOCAL PARTY.
4. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE PLAIN-FINISHED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY, OR AN APPROVED NEAREST FINISHING CONTRACTOR, SUBJECT TO APPROVAL.
5. ANY DIMENSIONS SHOWN ON REPRESENTATION OF THIS DRAWING LIST DRAWING ARE SUBJECT TO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LAWS AND MUST BE APPROVED BY THE ARCHITECT IMMEDIATELY.
6. DIMENSIONS TO BE APPROVED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY BEFORE INSTALLATION.
7. NON-APPROVED MATERIALS MUST BE CONSULTED AND APPROVED BY ALL RELEVANT PARTIES PRIOR TO INSTALLATION.



SCALE 1:100

MR & MRS GILLESPIE

DESIGN PROPOSAL ©
14 THE RISE
CAVERSHAM
READING
RG4 8NZ

EXISTING
ELEVATIONS

1:100 @ A2
MAY 2021
21063.S.BC-03
DANNI MULLINS

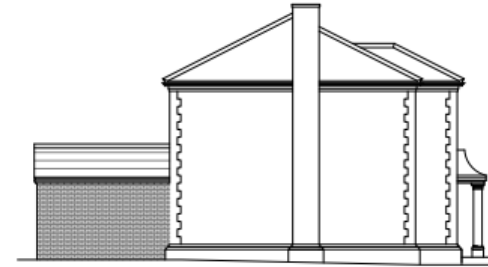
HAC DESIGNS LTD
WYVOLS COURT
BASINGSTOKE ROAD
SWALLOWFIELD RG7 1WY
info@hac-designs.co.uk
www.hac-designs.co.uk



John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



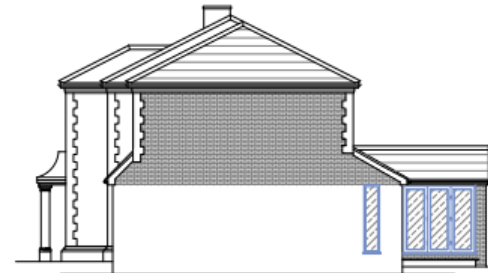
PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION

MR & MRS GILLESPIE
DESIGN PROPOSAL @
14 THE RISE
CAVERSHAM
READING
RG4 8NZ

PROPOSED ELEVATIONS



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION

1:100 @ A2
MAY 2021
21063.S.BC-06
DANNI MULLINS

HAC DESIGNS LTD
WYVOLS COURT
BASINGSTOKE ROAD
SWALLOWFIELD RG7 1WY
info@hac-designs.co.uk
www.hac-designs.co.uk



John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP

NOTES

1. CONSTRUCTION MUST CHECK DIMENSIONS ON-SITE PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS.
2. ANY DISCREPANCIES OR UNCLARITIES MUST BE REFERRED TO THE PROJECT MANAGER.
3. DIMENSIONS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED IN METRES. CONSTRUCTION AND DIMENSIONS OF MATERIALS MUST BE TAKEN UP WITH A LOCAL PARTY.
4. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CLAMP-INDICATED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY, OR AN INDEPENDENT SURVEYING COMPANY, BEFORE ANY WORK.
5. ANY UNEXPECTED DISCREPANCY OR REPRODUCTION OF THIS DRAWING LIST DRAWING ARE SUBJECT TO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LAWS AND MUST BE APPROVED BY THE DESIGNER.
6. STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS AND SUPPORTS MUST BE DESIGNED BY A QUALIFIED STRUCTURAL ENGINEER, THAT HAS PROVIDED SUPPORTING EVIDENCE TO BE APPROVED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY BEFORE INSTALLATION.
7. NON-PRESSED MATERIALS MUST BE CHECKED AND APPROVED BY ALL RELEVANT PARTIES PRIOR TO INSTALLATION.



SCALE 1:100