

**19 Surley Row
Emmer Green
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 8PW**

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

Ref: R2634/a

October 2020



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	INTRODUCTION	3
1.1	Background.....	3
1.2	Legislative Background.....	3
1.3	Site Location and Context.....	5
2	SURVEY METHOD	6
2.1	Bat Survey	6
2.2	Survey Constraints.....	6
3	SURVEY FINDINGS.....	7
3.1	Building Inspection.....	7
3.2	External Survey.....	7
3.3	Internal Survey.....	8
4	DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	9
4.1	Assessment of Bat Roost Potential.....	9
4.2	Impact of Proposals and Recommendations	9
5	REFERENCES	10
	APPENDIX 1 - SITE PHOTOGRAPHS	11
	APPENDIX 2 – PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT FINDINGS.....	14
	APPENDIX 3 – EXISTING AND PROPOSED ELEVATIONS	15

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP was commissioned by Gudrun Freese to undertake a survey for the presence of bats at 19 Surley Row – a detached house in Emmer Green near Reading, Berkshire.

1.1.2 The survey was commissioned in connection with planning proposals to be lodged with Reading Borough Council seeking consent for a two storey extension (refer to existing and proposed elevations in **Appendix 3**).

1.2 Legislative Background

1.2.1 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 affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species;
- Deliberately kill, injure or take any bat.

1.2.2 The government's statutory conservation advisory organisation, Natural England, is responsible for issuing European Protected Species licences 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, and;
- **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”.

- 1.2.3** 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 European Protected Species licensing is necessary before granting planning permission.
- 1.2.4** European Protected Species mitigation licence 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 of a full mitigation licence application.
- 1.2.5** Licensable projects affecting small numbers of seven commonly occurring bat species may fall under the remit of the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (WML-CL21). The Class Licence permits ‘Registered Consultants’ 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.
- 1.2.6** Survey data supporting EPS licence applications or the registration of the site under the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (WML-CL21) 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.

1.3 Site Location and Context

- 1.3.1** The house is situated on the southern side of Surley Row, which lies to the south of the village of Emmer Green on the northern side of Reading, Berkshire (OS grid reference: SU 71709 75893).
- 1.3.2** The property is surrounded by other residential houses and their respective gardens on all sides. There are numerous areas of deciduous woodland in the near vicinity, situated approximately; 139 metres to the north, 177 metres to the south-west, 320 metres and 430 metres to the north-west. Approximately 590 metres to the east of the site, behind nearby The Hill Primary School, there is an area of deciduous woodland surrounding a body of water, as well as an area of pasture and parkland, with a section of traditional orchard adjacent to that. Just over 1 kilometre to the north-east of the site is Clayfield Copse – a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).
- 1.3.3** Overall, the nearby gardens, connected tree-lines and nearby woodland provide an abundance of high-quality commuting and foraging habitat for bats adapted to living in a sub-urban environment.

2 SURVEY METHOD

2.1 Bat Survey

2.1.1 A survey of the interior and exterior of the house was undertaken on the 5th of October 2020 by an ecologist registered under the Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 and an assistant ecologist.

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

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

- 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);
- Bats (live or dead).

2.1.4 Residential properties may offer potential roosting sites in a number of locations, favoured locations include:

- Under roof and ridge tiles, especially when loose or missing tiles are present or sections of mortar are missing;
- At the eaves – gaining access via gaps between the soffits and wall;
- Within an enclosed roof space – long-eared bats (*Plecotus* sp.) for example, will often cluster at the ridge beam.

2.2 Survey Constraints

2.2.1 The newer, western side of the roof void was inaccessible but still visible from the main part of the void. Full access was available to the rest of the interior and exterior of the property and thus the constraints to the survey were minimal.

3 SURVEY FINDINGS

3.1 Building Inspection

- 3.1.1** Photographs of the property 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 bungalow are described as follows:

3.2 External Survey

- 3.2.1** The detached house was a mid-century building of brick construction, which had been painted, with hipped roof sections covering the entirety of the building.
- 3.2.2** The northern side of the house featured a section of flat roof in between two hipped roofs that looked of newer construction to the rest of the property (**Photograph 1 & 2**). The hipped roof to the front of the house had uneven tiles with gaps underneath them (**Photograph 3: Target note 1**) with intact hipped tiles. A tight wooden soffit ran the length of the eastern elevation of the house with no gaps (**Photograph 4: Target note 2**). The lead flashing was tight around the chimney breast, as were the ridge tiles leading up to the chimney (**Photograph 5: Target note 3**). Above the entranceway was a flat roof porch, with flat tiles and intact soffit that were tight to the walls (**Target note 4**). The south-eastern wall had a wisteria plant growing up and covering nearly the entire wall (**Photograph 6: Target note 5**) but where visible, the soffit was fitted tightly (**Target note 6**). To the rear of the property was a single storey hipped roof that had a gap in the mortar under the hip tiles (**Target note 7**) and uneven roof tiles with gaps underneath (**Photograph 7: Target note 8**). The rear elevation of the house had a tight soffit running the length of the side (**Photograph 8: Target note 9**). There was a slightly lifted tile below the ridge of the main roof, beside of the chimney (**Photograph 9: Target note 10**) with the rest of the roof and hip tiles all tight and intact. The newer section of roof, to the northern side of the house, had flat and intact roof, verge and hip tiles (**Photograph 10: Target note 11**). The newer roof had two sections of hipped roofing with a section of flat roof between them (**Target note 12**). The roof tiles on the north-eastern elevation were flat and the soffit was flush with the wall (**Photograph 11: Target note 13**). The windows around the house had open shutters pinned back to the wall, with gaps between the slats with no

promise for roosting opportunities (**Photograph 12: Target note 14**).

3.2.3 There was no evidence of bats observed during the external survey.

3.3 Internal Survey

3.3.1 The roof void was accessible via a hatch on the first floor. The roof was unlined, with the underside of the tiles visible in the main section of the void with remnants of old straw insulation hanging around the tiles in places (**Photograph 13: Target note 15**). The floor was partially boarded along the middle of the roof space, with older fibreglass insulation present towards the eastern side of the void, and with newer fibreglass insulation - laid in the last 12 months - towards the southern side of the void (**Photograph 14 & 15: Target note 16**). The eaves of the roof were mostly open where there was the older fibreglass insulation, and had been filled in the areas that had the new insulation (**Target note 17 & 18**). The void in the hipped roof extension to the northern end was inaccessible due to the trussed rafter construction, however, the roof was visible and lined with a breathable roofing membrane, that looked intact (**Photograph 16: Target note 19**). Around the chimney stack, the beams were tight to the brickwork and it was heavily cobwebbed (**Photograph 17: Target note 20**). Towards the north-eastern side of the roof void there was a large covered water tank, with a section of boarded flooring around it (**Photograph 18**). The hipped roof had a square section covered in a breathable roofing membrane, where it looked like there had been some repair work carried out in the past (**Photograph 19: Target note 21**). Along the side of the void there were rolls of fibreglass insulation that was yet to be put down (**Target note 22**). Within the void were numerous old wasps' nests (**Photograph 20: Target note 23 & 24**).

3.3.2 There was no evidence of bats observed during the internal survey.

4 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Assessment of Bat Roost Potential

- 4.1.1** There was no evidence of roosting bats (i.e. droppings or staining) found during the roost assessment. The house had some features suitable for allowing bats access, i.e. gaps under tiles and missing mortar under occasional hipped tiles of low bat roost potential. However, the gaps under the tiles were in the unlined section of the roof and therefore did not provide hidden crevices suitable for bats and there were not any bats or droppings visible within the roof void and as such it is considered unlikely that the house supports bats.

4.2 Impact of Proposals and Recommendations

- 4.2.1** The proposals are to erect a two storey extension on the northern side of the house, building out from the newer hipped roof towards the front of the dwelling (refer to existing and proposed elevations in **Appendix 3**).
- 4.2.2** The area of the house to be impacted by the works is minimal, with the area of roof to be extended from having no features suitable for bats and showed no evidence of use during the close inspection, and as such, the work is considered highly unlikely to lead to the loss of a roost or to the disturbance of bats and can go ahead lawfully with no requirement for a European Protected Species mitigation licence. The roof with low potential features will not be affected and will remain to potentially be used by bats in the future.
- 4.2.3** In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during the building work, the work must stop immediately, and a licensed ecologist must 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 or confirmation of the site's registration under the Bat Mitigation Class Licence CL21 (if applicable) may be required to permit the work to continue lawfully.

5 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 the house viewed from the northeast.



2. Rear of the house viewed from the southwest.



3. Uneven roof tiles to the front of the house.



4. Tight wooden soffit, flush to wall.



5. Tight lead flashing around base of the chimney; Intact hip, ridge and flat roof tiles.



6. Tight lead flashing around base of chimney; slightly lifted tile below chimney.



7. Uneven roof tiles on top of hipped roof to the rear of the house; gaps in mortar under the hip tiles.



8. Tight wooden soffit around the rear elevation of the house.



9. Slightly lifted tile below the ridge next to the chimney; intact hip tiles and mostly flat roof tiles.



10. Flat and intact roof, verge and hip tiles on the newer extension to the northern side of the house.



11. Tight roof tiles on the north-eastern side of the house: soffit flush with the wall.



12. Open shutters on windows, with no promise for roosting opportunities.



13. Unlined roof, with underside of roof tiles exposed; remnants of old straw insulation.



14. Newer fibreglass insulation laid to the south of the void around the chimney.



15. Older fibreglass insulation around the loft hatch and to the north-eastern side of the void.



16. Hipped roof extensions with intact breathable membrane lining.



17. Beams and rafters tight to brickwork around the chimney.



18. Covered water tank to the north-eastern end of the void.

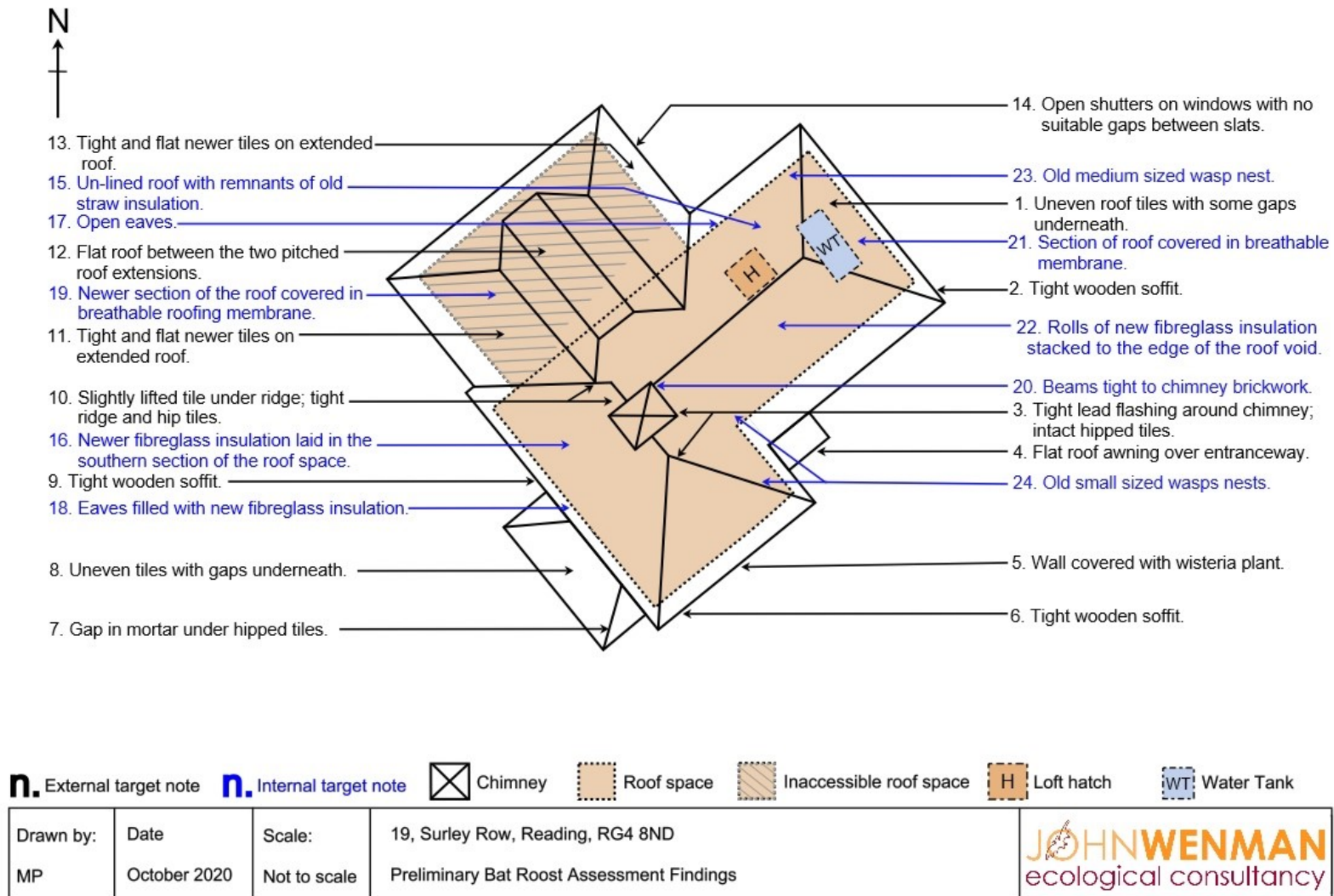


19. Area of hipped roof covered in plastic sheeting and breathable roofing membrane.



20. Old wasp nest present in the roof void.

APPENDIX 2 – PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT FINDINGS



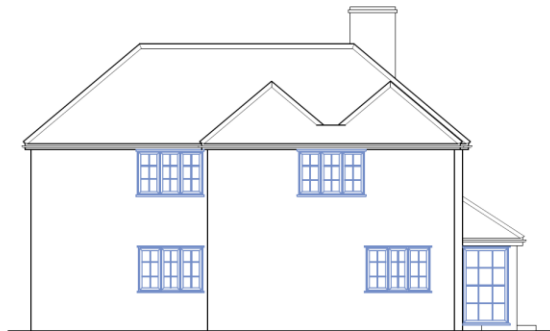
APPENDIX 3 – EXISTING AND PROPOSED ELEVATIONS



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION



EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION



EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION

NOTES:

1. CONTRACTOR MUST OBTAIN CONSENTS ON-SITE PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS.
2. ANY REQUIREMENTS OR UNDERTAKINGS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE ORIGINAL ISSUING BODY.
3. BOUNDARIES HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED ON SITE. CLARIFICATION AND CORRECTION OF BOUNDARY MUST BE TAKEN UP WITH A LEGAL PARTY.
4. ALL DRAWINGS ARE TO BE PLANNED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY, OR AN ALLOCATED INDEPENDENT BUILDING CONTROL SUPERVISOR AND APPROVED.
5. ANY UNDERTAKING OR REPRODUCTION OF THIS DESIGN LTD DRAWING ARE SUBJECT TO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LAWS AND MUST BE APPROVED BY PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT.
6. STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS AND SUPPORTS MUST BE DESIGNED BY A REGISTERED STRUCTURAL ENGINEER THAT HAS PROVIDED SUPPORTING CALCULATIONS TO BE APPROVED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY BEFORE INSTALLATION.
7. NON-SPECIFIED MATERIALS MUST BE CONSIDERED AND APPROVED BY ALL RELEVANT PARTIES PRIOR TO INSTALLATION.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
SCALE 1:100

PAUL & GUDRON
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT;
19 SURLEY ROW
READING
RG4 8ND

EXISTING ELEVATIONS

1:100 @ A3
JULY 2020
19069BC-03
ALINA LUCHIANOV

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



HAC
DESIGNS

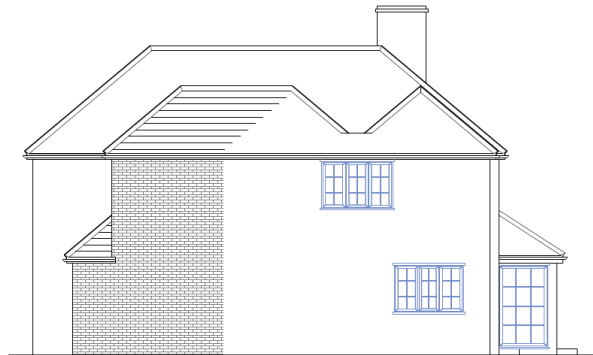
John Wenman Ecological Consultancy



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION

NOTES:

1. CONTRACTOR MUST CHECK DIMENSIONS ON-SITE PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS.
2. ANY DISCREPANCIES OR UNIDENTIFIED MUST BE NOTIFIED TO THE PRINCIPAL DESIGNER.
3. BOUNDARIES HAVE BEEN ASSUMED ON SITE. OBSERVATION AND CONFIRMATION OF BOUNDARY MUST BE TAKEN UP WITH A LEGAL PARTY.
4. ALL DRAWINGS ARE TO BE PLANNED-CHECKED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY, OR AN ALLOCATED INDEPENDENT BUILDING CONTROL SURVEYOR AND APPROVED.
5. ANY UNEXPECTED USAGE OR REPRODUCTION OF HAC DESIGNS LTD DRAWINGS ARE SUBJECT TO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LAWS AND MUST BE APPROVED BY PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT.
6. STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS AND SUPPORTS MUST BE DESIGNED BY A CERTIFIED STRUCTURAL ENGINEER THAT HAS PROVIDED SUPPORTIVE CALCULATIONS TO BE APPROVED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY BEFORE INSTALLATION.
7. NON-SHEEPED MATERIALS MUST BE CONSULTED AND APPROVED BY ALL RELEVANT PARTIES PRIOR TO INSTALLATION.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
SCALE 1:100

PAUL & GUDRON
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT;
19 SURLEY ROW
READING
RG4 8ND

PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

1:100 @ A3
JULY 2020
19069BC-06
ALINA LUCHIANOV

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



HAC
DESIGNS

John Wenman Ecological Consultancy