

**15 Kendrick Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 5DU**

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

Ref: R2449/a

January 2020



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP was commissioned by Mr James Jarvis to undertake a survey for the presence of bats within the house at 15 Kendrick Road in Reading, Berkshire.
- 1.1.2** The survey was commissioned in connection with a planning application lodged with Reading Borough Council seeking consent for a pitched roof extension providing second floor habitable rooms, a mono-pitch roof over the existing single-storey side extension, a rear pergola structure, and external alterations relating to existing and proposed window details (Planning Application Number: 191738).
- 1.1.3** Consultee comments made by Giles Sutton (RBC Ecology Consultations) are as follows:

'The house may host roosting bats and to confirm whether this is the case, and if so how bats will be affected by the proposals, a bat survey will need to be carried out. The survey will need to be carried out prior to determination of the application or the application would need to be refused on the grounds that insufficient evidence had been provided to determine the likely impacts of the proposals on bats (which are a protected species and a material consideration in the planning process).'

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;

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- 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.

1.2.5 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). The Class Licence 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.

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 eastern side of Kendrick Road in Reading, Berkshire (OS grid reference: SU 72110 72708).
- 1.3.2** The property is in a highly urbanised setting and is surrounded by residential and commercial buildings. Scattered trees are present along Kendrick Road and within the neighbouring grounds of The Abbey School to the south and Reading University to the east. The River Kennet is a known commuting corridor for bats and is approximately 600 metres to the north of the property.

2 SURVEY METHOD

2.1 Building Inspection

2.1.1 A survey of the interior and exterior of the property was undertaken by an ecologist registered under Natural England bat survey class licence CL18 and an assistant ecologist on the 20th January 2020.

2.1.2 The survey was undertaken with the aid of binoculars and a high power (1 million candle power) torch and looked 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:

- 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);
- Bats (live or dead).

2.1.4 Residential 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;
- 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 There were no significant survey constraints as full access was available to the exterior and interior of the property.

3 SURVEY FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1** Photographs of the site 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 house are described as follows:

3.2 External Survey

- 3.2.1** The Edwardian house had a flat roof concealed by parapets with a matching single-storey side extension running along the southern elevation (**Photographs 1 & 2**).
- 3.2.2** The concealed roof was accessible via a small store room positioned in the north-eastern corner of the house (**Photograph 3**). The roof was a bitumen-style flat roof with a layer of gravel around the store room and a strip of astro-turf towards the front (**Photographs 4 & 5; Target notes 1, 2 & 3**). The bitumen roof had been lined with flashing tape at the base of the parapets along the rear side of the house (**Photograph 6; Target note 4**). Flashing tape also lined the base of the store room and the adjoining chimney (**Photograph 7; Target note 5**). The bitumen roof was securely fixed around the remaining two chimneys, which were rendered and in good condition (**Photographs 8 & 9; Target note 6**). A rooflight was positioned in the centre of the roof and had been covered with corrugated uPVC held down by timber bed posts (**Photograph 10; Target note 7**). The store room had a bitumen flat roof with tight timber barge boards and painted timber cladding (**Photograph 11; Target note 8**). There was no evidence of roosting bats and no discernible bat roost features identified at roof-level.
- 3.2.3** From ground-level, the brickwork was rendered and the stonework beneath the roof parapets was intact (**Photograph 12; Target note 9**). The two oriel windows on the rear elevation were intact and flush against the wall render (**Photograph 13; Target note 10**). The front bay window extended two-storeys consisting of rendered brickwork and modern uPVC window frames (**Target note 11**). The side extension had a small loggia section to the rear that was being used for storage and showed no evidence of use by roosting bats (**Photograph 14**).

3.3 Internal Survey

- 3.3.1** The property possessed flat roofs and therefore lacked any true roof void; however, a store room was present on top of the main roof. The room had an approximate height of two metres and was of simple flat roof construction. The roof was insulated with polystyrene boards and a broken section revealed the underside of the bitumen roof (**Photograph 15; Target note 12**). The walls were boarded and the room was filled with stored boxes and timber (**Photograph 16**).
- 3.3.2** The store room lacked potential bat roost features and showed no signs of use by roosting bats.

4 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Assessment of Bat Roost Potential

- 4.1.1** The house showed no evidence of the presence of bats. Externally the property had no visible features suitable for use by crevice-dwelling species such as pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus* spp.). In addition, the house had flat roofs and therefore lacked a suitable roof void for void-dwelling bat species such as the long-eared bats (*Plecotus* spp.). Therefore the house is considered to be of negligible bat roost potential.

4.2 Impact of Proposals and Recommendations

- 4.2.1** The proposed works are considered highly unlikely to lead to the disturbance of bats or lead to the loss of a bat roost during the works, and as such, a European Protected Species mitigation licence would not be required to allow the works to go ahead lawfully.
- 4.2.2** In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during 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 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.

APPENDIX 1 - SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



1. Front of property viewed from west.



2. Rear of property viewed from east.



3. Store room on top of roof (viewed from roof).



4. Gravel layer on top of bitumen flat roof around store room (viewed from roof).



5. Astro-turf on the roof towards front of house (viewed from roof).



6. Flashing tape along roof parapets (viewed from roof).



7. Flashing tape along base of chimney and store room (viewed from roof).



8. Southern chimney (viewed from roof).



9. Northern chimney (viewed from roof).



10. Rooflight covered with corrugated uPVC (viewed from roof).



11. Tight timber barge boards and painted cladding on store room (viewed from roof).



12. Intact stonework beneath roof parapets (rear elevation).



13. Intact oriel windows (rear elevation).



14. Loggia section at rear of side extension (north elevation).

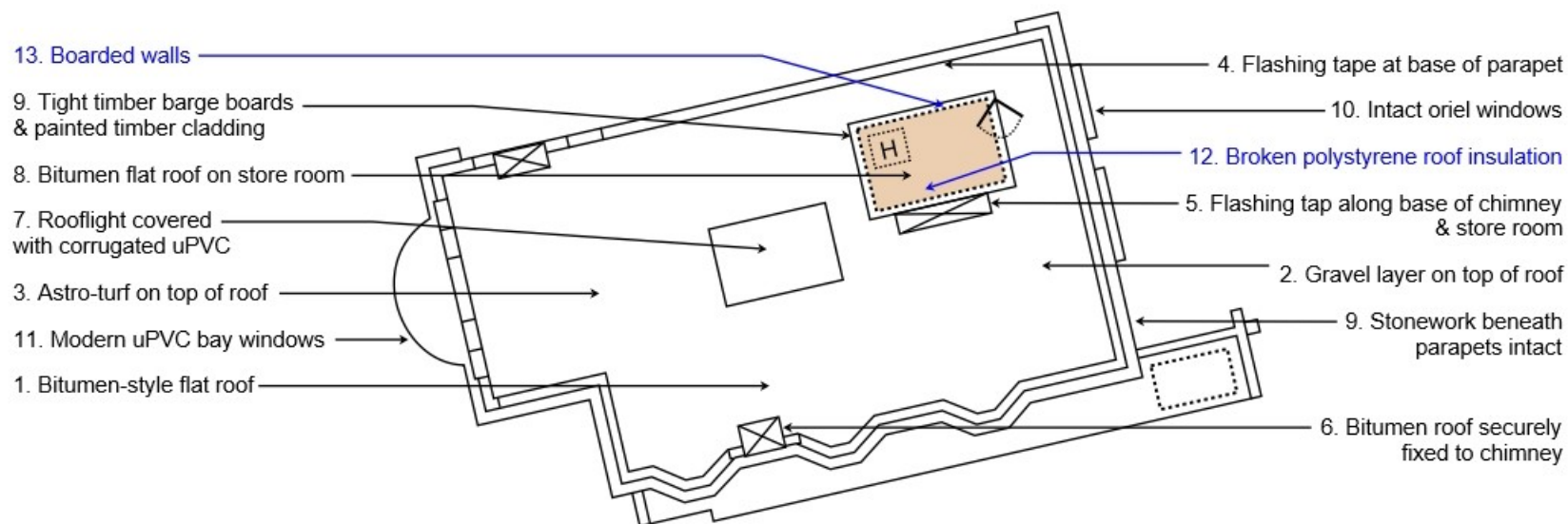


15. Roof of store room insulated with polystyrene.



16. Boarded walls in store room.

APPENDIX 2 – PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT FINDINGS



 Chimney
  Loft hatch
  Store room
  Loggia
  External target note
  Internal target note

Drawn by:	Date	Scale:	15 Kendrick Road Reading	
CW	January 2020	Not to scale	Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Findings	

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