

997 Oxford Road
Preliminary Bat Roost
Assessment
January 2018

COMMISSIONED BY
Jodie and Richard Clayton
997 Oxford Road
Tilehurst
Reading
RG31 6TL

997 Oxford Road

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

January 2018

Report Ref: DFA18007V2

Derek Finnie Associates Ltd
20 Soames Place
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 5AT

info@derekfinnie.com

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3
1.1	Background	3
1.2	Legislation	3
2	METHODOLOGY	5
2.1	Desk Study	5
2.2	Field Survey	5
3	RESULTS	6
3.1	Desk Study	6
3.2	Field Survey	6
4	EVALUATION.....	8
4.1	Bat Potential	8
	PLATES.....	9

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Derek Finnie Associates Limited was commissioned by Jodie and Richard Clayton to undertake a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of a property known as 997 Oxford Road, Tilehurst. There is currently a proposal to add an extension to the building which may impact upon the roof tiles and void space. Therefore, in line with current legislation and policy, the level of bat activity, if any, within the building needs to be assessed as it is a material consideration in the planning process.
- 1.1.2 To this end, a preliminary bat roost assessment was undertaken during January 2018. The following report describes the methodology employed throughout the assessment, presents the results and evaluates the likely impact based on the information gained to date.

1.2 Legislation

- 1.2.1 All species of British bat are afforded full protection under UK legislation, specifically under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which states:

9. Protection of certain wild animals.

(1) Subject to the provisions of this Part, if any person intentionally or recklessly kills, injures or takes any wild animal included in Schedule 5, he shall be guilty of an offence.

(4) Subject to the provisions of this Part, a person is guilty of an offence if intentionally or recklessly

(a) he damages or destroys any structure or place which any wild animal specified in Schedule 5 uses for shelter or protection;

(b) he disturbs any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or

(c) he obstructs access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection.

- 1.2.2 As all species of British bat are included on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, the above Section applies.
- 1.2.3 Further protection is given under Regulation 43 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which states:

Protection of certain wild animals: offences

43.—(1) A person who—

(a) deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species,

(b) deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species,

(c) deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or

*(d) damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,
is guilty of an offence.*

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 A review of aerial photography and the Government's Multi-Access Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) was undertaken to assess the extent and quality of potential roosting and foraging habitat within 1km of the property.

2.2 Field Survey

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

- 2.2.1 An external inspection of the building was undertaken on the 10th January 2018 during good weather, with access being available to all aspects of the buildings. Leica 10 x 32 BGA binoculars, a CluLite 1 million candlepower torch and a 4m telescopic ladder were used to assist in the search as necessary. The external features of the building, particularly the roof and ridge lines were inspected for potential ingress/egress points.
- 2.2.2 After the external inspection, a detailed inspection of the internal void space of the building was undertaken. Evidence of droppings, scratch marks, staining, feeding remains, urine stains and bats themselves were sought throughout the void space. Particular attention was paid to the areas underneath the ridge and joists, especially where the two meet. Evidence of gaps in the roof, indicating access to the outside, was sought, as well as gaps into any cavities that may be present. Again a CluLite 1 million candlepower torch was used to assist in the search.
- 2.2.3 The assessment was undertaken in line with the Bat Conservation Trust — *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (2016), as well as BS 42020: 2013 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development*.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1** The MAGIC website identifies several areas of broad-leaved woodland, which have been classified as a Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat, near to the property, with the nearest being some 85m to the north east. The property is also lies close to the River Thames which is likely to offer additional, suitable foraging habitat.

3.2 Field Survey

External Features

- 3.2.1** The property is a brick built, detached, two storey dwelling located Oxford Road, Tilehurst. The property is currently occupied and in sound condition throughout.
- 3.2.2** The roof is of basic partial hip with the ridge line running more or less south east to north west; a cross gable extends to the front (north east) at the south west end of the property. A small gable window is also present to the front. To the rear of the property, there is an existing single storey extension with a hip roof. There are no hanging tiles or wooden boarding on any aspect of the property. A chimney breast exits through the ridge line in the centre of the main roof, while a second exists through the south-east aspect (Plates 1 – 4).
- 3.2.3** The roof of the house is finished with flat, interlocking clay tiles (Plates 5). All the tiles are good condition throughout with no broken or loose tiles were noted; a moderate build-up of moss was noted on the rear aspect. The ridge lines are also intact.
- 3.2.4** The wooden soffit and fascia are in good condition, with no gaps noted. Polymer sealant is absent, but the walls are finished with render with the result that any potential gap has been eliminated (Plate 6).
- 3.2.5** The lead flashing around the chimneys and dormer window is also intact and tight with the surrounding tiles.
- 3.2.6** Externally, no potential ingress points were noted into the main dwelling.

Internal Conditions

- 3.2.7** Internally, the joists and rafters in the void are of a simple design, with the trusses being of a King style. Nail plates are absent at the major junctions, but any resulting gap is negligible. A low to moderate build-up of cobwebs was present around the junctions, suggesting a lack of bat activity (Plates 7 - 9). No staining or scratch marks were noted along any of the beams, and there was no evidence of feeding remains. No droppings were noted despite a thorough inspection and the distinct smell often associated with bat roosts was absent.
- 3.2.8** A brick chimney breast runs through the centre of the roof void; the bricks are all in good condition with no gaps or cervices noted.
- 3.2.9** The gable end wall is constructed from brick; the occasional area of missing mortar was noted, as is often the case with this type of construction. None, however, were of sufficient size or depth to offer potential roosting opportunities.
- 3.2.10** The roof lining is intact throughout, with no egress points evident.

Summary

- 3.2.11 In summary, no ingress /egress points were found into the roof void of the house, and no physical evidence of bat presence within the building in the form of scratch marks, stains or droppings was encountered. Overall, the building was assessed as having a negligible potential to support roosting bats.

4 EVALUATION

4.1 Bat Potential

- 4.1.1 The dwelling was assessed as having negligible potential to support bats and, as no evidence of bats, or of current or past bat occupancy, was encountered throughout the preliminary roost assessment, additional surveys are not deemed necessary. Due to the presumed absence of bats, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development would result in any infringement of either the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) or the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* in so far as either piece of legislation relates to bats.
- 4.1.2 However, in the highly unlikely situation a bat is encountered throughout the construction process, all works should stop immediately and advice sought from Natural England.

PLATES



Plate 1. General view of the front of the property



Plate 2. General view of the rear of the property



Plate 3. General view of the side (north western) of the property.



Plate 4. View of the single storey extension to the rear.



Plate 5. General view of the roof tiles.



Plate 6. General view of the soffit and fascia.

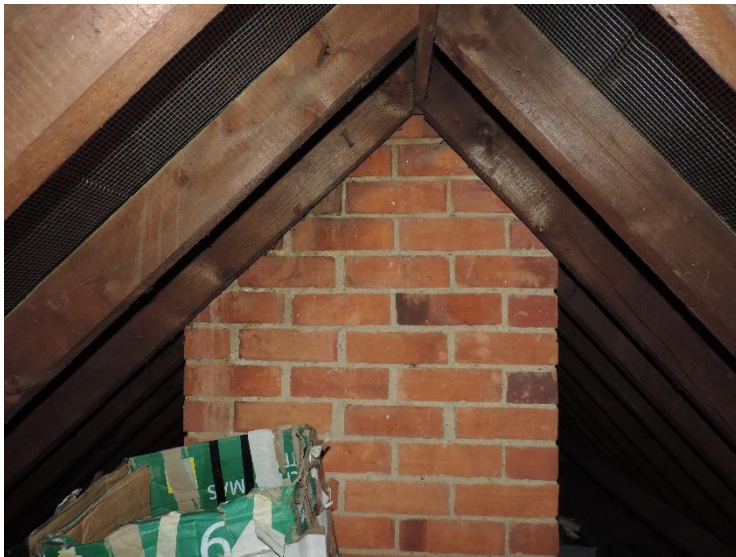


Plate 7. General view of the internal void.



Plate 8. General view of the internal void.



Plate 9. General view of the internal void space.